



Divine Savior Academy

EARLY CHILDHOOD &
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK
2016-2017

WELCOME TO:

DIVINE SAVIOR ACADEMY

Dear Parents,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you and your children to Divine Savior Academy (DSA)! Our student population is delightfully diverse. Families from various parts of the Miami area, as well as from other countries choose to send their children to our Christian and family-oriented Academy.

We appreciate the confidence you have shown in allowing us to teach and train your children. We eagerly look forward to partnering with you in educating and enlightening the next generation of young leaders.

The administration, teachers, and staff of DSA value excellence in education and we hold ourselves accountable for a thorough education of the whole child; mind, body, and spirit. Every aspect of our school conveys dedication to excellence: a challenging curriculum; a safe, structured, nurturing learning environment; a desirable student-to-teacher ratio; and new, state-of-the-art facilities, just to mention a few.

We trust that this handbook will help you better understand our program of quality Christian education at DSA. We encourage you to carefully read and discuss it with your children and welcome the opportunity to answer any questions.

As our motto states, we look forward to another outstanding year of “Educating the Mind” and “Enlightening the Heart!”

ACCREDITATION

Divine Savior Academy is listed as a Gold Seal Quality Care Program by the Florida Department of Children and Family services and is accredited by the following agencies:

- The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)
- The Association of Independent Schools of Florida (AISF)
- The National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA)
- Accreditation International (AI)

AFFILIATION

Divine Savior Academy is a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, a church body that supports the fourth-largest private school system in the nation.

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A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) has a rich tradition of academic excellence in its preschool through grade 12 school system. The WELS has operated highly regarded schools across the United States, the Caribbean, and elsewhere in the world for over 150 years. Currently, WELS churches and associations operate 398 early childhood centers, 337 elementary schools, and 25 high schools across the nation.

Divine Savior Academy of Doral is a part of the fourth largest private school system in America.

The Wisconsin Synod has provided excellent instructors to these schools by training its own teachers since 1884. It is gratifying to report that, on average, students attending WELS schools annually tend to outperform their peers by a considerable margin on national achievement tests. We humbly thank God for His blessings upon our schools.

Divine Savior Academy is proud to continue this rich tradition of academic excellence in the Doral community!

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Divine Savior Academy prohibits harassment and/or discrimination against a student on the basis of gender, race, color, disability, linguistic preference, ethnic or natural origin, and guarantees all the rights, privileges, programs, policies, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. We further abide by the laws of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

PHILOSOPHY

A CHRISTIAN ACADEMY...

Divine Savior Academy is dedicated to providing excellence in education for all its students. Our degreed teachers are committed to achieving this excellence by maintaining high academic standards; a safe, disciplined, nurturing environment; and pro-active home-school communication.

In cooperation with our parents, DSA will provide the knowledge and experience students need to become responsible and caring family members who will be productive citizens and leaders in the multicultural and technological society of the 21st Century.

DSA offers a comprehensive and varied curriculum, with all subjects being taught from a distinctively Christian perspective. This challenging curriculum is designed with flexibility to meet the needs of each student as it encourages exploration, critical thinking, problem solving, and sound study habits. The ultimate goal is to cultivate and maximize each student's unique talents and abilities so that he/she will be well equipped to serve as a valuable member of today's society.

Conscious of the attributes pertaining to the language and culture of the majority of our students, our faculty caters to Hispanic and International families by maintaining many of their customs and values while at the same time aiding them in their assimilation into the American way of life.

The Academy's educational philosophy maintains that each child progresses at an appropriate academic level. To that end our objective is to maintain class sizes of 18-22 students under the guidance and instruction of one full-time teacher and one bilingual paraeducator in grades PreK-3 through second, 24 students in grades three through five, 25 students in middle school and high school. Their dedication and energy ensures that no child is left behind.

At DSA each child's individual interests are encouraged and rewarded. Our teachers tailor their teaching to challenge each student, not to a class average. The diverse learning environment at DSA affords its students the opportunity to grow as scholars, musicians, artists, athletes, leaders, citizens – and most certainly as Christians – all to God's glory.

DEDICATED TO EXCELLENCE...

Faith...wisdom...confidence...perseverance...joy...strength of character – such are the inner qualities gleaned from an education that touches not only the mind, but also the heart. DSA is dedicated to enlightening the hearts of its children.

Our commitment, parents, is to assist you in your God-given responsibility to "...bring up children in the training and instruction of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4) Christian education is Christ-centered education. The Savior and His love for us are at the heart of all we think, do, and say. Parents and teachers alike have confidence in the Lord's command and promise which says, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." (Proverbs 22:6)

Divine Savior Academy is a place where children learn to fold their hands and bow their heads and talk to God. It's a place where the Bible serves as the framework for absolute guidance and truth. It's a place where love for God and His Word are instilled and nurtured in our precious children. It's a place to learn Bible stories and apply them to everyday life. It's a place to mold and shape the hearts and minds of impressionable children for a life of faith. In short, DSA is a place where children grow in their relationship with the Lord on their journey toward Christian maturity.

MISSION STATEMENT

PROVIDING EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION ROOTED IN THE TIMELESS TRUTHS OF GOD'S WORD.

MISSION

Divine Savior Academy will continuously integrate the wisdom of God's Word with the best pedagogical practices to offer a wholistic education that allows her students to grow in mind, body, and soul. DSA's faculty will continue to grow professionally by means of seminars, workshops, and advanced studies in order to provide the students of our church and the community a challenging, developmentally appropriate, and balanced curriculum.

VISION STATEMENT

The vision of DSA is to continue providing an excellent academic education in a safe environment that has been shaped by the love of God as shown in His Son Jesus Christ. In this manner, DSA will continue to educate the mind and enlighten the heart of her students.

OBJECTIVE STATEMENT

Divine Savior Academy will shape students who are responsible to God, to their families, to the community, and to themselves. Our students will become empowered learners prepared to meet and excel in life when confronted with challenges while remaining true to their Christian faith.

FACULTY & STAFF LIST

ADMINISTRATION

Pastor Carl Leyrer	<i>Senior Pastor</i>
Pastor Steve Mueller	<i>Associate Pastor</i>
Pastor Carlos Leyrer	<i>President/School Pastor</i>
Mr. Tim Biesterfeld	<i>2nd-8th Grade Principal and Head of Schools</i>
Mr. Ben Troge	<i>High School Principal</i>
Ms. Shawna Mehlberg	<i>Early Childhood Education Director</i>
Mr. John Althoff	<i>High School Academic Dean</i>
Mrs. Amy Arguello	<i>Elementary and Middle School Academic Dean</i>
Mrs. Monica Sanchez	<i>School Counselor</i>
Mrs. Juanita Wells	<i>Director of Admissions</i>
Mr. Tom Welch	<i>Director of College Counseling</i>
Mrs. Sarah Jimenez	<i>College Counselor</i>
Mr. Jon Romsdahl	<i>Elementary & Middle School Athletic Director</i>
Mr. Dan Unke	<i>Middle School & High School Athletic Director</i>
Mrs. Ginger Poulos	<i>Director of Public Relations</i>
Mrs. Dana Kirchoff	<i>Director of Communications</i>

OFFICE & SUPPORT STAFF

Mrs. Ileana Ortiz	<i>Business Manager</i>
Mrs. Zucet Calvo	<i>Office Assistant (ECE)</i>
Mrs. Christy Aguirre	<i>Office Assistant (Elementary and Middle School)</i>
Mrs. Gladys Mata	<i>Office Assistant (High School)</i>
Mr. Caleb Troge	<i>Information Technology (IT)</i>
Ms. Stephanny Martinez	<i>Graphic Designer</i>
Mrs. Henriette Vernimmen	<i>Activities Coordinator/Librarian</i>
Mr. Jairo Salcedo	<i>Head Custodian</i>

FACULTY AND STAFF

Mr. Jason Schultz	<i>High School Religion</i>
Mr. Erik Landwehr	<i>High School Religion</i>
Mr. Ryan Kirchoff	<i>High School English</i>
Ms. Anna Kalyanova	<i>High School French and Latin</i>
Mrs. Kristina Troge	<i>High School Science</i>
Mr. Matt Willems	<i>High School Math/Science</i>
Mr. Jonathan Ross	<i>High School Math and Science</i>
Mr. Tyson Zarnstorff	<i>High School Math</i>
Mr. Erik Parsons	<i>High School Math/Social Studies</i>
Ms. Alissa Ambroso	<i>High School Social Studies</i>
Mrs. Andrea Rodriguez	<i>Middle & High School Art</i>
Ms. Charis Scharf	<i>High School Music/Social Studies/English</i>
Mr. Michael Babler	<i>High School Media/Director of Instructional Technology</i>
Mrs. Evelyn Mitchell	<i>Study Hall Supervisor</i>
Mr. Tony Salvaggio	<i>Athletic Trainer/High School Physical Education</i>
Mrs. Jessica Spiegelberg	<i>English Language Learning Program</i>
Mrs. Erika Biesterfeld	<i>International Coordinator/English as a Second Language</i>
Mr. Gil Luna	<i>Chess</i>

Mrs. Brianne Loberger	<i>Kindergarten-8th School Music</i>
Mrs. Julia Leyrer	<i>Elementary Physical Education</i>
Mr. Cameron Sullivan	<i>Middle School Physical Education</i>
Mrs. Maria Freeman	<i>Middle & High School Spanish</i>
Mr. Jim Butz	<i>Middle & High School Spanish</i>
Ms. Melanie Laete	<i>8th Grade</i>
Mr. Phil Kurbis	<i>8th Grade</i>
Mr. Luke Hartzell	<i>8th Grade</i>
Mr. Jon Romsdahl	<i>7th Grade</i>
Mr. Kurt Hoppe	<i>7th Grade</i>
Ms. Kelly Mellgren	<i>7th Grade</i>
Mrs. Staci Landwehr	<i>6th Grade</i>
Mr. Tim Babler	<i>6th Grade</i>
Mr. Al Meihak	<i>6th Grade</i>
Mr. Ryan Loberger	<i>5th Grade</i>
Ms. Emily Westra	<i>5th Grade</i>
Mrs. Katie Meihak	<i>5th Grade</i>
Ms. Hannah Stellick	<i>4th Grade</i>
Mr. Joshua Gibson	<i>4th Grade</i>
Mrs. Heidi Sullivan	<i>4th Grade</i>
Mrs. Lauren Ross	<i>3rd Grade</i>
Mrs. Julie Hoppe	<i>3rd Grade</i>
Ms. Rebecca Balge	<i>3rd Grade</i>
Ms. Amelia Nemmers	<i>2nd Grade</i>
Ms. Brittany Steinmeyer	<i>2nd Grade</i>
Mrs. Nicole Gibson	<i>2nd Grade</i>
Ms. Elise Wordell	<i>1st Grade</i>
Ms. Laura del Rio	<i>1st Grade</i>
Ms. Rebecca O’Grosky	<i>1st Grade</i>
Mrs. Abby Molina	<i>Kindergarten</i>
Mrs. Jennifer Bello	<i>Kindergarten</i>
Ms. Shawna Smith	<i>Kindergarten</i>
Ms. Shawna Mehlberg	<i>Preschool, 4-year olds</i>
Mrs. Leah Unke	<i>Preschool, 4-year olds</i>
Mrs. Shanna Kurbis	<i>Preschool, 4-year olds</i>
Ms. Juliana Lopez	<i>Preschool, 3-year olds</i>
Mrs. Ana Gomez	<i>ESE Coordinator</i>
Ms. Gabriela Vargas	<i>Foreign Language Coordinator/English as a Second Language</i>
Ms. Ana Alvarez	<i>Elementary Art</i>
Links Languages	<i>Elementary Spanish</i>
Mrs. Cari Romsdahl	<i>Teacher</i>

CURRICULUM

The curriculum at Divine Savior seeks to educate the mind and enlighten the heart through the timeless truths of God's Word. DSA's curricular framework is balanced and comprehensive. Its design promotes cognitive growth in all of its objectives, activities, strategies, and resources. The curriculum takes into account the wide range of cultural backgrounds and learning styles of its students, offering flexibility to remediate the struggling student while at the same time enrich the gifted learner. The Divine Savior student will be fully equipped with the tools needed to succeed in and out of the classroom.

RELIGION

The key component in DSA's religion curriculum is the ChristLight series, which presents both Old and New Testament Bible stories in an exciting, colorful, and memorable way. Each lesson has a key truth that is meaningfully discussed and applied to the children's lives. This comprehensive curriculum gives students a strongly rooted foundation in God's Word, equipping them to live as children of God. Memorization skills are enhanced as students commit Bible passages to memory. Every Friday morning the students gather for a brief children's devotion in the chapel/auditorium. Parents and friends are invited to join the students for this devotion.

LANGUAGE ARTS

A clear understanding of the English language is imperative for success in all areas of the curriculum and everyday life. Divine Savior's language arts curriculum accomplishes this through its integration of reading, phonics programs, writing, spelling, grammar, and oral expression in a sequential and developmentally appropriate order.

READING

Students develop a love for reading through phonics-based instruction that incorporates thematic units of high quality literature, poetry, short stories, and plays. The curriculum emphasizes listening and comprehension skills, while developing the ability to read critically. In addition to the written curriculum, DSA makes use of the supplemental, computer-based Accelerated Reader program. It provides opportunities for independent reading that assess the learner's reading comprehension and progress, while stimulating and rewarding the reader. Each classroom has direct library accessibility for assistance with appropriate book selection and checkout.

WRITING

Students are taught to be proficient writers in a step-by-step composition process that includes phrases, sentences, paragraphs, reports, letters, poetry, journals, and short stories. Grammar is taught and stressed in all writing lessons. Students are encouraged to exercise their free expression in creative writing class.

SPELLING

The spelling component of the curriculum develops the sound/spelling connection in language, provides dictation practice, and incorporates and reviews vocabulary words in weekly units.

ORAL EXPRESSION

Students develop public speaking skills through experiences in show-and-tell, oral reports, and class presentations.

MATHEMATICS

A thorough mathematics curriculum is critical for success in our ever-changing world. The traditional math approach at DSA gives students a firm foundation in computation, math concepts, problem solving strategies, and data interpretation. This foundation is constructed through daily instruction and review in a cumulative manner. In order to promote fluidity, all of our classes in Kindergarten through 8th grade use Saxon mathematics. The math program is experiential in nature and employs manipulatives and real life situations to build mathematical knowledge. In addition, students in 2nd – 8th grade use *Mathletics* in the classroom, which is a program designed to allow individualized math enrichment practice to take place.

TECHNOLOGY

The development and use of modern technology continues to evolve and shape our lives. In order to gain proficiency in this technological age, computer education at DSA begins in first grade. Students are given the opportunity to develop familiarity with the physical structure of computers and with operating various computer programs to supplement cognitive growth. Each classroom is equipped with state-of-the-art computer equipment, numerous educational software titles, and high-speed Internet access that are utilized in a variety of contexts and disciplines. Educational software programs (for example: Microsoft Office, Learn 360, Renaissance Place) are incorporated into the curriculum as a way of enriching the overall academic program. Computer labs are equipped with educational software and are utilized to complement student needs. Student in 1st-5th grade begin typing instruction class twice a week to practice and develop these skills.

SCIENCE

The science curriculum at Divine Savior leads children to a greater appreciation of the awe-inspiring world in which they live. By means of textbook investigation, hands-on experimentation, special group projects, and technology-aided presentations, students discover various aspects of physical, earth, and life science. Special emphasis is placed on developing skills such as observing, comparing, hypothesizing, predicting, measuring, testing, and interpreting.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The scope of study in DSA's social studies curriculum includes exposure to a variety of social science disciplines: world cultures, values and customs, history, geography, sociology, current events, economics, and civics. Instruction and activities in these areas are structured to help young students develop skills such as critical thinking, decision-making, cause-and-effect relationships, and reading charts, maps, and graphs. This curriculum aspires to give students the necessary tools to be active, well-adjusted citizens and leaders in today's world.

SPANISH

The Spanish program at DSA contributes to preparing students as they become “global learners”. Our endeavor is to transfer knowledge by instilling love for the Spanish language in a fun and engaging atmosphere. Each class is divided into two levels to meet the needs of advanced Spanish learners as well as those learning Spanish as a second language.

Our curriculum develops multiple competencies such as listening comprehension, reading comprehension, oral expression, written expression and cultural awareness in students; based on their age and grade level, and in accordance with state and national standards for foreign language teaching.

The Spanish as a Second Language program is designed to build a solid foundation for communication skills in the language through immersion Spanish classes. Explicit instruction, along with repeated exposure to the language in a variety of themes and contexts, will lead to a strong foundation of linguistic skills for these students. Students develop written Spanish skills and an appreciation of the Hispanic culture.

The Advanced Spanish speakers program (Language Arts program in Spanish) is a challenging program which leads students to develop literacy and gain higher competence in their heritage language. Intellectually and affectively meaningful, this program expands their knowledge about their culture and the Hispanic world.

MUSIC

DSA’s music program contains the integrated components of music theory, voice development, and music appreciation. Basic elements such as notation, rhythm, and music terminology prepare the children to read music and explore musical instruments. Students practice note reading and rhythmic exercises through the use of recorders, boom whackers, ukuleles, drums, and other percussion instruments. Vocal skills are developed through pitch exploration, ear training, and daily classroom singing. Students are introduced to famous composers and some of their works. In an effort to showcase the musical talents and accomplishments of our young musicians, several public performances are planned throughout the year.

ART

Concepts such as line, shape, form, color, pattern, design, and composition are developed in an art curriculum that allows children to express their creativity and discover their talents. Young artists learn to value not only the product, but also the process. The children also enjoy exposure to well-known artists, their unique styles, and classical works. Other goals include development of fine motor skills, improvement of hand-eye coordination, and experiences in collaborative learning. An annual Art Fair allows the children to receive recognition for their favorite “masterpieces”.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The goals of DSA’s physical education program include: instruction in the rules, skills, and strategies of team and individual sports; physical fitness and cardiovascular development; practical experiences in leadership, teamwork, and sportsmanship; and development of a positive self-image in a safe, structured environment. Expectations include participation in all games and activities, respect for peers and instructors, proper care of equipment, and cooperation.

The P.E. program is designed to enable each child to achieve success while developing an interest in life-long physical activity. Participation in P.E. for students with medical problems or physical limitations will be modified as needed.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

DSA CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Children who enjoy singing are encouraged to further their musical interests through membership in the DSA Children's Choir. Opportunities for part-singing, solos, small group ensembles, and choreography add to the excitement of this weekly after-school activity. Public performances at church, school, Friday morning Chapel, and in the community provide the children with an opportunity to share their faith, promote their school, and expand their musical horizons. Students in 2nd – 5th grade may choose to join our elementary boys' or girls' choir.

INDIVIDUAL MUSIC LESSONS

Individual piano and instrumental lessons are offered through various teachers. The cost for this service is \$20 for each 30-minute lesson, and the payment will be made through your child's school account. Students who have enrolled in a minimum of eight (8) lessons each semester will be eligible to participate in the school recitals.

If you are interested in piano or instrumental lessons, please speak with Mrs. Amy Arguello (amy.arguello@dslca.org), and she will assist you in finding an available instructor.

Individual band lessons are also offered to students in 4th-8th during the day through an outside contractor. There is an additional fee for this service.

THEATER PROGRAM

Students with an interest in acting have a variety of opportunities within the theater program to develop their talents both on and off the stage. Productions include classroom plays for PreK-3, PreK-4, and Kindergarten. Students may audition for plays at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Whether it is acting, singing, dancing, or working behind the scenes, young performers will reap many benefits from their involvement in theater while at the same time delighting appreciative audiences.

ATHLETICS

In our athletic program, our coaches encourage students to develop personal commitment, teamwork, and good sportsmanship. Divine Savior offers organized after-school athletic programs including soccer, basketball, volleyball, golf, tennis, archery, and track to help young, aspiring athletes learn the rules and develop their skills. Active participation in athletics strengthens friendships, enhances teambuilding skills, improves coordination and strength, and promotes physical well-being. The children ultimately learn to view sports competition as both fun and rewarding. Dates and times are released seasonally. As DSA grows and expands, the athletic program will also grow, thereby offering additional sports in years to come.

CHESS

The chess program at DSA is offered to students from PreK-4 through 12th grade. Emphasis on advanced calculation through math and spatial recognition will be prioritized in chess instruction. Critical thinking and memory development through problem solving will be fostered in this program. Students that participate in chess have the opportunity to compete at local, regional, and state tournaments as part of a highly competitive team. Chess also strengthens problem solving skills, teaches them to make difficult and abstract decisions independently, and enhances reading, memory, language, and mathematical abilities among other benefits. The program is coached by a professional chess instructor.

If you are interested in the chess program, please speak with Mr. Gil Luna (gil.luna@dslca.org), and he will assist you with your questions.

DANCE & KARATE

Divine Savior Academy has contracted with two private companies to offer dance and karate lessons after school. These classes are available to student in Pre-K- 5th grade for an additional fee. All of these classes are held in the ballet studio of the high school building.

FACULTY

The dedication, professionalism, and training of any school's faculty are determining factors in assessing the degree of excellence of that educational institution. In order to facilitate the exceptional academic quality for which DSA was established, DSA's core classroom teachers possess at minimum a Bachelor of Science in Education degree and are required to pursue certification in the State of Florida and the Wisconsin Synod. Additionally, in order to ensure staff expertise in a broad sphere of disciplines, teachers are encouraged to earn advanced specialist degrees in areas of interest, attend professional development seminars and workshops, or seek enrollment in a post-graduate program at an accredited university.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Respect and educational purpose characterize the classroom environment at the Academy. The DSA code of conduct promotes responsibility, respect, civility and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. This learning atmosphere is relaxed but orderly – a place where instruction can take place and the joy of academic accomplishment can be experienced. In maintaining structured, disciplined classrooms, the teachers provide an educational setting where children can focus more readily, apply themselves better, and realize greater success in their quest to learn.

DISCIPLINE

In keeping with DSA's mission to develop Christian character and instill self-discipline, faculty and staff members strive to clearly communicate all school rules and classroom guidelines regarding student conduct. These rules and guidelines are shared with the parents at the start of the school year. Conformity to these rules is expected at all times, whether in the classroom, on the playground, or elsewhere on the school campus. Students are expected to follow these rules out of love for God, respect for their teachers, and consideration for their fellow students.

The staff assumes the role of parent when the children are left under their care each day. The Principal and teachers use their discretion whenever discipline is deemed necessary. Parents can rest assured that all discipline is carried out in the spirit of Christian love by teachers who genuinely care about each child. Discipline comes from the word "disciple" – to teach. Discipline is our way of teaching children to make proper choices. Discipline, then, is viewed not as punishment, but loving correction. No form of physical, corporal, or emotionally abusive disciplinary measures are used at any time.

Discipline is administered for the following unacceptable behaviors and may lead to suspension, confiscation of material, and/or other disciplinary action:

- Being disrespectful, rude, or disobedient to school personnel
- Using inappropriate, vulgar, or obscene language
- Stealing or possessing items not belonging to you
- Violation of dress code
- Failing to complete assigned school work
- Tardiness (5 or more per quarter)
Detentions are to be served on Thursday of each week from 3:20 PM – 4:05 PM. Please note that students not picked up at 4:05 PM. will be signed into aftercare. In addition, detentions take precedence over any extra-curricular activities.
- Cheating on tests or homework
- Harassment of fellow students
- Vandalizing/defacing school property (parents will be financially liable)
- Leaving class/school without permission
- Skipping class
- Being out of class (cutting) without permission
- Attitude and examples which are detrimental to the welfare of other students
- Gambling
- False pulling of fire alarms (fee may be incurred)
- Possession of water pistols, toy guns, knives, radios, electronic games, iPads, cell phones, or any other electronic equipment, or possession of illicit substances. (Cell phones brought to school should be given to the teacher for safe keeping at the beginning of the day.)

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

In the event that a student fails to observe the Divine Savior Student Conduct and Discipline Policy, a discipline process is initiated as follows:

- 1) The infraction is brought to the student's attention.

- 2) The incident is documented by the teacher.
- 3) By means of personal counseling, the teacher and student work together to achieve resolution. This may result temporarily in extra duties or the loss of privileges for the student. Whenever consequences are administered, they will be consistent, logical, and motivated by love for the child.
- 4) Parents may receive a phone call, hand-written note, or e-mail message from the teacher indicating concern for the student's behavior and inviting parental involvement.
- 5) Ongoing infractions may result in student conferences with the principal and/or academic dean.
- 6) A teacher or administrator may request a parent conference in which behavioral issues are identified and solutions are discussed.
- 7) A student can be placed on probation for repeated violations. The student will remain on probation status until the next marking period.
- 8) A student may be suspended for continued violations of school rules. The types and quantity of violations are taken into consideration. A suspension may be 1 - 5 days and may be served at home or in the school as directed by the administration.
- 9) If a student persists in his/her lack of cooperation as indicated by an unwilling spirit, rebellious behavior, or unacceptable attitude, the parents will be asked to withdraw the child.

Parents with questions or concerns about disciplinary actions should address them to the principal. The principal will then decide on the proper course of action; whether that is through counseling, scheduling a meeting with the teacher, or referral to the principal.

As disciplinary situations arise, we will approach our concerns with prayer and Christian love, always seeking to arrive at peaceful and proper solutions that are in the best interests of the child.

Disciplinary procedures for unacceptable/inappropriate behavior by students may include, but are not limited to:

Classroom teachers may discipline by:

- Warning/counseling
- Time Out
- Recess or lunch detention
- After school detention
- Referring students to administration

Students referred to school administration may be disciplined by:

- Warning/counseling
- Detention
- Parent conferences
- Action taken will be based on the severity of the offense and in accordance with the physical development of the student involved. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - In-school suspension
 - Out-of-school suspension
 - Probation
 - Loss of privilege to take part in extra-curricular activities
 - Legal action (court)
 - Recommendation for Alternative School

BULLYING

- **Definition:** An Imbalance of Power: Children who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people. This behavior is repeated consistently over a period of time. (Bullying is malicious behavior and involves more than joking behavior between friends.)
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying may involve but is not limited to: teasing, name-calling, slurs, rumors, jokes, false accusations, intimidation, stalking, innuendos, demeaning comments, pranks, social isolation, gestures, cyber-bullying or other verbal or written conduct. Cyber-bullying includes the following misuses of digital technology: teasing, intimidating, or making false accusations about another student by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital images or website postings (including blogs and social network sites). This definition includes students who either directly engages in an act of bullying or who, by their behavior, support another student's act of bullying.

This policy prohibits bullying that occurs either:

- On school premises before, during, or after school hours;
- On any vehicle used as part of any school activity; or
- During any school function, extracurricular activity or other school-sponsored event or activity.

Reporting Complaints:

- Each student and parent has a duty to report any bullying to the school immediately. If a student experiences (or a parent witnesses or learns of) any incident of bullying, the incident must be promptly reported to the Principal, School Counselor, Dean, faculty member, Head of School, or School President.

Disciplinary Action:

- Any student found to have violated this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include: temporary removal from the classroom, loss of privileges, detention, counseling, parent conference, suspension, expulsion, and/or notification to the appropriate authorities. This disciplinary action may be unique to the individual incident and may vary in method and severity based on the discretion of the administration.

False reports or accusations of bullying also constitutes a violation of this policy and may subject the offending party to appropriate disciplinary action.

Anti-Harassment Policy:

Divine Savior Academy is committed to providing a positive and productive learning environment free from sexual or racial harassment. Sexual or racial harassment shall not be tolerated in the school. Harassment of students by employees, other students, or others having business or other contact with the school is strictly prohibited.

All forms of harassment are prohibited at school, on school property, and at all school-sponsored programs or events. Harassment may result from verbal or physical conduct or written or graphic material. Harassment may include, but is not limited to: verbal harassment or abuse; pressure for sexual activity; repeated remarks to a person, with sexual, discriminating or demeaning implication; unwelcome touching; or suggesting or demanding

sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning a student's grades, participation in extracurricular activities, etc.

All victims of harassment and witnesses of such harassment are encouraged to report the incident immediately. Reports should be made to the campus director, another administrator, the guidance counselor, or another staff member. An investigation by the Headmistress and School Director is required in order to resolve the problem. If a person's alleged behavior is found to be harassment, that person will be subject to discipline under the employee or student code of conduct.

AFTER-SCHOOL DETENTION

It is important for students to accept responsibility for their actions. The purpose of after school detention is to correct minor behavior problems. Detention notices are given to the students to take home to their parents. We realize that students may unwillingly misplace or forget to take the notice home, so we will make reasonable efforts in following up with a phone call.

In looking at a student's past behavior and facts of an incident, the principal may assign a different penalty. The number days of detention will increase for repeated offenses. The principal, after consultation with the teacher has the final decision for disciplinary action. School community services may be substituted for detention in some instances.

Detention will be assigned for the following infractions - as deemed necessary:

- 1) Habitual refusal or failure to do homework.
- 2) Habitual refusal or failure to do class work.
- 3) Infractions of the teacher's code of conduct and classroom policy.
- 4) Excessive tardiness.
- 5) Failure to abide by school policies and procedures (dress code, etc.)
- 6) Detentions will typically be served on Thursday afternoons from 3:20-4:05 pm.

DISCIPLINARY PROBATION

Under certain circumstances, a student's behavior may warrant a more severe disciplinary intervention. Probation is intended to serve as a formal and serious warning to the student and his parents. During the probationary period the student must be all the more intent upon improving his conduct. It is also a period during which a student violating school rules is subject to further disciplinary action. At the discretion of the principal, probationary status may include one or more sanctions such as restriction of participation in school activities and/or other privileges.

Conditions:

- A student can be placed on probation for repeated violations of school rules
- Student progress will be reviewed periodically
- Disciplinary probation can be started at any time during the school year
- Parent cooperation is expected in monitoring concerns
- Duration of the probationary status will be a minimum of one marking period
- Both student and parents must meet school recommendations

- Student failure to improve conduct may result in a recommendation for alternative schooling.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY

In-School Suspension (ISS) –The principal may institute an ISS for discipline purposes. The student will be placed in a physical setting where there will be appropriate supervision by a designated person. Any disruption by the student in this setting will result in the student being sent home.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) – The principal may suspend any student from attendance at school or any school-related activity on or off campus or from attendance at a specified class or classes.

The following infractions shall result in suspension or expulsion:

- Violation of the Divine Savior Student Conduct and Discipline Policy
- Fighting and/or assault
- Possession of tobacco, tobacco products, drugs or alcohol (Note: a second offense may lead to expulsion.)
- The possession or use of firearms, weapons, or explosives will result in an immediate expulsion and notification of the proper authorities.

ADDRESSING CONCERNS

APPROPRIATE COMMUNICATION FOR ADDRESSING CONCERNS

Divine Savior Academy’s administration, teachers, and school staff work very hard to maintain an environment that nurtures academic excellence for our students. Differences of opinions need not create a divisive relationship between school and home. For the sake of the children, there is a mutual benefit if these differences can be resolved through communication and understanding.

To work towards this common goal, the following procedure is recommended:

- Maintaining a calm and respectful attitude that will set a tone where real listening can occur and understanding can emerge.
- Step 1: The first attempt to deal with a concern related to a classroom situation should be between the student and the teacher. Please encourage your student to contact the teacher before or after school, or during other available times, to resolve a concern.
- Step 2: Parents or students with grievances or concerns regarding general school policies or procedures should set up a meeting with the administration to discuss these items of concern. The administration will then decide on the proper course of action; whether that is through counseling, scheduling a meeting with a teacher, or referral to the principal. Concerns regarding your child’s academic performance should be brought to his/her classroom teacher through a scheduled appointment.
- Step 3: If the matter is between the home and the Principal, a conference with the Principal is the appropriate starting point. If satisfaction is not accomplished, then the matter may then be referred to the School President of DSA or the Executive Council of Divine Savior Academy.

ADDRESSING CONCERNS TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

When issues or concerns about the operation or policies of the school arise and you have not received a satisfactory resolution after following the steps listed above, we ask that you follow these steps.

- Step 1- Contact the administrator with your concerns.
- Step 2- If the issue cannot be resolved, contact the School President and discuss the issue.
- Step 3- Petition the Council through the President or Head of School. This should be done in writing ten days prior to a regularly scheduled meeting of the board.

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

DSA desires to build a culture where parents and teachers join hands as partners in providing the finest education possible for the young people entrusted to their care. To that end, the staff of DSA is truly committed to maintaining open channels of communication with the parents and or guardians of our students. The following list outlines some of the important avenues designed to promote efficient and effective home-school communication.

PARENT ORIENTATION NIGHT

In August, parents are expected to meet with the principal and teachers at a Parent Orientation night to discuss the school's philosophy, policies, and procedures. Classroom visitation and a question-and-answer session provide parents with helpful insights and information they will need for a successful school year.

SCHOOL INFORMATION SYSTEM

Divine Savior utilizes an online database offered to parents to track attendance, grades, and behavioral progress. Parents are encouraged to create their accounts at the beginning of the school year and to regularly check their child's progress. Weekly reports can be generated via e-mail through the parent portal.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Following the 1st and midway through the 3rd grading periods, parents are scheduled to meet with the teacher in a 20-minute conference. Discussion items include the child's academic progress, school disposition, and interaction with teacher and classmates.

TEACHER AVAILABILITY

If at any time during the school year parents have questions concerning their child's progress or behavior, they are encouraged to contact the teacher and arrange a mutually convenient time to meet. This may be accomplished by stopping by or calling the school office or e-mailing the teacher. The teachers will make every effort to return your call or respond to your e-mail no later than the following day.

CLASSROOM VISITATION

As part of DSA's open-door policy, parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom. Parents may participate in the classroom activities through field trips, birthday parties, and other special events. Upon arrival at school, parents will sign in and obtain a guest pass from the school office.

VOLUNTEERING

Parents are welcome to volunteer at Divine Savior Academy. Opportunities are plentiful. At all times we keep the safety of our students at the forefront of our minds. Therefore, all volunteers and field trip chaperones must participate in a volunteer orientation meeting as well as submit a set of fingerprints which will be used for a background check. Failure to complete all the necessary requirements will prohibit the volunteer's opportunity. The cost of the "live scan" fingerprints is the responsibility of the volunteer.

THE ACADEMY DISPATCH & WEEKLY TEACHER NEWS

The Academy Dispatch is DSA's way of keeping parents informed. This weekly newsletter is delivered electronically via email. Parents are encouraged to read it in order to stay informed about scheduled events, upcoming activities, and other informative news. Educational news items, parenting tips, and highlights of student work are also included.

Each teacher sends home a weekly update (included with The Academy Dispatch) that informs parents of curriculum units being introduced, projects students are working on, areas of school work where parents can assist their children, and or upcoming events. Additionally, student work is saved and sent home at the time specified by your child's teacher, so that parents are aware of their child's overall performance. Parent comments or questions are always welcomed.

ADMISSION GUIDELINES

- Our advanced curriculum is geared to challenge our students
- All students will be given an evaluation prior to being admitted
- Enrollment is based on availability and screening results
- Students will be placed in the grade level that corresponds with their chronological age using September 1 as the cut-off date
- Divine Savior Academy practices a non-discrimination enrollment policy

In order for a student to be admitted to the Academy, the following must take place:

- Parents submit the DSA Enrollment Application form
- The Admissions Counselor arranges a meeting with the parents to explain DSA's educational program/student expectations
- An appointment is made for a student screening. The child is evaluated in several readiness areas: language and communication development, willingness to learn, maturity, social skills, conduct, manual dexterity, and general academic knowledge
- Previous progress reports, school records, and standardized test results are submitted by the parents for review
- Results of these combined evaluations determine eligibility

Upon acceptance, parents submit the registration fee and their child's updated immunization and health examination records.

Because the Academy maintains high standards and expectations, re-enrollment in succeeding years is based on student achievement, attitude, and parental support.

TUITION AND FEES

Divine Savior Academy is a non-profit organization. It is not our intention or policy to realize financial gain from our institution. Our tuition fees are needed to maintain our facilities and offer the level of educational excellence (low student-teacher ratios, state of the art facilities and equipment) that is part of our philosophy of education.

Specific information pertaining to registration, tuition, and other related fees and schedules are established yearly and included in the enrollment package. General Guidelines are as follows:

- A registration fee is paid at the time of enrollment to secure your child's placement.
- Before the start of the school year, a signed tuition contract is required by parents and or legal guardians.
- Three tuition payment plans are available: annually, bi-annually, or monthly. While checks are the preferred method of payment, credit cards are also welcomed.
- The cost for extended care, hot lunch, uniforms, and transportation are not covered by the registration or tuition fees.
- All payments are non-refundable.
- Payments are due the 10th of every month. All payments received after the due date will incur a 5% late fee of the outstanding balance

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

- DSA office hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Classes begin promptly each day at 8:05 a.m. and conclude at 3:05 p.m. for 1st through 5th grade on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. The day ends at 2:05 p.m. on Wednesday.
- The PreK-3, PreK-4, and Kindergarten school day begins at 8:30 a.m. (7:30 a.m. for morning enrichment in the auditorium) and ends at 2:45 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. The day ends at 1:45 p.m. on Wednesday.
- Parents are asked to use the designated parent drop-off/pick-up area in the front of school upon both arrival and dismissal each day.
- Parents may walk Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten children to their respective classrooms each morning upon arrival.
- Classroom doors open each morning at 7:45 a.m. for students in 1st through 5th grade and at 8:00 a.m. Classroom doors for PreK-4 and Kindergarten students open at 8:15 a.m. For students in PreK-3, classroom doors open at 7:30 a.m. with Morning Care occurring in their classroom.
- At the end of the school day, under teacher supervision, students will be waiting to be picked up at designated areas between 2:45 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. for students in PreK-3, PreK-4, and Kindergarten and

between 3:05 p.m. and 3:20 p.m. for students in 1st – 5th grade. Students who are not picked up by 3:20 p.m. will be escorted to Extended Care.

- Children in the early childhood and elementary levels are not allowed to walk to or from school without adult supervision.
- DSA maintains a closed campus. Children may not leave the school grounds of their own volition at any time during the school day. School policy and the safety of our children dictate that the teachers know where the children are at all times.

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is both a right and responsibility of the parent and student. DSA recognizes that consistent school attendance is essential for academic success and that all absences affect learning. Therefore a Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy has been developed to meet the following objectives:

- To raise student achievement and close gaps in student performance
- To identify attendance patterns in order to design attendance improvement efforts
- To know the whereabouts of every student for safety and other reasons
- To verify that individual students are complying with education laws relating to compulsory attendance

According to Florida Law and Miami-Dade County requirements, 20 full-day absences during the course of a school year will result in a mandatory review by the Principal, Guidance Counselor, and classroom teacher to determine possible repetition of the class or the grade. An elementary student who accumulates 10 full-day absences during a semester will not be issued a report card. A middle school or high school student who accumulates 10 absences from any one class during a semester will not receive credit for that class. Absences are no longer defined as “excused” or “unexcused.” Chronic illness and family emergencies that extend beyond the total number of absences allowed will be considered on an individual basis by the administration.

In the event of illness or an emergency arising during the school day, a student should proceed immediately to the office for assistance and permission to leave the school. It must be recognized that the school is responsible for the student’s whereabouts from the time he/she enters school until he/she departs and, unless otherwise notified, the school assumes the student is attending classes as scheduled.

Half Day Absence:

Students who arrive to school more than 30 minutes after their start time (or leave early more than 30 minutes before their end time) will be issued a half-day absence.

Full-Day Absence:

Students leaving school before 12:00 noon or arriving to school after 12:00 noon are charged with a full-day absence.

Students must be in school the entire day to participate in extra-curricular activities. Exceptions are made for pre-approved scheduled appointments.

REPORTING ABSENCES

The school office must be notified by telephone (305-597-4545) no later than 9:00 a.m. if your child will be absent from school. When a student returns to school after an absence, he/she must bring a parent written note citing the reason for the absence.

TARDINESS & ARRIVING LATE

When a child arrives late to school in the morning, students should report to the office before going to class. Children who arrive late will be escorted to their rooms ten minutes into the school day so as to not disturb the classroom during devotion.

Students are expected to be on time and have transportation arrangements that will guarantee their punctuality.

- Students will serve an after-school detention after every fifth tardy per quarter.
- Excessive tardies (more than 10) will require a meeting with the administration, which could result in dismissal from school.
- Students in PreK-3, PreK-4 and Kindergarten will not serve detentions but will be suspended after the 10th tardy.

LEAVING EARLY

Students leaving early must check out through the office. The office calls the student out of class when the parent arrives. Whenever possible, the school requests that every effort be made to schedule appointments during non-school hours or on days when school is not in session. Parents should seriously consider all of the educational, social, and psychological pros and cons of habitually removing their children from school early. (Please see policies above for half-day and full-day absences.)

Truancies:

Truancies - Any student who is absent from school without parent permission or school knowledge for more than three days in one year is a truant.

MAKE-UP WORK

Teachers will allow students to make up and receive a grade for tests and assignments missed during excused absences. Students have two days to make up work for every day of an absence. Students are required to make-up work for all absences, truancies, or suspensions.

We appreciate the support of our parents and guardians in helping our students achieve this goal.

DRESS CODE

The following dress code has been developed in accordance with Divine Savior's commitment to character education. We, as a school community, are committed to excellence in all areas of school life. We have worked toward developing standards of dress that are conducive to a positive learning climate and reflect pride in our Academy. Students must wear the school uniform at all times unless directed otherwise.

School uniform purchases are made through Risse Brothers at www.rissebrothers.com. Questions regarding uniforms can be answered by calling their office at (954) 360-7777. In addition, they will be on campus once per month for parents to purchase school uniforms.

The principal and academic dean reserve the right to interpret and/or make changes. The following guidelines indicate appropriate dress.

Elementary Girl's School Uniform

- Grey pants with a black belt or approved sash
- Approved skirts or skorts no more than 2 inches above the knee
- A DSA polo with logo
- Approved dress blouse
- White turtle neck during cooler weather
- Sweaters or jackets with DSA logos (provided by Risse Brothers)
- Black or white socks or full-length tights
- Approved black dress shoes
- Friday is chapel day. Girls in PreK-3 through Kindergarten should wear the approved plaid dress. Girls in 1st-5th should wear the dress blouse with cross tie.

Elementary Boy's School Uniform

- Grey pants or shorts with a black belt (for pants with loops).
- A DSA polo with logo
- DSA oxford shirt
- White turtle neck during cooler weather
- Sweaters or jackets with DSA logos (provided by Risse Brothers)
- Black or white socks
- Approved black dress shoes.
- Friday is chapel day. Boys in 1st – 5th grade should wear the DSA oxford shirt with a tie.

General Guidelines

- Skirts, skorts, and shorts are to be worn no shorter than 2 inches above the knees.
- A black belt is to be worn in pants and shorts that have belt loops.
- No jeans, oversized clothing, hats, or caps may be worn.
- Shirts are to be worn tucked in at all times. (Except for PreK-3, PreK-4, and Kindergarten)
- Shoes must be the approved black dress shoe
- Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten children who have not yet learned to tie their shoes need to wear shoes with Velcro straps.

- Socks must be below the knee and without brand name logos.
- All articles of clothing should be marked with the child's name.
- All clothes must be neat, clean, and in good repair.
- For safety reasons, excessive jewelry and dangling or hoop earrings are not allowed (Silly Bands are not allowed). Small stud earrings may be worn. Boys are not to wear earrings.
- Hair is to be neatly combed and conservatively styled. Dyed, treated, or faddish hairstyles are not permitted. Boys' hair may be worn no longer than the top of the shirt collar or below the eyebrows.
- Good hygiene is an important part of a child's growth and development.
- Parental cooperation is appreciated.

SPIRIT DRESS

Certain times throughout the year our PTO or student council may call for a "spirit day" or "spirit week." During these days students may be allowed to dress out of the normal dress code following the daily theme.

EXTENDED CARE

BEFORE SCHOOL

Divine Savior provides supervised care for students before school beginning at 7:30 a.m. Students may use this time to read, review assignments, or eat a light breakfast (provided by the parents). Students are escorted to their respective classrooms at 7:45 a.m. (1st – 5th grade) or 8:15 a.m. (PreK-4 and Kindergarten), depending on the students' start time. There is no charge for this service. Please note that PreK-3 has Morning Care in their classroom and doors open at 7:30 a.m. for this service as well.

AFTER SCHOOL

The Divine Savior Academy after school program operates fifteen (15) minutes after each level's dismissal time and lasts until 6:00 p.m. and is designed to provide children of working parents, or those who have a late afternoon commitment with a safe, caring and enriching environment. Cost specifics are cited on the After School Program Handout.

The schedule provides opportunities for homework completion and/or other class projects, outdoor play, puzzles and board games, group activities, videos, and quiet time. An afternoon snack is also provided. Extended Care is available only on days when school is in session.

After school care is not provided on the last day of school before the following breaks: Thanksgiving, Christmas, Good Friday (Easter), and the last day of school.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are planned during the school year to enrich experiences for the children and expand their educational horizons. Careful thought goes into planning each activity to ensure its educational value and the safety of the children. Examples include trips to theaters, farms, museums, the local library and other special events. These educational trips are planned as a supplement to our curriculum; therefore, all pupils are expected to attend such trips as part of the regular school day. Attendance is taken for field trips and recorded accordingly on report cards.

Parent volunteers are needed to assist with student supervision; consequently, all volunteers and chaperones must adhere to all school policies and are under the direct authority of the classroom teacher. Students must travel to field trip location on transportation provided by Divine Savior Academy. Trip information and permission slip are sent home to the parents prior to each trip.

GRADING / HONOR ROLL

Assessing student progress is perhaps the most critical element of the teaching process. Accurate evaluation of learning directs and guides teaching. Teachers engage in daily on-going assessment of students understanding and proficiency as the basis for choosing and moving into the next instructional sequence.

WEEKLY PROGRESS REPORT

Parents are encouraged to sign up for weekly progress reports through our School Information System (SIS). This can be done after an account is created for each student, and it is an option that is available on each student's PowerSchool home page after logging into the site. These weekly reports will help parents to stay informed about their child's educational growth and effort. The weekly progress report will be e-mailed at the beginning of each week. Part of the value of the progress report is that they help prevent any "surprises" at report card time. Parents should contact the school office if they have not received the electronic progress report once it has been started. If a student's grades are dropping and a parent has not generated automatic weekly reports, teachers have the ability to generate these progress reports to ensure that parents are receiving weekly updates on their child's progress.

REPORT CARDS

Student progress is graded and officially recorded on the quarterly report card. The report card is sent home three days following the culmination of each grading period.

GRADING

All grades are reported as letter grades except for PreK-3, PreK-4, and Kindergarten. Student potential is included in evaluations. It is not enough to compare performance among students. Consideration is given to achievement in relationship to ability. Students should be rewarded if they are performing at a level that is commensurate with or above their expected range of achievement.

Daily preparation of homework and class participation is also taken into account. Demonstrated understanding of the assignment and careful thought should be part of written work. Test results are also weighed into the student grade.

SCHOOL INFORMATION SYSTEM (SIS)

At the beginning of the year, all families will be provided with log-in and password information to our School Information System. This allows real-time access to grades and attendance.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN AND KINDERGARTEN

Awareness-----Beginning-----Demonstrating-----Developing-----Proficient

GRADES 1 – 5

A	100-95	4.00	B	86-83	3.00	C-	72-70	1.67
A-	94-90	3.67	B-	82-80	2.67	D+	69-67	1.33
B+	89-87	3.33	C+	79-77	2.33	D	66-63	1.00
			C	76-73	2.00	D-	62-60	0.67
			F	59 or below		I	Incomplete Work	

HONOR ROLL

As a way of recognizing superior academic effort, achievement, and excellence, DSA maintains an Honor, High Honor, and Highest Honor Roll for students beginning in 4th grade. Additionally, there are quarter, semester and end of the year awards. Perfect Attendance and Honor Roll awards are given by quarter, Merit awards are handed out at the end of each semester and an all-inclusive Citizenship award is given out at the end of the year to one deserving student in each grade starting in the 4th grade. Honor Roll is based on the grades obtained in the core academic subjects (English, math, reading, social studies, science, and religion) and is weighted accordingly. Honor Roll commendation also serves as an excellent means of motivating students to do their very best at all times. Merit awards are given to those students who show academic improvement from the first to the second quarter and from the third to the fourth quarter. Citizenship awards are given to those students who show consistent academic excellence throughout the year, demonstrates a positive Christian attitude, and is involved in extra-curricular activities. The following criteria are used for Honor Roll distinction:

GRADE LEVELS – 4th-5th

HIGHEST HONORS	3.75-4.00 GPA
HIGH HONOR ROLL	3.50 -3.749 GPA
HONOR ROLL	3.25-3.499 GPA

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Each spring, per our accreditation standards, standardized achievement tests are administered to the students in grades Kindergarten and up. These tests compare our students with national averages using percentiles and grade

placement equivalents. They are useful in evaluating strengths and areas requiring further development in the curriculum. This serves to foster change and improvement. Achievement tests can be helpful in measuring each child's academic progress over the past year. Results are shared with parents as soon as they are made available to the school.

STUDENT RECORDS

Divine Savior Academy adheres to the regulations in the 1974 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). All scholastic records of a student maintained by the school are confidential. Scholastic reports, which contain only objective student data, will be kept permanently. Upon request to the principal, with a 24-hour notice, parents (or legal guardians) of students have the right to inspect their children's records. Transcript release requires the signature of the student, parent (or legal guardian). After graduation or transfer, a \$5.00 fee will be charged after the first request. An expedited request will incur a \$5.00 expedition fee.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

In today's changing society, children benefit from extra guidance during their formative years. To help them cope with the issues associated with growing up, DSA offers a developmental guidance and counseling program. These services focus on the needs of students from a Christian perspective, addressing the typical concerns, questions, and choices they face today. They will learn about interpersonal skills, relationships, and problem solving. The program is designed to enhance spiritual, personal, social, and academic growth. While the primary goal is to help students learn more effectively and efficiently, an added benefit is that it will ultimately make school life more satisfying and rewarding.

The school counselor makes monthly (or more) classroom visits to each homeroom in Kindergarten – 8th grade. DSA administrators, counselor, and teachers work together with parents as a team to identify student needs and provide a positive, personalized learning environment.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

FIRST AID AND CPR CERTIFICATION

CPR is a skill that can be the difference between life and death. All DSA faculty and staff are CPR and First Aid Certified and meet American Red Cross and American Heart Association recommendations. Knowledge obtained through these courses permits DSA faculty and staff to be ready to handle emergencies due to sudden illness or injury to students.

IMMUNIZATIONS AND HEALTH FORMS

Florida law requires that all students have the necessary forms on file by the first day of class. Students cannot begin classes at Divine Savior without a current, completed physical exam form and proper documentation of up-

to-date immunizations. Forms are available from your doctor or the school nurse. Physical exams are valid for two years. An emergency card, filled out at registration time, is also required of each student.

EMERGENCIES

Medical emergencies may, on occasion, occur at school. In the event of a life-threatening situation (i.e., unconsciousness), the school may need to contact the appropriate emergency medical service first, before calling the parents. In case of an accident or illness where immediate emergency care is not deemed necessary, but where a child is unable to remain at school, the school will contact the parents to arrange transportation home. Likewise, if a child shows symptoms of illness during the day, the child will be removed from the classroom, and the parents will be called.

Parents, please remember that the school must be able to reach you at all times. If neither parent can be reached at home, work, or cell, the emergency contacts listed on the child's emergency card will be phoned and asked to pick up the child.

MINOR ACCIDENTS

All minor accidents – cuts, scratches, bumps, and insect bites are given First Aid treatment and are recorded with the office. Administration is informed and parents and/or emergency contact person is notified of injury.

SERIOUS INJURY

If your child suffers a serious injury, procedures as outlined in the Safety and Emergency Management Plan will be initiated. The school will call 911 followed by the parents, provide First Aid until help arrives, and determine who will accompany the injured student to the hospital. An Accident Report form will be completed describing the nature and extent of the injury.

All head injuries will be reported to parents.

MEDICATIONS

All medications must be dispensed and kept in the school office.

Daily Medications:

Daily medications administered at school require the completion of the Divine Savior Academy's Authorization for Administration of Medication form. This form needs to be completed annually. At the end of the school year or when the medication has been discontinued, the extra medication should be picked up by the parent. Any medication left at the end of the school year will be properly discarded.

Discretionary Medications:

Tylenol, Advil, or Tums (or generic substitutes) may be administered at school with written permission from a parent. This permission is written on the Permission to Administer Medication form which is kept on file in the school office and is filled out by the parent or guardian at the beginning of each school year.

Self-medication:

Only a student that requires an EPI-PEN or inhaler is allowed to carry and administer his/her own medications. Please contact the school nurse (if applicable) or the administration so the procedure may be reviewed and the medication sheet filled out.

Short-term Medications:

Short-term medications will be administered to students at school if written consent for administration of approved medication is signed by the parent and the medication is provided in the original packaging with the student's name attached.

STUDENT ILLNESSES AND CONTAGIOUS CONDITIONS

Students who have been diagnosed with illnesses such as the flu, a fever, or any other contagious condition must be symptom-free for 24 hours prior to returning to school. In the event a student misses three or more days with a contagious condition, the student must obtain a doctor's note of clearance to return to school. With exceptions as provided by law, any student or staff member who suffers an infectious disease (other than an illness) must be removed from the premises until certified by a physician or a health care professional to be non-infectious and able to return to school.

LICE

In the event that lice and/or lice nits (eggs) are suspected or discovered on any student(s), the student will be immediately removed from the classroom and sent home. While we understand how difficult it is to rid the hair and scalp of all the eggs related to lice, we also must recognize how easily lice can be spread. For this reason, an e-mail will be sent home to parents in the grade level where lice has been suspected or discovered.

Therefore, if your child is sent home with lice and/or nits, they will be allowed to return to school when a verbal or written confirmation is given to the school that a treatment plan is in place.

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

A Divine Savior Academy Safety and Emergency Management Plan has been formulated in the event of an external threat to its students, teachers, staff and or physical plant. This multi-hazard evacuation plan shall encompass, but not be limited to, evacuations for fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, and other hazardous storms or disasters in which serious bodily injury might occur, hostage siege, terrorist activities, bomb threats, etc. The plan shall be designed for each school building after a review of each building. The Safety and Emergency Management Plan shall be reviewed annually and updated as needed.

The Safety and Emergency Management guide will assist teachers, school administrators and others in preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergency incidents on school grounds.

SEVERE WEATHER

Whenever possible the designated person will inform faculty and staff of weather warnings. A severe weather warning is made when the weather service announces a severe weather watch for the area.

Unless otherwise notified by Divine Savior Academy or the media, DSA will follow the Miami-Dade Schools' announcement regarding school closure and openings.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION DRILLS AND REPORTING

In compliance with state regulations, evacuation fire drills are performed once a month. Tornado and code red drills are practice once per year or at administrative discretion. For the safety of all, detailed drill procedures are shared and periodically reviewed in each classroom.

HOMEWORK

Homework is a valuable part of the educational experience - an extension and enrichment of the material taught in the classroom. It is the link between one lesson and the next. Students can expect to have 10 minutes of homework a night per grade starting in Kindergarten. (For example: a fourth grade child may have 50 minutes of homework.) The benefits of homework can be summarized as follows. Homework:

- Reinforces skills taught previously in the classroom
- Prepares students for new information
- Promotes creative thinking and independent research
- Communicates with parents the ongoing classroom learning
- Instills a sense of responsibility and personal accountability
- Helps to develop productive study habits and self-discipline

Parents should help their child set aside a quiet place and regular time for study each evening. Additionally, parents are encouraged to monitor their child's homework. Scheduling a quiet reading time and limiting television viewing will also help to improve overall school performance.

Parents who find that their child consistently has no homework, spends an inordinate amount of time on homework assignments, or is experiencing difficulty, should feel free to contact his/her teacher.

LUNCH AND SNACKS

LUNCH

Students may bring a lunch from home or buy the catered meal in the cafeteria. The catered meals are now provided by Neil's Catering. Any questions regarding hot lunch should be directed to them at (305) 558-6345.

Due to non-compete clauses, purchased meals may not be delivered or dropped off at school. Any student who does not bring a lunch will be required to purchase a lunch from Neil's Catering.

Due to time and sanitary conditions, teachers will not heat student lunches in the microwave. Therefore, if your student prefers to bring his or her own lunch, please plan accordingly.

SNACK BREAK

Children will have a snack break during the day. Parents are encouraged to send along nutritious snacks. Students in After Care may also bring along snacks to eat before or after school. Soda is not allowed.

PARTIES

Many of the parents like to bring refreshments on their child's birthday. This may be done with prior approval from the classroom teacher. Because of time and space constraints, birthday celebrations at school should be kept short and simple and cannot be spontaneous. Arrangements must be made with the classroom teacher's approval at least one day in advance. Additionally, if invitations for parties are handed out at school, everyone in the class must be invited. Invitations will be handed out at the end of the school day or at the teacher's discretion.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) at Divine Savior is a volunteer organization comprised of parents, staff, and friends of DSA that meets periodically during the school year to provide active support for the school and its programs. PTO is beneficial in that it promotes cooperation between the home and the school, provides opportunities for service and involvement, and encourages social interaction among our school families and staff. Several times during the school year, the PTO sponsors guest speakers, assists with special school functions, and/or activities. DSA parents are automatically members of the PTO. A school representative will attend the PTO meeting to share school updates or wishes, teacher requests, etc.

TELEPHONE

Students are allowed to use school phones to communicate home after permission has been granted by the classroom teacher. Cell phones brought to school should be turned in to the child's teacher before the school day begins and will be sent home when the child leaves for the day. In the event a student's cell phone is seen or rings during the school day, it will be confiscated and given to the parents. If it happens a second time it will be confiscated and given to the principal. On the third offense, the cell phone will be confiscated and held indefinitely by the principal until a parent/teacher/principal meeting can take place; at which time a decision about the cell phone and student will be made.

TUTORING

Paid tutoring for students desiring additional help is available after 4:00 p.m. Teacher availability is subject to a number of variables including extra-curricular obligations, school responsibilities, etc. For this reason, all tutoring requests should be made by contacting Mrs. Juanita Wells (juanita.wells@dslca.org), and she will assist you in finding an available instructor who will best meet your child's academic needs.

The cost for tutoring is \$40 for each one-hour lesson, and the payment will be made directly to the tutor.

CLASSROOM SINGING PERFORMANCES

Music is an important part of the curriculum at Divine Savior Academy. On days when students do not attend regular music class, singing takes place in the classroom during Devotion, Religion class, Chapel, and various other times throughout the day. There are several times during the school year when individual classrooms are scheduled to sing a song for a Divine Savior service, program, or community function. Often these songs are religious songs that give the students a chance to share God's Word with friends and family.

Students and their teachers spend many weeks and months learning these songs, memorizing the words, and practicing the music to perform. It is important, therefore, that every member of the class be present for every scheduled performance. When all members of the class or group are present, the students are able to perform to the best of their abilities and give praise to God for the talents he has given them.

If a student has to miss a program or performance for a valid reason (prior family commitment, illness, etc.) the parents must inform the teacher of the absence ahead of time. Elementary students will receive a music participation grade for each performance scheduled during the school year. Students that present a valid excuse ahead of time will not be penalized.

Revised: 7/22/16