

# **MOUNT AVIAT ACADEMY**



## **HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

**MOUNT AVIAT ACADEMY  
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# **I. PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION**

*"Begin with love, continue with love, and end with love." Saint Francis de Sales*

## **A. PHILOSOPHY OF MOUNT AVIAT ACADEMY**

Mount Aviat Academy is a Catholic elementary school of the Diocese of Wilmington, which serves the educational needs of children of varying intellectual abilities from preschool through the eighth grade. It is under the direction of the Oblate Sisters of Saint Francis de Sales and is staffed by a faculty of religious and lay teachers who "create for the school community an atmosphere enlivened by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity" in which each child grows and learns in a climate of mutual respect and charity, gentleness and integrity, according to the spirit of St. Francis de Sales.

The school cooperates with parents in the task of educating their children and assisting them to attain to their fullest potential in immediate preparation for entrance into high school and ultimately for life and life eternal. Mount Aviat Academy is dedicated to the instruction of children in the message of Christ as taught by the Catholic Church, enriched by the spirituality of St. Francis de Sales. The school strives to instill the principles of scholarship and service into the minds and hearts of its students, as well as the knowledge and appreciation of the heritage of American democracy.

As they grow academically within the school community, students see and experience the constant interaction of a living "community of faith" through the care, example, concern, and involvement of their parents, and teachers. As a result, Christ and his message permeate all areas of the students' experience of learning and living, and they grow to acquire a sense of responsible freedom as Christians.

*"Our great mission is to love the Savior and to make him loved."  
Father Louis Brisson, OSFS*

## **B. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

*"Pray that a great number of souls may receive, through Saint Francis de Sales, the grace to love God and to serve him faithfully." Blessed Frances de Sales Aviat*

The Mount Aviat Academy community is committed to the achievement of these fundamental goals and objectives:

### **Goals**

To educate our students as Catholics for now and for eternity by religious instruction and character formation in the Salesian spirit.

To educate our students to strive for excellence at each level of instruction by developing the necessary skills and principles of scholarship.

To educate our students as responsible citizens and to foster a spirit of service, patriotism, respect and for authority individual responsibility.

## **Objectives**

1. *To transmit* the truths of the Catholic faith through instruction in the authentic doctrine of our faith and through Christian witness and good example.
2. *To assist* each student to develop a personal relationship with Christ and to integrate religious truths and moral integrity with life in contemporary society.
3. *To foster* in our students the practice of Christian respect and self discipline and a growing commitment to appropriate attitudes and behavior.
4. *To communicate* the expectation of excellence to our students and to establish and maintain high standards of academic excellence.
5. *To provide* our students with fundamental knowledge and useful skills, as well as a spirit of inquiry and discovery, that will inspire them to achieve their fullest potential.
6. *To encourage* the involvement and active cooperation of parents as partners in education, aiding them to recognize, accept, and encourage the true abilities of their children.
7. *To challenge* our students to extend their interests beyond themselves into the community with a desire to love and serve God in loving and serving others.
8. *To respect* the differences of our students and to respond sensitively to them.
9. *To initiate* those changes and innovations that will improve the education of our students, better preparing them for life in today's world.

*"What we are, not what we say, is what moves the souls of our youth."  
Father Louis Brisson, OSFS*

## **C. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

*"The more one loves, the more one gives; the more one gives, the more one loves God."  
Father Louis Brisson, OSFS*

Religious education and character formation are of primary importance at Mount Aviat Academy. The students have instruction in their faith, not only through their religion classes, but also through the witness of the school community which surrounds them. Teachers base the content of their religion lessons on the diocesan curriculum guidelines.

1. Opportunities to worship and to express devotion are an integral part of the spiritual life of the school. These shall include classroom prayer, school Masses, the Living Rosary in October, the May Crowning, Stations of the Cross in Lent, Confessions, etc...
2. Teachers work to prepare the children for the reception of the sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion. Parents need to be in contact with their local parishes to determine what is required for reception of the sacraments.
3. Students at each grade level are required to memorize certain prayers, doctrinal formulas and facts.

4. Beginning in the fifth grade, the Bible is used as a text for study along with other textbooks.
5. Various types of instructional and multimedia presentations are incorporated into the daily lesson plans.
6. Lesson plans will include presentations and discussions relevant to character formation. This strand will be incorporated into all the areas of the curriculum.
7. In order to instill in our students the basic principles of Catholic social teaching, a component of community service will be incorporated into the curriculum of each grade level. Students will be encouraged to work for and to support the Oblate Missions, as well as special needs collections, such as the Advent Giving Tree.
8. Students of other faiths are required to take part in the religious formation and education programs of the school and must participate in all liturgies and religious functions which take place during the school day.
9. Students will be encouraged to develop a personal relationship with Christ and to nourish this relationship through personal and communal prayer, as well as the living out of the Gospel.

*"Great faith is living, vigilant, strong and prudent." Saint Francis de Sales*

#### **D. EDUCATIONAL ROLES**

*"Patience, prayer, respect for souls; that is our strength, our true way."  
Saint Francis de Sales*

Parent: Since parents have given their children life, the Catholic Church recognizes parents as the primary and principal educators of their children. The Catholic parents' promise at Baptism to raise their children as Catholic supports this premise. The Catholic school exists to assist parents in the spiritual formation of their children. Parents can best aid the school in its mission by supporting the goals and objectives stated above. Parental support of school and classroom policies are an important element in the overall accomplishment of these objectives.

In this handbook, the term parent refers not only to a child's natural or adopted parent, but to a student's non-parent legal guardian or to any person or agency authorized to act in the place of parents.

Office of Catholic Schools: The Catholic Schools Office for the Diocese of Wilmington acts as in an advisory manner. In the area of religious instruction, the school is subject to the guidelines adopted by the Religious Education Office in the Diocese of Wilmington.

Principal: The principal is responsible for the entire school program and is its chief administrator, spiritual and professional leader, and instructional supervisor. It is the function of the principal to provide spiritual leadership and to develop a climate throughout the school that allows the presence of Christ to be felt by all and instruction in the faith to be given the highest priority.

Teacher: The teacher, dedicated to the pursuit of excellence, strives to instill principles of scholarship and service into the minds and hearts of the students. It is the teacher's privilege and responsibility to create and maintain a Christ-centered environment conducive to learning and growth.

## **II. ACADEMICS**

Mount Aviat Academy follows the course of studies established by the Academy in compliance with what has been set forth by the state of Maryland. Instruction in religious truths and values is an integral part of our program. Much of the instructional program is based upon diocesan curriculum guidelines.

### **A. Curriculum**

The curriculum includes Religion, Language Arts (Writing, Grammar, Spelling, Handwriting), Reading (Phonics, Literature), Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Music, Art, Physical Education, French, and Computer Instruction. Time allotments required by the Maryland State Department of Education for Non-Public Schools are followed. Students in preschool and kindergarten receive a complete readiness program.

Students are grouped heterogeneously within the class. Students may be divided into smaller flexible groups and given additional assistance to meet their individual needs and learning styles.

Students in grades 5 to 8 have the opportunity to be placed in an accelerated Mathematics program. Admission to the program depends upon report card grades, standardized test scores and teacher recommendations.

### **B. Textbooks**

Current textbooks and materials are used in all areas of the curriculum. Texts are selected by the principal and teachers. All books and materials used at Mount Aviat Academy will support the philosophy of the school and will contribute to the character formation of the students.

### **C. Technology**

Students will receive regular technology instruction according to diocesan guidelines and national standards. This is an area in education that is undergoing constant change and refinement as schools try to respond to changing role of technology. Students will be taught to use technology for research and enrichment purposes.

Prior to being given access to the Internet, students and their parents will be required to sign an Internet User Agreement. Students will receive instruction in appropriate internet use. Improper or unauthorized use of the internet will be considered a serious matter and will result in disciplinary measures as well as the cancellation of this privilege for the remainder of the academic year. The personal use of any images or electronic data that references or uses the name or logo of Mount Aviat Academy to include any reference to its employees, staff or students is strictly prohibited. Engagement in online blogs may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, or other students.

Mount Aviat Academy attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats seriously or in jest online face detention, suspension, and/ or expulsion.

### **D. Testing**

The standardized testing program is designed as a systematic evaluation of the school's academic program and is used in the revision of its curriculum. It is also used as a diagnostic tool in identifying individual students' academic strengths and weaknesses. This testing is done in conjunction with the Diocese of Wilmington in the spring of each year for students in kindergarten through 7th grade. At the kindergarten level, the results are used as an indicator of readiness for the first grade program.

## **E. Homework**

Homework is an extension of class work and is intended to reinforce learning, review skills, and provide an opportunity to use research skills. Students will be given written assignments, long and short-term projects and study assignments. Homework is assigned daily. General time allotments for both written and study assignments are given below. Since all students work at different speeds, these are merely intended as a guide.

Grades 1 and 2 = 20 - 30 minutes

Grades 3 and 4 = 40 - 60 minutes

Grades 5 and 6 = 75 - 90 minutes

Grades 7 and 8 = 90 -120 minutes

All homework will be checked. Teachers will make an effort to coordinate their schedules so that no more than two major tests are given on any one day. Students should bring to the teachers' attention when more than two tests have been scheduled on the same day so that arrangements can be made to reschedule one. Weekly spelling tests are not considered major tests. In the beginning of each school year, each teacher will make known to the students and their parents the policy for late or incomplete assignments.

### Student Responsibilities

- ◆ Beginning in the third grade, students are encouraged to keep a calendar assignment book and to list assignments and tests daily.
- ◆ Students are required to complete and hand in all assignments on time.
- ◆ Students are required to plan ahead for long-term assignments and tests.
- ◆ In the Middle School, it is the responsibility of the student to make sure that he/she understands the assignment before leaving class.
- ◆ It is the responsibility of the student to write all reports in his/her own words and to properly document all sources.
- ◆ Daily review of math skills and independent reading should be part of each student's homework.
- ◆ Students are responsible for taking home the necessary books and assignments each day. In the case of forgotten work, students are encouraged to contact a classmate.

### Parent Responsibilities

- ◆ Parents need to provide a suitable environment for homework and study.
- ◆ Parents are encouraged to read and review math facts, as well as spelling and vocabulary words, with their children daily.
- ◆ Parental supervision and checking of homework depends upon the age of the child and the student's level of independence. In the younger grades, parents are encouraged to check their children's homework each evening and to help them to form good habits of study and review. As the students progress through the school, parents are encouraged to allow them more independence while continuing to check on the quality of their work and to provide guidance in long-term assignments.

## **F. Parent-Teacher Conferences**

A conference may be scheduled at any time during the year at the request of either the parent or the teacher. Parents who wish to consult with a teacher are asked to send a note to the teacher requesting the conference or call the school office.

Conferences are strongly encouraged at the distribution of first trimester report cards. Scheduled conferences are fifteen minutes in length. The purpose of these conferences is to provide an evaluation of the child's progress and to allow the teacher and parents to discuss ways of working together for the good of the child. Longer appointments can be requested at any time during the year.

## **G. Grading and Report Cards**

### Report Cards

Report cards are distributed each trimester. They are an important communication tool between the home and the school. Parents are asked to look over them carefully and to discuss them with their children, paying particular attention to the comments on effort, social development and work habits.

Report card grades in each subject area will reflect test and quiz grades, class participation, projects, portfolios (where appropriate), notebooks, homework and class work.

### Mid-term Progress Reports

Progress reports will be issued mid-trimester for any student in danger of failing or who has shown a significant drop in achievement or attitude. In the middle school, this would be equivalent to a D+ or lower and, in the lower school, a grade of I or U. These reports are viewed by the school as a timely warning that failure could occur if the student does not improve his/her performance. They should not be taken as an indication of failure in and of themselves. Progress reports must be signed and returned to the teacher the day after they are received.

### Honor Roll

Because one of the core goals of Mount Aviat Academy is to educate our students to strive for excellence at each level of instruction by developing the necessary skills and principles of scholarship, scholastic honors will be recognized each quarter with the distribution of report cards in grades 5 to 8. Eligibility for honors is as follows:

First Honors	GPA of 3.50 or above
Second Honors	GPA between 3.30 and 3.49

### Promotion and Retention

Promotion is based upon the teacher's recommendation to the principal in accord with the following principles:

- A student must have a passing (70% or above) average
- A student must be passing the core subjects
  - Grades 1 to 3: Reading, Writing Skills, Math
  - Grades 4 to 8: Reading, Math, English, Science, Social Studies
- Immaturity or excessive absence may also necessitate evaluation of promotion.

If a teacher believes that a student should be retained, a conference will be held with the parents no later than the end of the second trimester. A student who earns a D+ or lower in the middle school or an I in the lower school for the year in an individual subject will be required to be tutored, to complete a summer packet or to attend summer school. Parents will be informed if a student must attend a summer school program. A written report of the tutoring or summer school must be sent to the school at least two weeks before the beginning of the new academic year.

The final decision to promote or retain a student is made by the principal based on the student's academic performance, best interests, and teacher recommendation.

## **H. Academic Policy**

The academic success of each child is of primary importance to our school. When a student does not meet the minimal standards established to pass a subject, the school must take the necessary action to remedy this situation. Involvement in extracurricular activities demands a tremendous time commitment. It is hoped that by relieving this demand on the student's time, he/she can devote sufficient time to homework and studying.

If a middle school student receives a notice of deficiency at the mid-trimester, the student is suspended from participation in the sports program for two weeks. At the end of that period, the parents may determine whether the student has improved sufficiently to resume participation. When a student receives a D+ grade on a report card, the student is suspended from school-sponsored activities. The period of suspension will last three weeks.

The policy for students in the lower school is adapted slightly to accommodate the Learning Profile which serves as a report card. If a lower school student receives a notice of deficiency at the mid-trimester or a grade of I or U on the report card, the student is suspended from participation in the sports program one week for each deficient area. At the end of that period, the parents in communication with the teacher may determine whether the student has improved sufficiently to resume participation.

### **III. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

#### ***A. Attendance***

Regular student attendance and punctuality are essential to ensure continuous progress in school. For their own benefit, children should not stay away from school except for serious reasons, such as illness. As assigned make-up work is only a poor substitute for classroom instruction, the school strongly urges that family vacations be scheduled to coincide with school vacations. The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips and family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process. Student's grades may be adversely affected due to missed assignments that are the result absences.

In case of illness, students should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

A student is tardy if not present in the classroom by 8:20 A.M. A student who is tardy must report to the office for a late slip before going to his/her homeroom.

If a student will be absent or considerably late, parents should call the school office. Upon arriving at school the student must have a note stating the reason for the absence. Arrangements must be made with the teacher for all missed assignments and tests. If a parent wishes to pick up a student's books and assignments, the teacher must be notified before 10:00 A.M. The books and assignments will be sent to the school office by 2:50 P.M. Parents may not stop by the classroom for the books unless they have made previous arrangements with the teacher.

A student who returns to school after a prolonged illness with a medical excuse from physical education or outdoor recess must present a doctor's note stating the reason for these restrictions. The note must be kept on file.

When a family anticipates that a child will be absent for a period of days, the principal and the teacher should be notified so that appropriate make-up work can be assigned. The teachers may provide assignments in advance if it is deemed appropriate. All other work must be made up once the student has returned to school. Keeping track of make-up work and completing it is the responsibility of the student and the parents. The school discourages such absences.

Except in cases of emergency as determined by the principal, a student may only be released from school with prior written authorization from a parent. Students may be picked up in the office where they must sign out on leaving the building and returning to it.

## ***B. Admissions***

An entrance exam will be administered to any student seeking admission. This requirement may be waived if a recent nationally recognized standardized test has been taken by the student. Students demonstrating grade level performance will be considered for admission. Other factors for consideration include maturity, previous school performance and past conduct.

Children who will have reached the age of five years by August 31st will be admitted to the kindergarten program.

At the time of initial admission to Mount Aviat Academy, the family must present the immunization record and social security number (if U.S. citizen). Students must have a physical examination when transferring into the school.

Any time a change of custody has occurred, the principal must be given a copy of the legal document from the parent or guardian.

Parents are strongly urged to notify the school promptly of any change of telephone number, address, or emergency contact.

## ***C. Transfers***

Students registering for grades 1 to 8 or transferring during the school year are required to present copies of report cards and standardized test scores for the present and previous years. Any educational or psychological testing results must also be submitted so that the child may be placed appropriately.

Students transferring from Mount Aviat Academy must have a request for records sent from the new school. All fees and tuition must be paid.

Mount Aviat Academy adheres to the Buckley amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy) regarding access to student records. Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the U.S. mail. No records will be given to parents to transport to the new school. Students requesting records/recommendations must make a five school-day request to the office. All forms should be submitted to the school office for distribution. Completed forms will be sent via the U.S. mail.

## ***D. Lunch***

Children may bring their lunch to school. A school lunch program is available for those who wish to use this service. They will be able to purchase milk and juice. Special hot lunches sponsored and coordinated by a group of parents will be available periodically during the school year.

## ***E. Arrival and Dismissal***

7:30 - 8:20a.m.	Students arrive
8:20a.m.	Morning Prayer
8:30a.m.	Classes begin
3:00p.m.	Closing Prayer and dismissal
3:15p.m.	Remaining students report to After Care program
5:30p.m.	After Care program closes

## **IV. GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES**

### **A. Administrative**

#### Parental Visits

Parents who must drop off lunch or other materials for their children are asked to leave those items in the school office. Parents are asked not to go directly to their child's classroom since this would disrupt instruction. Parents who need to speak with their children while they are in school should contact the office.

#### Parental Concerns

Parents are strongly encouraged to contact their child's teacher with any concerns they might have by sending in a note and requesting an appointment or a phone call. All are asked to avoid participating in gossip since this is damaging to the school environment and ultimately to the children. Because teachers and the principal are usually not free during the opening and closing minutes of the school day, parents are asked not to attempt to hold impromptu conferences at this time. The principal and teachers will willingly schedule a conference to discuss any concerns or suggestions a parent may have. It is important to keep open the avenues of communication and to clear up any misunderstandings before they become problems.

#### Family Newsletter

A newsletter will be distributed electronically every Friday. The purpose of this newsletter is to keep families informed about what is taking place in school and to provide timely reminders of deadlines, etc... Regular communication between the home and the school is essential.

#### Family Folder

All communications for the week will be sent home on Friday in the Family Folder. These will be sent with the youngest child in the family unless a family requests otherwise of the office staff. Parents are encouraged to ask their children for the folder on Friday and to see that it is returned promptly on Monday. Any flyer or information that an individual or organization wishes to be sent to the school families must first be approved by the principal.

#### School Telephone

Students are not permitted to make or receive phone calls during the day except in case of emergency. In this case, the principal or secretary must be notified before the student makes or accepts the call. Students may not call home for forgotten books, projects, lunch, etc. Students may not have cellular phones in their possession at school. Cell phones required for after school activities must be given to the classroom teacher to hold during the day.

#### Emergency School Closings

Mount Aviat Academy will be closed if Cecil County Public Schools close because of bad weather. If Cecil County has a delayed opening, Mount Aviat Academy will as well. If the delay is one hour, preschool will be held. If the delay is two hours, there will be no preschool. This information is available on local radio stations, the CCPS.org website and will be broadcast through School Reach.

#### Preschool and Kindergarten Policies

Since many of the policies in this handbook do not pertain to the preschool and kindergarten, the teachers of those classes will review class policies at an orientation meeting held at the beginning of each academic year.

#### Photographs

Individual and class pictures will be taken in the Fall. The date will be announced well in advance. A photo release permission form will be kept on file in the school office in the event that a student's photograph is published. Parents have the right to grant or withhold this permission. Parental preferences will be respected.

### Class Parties

Parents who wish to send in a treat for their child's birthday are asked to contact the teacher in advance. It is up to the teacher to decide when the treat will be given to the class. Parents are asked to keep the treats simple and easy to distribute. More elaborate birthday treats such as cakes and treat bags should be kept for home celebrations. This guideline is particularly important with regard to the lower school lunch period when birthday celebrations can interfere with the smooth running of the limited lunch period.

Parents should always communicate with teachers for the planning of class celebrations.

Invitations to birthday parties may be sent home with students only when the entire class is invited, or all the boys or all the girls in the class. In all other cases, invitations may not be brought into school.

### Graduation Ceremonies

Mount Aviat Academy will hold graduation ceremonies for kindergarten and eighth grade. Kindergarten graduation will consist of a presentation by the students for their parents and an awarding of diplomas to the children. Graduation from the eighth grade is marked with a special Mass followed by a graduation ceremony in the evening.

## ***B. Parent Meetings***

Mount Aviat Academy will host home school meetings:

- ◆ to support the principal and the school's policies
- ◆ to provide a means by which parents can articulate their values and expectations for the school
- ◆ to support and promote quality Catholic education
- ◆ to provide information to parents about instructional programs and school policies
- ◆ to offer opportunities for parent education

## ***C. Fund-Raising***

Any group affiliated with the school wishing to conduct a fund-raising program must obtain the approval of the development director who will communicate with the principal and coordinate the calendar of events to avoid overlap. Fund-raisers must not interfere with the regular school program. Students are not permitted to solicit door-to-door for any school-sponsored fund-raising program.

## ***D. Transportation***

It is anticipated that all students will arrive and depart from school by car or by buses provided through the state of Pennsylvania. Parents are responsible for arranging carpools. Parents may come to the school office to consult an address list. Faculty members will assist with student dismissal. All drivers are expected to abide by dismissal procedures and regulations. Drivers are asked not to pass other cars in the carpool line and to refrain from using cell phones while driving on the school property.

Only students participating in an approved after-school activity are permitted to remain on the school property after dismissal. Siblings and other carpool members may not remain with them since they cannot be supervised properly. All other students must be in the After Care program to assure safety and supervision of all children on the school property.

## **V. FINANCES**

### Tuition Policies

Tuition rates will be published by the school in a timely manner each year.

At the time of registration, a \$100 non-refundable down payment must be made for each family.

All families with children at Mount Aviat Academy must understand that tuition is a significant portion of the school's revenues. Prompt payment is essential to the smooth operation of the school.

Re-registration for students currently enrolled takes place during the second trimester. Only those students whose families' financial accounts are current will be allowed to reregister. Registration for the following year will not be considered final until all tuition and fees for the current year are paid. Any family which can not meet their financial obligations at any time during the year must contact the principal so that mutually agreed upon arrangements may be made.

Mount Aviat Academy has a limited tuition assistance program. Families will be required to apply for assistance through a company who will evaluate the families' need and make recommendations to the school. The deadline to apply for financial assistance will be announced to all families.

The yearly registration fee and all tuition payments are non-refundable even if these payments are made before the first day of school.

### Tuition Policies

All policies relating to tuition are made available to all present and prospective parents. All questions or special situations should be referred to the accounting secretary.

### School Fees

In addition to tuition, students are assessed a registration and instructional materials fee. The instructional materials fee covers rental of hard-cover textbooks, consumable workbooks, classroom supplies, art materials, physical education equipment, and science lab fees for consumable materials. Students graduating from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade are required to pay a fee associated with the expenses incurred by graduation.

Students who wish to participate in special programs or extra-curricular activities will be expected to pay a fee. It will be necessary for students enrolled in sports to contribute to the cost of these activities. Students who enroll in the school band will have to pay for their lessons and to rent their instruments. Every effort will be made by the school to keep these extra fees to a minimum. Participation in all these programs is optional. They are offered by the school as a service to our families.

## **VI. CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Participation in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities is a privilege extended to students who consistently meet their primary obligations to their school community. Therefore, it should always be considered a prerequisite for participation that students maintain passing grades in all subjects and abide by school regulations.

### Music

Mount Aviat Academy offers an instrumental band program through an independent company. Students in grades 4 to 8 will receive all the necessary information at the beginning of the school year. Lessons are given during school hours on a rotating basis. It is the responsibility of each band member to make up any class work that has been missed.

### Field Trips

Field trips which are educationally enriching are permitted by the school. They must be conducted within school guidelines. Written parental permission must be obtained before any student will be allowed to participate. Verbal permissions can not be accepted. The school reserves the right to refuse a student permission to participate if his/her behavior is inappropriate or potentially unsafe to the group or an individual. Elementary school students are not permitted to take overnight school-sponsored trips. The school will make every effort to keep the price of the trips reasonable. Any family who finds the cost of a field trip prohibitive is encouraged to consult with the principal.

Cell phones are not allowed on field trips unless otherwise directed by the teacher and/or administration.

## **VII. PARENT AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### ***A. The Role of Parents***

Mount Aviat Academy respects the role of parents as the primary educators of their children. Since the school is a continuation of the education children are receiving at home, the school pledges itself to demonstrate respect and support for the parents in their important and challenging task and calls upon the parents to display an attitude of respect and support toward the school, the staff, and the educational process. This attitude of the parents is the most important requirement for the school to fulfill its mission. Parents are asked to attend particularly to the following:

- ◆ support of the school's mission and commitment to Christian principles
- ◆ support of the school policies as outlined in this handbook and published by the school administration or the classroom teacher
- ◆ discussing any disagreement with a teacher privately
- ◆ taking care that their children adhere to the dress code
- ◆ insuring that their children's hair styles conform with school policy
- ◆ maintaining awareness of their children's assignments - insisting upon quality in all work
- ◆ checking their children's homework until the child achieves independence
- ◆ insuring that their children arrive promptly at school
- ◆ assisting their children to maintain a good attendance record, except when the child is sick
- ◆ reading all school publications, especially the weekly newsletter
- ◆ volunteering to help out at the school in some way

Parents are strongly encouraged to make an appointment to discuss a problem with their child's teacher. Teachers welcome the opportunity to clear up a misunderstanding before it becomes an actual problem. Parents are asked not to discuss the situation with other parents. Any parent who wishes to speak with the principal may do so but the first step should always be to contact the classroom teacher. Parents are reminded that arrival and dismissal times are not appropriate conference times. It is essential that teachers attend to the needs of their students.

Because Mount Aviat Academy is first and foremost a faith community, parents are invited to participate in all school liturgies. As a means of positive and ongoing communication between the home and the school, parents are strongly encouraged to attend Open Houses and parent meetings.

Parents have the right to inspect the records of their child. Any parent wishing to do so is requested to notify the principal who will arrange access to the records in a timely fashion. If the educational records of a student contain information on more than one student, the parents are limited to specific information about their child only.

Student records will be released only upon written consent of the parent. Parents may not hand-carry records to another school.

Mount Aviat Academy offers many opportunities for parents to be involved in the education of their children. All parents are encouraged to participate in school activities and to find some opportunity to be involved in the school. Together the home and the school can accomplish great things!

## **B. Dress Code**

Mount Aviat Academy maintains a dress code for the following purposes:

- ◆ to foster an environment which is conducive to learning and to self discipline
- ◆ to minimize distractions during the school day.
- ◆ to establish clear directives which are easily followed by parents and students and easily enforced by faculty members

### Uniforms

#### *Girls in Grades 1 to 4*

plaid jumper  
white MAA golf shirt  
navy blue sweater (must be worn for school pictures and special events)  
dress shoes  
navy blue knee socks/tights

#### *Girls in Grades 5 to 8*

Plaid skort  
white MAA golf shirt or turtleneck  
navy blue sweater (must be worn for school pictures and special events)  
dress shoes  
navy blue knee socks/tights

#### *Boys in Grades 1 to 8*

grey dress slacks and belt (boys in grades 1 to 4 may wear dress shorts in warm weather)  
white shirt and uniform tie  
navy blue sweater (must be worn for school pictures and special events)  
dress shoes  
grey socks

#### *Uniform Shoes in Grades 1 to 8*

All school shoes must be obtained through the approved school shoe uniform company.

#### *Physical Education uniforms for Grades 1 to 8*

blue athletic shorts and tee-shirt with school logo  
grey sweat suit with school logo (no other sweat suit may be worn)  
white athletic socks and sneakers

- ◆ Girls' uniforms should be a reasonable length. Correct uniform length must be maintained to the end of the school year.
- ◆ Girls' earrings must be small posts. Hoops and dangling earrings may not be worn. Boys may not wear earrings.
- ◆ Students may not wear excessive amounts of jewelry. Religious symbols may be worn.
- ◆ No make-up should be worn other than clear or pastel pink nail polish.
- ◆ Personal care items should not be brought to school.
- ◆ Tattoos and tattoo transfers are not permitted.
- ◆ Students are expected to maintain neat hairstyles. Extreme hairstyles are not permitted. Gels and other hair products may not be worn.
- ◆ Boys' hair may not touch the shirt collar, come below the eye brows or appear uncombed and shaggy.
- ◆ Tee-shirts worn under the uniform shirt must be solid white.
- ◆ Students may not wear sweatshirts in class or at assemblies except when they are in their physical education uniforms. Only the uniform sweatshirt is permitted. Students who are cold must wear the school sweater.

- ◆ Hats may not be worn indoors.
- ◆ The complete school uniform must be worn every day, although, students are not obliged to wear the sweater except for school pictures and special events.
- ◆ On the day the students have physical education, they will wear their physical education uniform all day when they have class. The sweat suit must be worn except during warm weather.

### Color Day Dress Code

When students are permitted to dress out of uniform on a school day or at a school function, they must adhere to the following dress code:

- ◆ Shirts or other pieces of clothing featuring any type of a musical group or with a questionable message are absolutely forbidden. Wearing of such a shirt or piece of apparel would be considered a serious violation of the discipline code. Sorts with logos or messages on the back are not acceptable.
- ◆ Clothing must be neat and appropriate for school or the scheduled activity.
- ◆ Girls' skirts or dresses must be of a modest length.
- ◆ Shirts must go below the waist and have a sleeve.
- ◆ Clothing must fit appropriately.

School uniforms must be purchased from one of the two companies contracted by the school. School shoes must be purchased from the approved company. The physical education uniform is purchased directly from the school.

Students who repeatedly violate the uniform policy will be denied participation in the next color day.

## **C. Code of Student Conduct**

Mount Aviat Academy maintains a discipline code in order to accomplish the following:

- ◆ to promote growth in Christian virtue in its students
- ◆ to create an environment in which each individual is accepted and valued
- ◆ to allow all students to learn
- ◆ to insure the safety of all

Mount Aviat Academy has high standards for the conduct of its students, expecting them to act as Jesus acted. Students are asked to observe the following at all times:

- ◆ Treat others the way you wish to be treated.
- ◆ Speak respectfully to everyone. Speak kindly about everyone.
- ◆ Show respect for others' opinions.
- ◆ Display the proper courtesy when addressing adults. The religious as Sister and all adults spoken to or about with their proper title of Mrs., Miss, or Mr., Ms. and their surname.
- ◆ Obey and respect proper authority in the school.
- ◆ Only use appropriate language, especially with regard to the use of God's name.
- ◆ Avoid loud noises in the corridors out of respect for those in class.
- ◆ Respect school property. Help to keep Mount Aviat Academy neat, clean and in good condition. Pay particular attention to neatness in the lunchroom.
- ◆ Respect the property of others, never entering another's desk or personal property without that person's express permission.
- ◆ Refrain from chewing gum.
- ◆ Treat school and library books, as well as all learning materials, with utmost respect as valuable resources.
- ◆ Accept responsibility for your own actions and decisions.
- ◆ Display honesty in all situations by doing your own work, giving proper credit for sources in written work, and always telling the truth.
- ◆ Complete all assignments promptly and neatly.

- ◆ Display good sportsmanship in physical education, on sports teams, and on the playground.
- ◆ Remain in the assigned areas at all times.
- ◆ Clear any and all publications with the principal before distributing them.
- ◆ Look for ways of giving service in your class and school.
- ◆ Students are discouraged from having a lot of money in school.

Any behavior which does not conform to the above principles is considered inappropriate. The following violations of the discipline code are considered particularly serious:

- disobedience or disrespect to authority
- defiance of school rules
- physical or verbal harm to another person
- any form of cheating, lying or stealing
- damage of school or personal property
- use of foul language
- leaving an assigned area without permission
- any form of sexual harassment

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems which arise, this clause empowers the faculty and administration to take disciplinary action for any behavior which violates the spirit and philosophy of Mount Aviat Academy even though not specified.

#### ***D. Student Privacy***

Mount Aviat Academy has the right and the responsibility to protect the health, welfare and safety of its students and staff against drugs, weapons, unauthorized publications, and other contraband materials. Search of a student's property and/or personal property on school property or at school activities may be conducted by the school principal or designated officials. It is only necessary that the search be reasonable and related to the school's rights in this regard. The failure of a student to submit voluntarily to a search shall be presumptive evidence of the existence of contraband and grounds for appropriate disciplinary action.

Lockers and desks are school property and are subject to searches by school authorities to protect the safety of all. A student to whom a locker or desk has been assigned has vis a vis other students exclusive use of the locker or desk but has no proprietary rights versus the school. School authorities have the right to inspect a locker or desk to insure that it is only being used for authorized school purposes.

#### ***E. Student Discipline Code***

##### Playground Regulations

- ◆ Students must remain in the assigned area at all times.
- ◆ Supervising adults are to be shown the same respect as the classroom teacher.
- ◆ Foul or abusive language may never be used.
- ◆ All forms of fighting, shoving, pushing, tackling, tripping, or wrestling are not permitted.
- ◆ Any destruction of property, including landscaping and equipment, is expressly forbidden.
- ◆ Students must share playground equipment.
- ◆ Rough playing and throwing rocks or other objects is not permitted.
- ◆ When the bell rings, students must line up promptly in their designated spots.

##### Lunchroom Regulations

- ◆ Supervising adults are to be shown the same respect as the classroom teacher.
- ◆ Students must enter the lunchroom quietly and in an orderly fashion with their classes.
- ◆ Students must go to their places, be seated, and remain there unless they have received permission to do otherwise.
- ◆ Students may talk quietly during lunch. Loud and boisterous behavior is never acceptable in the lunchroom.

- ◆ Students are to display proper table manners at all times. They are expected to clean up after themselves and to make sure that no trash is left on the floor or on the table.
- ◆ Students are not to waste food. Unopened food is to be put back in the lunch bag and taken home.

### Code of Conduct Violations and Consequences

Students who violate the code of conduct explained in this handbook or that given them by their teachers can expect a disciplinary consequence. The purpose of this is to modify and change the inappropriate behavior and to develop self-discipline in the student.

Each offense will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the age of the child and the frequency of disciplinary infractions. Inappropriate student behavior will ordinarily be dealt with in the following ways:

- ◆ verbal warnings and reminders
- ◆ conferences between the student and the teacher
- ◆ loss of minor privileges such as recess
- ◆ issuing a demerit
- ◆ assignment of special tasks
- ◆ conference with the student, teacher and parent
- ◆ conference with the student, teacher, parent and principal

More serious or repeated disciplinary infractions could result in a discipline notice, probation, suspension, dismissal at the end of the academic year or expulsion. A discipline notice carries the same weight as a suspension, however, the student does not miss a day of school. If a student receives three suspensions or discipline notices or a combination of the two, he or she will be asked to leave the school.

### ***F. Disciplinary Policy***

1. Teachers are encouraged to show respect to students at all times. No teacher shall be insulting in comments to students, or use offensive names or corporal punishment.
2. Group punishment is discouraged. It is unfair to the individual rights of students to punish an entire class for the sake of a few students, although at times it may be necessary.
3. Under normal circumstances, a student should not be dismissed from class for disciplinary reasons. If a student persists in extremely disruptive behavior, a note may be sent to the office requesting assistance from the principal.
4. To teach students to accept responsibility for their own actions, Mount Aviat Academy has chosen to use a demerit system. Teachers are urged to use discretion and prudence in administering these demerits. The welfare of the student and the upholding of school principles are the criteria to be used. Where natural consequences would serve a more productive purpose, they should be employed.
5. In all grades, disciplinary notices may be given by the administration for serious infractions of the rules such as arrogance, gross disobedience, or willful destruction of property.
6. The school policy concerning disciplinary probation is as follows:
  - a) A student who has received 15 demerits is placed on disciplinary probation. This probation is automatic and is preceded by a one-day suspension. If the student accumulates 5 more demerits, he/she may no longer continue at Mount Aviat.
  - b) A student who has received 2 discipline notices is also placed on disciplinary probation. At the third discipline notice, the student must leave the school.
  - c) Serious infractions such as cheating on a major test, obscene language or gestures, or fighting can merit an immediate suspension of one day. At the third suspension, the student may no longer remain at the school.

7. Teachers are encouraged to use the disciplinary policies in a way that is fair, consistent and just. The ultimate goal of the school is to teach the students responsibility for their own actions and to assist them in making responsible decisions. Whenever possible, the school favors a positive approach to discipline the rewarding of good behavior, as the more correct application of "Salesian Education".

8. Merits will be given to students for showing Christian kindness and Salesian attitudes. They are a positive way to reward students for behavior modeled after the example of Jesus.

**Suspension** - A student may be suspended by the principal immediately for fighting, obscene language or gestures, cheating on a major test or other seriously inappropriate behavior. A conference with the principal and parent is required in all cases of suspension.

**Discipline Notice** - A student may receive a discipline notice for incidents which merit a suspension, but it is not deemed advantageous to have the student miss a day of school. This notice is signed by the principal and, if appropriate, by a faculty member.

**Dismissal** - Conduct that is disruptive to the learning atmosphere and/or contrary to Catholic principles is justification for the principal to dismiss a student at the close of the school year. Parental notification must be in writing and must provide an opportunity for parents to meet with the principal. Students who are dismissed may apply for readmission after one full year.

**Expulsion** - Expulsion may be resorted to when a grave infraction of school rules occurs, when the student has demonstrated continuing disregard of school rules for which other means of discipline have proven ineffectual, and/or when the student's continued presence in the school has the probability of being a serious hindrance to the safety and welfare of the school community. The principal must meet with the student and the parents and must provide written notice to the parents of the decision to expel the student.

### ***G. Sexual Harassment Policy***

All staff and faculty are obliged to follow the sexual harassment policy adopted by the Diocese of Wilmington. Review of the policy will take place each academic year. The policy is available in the principal's office for review at any time.

### ***H. Non-Discrimination Clause***

Mount Aviat Academy complies with those constitutional and statutory provisions, as may be specifically applicable to the schools, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, marital status, handicap or disability, national origin, or citizenship in the administration of their educational, personnel, admissions, financial aid, athletic and other school administered programs.

This policy does not preclude nor does it conflict with the priority given to the employment of Catholics. This policy also does not preclude the ability of the school to undertake and/or enforce appropriate actions with respect to applicants or students who teach or advocate on school property or at school functions any practices or doctrines which are inconsistent with religious tenets of the Catholic faith.

### ***I. Care of School Property***

Mount Aviat Academy is privileged to have a beautiful facility. It is the responsibility of each one to insure that it is taken care of and kept in excellent condition. Such vigilant care of our facility is one way to show gratitude to God for His great goodness to us. It is also a way to show our appreciation to those who have made many sacrifices to provide us with this beautiful school. Any damage of school property is considered a serious violation of the school's discipline code. Students are reminded to pay particular attention to the following:

- ◆ Marks should never be made deliberately on walls, floors, desks, furniture or any other surface. Marks made accidentally should be cleaned up promptly. If a student accidentally damages a piece of furniture or some part of the building, he/she must report the damage immediately to the office so that it can be repaired.
- ◆ Spills must be cleaned up immediately or the maintenance staff should be contacted to address the situation.
- ◆ Ball playing is restricted to the assigned areas.
- ◆ Students should not hang or pull on trees and shrubs.
- ◆ Mount Aviat Academy students must be willing to require other students who visit or use our school facility to take good care of it.
- ◆ No chewing gum is permitted at Mount Aviat Academy. This frequently leads to damage to the school building and furniture.
- ◆ Students are reminded to treat school and library books, as well as all learning materials, with utmost respect as valuable resources provided for us that we might learn.
- ◆ Students who damage, intentionally or accidentally, school or personal property will be required to pay damages.

## ***J. Substance Abuse Policy***

Mount Aviat Academy is smoke and drug free. All forms of tobacco are included in the school's drug and alcohol policy that is given below.

A student shall not possess, use, transmit, sell, conceal or be under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, intoxicant, tobacco product, any substance which when taken internally or inhaled causes a change in a person's behavior, or any of the drugs defined by state law on school grounds, at school-sponsored or related functions or activities off school grounds, or at any other time the student is subject to the authority of the school.

A student may not possess, use, transmit, sell or conceal any drug or drug abuse paraphernalia on school grounds or at any other time the student is subject to the authority of the school.

A student may not possess imitations of controlled substances or illegal drugs at any time the student is subject to the authority of the school. The use or sale of drugs on or near school property is unlawful under Maryland State law.

In any case of a suspected violation of this policy, the parents will be called. Law enforcement agencies must be notified if there is any violation of state law. The school will assist the family in procuring any needed professional resources.

Any student who violates this policy will be subject to the following disciplinary action.

For the first offense:

If the student and family are cooperative, the student will be suspended from school for one week. This must be an out-of-school suspension. It is within the jurisdiction of the school to require a professional assessment to determine if a rehabilitation program is needed. Participation in a program is a valid condition for the re-admittance of a student. It is required that the parents and the student meet with the principal **before** the student returns to school.

If the student and/or family are not cooperative, the student will be expelled.

For the second offense:

The student will be expelled.

The school maintains the right to dismiss a student for distributing alcohol and/or drugs on school property or during any school sponsored activity.

### **K. Inappropriate Materials**

Students are not permitted to bring the following or similar items to school unless needed for educational purposes: MP3 players, CD players, iPods/iTouches, radios, electronic games, play guns or any sort of play weapon, cell phones, magazines (other than for an assignment given by a teacher), skateboards, scooters, or roller skates/roller blades.

It is much more serious for a student to have on the school grounds or at a school-related function any form of weapon: guns, knives, matches, lighters, laser pointers or any device that causes an explosion including, but not limited to, devices requiring a fuse for ignition of any chemical.

### **L. Child Abuse Laws**

Mount off the Academy abides by the child abuse laws of the State of Maryland. This law mandates that in all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect the reported to Social Services.

### **\*\*Right to Amend**

The Mount Aviat Academy reserves the right to amend this handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the Family Folder

*Parents and students are reminded that the purpose of all discipline at Mount Aviat Academy is the safety and welfare of its children. It is the sincere desire of the faculty and administration to work together with the parents, the primary educators of their children, to bring about the spiritual and intellectual growth of its students.*

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