



Divine Savior  
Academy  
*A Christian Academy Dedicated to Excellence*

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK  
2011-2012

WELCOME TO:

# DIVINE SAVIOR ACADEMY

Dear Parents:

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

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

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

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

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

## ACCREDITATION

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

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

## DIVINE SAVIOR ACADEMY

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

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

3	A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE
3	STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION
4	PHILOSOPHY
5	MISSION/VISION/OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS
6	FACULTY & STAFF LIST
7	CURRICULUM
10	EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
11	FACULTY
11	LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
11	DISCIPLINE
15	HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION
17	ADMISSION GUIDELINES
17	TUITION AND FEES
18	ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL
18	ATTENDANCE
21	DRESS CODE
22	EXTENDED CARE
23	FIELD TRIPS
23	GRADING/HONOR ROLL
25	STUDENT RECORDS
25	GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING
26	HEALTH AND SAFETY
28	HOMEWORK
28	LUNCH AND SNACKS
29	PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION
29	TELEPHONE
29	TUTORING

# A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) has a rich tradition of academic excellence in its Pre-School through Grade 12 school system. The WELS has operated **highly regarded schools across the United States, the Caribbean, and elsewhere in the world for over 150 years**. Currently, WELS churches and associations operate 396 early childhood centers, 345 elementary schools, and 26 high schools across the nation.

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

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

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

## STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

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

# PHILOSOPHY

## *EDUCATING THE MIND.....*

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

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

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

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

The Academy's educational philosophy maintains that each child progress faster and participate more. To that end our objective is to maintain class sizes with 22 students under the guidance and instruction of one full-time teacher and one bilingual paraeducator in grades Pre-K through Second. Their dedication and energy ensure that no child is left behind.

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

## *ENLIGHTENING THE HEART.....*

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

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

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

## MISSION STATEMENT

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

### MISSION

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

### VISION STATEMENT

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

### OBJECTIVE STATEMENT

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

# FACULTY & STAFF LIST

## ADMINISTRATION

Pastor Carl Leyrer	<i>Senior Pastor</i>
Mr. Ben Troge	<i>Principal</i>
Pastor Carlos Leyrer	<i>Administrator/School Pastor</i>
Mr. Tim Biesterfeld	<i>Dean of Students</i>
Mrs. Connie Rodriguez-Leyrer	<i>School Counselor</i>
Mrs. Juanita Wells	<i>Admissions Director</i>
Mr. Jon Romsdahl	<i>K-8 Athletic Director</i>
Mr. Dan Unke	<i>High School Athletic Director</i>

## FACULTY AND STAFF

Pastor Carl Leyrer	<i>High School Religion</i>
Principal Ben Troge	<i>High School Religion</i>
Pastor Carlos Leyrer	<i>Middle School Religion</i>
Mrs. Sarah Jimenez	<i>College Counselor/Psychology</i>
Ms. Kedare Filsaime	<i>High School French</i>
Mr. Eduardo Escobar	<i>Latin I</i>
Mr. Logan Block	<i>Middle/High School English</i>
Ms. Anne Schroeder	<i>Middle/High School Math/Science/P.E.</i>
Mr. Chris Fischer	<i>Middle/High School Science/P.E./I.T.</i>
Mr. Tim Biesterfeld	<i>Middle/High School Math</i>
Mrs. Kristina Troge	<i>Middle/High School Science</i>
Mr. Jon Romsdahl	<i>Middle/High School English/Literature</i>
Mr. John Althoff	<i>Middle/High School Social Studies/Math</i>
Mr. Dan Unke	<i>Middle/High School Social Studies/Math</i>
Ms. Odette Martinez	<i>Art</i>
Mrs. Brianne Loberger	<i>Elementary/Middle/High School Music/English</i>
Ms. Maria Olavarrieta	<i>Elementary/Middle School Spanish</i>
Mrs. Yuliet Vega	<i>Elementary/Middle School Spanish</i>
Mr. Michael Babler	<i>5<sup>th</sup> Grade</i>
Mr. Erik Parsons	<i>5<sup>th</sup> Grade</i>
Ms. Amy Schramm	<i>4<sup>th</sup> Grade</i>
Ms. Kelly Mellgren	<i>4<sup>th</sup> Grade</i>
Ms. Lauren Moll	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Grade</i>
Ms. Lauren Kitka	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Grade</i>
Mrs. Rebekah Fincham	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Grade</i>
Ms. MyKayla Jensen	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Grade</i>
Ms. Sarah Howell	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Grade</i>
Ms. Amanda Selle	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Grade</i>
Ms. Elizabeth Meier	<i>Kindergarten</i>
Ms. Abby Hosbach	<i>Kindergarten</i>
Ms. Bonnie Hutchinson	<i>Preschool, 4-year olds</i>
Ms. Shawna Mehlberg	<i>Preschool, 4-year olds</i>
Mrs. Ely Simon	<i>Preschool, 3-year olds</i>
Ms. Juliana Lopez	<i>Preschool, 3-year olds</i>

# CURRICULUM

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

## RELIGION

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

## LANGUAGE ARTS

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

### *READING*

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

### *WRITING*

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

### *SPELLING*

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

## ORAL EXPRESSION

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

## MATHEMATICS

A thorough mathematics curriculum is critical for success in our ever-changing world. The traditional math approach at DSA gives students a firm foundation in computation, math concepts, problem solving strategies, and data interpretation. This foundation is constructed through daily instruction and review in a cumulative manner. Ample time is provided to grant individual assistance until the concepts are mastered. In order to promote fluidity, all of our classes in Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade use Saxon mathematics. The math program is experiential in nature and employs manipulative and real life situations to build mathematical knowledge.

## TECHNOLOGY

The development and use of modern technology continues to evolve and shape our lives. In order to gain proficiency in this technological age, computer education at DSA begins in first grade. Students are given the opportunity to develop familiarity with the physical structure of computers and with operating various computer programs to supplement cognitive growth. Each classroom is equipped with state-of-the-art computer equipment, numerous educational software titles, and high-speed Internet access that are utilized in a variety of contexts and disciplines. Educational software programs (Microsoft Office 2007, Learn 360, EBeam, Renaissance Place, My Reading Coach, and various math programs) are incorporated into the curriculum as a way of enriching the overall academic program. Computer labs are equipped with educational software and are utilized to complement student needs.

Use of the computer is regularly incorporated into the curriculum as a way of enriching the overall academic progress.

## SCIENCE

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

## SOCIAL STUDIES

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

## SPANISH

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

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

The Spanish as a Second Language program is designed to build a solid foundation for communication skills in the language through immersion Spanish classes. A repeated exposure to the language in a carefully planned variety of themes and contexts lead to natural acquisition of linguistic skills. Students develop written Spanish as well as the appreciation of the Hispanic culture.

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

## MUSIC

DSA’s music program contains the integrated components of music theory, voice development, and music appreciation. Basic elements such as notation, rhythm, and music terminology prepare the children to read music and explore musical instruments. Vocal skills are developed through pitch exploration, ear training, and daily classroom singing. Students are introduced to famous composers and some of their works. In an effort to showcase the musical talents and accomplishments of our young musicians, several public performances are planned throughout the year. The DSA children’s choir is open for participation for students in second through fifth grade. Future plans include the formation of a DSA band.

## ART

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

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

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

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

### DSA CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Children who enjoy singing are encouraged to further their musical interests through membership in the DSA Children's Choir. Opportunities for part-singing, solos, small group ensembles, and choreography add to the excitement of this weekly after-school activity. Public performances at church and in the community provide the children with occasion to share their faith, promote their school, and expand their musical horizons. Students in grades 2 through 5 may choose to join this voluntary choir.

### INDIVIDUAL MUSIC LESSONS

Individual piano and instrumental lessons are offered through various teachers and are contracted out at registration time.

### DRAMA PROGRAM

Students with an interest in acting have the opportunity to stage their talents as cast members of the Drama program. Two stage productions, the school play for students in grades 3 through 8, and a youth play for students in Pre-K4 through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade are planned annually. Whether it is acting, singing, dancing, or working behind the scenes, the young performers will reap many benefits from their involvement in theater while at the same time delighting appreciative audiences.

### ATHLETICS

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

### SPECIALTY PROGRAMS

Students have the opportunity, either by class, or as individuals, to explore various specialty programs offered at DSA. Art classes, piano lessons, and chess are included in these specialty programs.

# FACULTY

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

# LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Respect and educational purpose characterize the classroom environment at the Academy. The DSA code of conduct promotes responsibility, respect, civility and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. This learning atmosphere is relaxed but orderly – a place where instruction can take place and the joy of academic accomplishment can be experienced. Classrooms that are quiet and conducive to learning are the norm. Students are asked to raise their hands and wait for the teacher to call on them before giving an answer. In maintaining structured, disciplined classrooms, the teachers provide an educational setting where children can focus more readily, apply themselves better, and realize greater success in their quest to learn.

# DISCIPLINE

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

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

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

- Being disrespectful, rude, or disobedient to school personnel
- Using inappropriate, vulgar, or obscene language
- Stealing or possessing items not belonging to you

- Violation of dress code
- Failing to complete assigned school work
- Tardiness (4 or more per quarter)
- Cheating on tests or homework
- Harassment of fellow students
- Vandalizing/defacing school property (parents will be financially liable)
- Leaving class/school without permission
- Skipping class
- Being out of class (cutting) without permission
- Attitude and examples which are detrimental to the welfare of other students
- Gambling
- Possession of water pistols, toy guns, knives, radios, electronic games, I-pods, CD players, cell phones, any other electronic equipment or possession of illicit substances.

## DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

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

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

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

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

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

- Teachers
- Warning/counseling
- Time Out
- Copy classroom rules
- Recess detention
- Contacting parent
- After school detention
- Extra assignments
- Referring students to administration
- Administration
- Students referred to school administration may be disciplined by:
  - Warning/counseling
  - Parent conferences
  - Action taken will be commensurate with the offense and in accordance with the physical development of the student involved. Examples include, but are not limited to:
    - In-school suspension
    - Out-of-school suspension
    - Probation
    - Loss of privilege to take part in extra-curricular activities
    - Legal action (court)
    - Recommendation for Alternative School

## AFTER-SCHOOL DETENTION

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

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

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

- 1) Habitual refusal or failure to do homework.
- 2) Habitual refusal or failure to do class work.
- 3) Infractions of the teachers code of conduct and classroom policy.
- 4) Excessive tardiness
- 5) Failure to abide by school policies and procedures (dress code, etc.)

## DISCIPLINARY PROBATION

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

### Conditions:

- A student can be placed on probation for repeated violations
- Student progress will be reviewed periodically
- Disciplinary probation can be started at any time during the school year
- Parent cooperation is expected in monitoring concerns
- Duration of the Probationary status will be a minimum of one marking period
- Both student and parents must meet school recommendations
- Student failure to improve conduct may result in a recommendation for alternative schooling.

## SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY

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

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

The following infractions shall result in suspension or expulsion:

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

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

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

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

- 1) Maintaining a calm and respectful attitude that will set a tone where real listening can occur and understanding can emerge.

- 2) Parents or students with grievances or concerns regarding general school policies or procedures should set up a meeting with the Guidance Counselor to discuss these items of concern. The Guidance Counselor will then decide on the proper course of action; whether that is through counseling, scheduling a meeting with a teacher, or referral to the principal. Concerns regarding your child's academic performance should be brought to his/her classroom teacher through a scheduled appointment.
- 3) If the matter is between the home and the Principal, a conference with the Principal is the appropriate starting point. If satisfaction is not accomplished, then the matter may then be referred to the Pastor / Superintendent of DSA or the Executive Council of Divine Savior Academy.

## HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

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

### PARENT ORIENTATION NIGHT

In early August, parents are expected to meet with the Principal and teachers at a Parent Orientation night to discuss the school's philosophy, policies, and procedures. Classroom visitation and a question-and-answer session provide parents with helpful insights and information they will need for a successful school year. Inability to attend this meeting will necessitate a separate visit with the administration.

### POWER SCHOOL

PowerSchool is an online database offered to parents to track attendance, academic, and behavioral progress. In order to introduce this program to parents, seminars are offered at the beginning of every school year. These sessions are open to everyone but mandatory for all new families.

### PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Following the 1st and 2nd grading periods, parents are scheduled to meet with the teacher in a 20-minute conference. Discussion items include the child's academic progress, school disposition, and interaction with teacher and classmates.

### TEACHER AVAILABILITY

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

## CLASSROOM VISITATION

As part of DSA's open-door policy, parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom and see education in action. Parents may participate in the classroom activities or just come and observe. Prior to the visit, arrangements should be made with the teacher for the best time to visit so that the teacher may prepare ways to involve the parent during the visit. Upon arrival at school, parents will sign in and obtain a guest pass from the school office.

## VOLUNTEERING

Parents are welcome to volunteer at Divine Savior Academy. Opportunities are plentiful. Whether it's one day a month or one day a year, please consider reading a story, assisting with a small group, helping with a project, singing a song, manning the computer, or just being an extra pair of hands. Your presence enhances your life, your child's life, and our educational program as well. If interested, please contact the school office for orientation. At all times we keep the safety of our students at the forefront of our minds. Therefore, all volunteers must participate in a volunteer orientation meeting as well as submit a set of fingerprints which will be used as a background check.

## WEEKLY TEACHER NEWS

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

## STUDENT WEEKLY PROGRESS REPORT

A weekly student progress report may be started after a conference with the parent has deemed it necessary to assist a student with areas of concerns. This progress report is not a report card. Its purpose is to inform the student and his parents of the student's scholastic progress, homework completion and quality, test results, and or conduct.

## THE ACADEMY DISPATCH

The Academy Dispatch is DSA's way of keeping parents informed. This monthly newsletter is sent home the first Friday of every month with your child. Parents are encouraged to read it so as to stay abreast of campus scheduled events, upcoming activities, and other informative news. Educational news items, parenting tips, and highlights of student work are also included.

# ADMISSION GUIDELINES

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

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

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

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

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

# TUITION AND FEES

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

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

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

# ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

- DSA office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Classes begin promptly each day at 8:00 a.m. and conclude at 3:00 p.m. for grades 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. The day ends at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday.
- The Pre-K and Kindergarten school day begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 2:45 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. The day ends at 1:45 p.m. on Wednesday.
- Parents are asked to use the designated parent drop-off/pick-up area in the front of school upon both arrival and dismissal each day.
- Parents may walk Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten children to their respective classrooms each morning upon arrival.
- All parents, regardless of your child's grade level, must be out of the classroom building five minutes before the school day begins.
- Classroom doors open each morning at 7:40 for students in 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Students who arrive before 7:40 a.m. are to report to Before Care. Classroom doors for Preschool and Kindergarten students open at 8:15 a.m.
- At the end of the school day, under teacher supervision, students will be waiting to be picked up at designated areas between 2:45 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. for students in PreK and K and 3:00 and 3:15 p.m. for students in grades one through five. Students who are not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will be escorted to Extended Care.
- To ensure their safety, children who walk to school should do so under adult supervision.
- DSA maintains a closed campus. Children may not leave the school grounds of their own volition at any time during the school day. School policy and the safety of our children dictate that the teachers know where the children are at all times.

# ATTENDANCE

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

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

According to Florida Law and Miami-Dade County requirements, 20 absences during the course of a school year will result in a mandatory review by the Principal, Guidance Counselor, and classroom teacher to determine possible repetition of the class or the grade. A high school student who accumulates 10 absences from any one class during a semester will not receive credit for that class. Chronic illness and family emergency will be considered on an individual basis.

#### *Half Day Absence:*

Students arriving at school after 9:15 a.m. without pre-approval by the principal at least one day in advance are charged with a half-day absence.

Students leaving school after 12:00 noon without pre-approval by the principal at least one day in advance are charged with a half-day absence.

#### *Full-Day Absence:*

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

A parent or guardian is required to call the office by 9:00 a.m. when a student is absent (unless an advanced absence notice has been submitted).

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

### REPORTING ABSENCES

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

### ARRIVING LATE

When a child arrives late to school in the morning, parents are asked to accompany the child to the office and sign him/her in. Children who arrive late will be escorted to their rooms by the security guard ten minutes into the school day so as to not disturb the classroom during devotion.

### LEAVING EARLY

Students leaving early must check out through the office. The office calls the student out of class when the parent arrives. Whenever possible, the school requests that every effort be made to schedule appointments during non-school hours or on days when school is not in session. Parents should seriously consider all of the educational, social, and psychological pros and cons of habitually removing their child(ren) from school early. Attendance of less than 4½ hours during a school day constitutes an absence.

## KINDS OF ABSENCES

### *Excused Absences*

- Personal illness: Students missing 3 or more consecutive days of school due to illness or injury are required to provide a written statement from a health care provider. The written statement must include all days the student has been absent from school. If a student is continually sick and repeatedly absent from school due to a specific medical condition, he or she must be under the supervision of a health care provider in order to receive excused absences from school.
- Illness in the immediate family requiring the student to be at home
- Death in the Family
- Scheduled Medical appointment: If a student is absent from school due to a medical appointment a written statement from a health care provider indicating the date and time of the appointment must be submitted to the school secretary.
- Quarantine
- Court appearance
- Observance of religious holiday
- Immunization
- School-sponsored event or activity previously approved
- Other individual student absences beyond the control of the parent or student, as determined and approved by the Principal or designee. Parents must submit documentation related to the condition.

### *Unexcused Absences:*

- Any absence that does not fall into one of the above excused absence categories will be considered unexcused. Any student who has been absent from school will be marked unexcused absent until he/she submits the required documentation as specified above. Failure to provide the required documentation within three school days upon the return to school will result in an unexcused absence. Unexcused absences include:
  - Absences due to vacations, personal services, local non-school events, programs or sporting activities.
  - Absences due to older students providing day care services for siblings.
  - Absences due to non-compliance with immunization requirements (unless lawfully exempted).

Students will be expected to make up work for unexcused absences after hours and will receive a percentage grade of "0" until the work is made up; at which time the grade will be marked as "exempt." (An exempt score indicates the work was satisfactorily completed, however, this score will not have an impact on the overall grade. Three or more unexcused absences per quarter will result in an in-school suspension. Five or more unexcused absences are considered "excessive" and will result in a one-day out of school suspension.

### *Truancies:*

Truancy is an absence without parent permission. Any student who is absent from school without parent or school permission for more than three days in one year is a truant.

## MAKE-UP WORK

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

Parent can request make-up school work for their child through the office on the second day of absence.

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

## TARDINESS

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

- When tardy, students must report immediately to the school office and be signed in by the adult guardian to receive a tardy pass.
- Students late for school must report immediately upon arrival to the office.
- Chronic tardiness (more than four per quarter) results in after-school detention.
- Students who are excessively tardy (10 or more) will be suspended.
- Excessive tardies (more than 10) could result in dismissal from school.

# DRESS CODE

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

School uniform purchases are made through Sunshine School Uniforms at their Miami Lakes store (16371 NW 57<sup>th</sup> Ave., Miami Lakes, FL 33014), online at [www.sunshineuniforms.com](http://www.sunshineuniforms.com), or over the phone at (800) 354-7724. A listing of approved apparel can be found through Sunshine.

## GIRLS' UNIFORMS

- Grey pants with a black belt or approved sash
- Approved skirts or skorts no more than 2 inches above the knee
- A DSA polo with logo
- Approved dress blouse
- White turtle neck during cooler weather
- Grey cardigan with DSA logo
- Black pullover sweater with DSA logo
- White socks or tights
- Approved black dress shoes
- Friday is chapel day. Girls in Pre-K3 through Kindergarten should wear the approved plaid dress. Girls in grades 1-5 should wear the dress blouse with cross tie.

## BOYS' UNIFORMS

- Grey pants or walking shorts with a black belt when appropriate.
- A DSA polo with logo
- White turtle neck during cooler weather
- Grey cardigan with DSA logo
- Black pullover sweater with DSA logo
- White socks
- Approved black dress shoes.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Skirts, skorts, and shorts are to be worn no shorter than 2 inches above the knees.
- A black belt is to be worn in pants and shorts that have belt loops.
- No jeans, oversized clothing, hats, or caps may be worn.
- Shirts are to be worn tucked in at all times. (Except for Pre-K)
- Shoes must be the approved black dress shoe
- Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten children who haven't yet learned to tie their shoes need to wear shoes with Velcro.
- Socks must be above the ankle and without brand name logos.
- All articles of clothing should be marked with the child's name.
- All clothes must be neat, clean, and in good repair.
- For safety reasons, excessive jewelry and dangling or hoop earrings are not allowed (Silly Bands are not allowed). Small stud earrings may be worn. Boys are not to wear earrings.
- Hair is to be neatly combed and conservatively styled. Dyed, treated, or faddish hairstyles are not permitted. Boys' hair may be worn no longer than the top of the shirt collar or below the eyebrows.
- Good hygiene is an important part of a child's growth and development.
- Parental cooperation is appreciated.

## SPIRIT DRESS

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

# EXTENDED CARE

## BEFORE SCHOOL

Divine Savior provides supervised care for students before school beginning at 7:30 a.m. Students may use this time to read, review assignments, watch a video, or eat a light breakfast (provided by the parents). Students are escorted to their respective classrooms at 7:40 or 8:15 a.m. depending on the students' start time. There is no charge for this service.

## AFTER SCHOOL

The Divine Savior Academy after school program operates from 3:15-6:00 p.m. and is designed to provide children of working parents, or those who have a late afternoon commitment with a safe, caring and enriching environment. Cost specifics are cited on the After School Program Handout.

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

## FIELD TRIPS

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

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

## GRADING / HONOR ROLL

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

To communicate student progress to parents formally, teachers assess student performance during a span of specified time.

## WEEKLY PROGRESS REPORTS

Teachers can initiate the weekly progress report for students of concern or at risk. Parents may also request that a weekly progress report be implemented. This will help parents keep a pulse on their child's educational growth, effort, and conduct. The weekly progress report will be sent home each Friday. Part of the value of the progress report is that they help prevent any "surprises" at report card time. Parents are to ask the child for the progress report. Parents should contact the school office if they have not received the weekly progress report once it has been started.

## REPORT CARDS

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

## GRADING

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

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

## POWER SCHOOL

At the beginning of the year, all families will be provided with log-in and password information to Power School, the company that hosts Divine Savior's grades, family information and announcements. Power School allows parents access to "real-time" reports of their child's grades.

### *PRE-KINDERGARTEN AND KINDERGARTEN*

1	2	3	4	5	*
Beginning-----Developing-----Proficient					Not yet assessed

### *GRADES 1 – 5*

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

## HONOR ROLL

As a way of recognizing superior academic effort, achievement, and excellence, DSA maintains an Honor and High Honor Roll. Additionally, there are quarter, semester and end of the year awards. Perfect Attendance and Honor Roll awards are given by quarter, Merit awards are handed out at the end of each semester and an all-inclusive Citizenship award is given out at the end of the year to one deserving student in each grade starting in the 4th. Honor Roll is based on the grades obtained in the core academic subjects and are weighted accordingly. Honor Roll commendation also serves as an excellent means of motivating students to do their very best at all times. Merit awards are given to those students who show academic improvement from the first to the second quarter and from the third to the fourth quarter. Citizenship awards are given to those students who show consistent

academic excellence throughout the year, demonstrates a positive Christian attitude, and is involved in extra-curricular activities. The following criteria are used for Honor Roll distinction:

*GRADE LEVELS – 4th-5th*

**HIGHEST HONORS** 3.75-4.00 GPA

**HIGH HONOR ROLL** 3.50 -3.749 GPA

**HONOR ROLL** 3.25-3.499 GPA

## STANDARDIZED TESTING

Each spring, per our accreditation standards, standardized achievement tests are administered to the students in grades K and up. These tests compare our students with national averages using percentiles and grade placement equivalents. They are useful in evaluating strengths and areas requiring further development in the curriculum. This serves to foster change and improvement. To a degree, achievement tests can be helpful in measuring each child's academic progress over the past year. Results are shared with parents each May.

## STUDENT RECORDS

Divine Savior Academy adheres to the regulations in the 1974 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The complete written policy and procedures for Divine Savior's students is available in the office from the secretary or principal. Parents will be notified of their FERPA rights annually at the Back-to-School Orientation and/or by distribution at the guardian's request.

## GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

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

DSA administrators, counselor, and teachers work together with parents as a team to identify student needs and provide a positive, personalized learning environment.

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

“Emergencies present themselves without announcement”

## FIRST AID AND CPR CERTIFICATION

No one can know when CPR will be needed, but it’s a skill that can be the difference between life and death. All DSA faculty and staff are CPR and First Aid Certified and meet American Red Cross and American Heart Association recommendations. Knowledge obtained through these courses permits DSA faculty and staff to be ready to handle emergencies due to sudden illness or injury to students.

## IMMUNIZATIONS AND HEALTH FORMS

Florida law requires that all students have the necessary forms on file by the first day of class. Students cannot begin classes at Divine Savior without a current, completed physical exam form and proper documentation of up-to-date immunizations. Forms are available from your doctor or the school nurse. Physical exams are valid for two years. An emergency card, filled out at registration time, is also required of each student.

## EMERGENCIES

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

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

## MINOR ACCIDENTS

All minor accidents – cuts, scratches, bumps, and bite are given First Aid treatment and recorded on the teacher’s First Aid Log. Administration is informed and parents and or emergency contact person is notified of injury.

## SERIOUS INJURY

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

All head injuries will be reported to parents.

## MEDICATION

Medication which is prescribed by a physician may be administered to the student if failure to take such medication during the school day jeopardizes a student's health. All medications must be brought to the school office where the office staff will be responsible for administering and recording the administration of the medication.

An authorization to Administer Oral Medication shall be completed by the parent or legal guardian before any prescription medication is administered by an authorized person. Any change in dosage or directions will require completion of a new authorization by the parent. A physician's signature will be required if the prescription date is more than 12 days old.

## STUDENT ILLNESSES AND CONTAGIOUS CONDITIONS

Students who have been diagnosed with illnesses such as the flu, a fever, or any other contagious condition must be symptom free for 24 hours prior to returning to school. In the event a student misses three or more days with a contagious condition, the student must obtain a doctor's note of clearance to return to school.

## LICE

In the event that lice and/or lice nits (eggs) are discovered on any student(s), we will be following a "no nit" policy. While we understand how difficult it is to rid the hair and scalp of all the eggs related to lice, we also must recognize how easily lice can be spread. Therefore, if your child is sent home with lice and/or nits, they will not be allowed back into school until they are free from all nits. Students must receive clearance from a health care professional before returning to school.

## SAFETY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

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

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

## SEVERE WEATHER

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

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

## EMERGENCY EVACUATION DRILLS AND REPORTING

In compliance with state regulations, evacuation drills are performed once a month. For the safety of all, detailed drill procedures are shared and periodically reviewed in each classroom.

# HOMEWORK

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

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

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

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

# LUNCH AND SNACKS

## LUNCH

Students may bring a lunch from home or buy the catered meal in the cafeteria. The catered meal menu is posted and available to families at the beginning of the month. Parents wishing to purchase the catered meals must pay for them a month in advance.

It is preferred that lunches are sent with the child to school rather than at the time of your child's lunch period. Soda is not allowed. Under extenuating circumstances, when a lunch must be dropped off it needs to be delivered to the school secretary prior to the student's lunch period.

Due to limited cafeteria seating, parents are not allowed to eat with their children at lunch.

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

## SNACK BREAK

At the start of each morning recess, the children will have a short snack break. Parents are encouraged to send along nutritious, low-sugar light snacks. Students in Extended Care may also bring along snacks to eat before or after school. Soda is not allowed.

## PARTIES

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

# PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

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

# TELEPHONE

Children are not allowed to use the office phone except in cases of emergency or unforeseen circumstances, and only with the permission of a teacher. Cell phones tend to serve as a disruption and should be left at home. In the event a student's cell phone is seen or rings during the school day, it will be confiscated and given to the parents. If it happens twice it will be confiscated and given to the principal. If it happens a third time, the cell phone will be confiscated and held indefinitely by the principal until a parent/teacher/principal meeting can take place; at which time a decision about the cell phone and student will be made. Cell phones are non-essential school items and do not belong at school.

# TUTORING

Paid tutoring for students desiring additional help is available after 4:00 p.m. Appointments and payment arrangements can be made directly with the teacher. To prevent feelings of favoritism, teachers cannot tutor their own students for payment.

The cost for paid tutoring is \$35.00 per hour.