



Student Handbook  
2024-2025

# ADMINISTRATION

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**Office hours:** The school office is open from 7:30AM to 3:30PM every school day. School office hours are limited during summer months and breaks.



*South Merrimack Christian Academy is a member of  
the New Hampshire Association of Christian Schools (NHACS),  
the American Association of Christian Schools (AACCS),  
and regionally accredited through  
the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).*

## **Non-discrimination Policy**

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

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# INTRODUCTION

South Merrimack Christian Academy is committed to providing quality Christian education to your children.

## WHAT IS CHRISTIAN EDUCATION?

Our purpose is to approach education from a biblical point of view. (See our Statement of Faith). This will be accomplished through Bible stories or lessons each day, as well as chapel services held each week. In addition, the whole program will be taught in an atmosphere acknowledging the existence and love of God. In the observance of holidays, for example, we will emphasize the religious rather than the secular significance.

Although Christian Education will be a basic and important part of our program, it will not take away from the rest of the curriculum. It is our purpose to provide our students with a curriculum that is of the highest quality. The curriculum that best fits our criteria is a combination of the Abeka program and Bob Jones University curriculum. We encourage students to achieve a high standard of performance in each of their classes.

## PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- a) To bring each student into a personal relationship and unbroken fellowship with Jesus Christ.
- b) To instill within them a love for God's Word, His Son the Lord Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.
- c) To encourage and prepare each child to glorify, enjoy, and serve God faithfully and effectively.
- d) To develop the mind to think biblically, clearly, logically, and independently.
- e) To provide the best atmosphere to grow academically, physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.
- f) To encourage a biblical worldview of creation, history, the environment, and morality.
- g) To communicate a biblical relationship between the student and family, other believers, non-believers, the church, employer, and government.

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

**We believe** the Bible to be the inspired Word of God, complete and without error in the original manuscripts.

**We believe** in one God, existing in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, co-equal in every way.

**We believe** that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin and was divine and sinless. Jesus died vicariously, atoning for our sins; rose bodily; ascended to heaven; and is imminently and personally coming again.

**We believe** that the divine Holy Spirit convicts, convinces, and converts the unbeliever, and that He seals, indwells, fills, motivates, teaches, and comforts the believer.

**We believe** that God created man perfect, but that man by choice fell. And so every man is a sinner by nature and totally depraved, unable to save himself from hell. Only by Faith alone in the shed blood of Christ can he find forgiveness of sin and a home in heaven.

**We believe** that the local church is to be independent and autonomous; to have two officers: Pastor and Deacons; and to practice two ordinances: believer's baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper.

## MISSION

South Merrimack Christian Academy, a ministry of Merrimack Valley Baptist Church, is a life preparatory school in partnership with parents to cultivate the academic, spiritual, and emotional growth of students and to inspire them to influence our culture for Jesus.

## SMCA CORE VALUES

**SCRIPTURE** - We commit to a Christ-centered education that acknowledges the truth and authority of Scripture, and we strive to ensure that all subjects are taught from a biblical worldview and a gospel-centered perspective. This is the foundation of our practice to encourage excellence in all academic and extracurricular activities undertaken by faculty, staff, and students. **Psalm 1:1-2, John 1:1, 2 Timothy 3:16-17**

**PRAYER** - We commit to the power and efficacy of prayer, and we emphasize the importance of seeking God's wisdom and direction rather than relying on our own understanding and provision. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Philippians 4:6**

**SPIRIT** - We commit to the fact that the Holy Spirit changes lives and produces fruit in the lives of those empowered by and yielded to Him. **Galatians 5:22-23, Acts 1:8**

**OTHERS** - We commit to providing opportunities for students to serve one another, their community, and their world, and we strive to cultivate a sense of Christ-centered servant-leadership among our students. **Philippians 2:3-5, Matthew 20:26-28**

**COMMUNITY** - We commit to the God who designed us to live in community as we depend on and to help one another to grow. **Hebrews 10:24-25**

**DISCIPLESHIP** - We commit to the ultimate aim of a Christian education which is to reproduce disciples - men and women who become Christ-followers who are salt and light to the world. **Matthew 28:19-20**

# REGISTRATION

## ADMISSIONS POLICY

- South Merrimack Christian Academy admits only students coming with the recommendation of the school most recently attended. Children who have been expelled from another school will not be accepted at SMCA. In evaluating a potential student, academic and spiritual referral and interviews are customarily required. The interviews are with the school administration and/or the pastor.
- South Merrimack Christian Academy admits students transferring from other Christian schools only after their present school bill has been paid in full.
- SMCA admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic, and other school-administered programs.
- Our program is not designed to meet the special needs of students with unusual behavior, spiritual, academic, social or physical problems.
- SMCA reserves the right to deny, to suspend, or rescind admission to any student that is judged to be a negative influence upon the student body.

We encourage anyone interested in our school to attend at least one regular church service at Merrimack Valley Baptist Church. This visit will help you better understand the philosophy and tone of our ministry.

February is set-aside for Online Enrollment of children currently enrolled, children of church members, siblings of children currently enrolled, and siblings of children previously enrolled. Open Enrollment begins in the middle of February for all prospective applicants. An Online Application form for new applicants is available on the school website under Admissions. See Financial Policy in Appendix A for applicable fees.

## PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN CUT-OFF DATES

Application for enrollment into kindergarten will be open to all children whose fifth birthday comes on or before September 30th of the school year and who are not yet six by that date. This full-day program is offered five days a week.

Application for enrollment into the four-year-old kindergarten program will be open to all children whose fourth birthday comes on or before September 30th of the school year. This half-day program is offered three days or five days a week.

Application for enrollment into the three-year-old program will be open to all children whose third birthday comes on or before September 30th. Children must also be toilet trained. This half-day program is offered two days a week.

## REQUIRED PAPERWORK

### **The following forms are required for Admission:**

- ✓ Online Application (new students entering SMCA)
- ✓ Spiritual leader recommendation form
- ✓ Academic leader recommendation form

- ✓ Online Enrollment (annual enrollment required for all students)
- ✓ Statement of Cooperation (completed through Online Enrollment)
- ✓ Student Health Form, Immunization Record, and Emergency Medical Release Form
- ✓ School Records (new students entering SMCA)
- ✓ Birth Certificate (upload, email, or bring to the school office)
- ✓ Photo Release Form (completed through Online Enrollment)

## **Medical Forms and Emergency Cards**

No child will be allowed to enter school without having a current STUDENT HEALTH FORM on file as required by *state law*. For preschool students, a new health form is needed with a current physical on a yearly basis. For K-12 students, a new health form is needed with a current physical every two years. Each child must also have an EMERGENCY MEDICAL FORM on file by the first day of school.

Enrollment acceptance is contingent upon successful completion and evaluation of entrance exam.

- K5-4<sup>th</sup> Grades – Onsite with a proctor
- 5<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> Grades – Onsite online

## **TRANSFER STUDENTS**

If a student transfers out of the SMCA during the school year, then the date of withdrawal must be clearly communicated to the school office. A request must be initiated by the new school in order for student records to be released. SMCA will mail student records, report cards, diplomas, and transcripts to the new school once all financial obligations are met. Student records cannot be released to parents.

When a transcript is received from an outside school containing a letter grade the average numeric value of that alpha grade is what is inputted into our system. For example, an “A” (93% - 96%) will be inputted at a value of 94.5%. The numeric grades from transcripts of transferred students are manually inputted into our system at the exact value written on the transcript. Valedictorian and Salutatorian are determined by GPA. In the unlikely event of a tie, the average grade is used.

Students transferring into SMCA in their senior year are not eligible to receive Valedictorian or Salutatorian status.

## **MID-YEAR ENROLLMENT**

SMCA accepts mid-year enrollment as space allows. The registration fee and testing procedures apply to mid-year students. Tuition is prorated according to entry date.



# GENERAL POLICIES

## GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

1. Parents should read through the SMCA Student Handbook and familiarize their children with its contents.
2. Parents are asked to support the activities and programs of South Merrimack Christian Academy.
3. Parents will pay all financial obligations to the school on or before the due date(s). If this is not possible, parents will notify the Finance Office in advance to make special arrangements.
4. Parents are responsible to ensure that the students arrive at school on time each school day.
5. Parents should help ensure that their children participate in scheduled field trips and other school-related activities.
6. Parents are responsible to see that the students arrive at the school dressed in accordance with the uniform dress code.
7. Parents understand that the Administration has full responsibility for placing a student at the proper grade level and/or in a particular classroom.
8. Parents understand that SMCA reserves the right to dismiss any student who does not respect its spiritual standards or cooperate in the educational or disciplinary process of the school.
9. Parents will support the teacher who has full responsibility for classroom management/discipline in accordance with the discipline policy of the school.
10. Parents who have concerns or disagreements with how SMCA functions should seek to resolve the matter with the person or persons directly involved, following the Biblical principle of reconciliation set forth in the Bible (Matthew 18).
11. Parents are expected to fully support the school's mission and philosophy. SMCA reserves the right to dismiss any family found to cause divisiveness or disharmony among the school community.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Because we believe that honesty and integrity are hallmarks of Christian living and evidence of sound and legitimate academic work, we believe that plagiarism a serious offense.

Examples of Plagiarism:

- You hand in someone else's work (that of a parent, friend, tutor, etc.) as your own.
- You copy another student's work (with or without their knowledge) and hand it in as your own.
- You allow someone else to copy your work and hand it in.
- You paraphrase material from another source without proper acknowledgement or citation.
- You change words but copy the sentence structure of a source without giving credit.
- You piece together different sections of the work of others (i.e., "cutting and pasting", especially off the Internet).
- You fail to indicate with quotation marks that you copied another person's exact written words or symbols, regardless of how few were used.
- You fail to provide a bibliography for a project that requires research.
- You buy or obtain a paper from an Internet research service and hand it in as your original work.

Students are responsible for knowing the school's policy and consequences, and most importantly, students are individually and collectively responsible for cheating/plagiarizing themselves or aiding in another's attempt to cheat/plagiarize.

A teacher who discovers a student cheating/plagiarizing – in whole or in part – academic papers, journal, other writings, test/quizzes, or daily homework assignments will direct the situation to the administration. The incidents will also be recorded in FACTS on the student's record and may result in a suspension.

Violations of academic integrity, cheating/plagiarism, may range from a 2% deduction applied to each of the student's classes for each day of their suspension, a *zero* on the assignment to failure of a course. Discretion for penalties imposed is left to the teacher and administrator involved with the specific incident, based on the information provided in that teacher's syllabus.

## ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance and punctuality are required of every student. If a student is not in school for any reason, the school office must be notified immediately. Parents should email the school office at [smca\\_attendance@smcanh.org](mailto:smca_attendance@smcanh.org) for *all* attendance and tardy issues. Please provide a brief explanation for the absence or early dismissal and refrain from other communication in this email.

**Parents are discouraged from removing children from school for the purpose of vacationing.** Those students that are removed for vacation or other non-essential reasons should alert the office as early as possible about the planned absence. **All non-essential absences are considered unexcused.** The office will make the student's teachers aware of the planned absence. Upon their return to school, students are expected to complete all missing assignments, quizzes, and tests that took place during their absence. They will have the same number of school days as the absence to complete their makeup work without receiving any academic penalty. Students may request assignments from their teachers so that they can complete them before their absence, but they are not required to do so. Each teacher has the prerogative to provide assignments for planned absences ahead of time or not.

Students are expected to attend all school activities for their age group recorded on the school calendar such as Christmas and Spring programs, Fine Arts competitions, and announced special events beginning during the day and ending after regular school dismissal time. **Failure to attend these activities may be reflected on the report card.**

In order to attend any extra-curricular activity, a student must be in school for at least half a day.

Special recognition is given to students for perfect attendance.

## **Absences**

***Partial Day*** – In instances where a student is absent from an individual class but is not absent for the entire day (i.e.-arriving late to or leaving early from school, leaving temporarily for a doctor's appointment, etc.), the student is still responsible to complete all assignments that were due including quizzes, tests, and homework. The student should make every effort to meet with the teacher the same day to discuss missing work and to schedule a time to make up a quiz or test. All assignments will be due the following day. No additional days will be given to complete the work. Failure to complete all required assignments will result in homework offenses and academic penalties.

Students with excessive absences in the same class will receive a full letter grade deduction from their course average per semester and may jeopardize their promotion to the next grade. All exceptions must be approved by the administration. *Excessive is defined as absences that exceed 10 days for a daily class and 5 days for a non-daily class per quarter.*

***Full Day*** – If a student is to miss school due to illness or unexpected family emergency, the school office must be notified of the reason for the absence via [smca\\_attendance@smcanh.org](mailto:smca_attendance@smcanh.org). One day for each day missed will be allowed for make-up work. In case of an extended illness, special arrangements may be made to extend the time for finishing make-up work.

***Excused Absence*** – Illness, attending a funeral, surgery, all other excused absences must be approved by the administration.

***Unexcused Absence*** – All other absences, such as family vacations, will be categorized as unexcused even if the school has been made aware of them.

## Elementary

If you wish to have homework assignments sent home, you must contact the school office by 9:00AM. This will allow the teacher time to prepare the list of assignments to be picked up by the end of the day. We are unable to guarantee work if calls are received after 9:00AM.

## Secondary

FACTS is your best source for homework. If a textbook is needed, please call the school office. Textbooks are sent up to the office by 2:30PM each day. It is the parent's responsibility to pick them up or have them picked up.

## Tardies

Any student arriving after 8:00AM should check in with the school office to receive a tardy pass. Generally, excused tardies will be given only in case of vehicle breakdown or extreme bad weather. All others will be considered "unexcused." It is the parent's responsibility to notify the office of any potential excusable tardy.

A \$3 charge will be added to your bill for each time a student is tardy over the five tardy maximum per quarter. After a total of 10 tardies, a meeting will be scheduled by the office to address the situation.

A grade deduction will be enforced for students with excessive tardies.

## Half-Days

Any student arriving at school after 10:00AM or leaving school before 1:00PM will be credited for a half-day attendance. Half-day absences disqualify a student from receiving a Perfect Attendance Award.

## Dismissal

Parents must "check-out" and "check-in" a student in the school office when leaving the school for any reason and returning later (i.e. dentist and doctor appointments, etc.), or leaving early or arriving late. Please send an email the school office and a note to the teacher informing them of your plans to pick up a student early.

All students must leave the building by 3:15PM, unless they are staying for regular after-school activities or they have been given special permission to remain on school campus. Students will be supervised during pick-up. Once released to a parent or guardian, the school relinquishes responsibility for the child.

Elementary students who are not going home or who are not picked up by regular means of transportation, must bring a signed note from home stating parental permission to be picked up by an alternate driver, who is currently on their pickup list in FACTS. In the case of a last-minute change of plans, parents must call the school office; otherwise, the child will be sent home by his regular means of transportation.

**\*Seniors** must leave the premises immediately after their last class of the day unless special arrangements with the administration have been made.

## ATHLETICS

Playing sports at SMCA is a privilege and will never be more important than a student's academic or spiritual condition. If the Athletic Director or School Administrator deems it necessary, students can be taken off a team at any time. **Students must exhibit good conduct, have no F's, and maintain an overall C average in all classes.** It is the student athlete's responsibility to get homework completed on nights when there are sports games or practice, even if the student misses the class.

Students are *not* allowed to play sports with another organization if the sport is offered at SMCA.

All athletes will be required to read and adhere to the specific guidelines listed in the SMCA Athletic Policy, which is available through their coach or the school office.

## AWARDS

Students are recognized for various achievements accomplished throughout the year. Some ongoing awards are as follows:

### **Highest Academic Average**

- Elementary: Awards are presented annually to the student(s) with the highest academic average in each grade.
- Secondary: Awards are presented annually to the student(s) with the highest academic average in each grade.

### **Spelling Bee Award**

Award is presented to the top speller at the annual spelling bee.

### **Attendance Award**

Awards are presented annually to the student(s) with perfect attendance. (This takes into account tardies and dismissals.)

### **Honor Roll**

Awards are presented annually to the student(s) who meets the following criteria on final report card:

- “A” Honor Roll – 90 or above in all subjects in each quarter. “Specials” are excluded in this calculation for elementary students.
- “A/B” Honor Roll – 80 or above in all subjects in each quarter. “Specials” are excluded in this calculation for elementary students.

## BAD WEATHER CLOSINGS

At the discretion of the administrator the school may be delayed or closed due to bad weather. SMCA uses the ParentAlert system powered by FACTS to notify parents of delays and closings. *Text messages* will be sent to all contact numbers listed in student demographics. Alerts will also be announced on WMUR TV, channel 9.

- K3 and K4 will be closed if there is a delayed opening.
- Grades K5 – 1<sup>st</sup> grade will utilize Blizzard Bags.
- Grades 2<sup>nd</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> will participate in remote learning from 8:00am – 12:00pm on declared snow days.

## BOOKS AND SUPPLIES

### **Books**

Student textbooks and consumable books are provided by South Merrimack Christian Academy at the beginning of the school year. The family account will be billed an annual book fee per student. Consumable books should be kept neat and free from extraneous writing (i.e. pictures, doodling, etc.). If

a student loses a book or returns a damaged textbook, the family account will be charged a replacement fee.

## **Supplies**

Students in grades K5 – 12 are also required to have their own Bible (New King James Version).

## **BULLYING POLICY**

It is the policy of the South Merrimack Christian Academy to maintain a safe learning and work environment that is free from bullying. Students, staff, and the school community are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful, Christian manner, and demonstrate a level of respect and dignity towards others. We prohibit all forms of bullying.

Bullying is defined as intentional harmful behavior by one or more students and directed towards another student. The intent to haze, harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule, or humiliate students/school personnel by means of written, verbal, graphic, or physical acts, including electronically transmitted acts, will not be tolerated. Students or families that feel they are victims of bullying may report a bully to a teacher or the principal. Students that are found to be exhibiting bullying behavior may be subject to school discipline including, but not limited to suspension from school.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

All 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students are required to complete at least 10 hours of community service per semester for a total of 20 hours per year. Community service is defined as an act of assistance provided to another person or group of people who is not an immediate family member. SMCA recognizes community to be in the location of school, students' hometowns, and respective church locations. We also recognize community service to include global serving opportunities with structured organizations.

This requirement is noted on a student's official transcript and is something that is appealing to colleges and universities who are considering our students for admission. The community service form containing the date, description of the work completed, number of hours, and a contact phone number is due near the end of each semester. An administrative hold may be placed on a student's grades and transcripts until they submit a complete and correctly filled out form to the Academic Counselor.

## **COUNSELING**

Academic counseling will occur at grade appropriate levels on an ongoing basis to prepare each student for their desired college or career goals. Other counseling can be requested by parents/guardians and/or teachers. These social, emotional or spiritual needs can be discussed and counseling can be a one-time session; OR a series of sessions that will aim to develop coping skills, social skills, classroom management skills, among other needs. These sessions will also aim to strengthen their spiritual development through prayer and scripture reading. There are also times when students come to the office without a referral and need guidance spontaneously. When the capabilities of our guidance department are not appropriate for the needs of a child socially or emotionally, outside counseling referrals will be made to students' parents/guardians."

*As per NH Statute, all faculty are mandated reporters, and should safety be questioned, it is our responsibility to report this to appropriate authorities.*

## DISCIPLINE

South Merrimack Christian Academy is committed to the highest quality education for your child. We believe that a well-disciplined classroom is a prerequisite to this high quality. Teachers and school administration must be authoritative and must command the respect of student at all times. It is therefore imperative that we closely follow the guidelines and rules established for SMCA.

A signed “Statement of Cooperation” will be required from each parent agreeing to the guidelines for discipline and promising cooperation in reinforcing these policies at home. It is important that respect of authorities and good classroom behavior is instilled by the parents at home, and a full knowledge of the consequences for disobedience and disorder be established.

It is our policy to not practice any form of discipline that would in any way physically harm your child.

### **General Discipline Guidelines**

SMCA has basic classroom guidelines, as listed below, which is followed by all teachers. Because our school belongs to God, we wish to honor Him in it. Because self-discipline is necessary to learning, we hold to the following rules:

1. Students are to maintain Christian standards and attitudes of honesty, courtesy, morality, and kindness at all times. A poor attitude or a complaining spirit will be considered worthy of correction or expulsion.
2. Students are to be respectful to all school personnel in both action and word. Disrespect will be considered a serious offense.
  - a) All teachers and school/church personnel are to be respected at all times. Proper authorities are given by God, for the good of His people. Students at South Merrimack Christian Academy are taught to honor and respect parents (Eph. 6:1-2), civil authorities (I Peter 2:17b), and church leaders (I Thes. 5:13). Parents and students are to respect the authority of the teacher and/or the School Administrator to make and enforce classroom regulations set forth in this handbook.
  - b) The proper respect for authority requires that students not “challenge” a teacher, but instead bring questions to them in a Christ-like manner and spirit. Respect includes words, tone of voice, facial expressions, and attitudes.
  - c) Students violating these standards may expect one or more of the following: a stern rebuke, a tally or demerit, a detention, suspension, or expulsion.
3. Drug and Alcohol Usage: We make two words of drugs and alcohol only because these have different legal ramifications in our society, but they are both drugs and will be treated as such in SMCA disciplinary procedures. Use, sale, or possession of any illegal substance at any time on or off campus may result in immediate suspension from school, and the administration will make a recommendation whether to proceed with expulsion. Any student choosing to remain in the company of another person who is clearly involved in illegal drugs may also be in violation of this policy. If a student has been suspended for drug use, and the circumstances are such that the student is allowed to return to school, any subsequent violation involving drugs at any time during his or her enrollment at SMCA will result in an automatic recommendation for expulsion. Vaping or tobacco use or possession is not permitted at any time. This includes all forms of tobacco, including chewing tobacco. Student use of these substances may result in suspension and possible consideration for expulsion.
4. Boy-Girl Relationships: Students are not permitted to hold hands or participate in other inappropriate displays of affection at school or at any school function. Improper conversations will also be restricted.
5. In passing through the halls, there is to be no running, pushing, shoving, or excessive noise.
6. Teacher permission is required to leave the classroom during the school day.



7. Food and beverages will be consumed only at appropriate times or when authorized by a teacher or administrator.
8. There is to be no gum chewing during the school day.
9. Students will be held accountable for any electronically transmitted content they post over social network sites, text messages, or pictures on cell phones.

## Elementary Discipline System (Grades 1-6)

**H** – Hullabaloo (anything not covered in the following)

**O** – Out of Order

**W** – Work Not In

**I** – Intentional Disobedience

**A** – Attitude

**C** – Careless

**T** – Talking

The tally is a marker given to the student for inappropriate behavior during the school day. The tally corresponds with the letter it represents, thus allowing the teacher, student, and parent alike to see the problem areas. Each class has a tally chart like the one listed above, which explains the violations. In addition, a pocket chart for each day of the week is located in the classroom. When a violation takes place the card with the student's name on it is placed in the pocket on the day it represents. The following are guidelines used to govern the function of the tally system:

1. Each tally earned in a day requires the student to do whatever the teacher deems appropriate to stop the behavior.
2. An accumulation of **three or more tallies in one given day** results in the following actions:
  - a) **First Offense:** The student meets with a teacher for a detention period after school from 3:05PM – 3:35PM. A notice will be sent home to the parents.
  - b) **Second Offense:** A detention period is assigned again. A parent/teacher conference is required within a week of the second detention to discuss necessary behavior changes.
  - c) **Third Offense:** A parent conference is required with the teacher and principal to discuss further actions and ways to correct behavior. A detention will be assigned.
  - d) **Fourth Offense:** To be determined by teacher and school administrator.
3. If a student does not accumulate 3 or more tallies in any given day but receives a **weekly accumulation of 9 or more**, the same policies mentioned above will apply for each offense.
4. Tallies are **not** carried over to the next week for accumulation.

**NOTE:** The tally system is an effective tool for the teacher, student, and parent alike to see the problem behavior areas. It also encourages the student to develop self-discipline and self-control, as well as personal responsibility in the areas of behavior and academics. It consistently discourages inappropriate behavior while encouraging the acceptable. No system of discipline is perfect, for all systems are the design of sinful man. However, Biblical principles are the foundation of the tally system and hopefully encourage more Christ-like behavior in the students. The administration is always willing to listen to parents when dealing with matters about student behavior. The key to a successful discipline system is parent/teacher/administration cooperation and communication. We hope this explanation will be beneficial to all parents of SMCA elementary students.

## **Secondary Discipline System (Grades 7-12)**

Our secondary division utilizes a demerit system for discipline. Parents will be notified after 3 demerits. A detention will be issued after the 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> demerits. Suspension will be considered at 10 demerits and thereafter. Expulsion will be considered at 15 demerits.

***Demerit Offenses:*** Chewing gum/candy or consuming food or drinks when not approved, excessive talking, horseplay, passing notes, dress code violations.

***Detention Offenses:*** Minor disrespect, disobedience, lying.

***Offenses Handled by Office:*** Fighting, profanity, major disrespect, defacing school property, improper literature, cheating, bullying, and stealing.

***Suspension and Expulsion:*** Threat to school, drinking alcohol, illegal drugs, smoking/tobacco, immorality/promiscuity, or an attitude not in harmony with SMCA.

**NOTE:** All secondary students and parents must read the student Handbook (found on the SMCA website) and will electronically sign the SMCA Statement of Cooperation during the application and enrollment process.

### **DONATIONS**

Donations to SMCA are tax deductible and we welcome all forms of donations. Since the needs of SMCA are continually changing please feel free to call the school office for donation needs.

### **DRESS CODE**

South Merrimack Christian Academy has a Dress Code policy to encourage a scholastic, modest, and professional appearance. The policy is designed to promote academic excellence in a Christ-honoring atmosphere. In no way do we believe that SMCA's guidelines measure one's spirituality or define boundaries for one's personal lifestyle.

The Dress Code is in effect during school hours (8:00AM – 3:00PM), and any SMCA event for grades K5-12<sup>th</sup>. If special circumstances arise, permission must be given from the school office. There are several distinctions between acceptable clothing attire for elementary (grades K5-6<sup>th</sup>) and secondary (grades 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>), please see General Dress Code below for details.

A school uniform is not required for grades K3-K4. K5-12<sup>th</sup> grade students will be held accountable to the Dress Code policy.

Seniors that have a reduced course schedule and remain on campus until 3:00PM are required to wear the SMCA school uniform.

Lands' End is the official source for ordering any school uniforms that require a logo. For a list of approved items, please see Appendix B, at the end of the Student Handbook.

To place an order, visit the Lands' End website at [www.landsend.com/school](http://www.landsend.com/school). Select "Find My School" (account #900074402) and follow prompts to set up a personal profile for each child.

The School Administration has the authority to make final determinations regarding the appropriateness of any apparel. School dress standards may be modified, and exceptions made by the administration as conditions warrant.

### **General Dress Code for Grades K5-12<sup>th</sup> Girls:**

***Shirts for Girls:*** Lands' End approved shirts with SMCA logos must be worn. Long-sleeve shirts should not be worn under short-sleeve shirts.

***Outerwear for Girls:*** Lands' End approved attire including sweaters, fleece jackets, and Minutemen sweatshirts are acceptable in the classroom if they have the SMCA logo.



**Skirts for Girls:** Navy and khaki skirts are to be at knee length or longer.

Elementary girls (only) may also wear a plaid skirt with hunter/classic navy color.

**Jumpers for Girls:** Lands' End jumpers are permissible for elementary only. A collared, school approved colored shirt (logo not required) must be worn underneath.

**Pants for Girls:** Navy and khaki pants are acceptable throughout the school year provided they are appropriately sized with a **comfortable, loose fit** (Corduroy, denim, cargo, pants with rips, skin-tight, elastic ankles, and below-the-hip styles are **not** allowed.)

**Shoes for Girls:** Girls may wear dress, casual, or athletic shoes. (No high heels, platform shoes, or shoes with wheels allowed.) In warmer weather, secondary girls may wear sandals. (No flip-flops, Crocs, slides, plastic, rubber, or water shoes).

**Tights, and Leggings for Girls:** Tights and leggings worn under a skirt must be solid navy, white, black, or brown. Secondary girls may wear nylons, but fishnet stockings are not allowed.

**Hair and Make-up for Girls:** Hair accessories should be conservative and not distracting. No unnatural hair coloring except on days allowed by the administration (Spirit Week).

Elementary girls may not wear make-up.

Secondary girls may wear make-up that is simple, natural in appearance, and not distracting.

**Jewelry and Accessories:** Jewelry and accessories should be conservative and not distracting. Only ear piercings are acceptable.

Girls should refrain from dangling earrings due to PE and recess.

**Tattoos and Writing for Girls:** Tattoos are not allowed. Writing on self is not permitted.

**Physical Education for Girls:** Lands' End approved gray and cobalt blue shirts with SMCA logos must be worn. Lands' End approved black shorts with SMCA logos must be worn. Black or navy blue, loose fitting, sweatpants may be worn. **Gray sweatpants ARE NOT permitted.**

No tight or yoga-style pants will be allowed. Students must wear sneakers during PE class.

**Dress Down Days for Girls:** Casual wear for Dress Down Day is acceptable.

This includes t-shirts, capris, and jeans (ripped jeans are NOT permitted). Pajama pants and shirts are not permitted (except on preschool and elementary themed days).

No violent or slang graphics on clothing, no hats, no tank tops, and no shorts are allowed.

All t-shirts must be on the shoulder and have a sleeve. Any casual-style sandal is acceptable (No flip-flops or water shoes).

**Formal Wear at Spring and Sports Banquet for Girls:** Formal dresses worn at all SMCA banquet events need to be **knee-length or longer**. It is required that all dresses have straps. Please refrain from revealing necklines and backless dresses. **Dress approval is required!**

## **General Dress Code for Grades K5-12<sup>th</sup> Boys:**

**Shirts for Boys:** Lands' End approved shirts with SMCA logos must be worn. Long-sleeve shirts must not be worn under short-sleeve shirts.

**Outerwear for Boys:** Lands' End approved attire including sweaters, fleece jackets, and Minutemen sweatshirts are acceptable in the classroom if they have the SMCA logo.

**Pants for Boys:** Navy blue and khaki pants must be worn over the hip and not sagging (corduroy, denim, cargo, elastic ankle, and pants with rips are **not** allowed).

**Shoes for Boys:** Boys may wear dress, casual, or athletic shoes. In the warmer weather, secondary boys

may wear sandals (no flip-flops, Crocs, slides, plastic, rubber, or water shoes).

***Hair for Boys:*** Hair needs to be neatly tapered off the ears and collar. Bangs should not extend past the eyebrow. No unnatural hair coloring except on days allowed by the administration (Spirit Week). **Facial hair is not permitted.**

***Accessories for Boys:*** No earrings, necklaces, hats, sunglasses, or bandanas are to be worn during the school day.

***Tattoos and Writing:*** Tattoos are not allowed. Writing on self is not permitted.

***Physical Education for Boys:*** Lands' End approved gray and cobalt blue shirts with SMCA logos must be worn. Lands' End approved black shorts with SMCA logos must be worn. Black or navy blue, loose fitting, sweatpants may be worn. **Gray sweatpants ARE NOT permitted.**

***Dress Down Days for Boys:*** Casual wear for Dress Down Day is acceptable.

This includes t-shirts, capris, and jeans (ripped jeans are NOT permitted). Pajama pants and shirts are not permitted (except on preschool and elementary themed days).

No violent or slang graphics on clothing, no hats, no tank tops, and no shorts are allowed.

Any casual-style sandal is acceptable (No flip-flops or water shoes).

## Dress Code Chart

	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Need Logo</b>
<b>Pants</b>	Navy/Khaki	Navy/Khaki	No
<b>Shirts</b>	Lands' End	Lands' End	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Skirts</b>	Navy/Khaki	-----	No
<b>Elementary Plaid Skirts</b>	Lands' End	-----	No
<b>Elementary Skorts</b>	Lands' End	-----	No
<b>Elementary Jumpers</b>	Lands' End	-----	No
<b>Outerwear</b>	Lands' End	Lands' End	<b>Yes</b>
<b>PE Shirt</b>	Lands' End	Lands' End	<b>Yes</b>
<b>PE Shorts</b>	Lands' End	Lands' End	<b>Yes</b>
<b>PE Sweatpants</b>	Navy/Black	Navy/Black	No

### DROP / ADD POLICY

When deciding which elective classes they will take for the following school year, students should choose carefully and thoughtfully. Once the school year has begun, students will be allowed to drop or add an elective class only during the first two weeks of the year. After this two-week period, dropping or adding will only be allowed under the following circumstances:

- The administration and/or faculty of the school feel it is in the best interest of the student to do so.
- The student is enrolling in a college preparatory class and can demonstrate that this class is a suitable replacement for the class being dropped.
- Extenuating circumstances (such as physical difficulties or a family situation) require that the student no longer attends the class.

## EXTENDED CARE

Extended Care is available to all\* students until 5:30PM, Monday-Friday.

\*Extended Care is only offered on the days that your student attends school.

### **Hours and Fees (based on a daily rate)**

- Late pick up for K3 – K4 (12:15PM – 3:15PM) \$7/hour
- Late pick up for all other students (3:15PM – 5:30PM) \$7/hour

Families who consistently use extended care **5 days a week** will receive a 25% discount. If these families have multiple children, their children will also receive the same additional sibling discounts as applied to tuition. The child in extended care for the longest amount of time will be considered “the first sibling”.

Parents who habitually pick up students late or drop off students for school early may incur a daycare fee according to the above rates. We close promptly at 5:30PM. An additional fee of \$5.00 for every 10 minutes or portion thereof for late departures after closing will be charged.

It is very important that you remember to sign your child out for daycare hours. If a parent fails to sign their child in or out, she/he will be charged for a full day of care.

SMCA *does not* offer drop-in extended care. **Advanced sign-up is required.** Exceptions can be made for emergencies. However, please notify the school of plans to leave a student in extended care as soon as possible.

### **Billing**

The school calculates extended care fees at the end of the week. Each week will be listed separately on your monthly statement.

### **Pre-school Extended Care**

Pre-school students staying for the afternoon (12:15PM – 3:15PM) should bring a lunch (no nut products).

### **Playground**

The playground is reserved for the extended care program from 3:00PM – 5:30PM Monday-Friday.

### **Drop-off**

Drop-off begins at 7:30AM. Morning care is not available, and students should not be dropped off any earlier.

## EXTRA HELP

Teachers may assign "Required Extra Help" for students with incomplete homework, tests to make up, or for students experiencing difficulty with the subject matter. This required help would be assigned at the teacher's discretion. Students with habitual incomplete homework may be restricted from participation in extra-curricular activities.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY EXEMPTION POLICY

High school students who are involved in extracurricular activities (either through SMCA or other schools/organizations) may be eligible for an exemption from certain academic requirements. The following exemptions are currently available to students who meet the criteria listed:

## Physical Education

Students who play a sport (team or individual) for SMCA or in a league/organization approved by the administration may be exempt from attending PE class for the duration of each sport's season. Upon receiving adequate documentation of the student's participation, the administration will count their involvement in each sport toward their grade in PE and will award credit on their transcript accordingly. Once their season is complete and their participation in the sport is over, the student will be required to begin attending PE class once again. Any student who participates in extracurricular sports for at least 6 months in a single school year will be exempt from an entire year of PE and will be awarded the equivalent number of credits on their transcript.

## Drama/Theater

Students who participate in a theatrical production (musical or non-musical, cast member or crew) for SMCA or an organization approved by the administration may be exempt from taking one of SMCA's Fine Arts Department classes. Upon receiving adequate documentation of the student's participation, the administration will count their involvement in the production in lieu of a Fine Arts class at school and will award the appropriate number of credits on their transcript. In order to qualify for this exemption a student must submit a record of:

- At least 60 hours of participation for .5 credits.

## EQUIPMENT REGULATIONS

School property and personal property of others must be respected at all times. Defacing school property or stealing will be worthy of the most severe disciplinary actions. Students must pay for any lost or damaged equipment or books regardless of the circumstances under which the materials were lost or destroyed.

Students are to refrain from disturbing materials belonging to other students or teachers without having clearly expressed permission.

Name and grade should be clearly marked on all notebooks, jackets, uniforms, scarves, etc. Lunches are to be kept in assigned areas only. Personal items left out will be placed in lost and found. At the end of each month, the contents of lost and found will be given to charity.

Radios, comic books or magazines, video games, videos, weapons of any kind, reading material not pertinent to a class, and other disruptive articles or collectibles are not to be in school.

Students in grades 1-12 will be assigned a locker. Please refer to ***Locker Policies***.

**Students must keep their cell phones in their locker during the school day.** The only exception for cell phone usage is between classes. It will be at the discretion of the student and parent whether the locker should be locked or unlocked. SMCA is not responsible for lost or stolen items. **Seniors: See Senior Privilege guidelines.**

Failure to comply with these guidelines will result in the following:

***First Offense:*** Cell phone will be confiscated. Student will retrieve it at the end of the day from the school office.

***Second Offense:*** Cell phone will be confiscated. Parent will retrieve it at the end of the day from the school office.

***Third Offense:*** Cell phone will be confiscated. Parent will retrieve it at the end of the day from the school office. Student will not be permitted to bring a cell phone to school.

## FIELD TRIPS

The teachers schedule Field Trips throughout the year. All students are required to participate in field trips unless sick, etc.

Parents may volunteer to chaperone on field trips but may not bring younger siblings as this may take away from the focus of the trip. **Parents are required to complete a background check as well as our Child Safety Course.** Contact Alix Collenberg at [alexandra.collenberg@smcanh.org](mailto:alexandra.collenberg@smcanh.org) for more information. Teachers will use parents who volunteer as needed.

## FINANCES

See Appendix A, at the end of the Student Handbook, for SMCA Financial Policy and Rates for domestic and international students.

## FINE ARTS

SMCA offers weekly art and music classes for all grades. Students interested in private art or music lessons may contact the office.

## GRADING SYSTEM AND POLICIES

A traditional grading system will be used as follows:

	Standard GPA		
Letter Grade	Numeric Grade	GPA	
A+	97 -100	4.0	
A	93 - 96	4.0	
A-	90 - 92	3.7	
B+	87 - 89	3.3	
B	83 - 86	3.0	
B-	80 - 82	2.7	
C+	77 - 79	2.3	
C	73 - 76	2.0	
C-	70 - 72	1.7	
D+	67 - 69	1.3	
D	65 - 66	1.0	
F	0 - 64	0.0	
I	Incomplete	0.0	

	Dual Enrollment GPA		
Letter Grade	Numeric Grade	GPA	
A+	97 -100	5.0	
A	93 - 96	5.0	
A-	90 - 92	4.7	
B+	87 - 89	4.3	
B	83 - 86	4.0	
B-	80 - 82	3.7	
C+	77 - 79	3.3	
C	73 - 76	3.0	
C-	70 - 72	2.7	
D+	67 - 69	2.3	
D	65 - 66	2.0	
F	0 - 64	0.0	
I	Incomplete	0.0	

All incompletes are to be made up within 2 weeks of grades closing. Any incompletes not made up will be recorded as an "F" (Numerical grade of 50). Students will also receive conduct marks from their teacher on a separate scale.

## Academic Probation

If a student receives a failing grade in the same class on two consecutive report cards, the student will be placed on academic probation. Specific details will be discussed with the administration.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The following courses are required for high school graduation from South Merrimack Christian Academy. Transferring students must provide sufficient transcripts from previous schools showing that they have met the necessary requirements. College-bound seniors may want to ask prospective colleges about any special requirements for that school or the student's field of study.

<u>COURSES</u>	<u>REQUIRED UNITS</u>
<b>Bible</b> .....	<b>4 credits</b>
<b>English</b> .....	<b>4 credits</b>
<b>History/Social Studies</b> .....	<b>4 credits</b>
Geography.....	(1 credit)
World .....	(1 credit)
US .....	(1 credit)
Government.....	(.5 credit)
Economics.....	(.5 credit)
<b>Science</b> .....	<b>3.5 credits</b>
Physical Science.....	(1 credit)
Biology .....	(1 credit)
Chemistry.....	(1 credit)
<b>Health</b> .....	<b>(.5 credit) (Required for graduation)</b>
<i>Physics</i> .....	<i>(1 credit)</i>
<b>Math</b> .....	<b>3 credits</b>
Algebra I .....	(1 credit)
Geometry.....	(1 credit)
Algebra II.....	(1 credit)
<i>Pre-Calculus</i> .....	<i>(1 credit)</i>
<i>Consumer Math</i> .....	<i>(1 credit)</i>
<i>Calculus</i> .....	<i>(1 credit)</i>
<b>Physical Education</b> .....	<b>(.5 credit)..... 1 credit</b>
<b>Fine Arts</b> .....	<b>1 credit</b>
<b>Speech</b> .....	<b>(.5 credit) (Required for graduation)</b>
Art 1 .....	(.5 credit)
Art 2 .....	(.5 credit)
Drama.....	(.5 credit)
Choir .....	(.5 credit)
<b>Foreign Language</b> .....	<b>2 credits</b>
Spanish 1 .....	(1 credit)
Spanish 2.....	(1 credit)
<i>Spanish 3</i> .....	<i>(1 credit)</i>
<b>Senior Project Initiative (Required for graduation)</b> .....	<b>1 credit</b>
<b>Electives</b> .....	<b>2 credits</b>
<b>Personal Finance</b> .....	<b>(.5 credit) (Required for graduation)</b>
Computers .....	(.5 credit)
Bible.....	(1 credit)
Yearbook.....	(.5 credit)
Teacher's Aide .....	(.5 credit)
Additional Math .....	(1 credit)
Additional Science .....	(1 credit)
Additional Fine Arts.....	(.5 credit)
Online Courses.....	(based upon administrative approval)
<b>Total required units to receive a diploma</b> .....	<b>25.5 credits</b>

## HOMEWORK

South Merrimack Christian Academy has developed the following homework philosophy and guidelines for students and parents.

1. ***The Purpose of Homework:*** Homework may be used to preview new material, reinforce, and practice skills taught in the classroom, or to review materials in preparation for student evaluation (tests and quizzes). Homework involves both written work and studying (memorizing, mastering skills, applying new information, etc.).
2. ***The Responsibilities of Homework:***
  - a) *Teacher's Responsibility:* Teachers are to assign the appropriate type and amount of homework. In so doing, they should explain the material (or demonstrate), motivate the students, correct the material once handed in, and follow up on those having difficulty with the assignment.
  - b) *Student's Responsibility:* Students are to 1) Keep track of the assignments, 2) Complete the assignments to the best of their abilities, 3) Seek help when needed, 4) Review errors and file for later use in test review, and 5) Know when test and /or quizzes are being held and study accordingly.
  - c) *Parent's Responsibility:* Parents are to 1) Provide time and an appropriate environment for homework on a consistent basis, 2) Monitor student progress according to age and need of the student, 3) Assist, when needed, in providing resources, clarification, and/or quizzing on mastery of material, 4) Provide positive encouragement, 5) Communicate with teachers when needed, and 6) Train children early to work independently.
3. ***The Proper Environment for Homework:*** The following contribute to accomplishing homework effectively: 1) A designated area that is quiet, well-lighted and is separated from other activities as possible (especially for older students doing independent work), and 2) A family schedule that allows the recommended study times (See #6).
4. ***The Guidelines for Wednesday Homework:*** No homework will be given on these nights, although assignments given in advance may be due on a Thursday.
5. ***Suggestions for Those Having Difficulty with Homework Assignments:*** The following suggestions should help a student who is having difficulty with a homework assignment:
  - a) Develop the habit of reviewing assignments while at school and the teacher is available.
  - b) Review directions for assignment carefully and thoroughly.
  - c) Call a friend for the exact assignment or for clarification if needed.
  - d) For younger students, parents may write a note to the teacher regarding homework.
  - e) Secondary tutoring may be available (see the Tutoring section for details)
  - f) Check the information at the top of the worksheets on how to do the assignment.
6. ***Typical Time Required for Homework:*** Length will vary from day-to-day (generally  $\frac{1}{2}$  the amount on Fridays) and from student to student; however, following is the estimated time required:
  - a) 1st and 2nd:  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour
  - b) 3rd and 4th: 45 minutes – 1 hour
  - c) 5th and 6th: 1 hour –  $1\frac{1}{4}$  hour
  - d) 7th and up: 20 – 30 minutes per class (includes study hall time).
7. ***Additional Suggestions About Homework:***
  - a) Parents should establish a positive attitude in the home about homework and school in general.



- b) Parents should help the child do the work, not do the work for them.
- c) Parents should help the child organize his or her time and materials, learn to follow directions, and encourage thoroughness.
- d) Parents should encourage the child to do the most difficult or most pressing homework first.
- e) Parents should help the child master material by questioning which leads to correct student responses and should look for creative ways to accomplish homework assignments.
- f) Parents should recognize that the child would always give HIS or HER perspective in problem areas with schoolwork; therefore, they should communicate with teachers in problem situations.
- g) Parents should never allow their children to sacrifice principles for homework.

8. ***Incomplete Work:***

- a) *Elementary* – Students will receive a tally for every subject in which they are missing work. The work will need to be made up the following day.
- b) *Secondary* – Students will receive a homework offense if a homework assignment is not completed and/or not turned in on time. A homework offense does not count against a student’s demerit total. ***The homework offense will be issued in addition to any academic penalty that a teacher may enforce, per their syllabus.***
  - Parents will be notified by email after each homework offense.
  - A detention will be issued after every 4th homework offense.
  - Each student’s homework offense count will be moved back to zero at the beginning of each quarter.

**ILLNESS / MEDICATION**

At SMCA we recognize that illness is a part of the school year. We want to care for all students to the best of our ability, keeping students in school while also respecting the illness and healing process. For any questions regarding the illness policy, please contact the school nurses in the SMCA Health Office, Danielle Ezzo or Jennifer Wilkins, at (603) 880-6832. The following outlines SMCA’s illness policy for the 2024-2025 school year.

While your child is a member of the school, he/she should be in school unless ill. Please keep your child home at the first sign of a communicable disease and report to the school office immediately. Some communicable diseases are also “reportable diseases” (“Reportable disease” means a communicable disease, as defined in RSA 141-C: 2, VI, required to be reported to the commissioner pursuant to RSA 141-C: 7 and He-P 301.02.) The New Hampshire Division of Public Health Services updates a list of reportable diseases regularly.

**If your child needs medication administered during school hours, please note the following guidelines:**

- Medication must be in the original container and/or prescription bottle.
- Students are not permitted to keep medicine with them at school, unless a release form is on file in the school office.
- All medications that come from a student’s home, over the counter or prescription, must be signed into the Health Office by the student’s parent. The one exception is when a student has permission to self-carry an EpiPen or inhaler.
- *NOTE: All over-the-counter and prescription medications are securely stored in a locked area within the health office.*

***Please keep your child home at the first sign of illness.*** We greatly appreciate the respect you show by not exposing others to illness. Review the guidelines below and notify the school office if your child will be out due to illness or injury.

## **Antibiotics**

If a student is diagnosed with a contagious infection requiring antibiotics, the student should stay home until he/she has been on antibiotics for a minimum of 24 hours to prevent the spread of infection to others.

## **Chronic Conditions**

If your child has a chronic condition such as asthma, diabetes, seizures, etc., allergy (food or other), or anaphylaxis, please inform the school nurse. Students with asthma, food allergies, anaphylaxis, diabetes, or seizure disorders will need an updated action plan (within the last two years) from their healthcare provider to be held in the Health Office. If a student requires a rescue inhaler or EpiPen, parents need to sign the medication into the Health Office by the first day of school. Certain circumstances may require a release form to be filled out by both parent and physician.

## **Fever**

A temperature equal to or greater than 100.0 requires a student to stay home from school or be sent home from school. A student must be fever-free or have a temperature lower than 100.0 for at least 24 hours without the use of antipyretics prior to returning to school.

## **Cough**

Students that have coughs that are disruptive and persistent should be kept home from school. If a student's cough is concerning, disruptive, or persistent while at school, they will need to be picked up.

## **Vomiting/Diarrhea**

Students should not be in school if they are vomiting or having episodes of diarrhea. The State of New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services defines diarrhea as an increase in the number of stools over what is normal for that and stools which are not formed (i.e. loose and watery). A student needs to be free of diarrhea for 24 hours prior to returning to school. A student needs to be free of vomiting for 24 hours prior to returning to school. This means the last vomiting or diarrhea episode starts the time period until 24 hours. Students who have vomiting or diarrhea while at school will need to be picked up from school, and they can return when they are free of vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours.

## **Rashes**

Rashes have many causes. Whether a rash is or is not infectious needs to be determined by a healthcare provider. Rashes need to be evaluated by a health care provider before students can come or return to school. If a student is being treated with a medication prescribed by a healthcare provider for an infectious rash, the student must be on the medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

## **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)**

Conjunctivitis can be bacterial, viral, or allergic. Both bacterial and viral conjunctivitis are very contagious and are spread by contact with the eye discharge. A student with suspected conjunctivitis should not come to school and needs to be evaluated by a healthcare provider. Students who develop symptoms of conjunctivitis at school will need to be picked up from school. A healthcare provider can determine the type of conjunctivitis and treatment. If the conjunctivitis is bacterial and being treated with an antibiotic, the student must be on the antibiotic for 24 hours and without eye drainage before coming or returning to school. For all cases of conjunctivitis (bacterial, viral, and allergic), students must be free of eye drainage for 24 hours before returning to school.

## Strep Throat

If a student is being treated for strep throat, they must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before coming or returning to school. Symptoms that often accompany strep throat such as fever, vomiting, and diarrhea must also be absent for 24 hours before coming or returning to school. Students who develop symptoms of strep throat while at school will need to be picked up.

## Head Lice

If a student has head lice they must do the following before coming to school:

1. Treat the lice/lice eggs found with lice treatment. Follow instructions.
2. Remove all lice eggs and nits with nit comb.
3. Student may return to school 48 hours after lice treatment and lice and nit removal AND no new lice eggs or nits found on the child.

Any students who have lice or nits at school will need to be picked up.

## Before returning to school

A child returning to school should be fever free, diarrhea, and vomiting free for at least **24 hours without medication**. If you are uncertain about whether your child should attend school, please call the school office.

## LOCKER POLICIES

It is a privilege to use a locker. Students should take care of their locker by keeping it orderly and not overloaded.

1. It is a serious offense to enter another student's locker without their permission.
2. **Stickers** are not to be placed inside or outside lockers. Magnets may be used to put up pictures inside the locker. Pictures that are deemed inappropriate by administration will be taken down. No tape or other material should be used to hang items.
3. All tote bags and backpacks must be emptied and placed in lockers or hung up. Items left in the hallway floor will be taken to the office, identified, and an infraction will be given to that student.
4. Locker privileges will be lost if they are abused.

## Backpack Rule

All backpacks should be emptied into the student's assigned locker. Emptied backpack should be placed on top of the locker or inside the locker. **Backpacks will not be permitted in the classroom**. Students have five minutes in between each class and will have ample time to retrieve the needed books for the next class.

## LUNCH AND SNACK

Students will need to bring their own lunch and snacks. Lunch and snacks need to be labeled. Please send napkins, eating utensils, plates, bowls, and condiments with your child. Microwaves are available for use in Grades 6-12 only. Hot lunches are served Monday - Friday. They are pre-ordered one month in advance via the FACTS website. We are unable to refund the cost of lunches missed due to illnesses or unexpected absences.

## PARENT / TEACHER CONFERENCES

See school calendar for schedule of Parent/Teacher Conferences. Notification will be sent home to parents regarding upcoming conference.

If you feel that a conference is necessary at other times, please email your child's teacher to schedule an appointment.

## RETENTION

It will be the policy of the school to retain any child who does not successfully complete a specific grade level, and who, in the teacher and administrator's opinion, would profit by repeating the work of that grade level. The school will try to notify parents by the last quarter of the school year. Occasionally, especially at the kindergarten level, the school may not make its final decision regarding retention until the end of the school year.

In some cases, your child may require extra help during the summer from an approved tutor. In order to matriculate to the next grade, the student will be evaluated at the end of the summer.

## CHILD RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION POLICY

There are no circumstances under which restraint and seclusion would be used at South Merrimack Christian Academy.

## SCHOOL HOURS

### **Normal School Day**

#### Elementary and Secondary Students

7:30AM	Doors open
8:00AM	School begins
3:00PM	School ends, car line pick-up for K5–12
5:30PM	Extended care ends

#### Preschool Students

7:55AM	Doors open
8:15AM	School begins
12:00PM	Car line pick-up for K3–K4
3:00PM	School ends, car line pick-up for K5
5:30PM	Extended care ends

### **Kindergarten & Preschool**

K3: 2-day	Tuesday, Thursday	8:15 AM – 12:00 PM
K4: 3-day	Mon, Wed, Fri	8:15 AM – 12:00 PM
K4: 5-day	Monday — Friday	8:15 AM – 12:00 PM
K5: 5-day	Monday — Friday	8:15 AM – 3:00 PM
5:30PM	Extended Care ends	

### **Half Days – 20 minute classes**

7:30AM	Doors open
8:00AM	School begins
11:30AM	Car line pick-up for K3, K4, and K5
12:00PM	School ends for 1–12

School will begin at 8:00AM. Students are to arrive at school no earlier than 7:30AM. Parents are not to stay in the classroom after the school day begins. At the beginning of the school year, teachers will

provide a more detailed class schedule.

Students that need to leave school early on a repeated basis must obtain administrative approval.

### SCHOOL MASCOT

SMCA's mascot is the Minuteman. This mascot was chosen because during the War for Independence a group of minutemen from the area camped at 'the point' (on our property) on the way to Boston.

### STUDENT DRIVERS

SMCA recognizes that driving is an important part of growing up and becoming an adult. This important transition must be accompanied by responsibility and accountability.

All student drivers must abide by the following rules:

1. All student drivers must have a legal driver's license.
2. All student drivers must obey all New Hampshire driving laws.
3. Student drivers may transport siblings to and from school.
4. Student drivers **may NOT transport non-sibling students**.
5. Student athletes may use their own vehicles to get to the sports practice locations (they **may NOT transport non-sibling students**).
6. Student athletes may with permission use their own vehicles to travel to away games (they **may NOT transport non-sibling students**).

### SENIOR PRIVILEGE

The goal of senior privilege is to allow senior students to make more decisions and show leadership and responsibility in preparation for graduation and the next life steps. We expect students to take this freedom seriously while maintaining school responsibilities. There is a 2-week "hold" period before privileges are given so students can get back in the rhythm of school and keep up grades and responsibilities. After this period, students will be able to engage in the senior privilege as indicated below.

1. Students must have passing grades and maintain appropriate school responsibilities. **Students MUST maintain a 3.0 GPA with no F's.**
2. After the "hold" period, this privilege must be discussed with Mr. Amador prior to being granted. Students **MUST** sign in and out at the school office. The permission slip will be provided and should be signed by the senior and their respective parents.
3. After students have passed the "hold" period, they may engage in the following privileges after their meeting with Mr. Amador has occurred. Seniors with senior privilege may:
  - a. Use their phones in the senior lounge and study halls. Seniors may **NOT** share their phones or media use with students in other grades or distract others. Earphones must be worn during acceptable use times. **NOTE:** Students may **NOT** use their phones in hallways or classrooms during school hours.
  - b. Listen to music during study halls only; **NOT** in hallways, between classes, even with earbuds.
  - c. Participate in extracurricular serving activities with Mrs. Lukawitz. (i.e. restocking Snack Shack, running special errands, etc.)
  - d. Leave school to get food or snacks during non-class periods. Food is **NOT** to be bought and brought back to school to share with students in other grade levels or seniors without senior privilege.

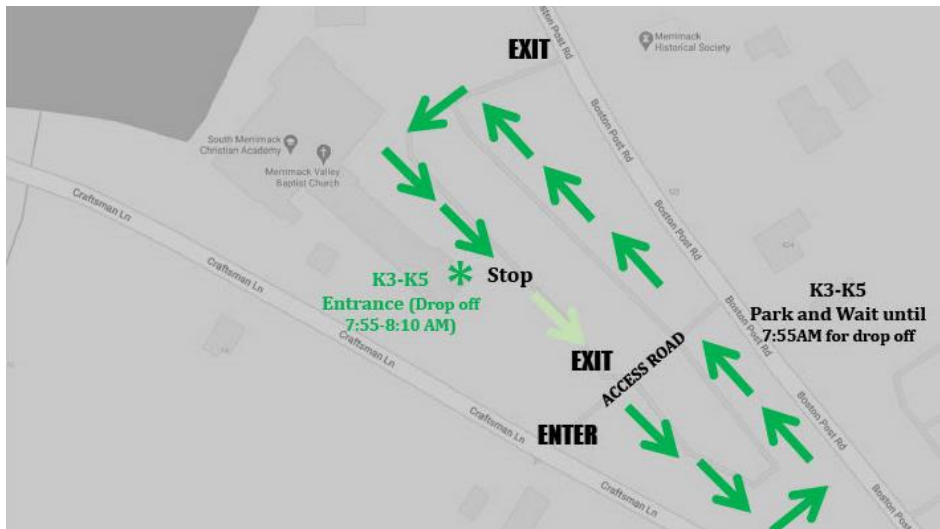
**NOTE: Students MUST ALWAYS sign in and out at the school office when coming and going! Senior Privilege may be revoked if normal school policies are not adhered to.**

## TRANSPORTATION

### Drop-off/Pick-up Procedure for Preschool

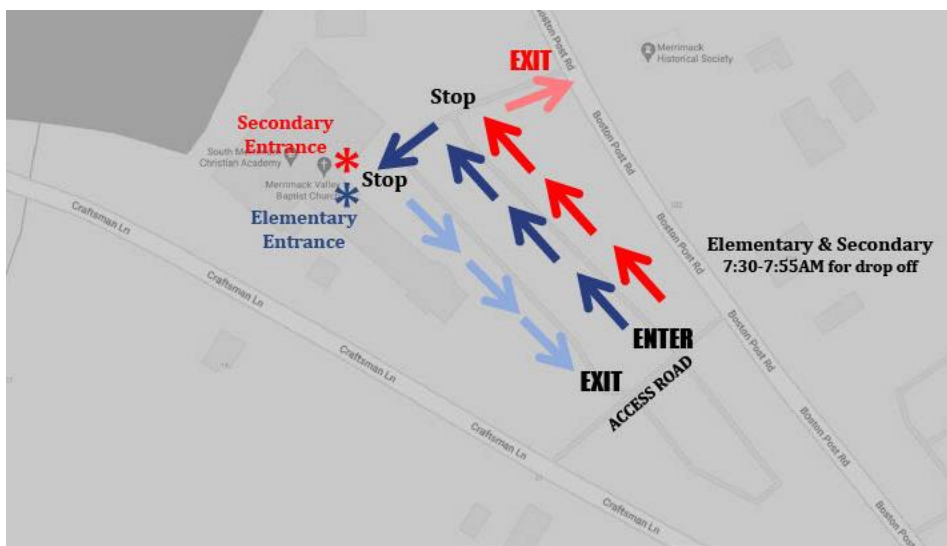
An aide will be in the parking lot from **7:55AM – 8:10AM** for K3 – K5 students. **DO NOT** leave your child until the aide is there to greet him/her. If you are late and the aide has gone inside, **WALK YOUR CHILD** to the office and check your child in.

Please be prompt in picking up your child at 12:00PM. After 12:15PM, your child will be placed in extended care and you will be charged accordingly. If you need to talk to a teacher, pick up your child first and then park your car in a space available and wait for pick-up to be completed.



### Drop-off Procedure for 1<sup>st</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

Students may be dropped off no earlier than 7:30AM. The older sibling should escort the younger sibling to their wing.



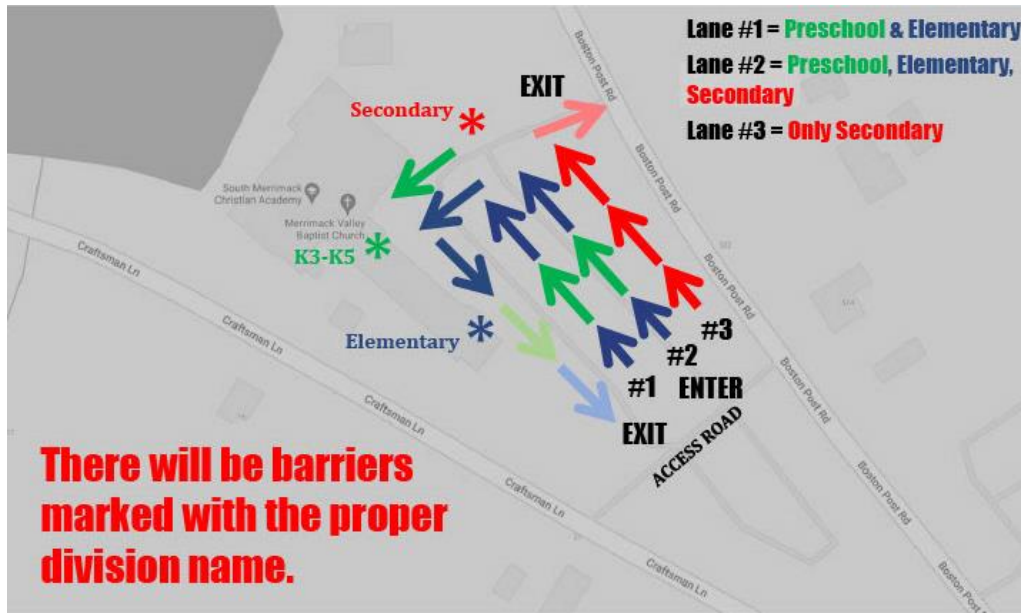


## Pick-up Procedure for K5 – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

Please be prompt in picking up your child when school is dismissed. After 3:15PM, your child will be placed in extended care, and you will be charged accordingly. If you need to talk to a teacher, pick up your child first and then park your car in a space available and wait for pick-up to be completed.

No child will be released from school until the end of the school session unless the teacher or school office receives written notice that the child is to be dismissed early. State the person authorized to pick up the child at that time. That person must be logged as an authorized pick up person in the FACTS system.

**NOTE:** No child will be released to anyone except his/her own parent/guardian unless written notice has been given to the teacher and the school office by the parent or guardian.



## TUTORING

The SMCA Academic Counselor will assist parents by suggesting possible tutoring services for students who are struggling academically (earning below a 70 in a particular class) and who will, in the opinion of the faculty and administration, most benefit from individualized attention. All tutoring requests must be submitted to the elementary supervisor or secondary supervisor for approval.

## VISITORS

All visitors and volunteers should enter the building through the school office. They are required to log their visit with the office and wear a visitor's pass at all times while on the school premises. All other doors will be locked from inside once school has started. For emergency reasons, the doors can be opened from the inside.

Parents and volunteers are asked to dress in accordance with school standards when in the building, during the school day, or when attending any school functions.

Visiting students who desire to shadow a SMCA student must qualify as a viable candidate for potential enrollment at SMCA.

## VOLUNTEERS

We appreciate parents who are able to volunteer their services during the school year. If you are

interested, you may check with your child's teacher for times of field trips, parties, etc. in which help is needed.

The school also needs people who can volunteer with serving hot lunch one day a week from 10:30AM – 1:00PM. If you are interested, please call the school office.

Please note that all parents volunteering for lunch, field trips, parties, etc. must first complete the safety training as well as a background check. Contact [alexandra.collenberg@smcanh.org](mailto:alexandra.collenberg@smcanh.org) for necessary forms and safety training link.



# APPENDIX A

## FINANCIAL POLICY 2024-2025

\* See separate policy for International Students

- **Admissions Fee: (Application & Enrollment)**
  - New Applicant \$130 per child Online payment
- **Online Reenrollment Fee: (annual fee)**
  - Returning Student \$120 per child Online payment **by** April 1
  - Returning Student (with late fee) \$175 per child Online payment **after** April 1
  - Hard Copy-Additional Processing Fee \$25 per child To be paid with Enrollment Form
- **Senior High (Grades 9-12)**
  - Annual Tuition \$8,350 First payment due August 1
  - Book Fee (Non-Refundable) \$250 Payment due July 1
- **Junior High (Grades 7-8)**
  - Annual Tuition \$8,130 First payment due August 1
  - Book Fee (Non-Refundable) \$250 Payment due July 1
- **Elementary: (Grades 1-6)**
  - Annual Tuition \$7,280 First payment due August 1
  - Book Fee (Non-Refundable) \$250 Payment due July 1
- **Kindergarten: 5 year old programs (K5)**
  - Annual Tuition, full day \$7,280 First payment due August 1
  - Book Fee (Non-Refundable) \$135 Payment due July 1
- **Pre-School: 4 year old programs (K4)**
  - Annual Tuition, M-F (5 half days) \$4,940 First payment due August 1
  - Annual Tuition, M/W/F (3 half days) \$3,920 First payment due August 1
  - Book Fee (Non-Refundable) \$35 Payment due July 1
- **Pre-School: 3 year old program (K3)**
  - Annual Tuition, T/R (2 half days) \$3,220 First payment due August 1
- **Graduation Fees (Charged to account)**
  - Kindergarten \$25
  - High School \$40
- **Other Fees (Charged to account)**
  - Technology Fee \$325 (One Time Fee for 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade)
  - Chromebook Insurance \$35 (Yearly Fee for 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade)
  - Sports Fee
    - Varsity \$100 (extra expenses, referee costs, uniform costs)
    - Junior Varsity \$40 (extra expenses, referee costs, uniform costs)
- Outstanding Balance Fee \$30 fee for outstanding statement balance after 20<sup>th</sup> of month
- **Secondary Trip Fees (Charged to account)**
  - 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Trip \$300/TBD cost per student (divided in three monthly payments)
  - 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Trip \$300/TBD cost per student (divided in three monthly payments)
  - RENEW Retreat \$180 per family (Grades 9-12)
- **2023/24 Tuition Discounts – There are NO discounts on Enrollment Fees or Book Fees.**
  - MVBC member discount 5% *Note: Must be member at the beginning of school year (discount rate applies to new families as of 2023/24 school year)*
  - Sibling discount
    - 1<sup>st</sup> Child - 0%
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> Child - 25%
    - 3<sup>rd</sup> Child - 50%
    - 4<sup>th</sup> Child and thereafter - 75%
 (discount rate applies to new families as of 2023/24 school year)
  - Paid in full incentive 3% deducted from tuition (must be paid by first day of school)

**Statements and Payments:** At anytime during the current school year, you can access your household account detail through ParentsWeb. On the first business day of every month, you will receive an email with a statement of your household account balance. Your statement balance is due and payable on the first of the month and payments will be applied to the oldest balance first. If the household account has a balance after the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month, then a \$30 outstanding balance fee will be added to the household account (see Delinquency Policy below.) All balances must be paid in full by the last day of school.

Tuition may be paid in full at the beginning of the school year or in ten (10) monthly installments due and payable on the first of each month starting with August 1<sup>st</sup> and continuing through May 1<sup>st</sup>. Incidental charges are due and payable on the first of the month following the initial charge.

SMCA will accept payments in the following formats:

1. Cash or check paid at the school office (*A payment drop box is located in the school office*)
2. Check mailed to the school office
3. Web-Check through ParentsWeb (*A processing fee will be added to account*)
4. Debit card or credit card through ParentsWeb (*Discover or Master Card only. A processing fee will be added to account*)

**Withdraw / Late Enrollment:** The SMCA financial office will determine a child's pro-rated tuition based on the number of days enrolled in school. The enrollment fee and book fee are non-refundable. If a child is withdrawn during the school year for any reason, the date of withdrawal must be clearly communicated to the school office. Report cards, transcripts, and other student records will be withheld until all financial obligations are met. If a student enrolls after the first day of the school year, a 3% paid-in-full tuition incentive is available. Payment arrangements must be communicated to the financial office prior to the start date.

Tuition will not be refunded for days missed due to illness. If a child will not be attending school for an extended period, space cannot be guaranteed unless tuition is paid without interruption. The Administrator must receive advanced notice of extenuating circumstances that require special financial arrangements.

**Delinquency Policy:** The following method will be used for household accounts with an outstanding balance:

1. Payments received by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month that do not satisfy the total statement balance will result in a \$30 outstanding balance fee added to the household account.
2. Payments received after the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month will result in a \$30 outstanding balance fee added to the household account.
3. An outstanding household account balance that is 30 days past due will result in a notification of overdue account sent to the address on file. Arrangements to meet with a school official will be required.
4. Outstanding household account balance that is 60 days past due will result in a notification of overdue account sent to address on file. Arrangements to meet with a school official will be required. If arrangements have not been made or kept, further review by the school board will be required and dismissal is possible.

**Returned Check Policy:** If the bank returns a check due to insufficient funds, a \$25.00 bank fee will be added to the account.

**Household Account Balances:** All household accounts must be paid in full by the last day of school. Report cards, transcripts, diplomas, and other school records will be withheld until all financial obligations are met. If the student is a Senior and there is a balance due at the time of graduation, the student will not be allowed to walk or participate in commencement activities, unless prior arrangements have been made.

Financial Hold Exception: Students will not be re-admitted the following school year until all past balances are paid or special arrangements are made. However, if a student is reenrolling the following school year and the family account balance is less than \$50.00, a financial hold will not be placed on the family account and a final report card will be issued.

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

## INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL POLICY 2024-2025

- **All applicants**
  - Admissions Fee \$200 To be paid with application
  - I-20 Fee \$150 To be paid with application
  - Bank Fee \$25 Due with transaction
  - Deposit Fee (for misc. charges) \$200 Due before the first day of school
  
- **Senior High (Grades 9-12)**
  - Tuition \$9,350 Due before the first day of school
  - Book Fee (Non-Refundable) \$250 Due before the first day of school
  
- **Junior High (Grades 7-8)**
  - Tuition \$9,130 Due before the first day of school
  - Book Fee (Non-Refundable) \$250 Due before the first day of school
  
- **Elementary (Grades 1-6)**
  - Tuition \$8,280 Due before the first day of school
  - Book Fee (Non-Refundable) \$250 Due before the first day of school
  
- **Graduation Fees (Charged to account)**
  - High School \$40
  
- **Other Fees**
  - Technology Fee \$325 (One Time Fee for 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade)
  - Chromebook Insurance \$35 (Yearly Fee for 7<sup>th</sup>-12 Grade)
  - Sports Fee
    - Varsity \$100 (extra expenses, referee costs, uniform costs)
    - Junior Varsity \$40 (extra expenses, referee costs, uniform costs)
  - Outstanding Balance Fee \$30 fee for outstanding statement balance after 20<sup>th</sup> of month

Account Balances: Account must be paid in full by the first day of school. Balances not paid by the first day of school will result in jeopardizing admittance. Any additional expenses incurred throughout the school year not covered by the prepaid **Deposit Fee**, must be paid by the last day of school.

Report cards, transcripts, diplomas, and other school records will be withheld until all financial obligations are met. All household accounts must be paid in full by the last day of school. Students are not re-admitted the following school year until all past payments are made or special arrangements have been made. If the student is a senior and there is a balance due at the time of graduation, the student will not be allowed to walk or participate in any commencement activities unless prior arrangements have been made.

SMCA will accept payments in the following formats:

1. Cash or check paid at the school office. (*A payment drop box is located in the school office*)
2. Check mailed to the school office
3. Web-Check through ParentsWeb (*A processing fee will be added to account*)
4. Debit card or credit card through ParentsWeb (*Discover or Master Card only. A processing fee will be added to account*)
5. Bank wire transfers

Withdraw / Late Enrollment: If a child is withdrawn during the school year for any reason, the date of withdraw must be clearly communicated to the school office. The family is responsible for tuition through the withdraw date. If a child enrolls later than the first day of school, the family is responsible for

the number of school days that the child will be attending school. Any overpaid amount on the account at the end of the school year will be refunded at that time unless the child is enrolled for the following year. In such case, the remaining balance will remain on the account to be applied toward the following year's charges.

**Returned Check Policy:** If a check is returned from the bank, then a bank fee of \$25.00 will be added to the account.