



Welcome to the All Saints Catholic Academy Family!

We are delighted to have you, and your child(ren) join our community for the upcoming school year. Our school is dedicated to providing a nurturing and enriching environment where students can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

This guidebook is designed to help you navigate the exciting journey ahead, offering insights into the various events, activities, and opportunities that make our school unique. As part of our vibrant community, you will have the chance to participate in a range of events and fundraisers that not only support our school but also foster a strong sense of community among students, parents, and staff. I am thankful to the PTO for creating this parent resource.

What to Expect:

1. Fundraisers and Events
2. Community Involvement
3. Monetary Expectations

We believe that communication is key to a successful partnership. Our staff is always available to answer any questions you may have, and we encourage you to reach out whenever needed.

Additionally, regular updates will be shared through our newsletters, website, and social media channels to keep you informed about school news and upcoming events.

Thank you for choosing All Saints, home of the Grey Wolves! *Strength in Spirit!* We look forward to a wonderful year ahead filled with growth, learning, and memorable experiences for your child. Together, we can make this a fantastic year!

Warm regards,

Ms. Traci Johnson
Principal

Operations and Procedure

Communications from the Principal

The principal will communicate often throughout the school year. Families can always check the website to stay up to date with messages from the school. Visit <https://www.ascaalbany.org/> and navigate to the homepage, where you will find a link titled, *Communication from the Principal, Ms. Johnson*.

Family Portal

FACTS is the family portal. Here is where you can update contact information, see your child's grades and report cards, as well as manage your FACTS tuition account. This site is: <https://asc-ny.client.renweb.com/pwr/>.

Lunch Portal & Food Allergies

Our lunch program is managed through North Colonie School District. Teachers hand out a paper copy of the lunch menu at the beginning of every month, but if you ever lose your monthly lunch calendar you can always view it online at <https://www.ascaalbany.org/Parent-Resources/LunchProgram>

Parents can preload funds to their students' lunch accounts allowing them to purchase lunch at school. It is not mandatory for students to buy lunches. However, parents should know that there is not a microwave available for students to heat up any food from home.

North Colonie's Child Nutrition Program will accommodate students with allergies. Please check the lunch page at www.ASCAalbany.org for additional details. To address food allergies while in the cafeteria, there is a dedicated section of the cafeteria for students to eat. Teachers will notify families if there are any restrictions on snack foods in the classroom. If there is a food allergy in the class, we ask that snacks be allergen-free.

Text & Email Alerts

In the event the school has any urgent communications that need to reach families, they will send out a text. Please make sure your phone numbers are updated with the school. This will include things such as early dismissal, snow days, and any urgent messages that may arise.

Not only will the principal send out weekly emails, but so will your child's teacher. It is important that family email addresses are up to date with the school. While these weekly communications are not as urgent, they are still important for your student's success.

Uniforms

School uniforms are available for purchase at the uniform store, Student Styles, located in Latham, NY. You can also purchase from them online and pick up your order in store or have it directly shipped to your home. You can visit their site at: <https://yourstudentstyles.com/>.

In addition to the uniform store, ASCA offers gently used uniforms for sale at the school. Gently used uniform sales typically occur twice a year at the beginning and end of the year. However, the items are purchasable throughout the school year as well. Kids grow constantly, and we're here to make things easier for you.

The school has a warm weather uniform as well as a cold weather uniform. The warm weather uniform allows for white sneakers or dress shoes. Warm weather uniforms may be worn from the first day of school until October 31st, and then again from May 1st until the last day of school. Information will be sent home about what uniform pieces belong with each set of uniforms, and this information is available on the website.

Spirit Wear

Once a month, students will be allowed to skip the uniform for a day. In exchange, they'll be asked to don their favorite "spirit wear." At the beginning of each year, information will be shared with families about how to purchase t-shirts and hoodies for their children. Car magnets and stickers available for purchase as well. While spirit wear is not part of the mandatory uniform for students, families are encouraged to share in the *spirit* of the school for various events. Students may wear their spirit wear to celebrate an occasion, or to contribute to a cause with a small donation. In all instances, families will be made aware ahead of time.

Dress Down Days

There will be opportunities for students to dress in street clothes. These can sometimes be in support of a cause, or to help teach students a lesson. Examples of such days include, but are not limited to:

- On a student's birthday (or on the Monday or Friday surrounding a weekend birthday)
- Real Saints Wear Pink Day - annually held in October in support of Breast Cancer Awareness.
- Souper Bowl of Caring – Students may dress down in their favorite football team's garb (or any sports team wear) if they bring in a can of soup for the local food pantry.
- Spirit of Christmas – student may wear their favorite Christmas outfit
- Dress Down Day for specific causes (i.e. pink for Breast Cancer Awareness, red for American Heart Association, etc.)
- Book Character Day (usually in early March) – students are encouraged to choose their favorite book character and come to school looking like that character. No weapons, masks, or gore are permitted.

There will be opportunities for students to earn or win dress down passes. Dress down passes may be given as part of a fun school activity, as a reward for good behavior or accomplishment. Dress down passes enable the student to wear street clothes for that day. They must surrender the pass at the time of redemption. There are blackout days that students are not permitted to use dress down passes which are announced by the office.

First Friday Early Dismissal

Majority of the first Fridays throughout the school year are 12pm early dismissal days for students. This is also a day that students may dress down, and do not need to use a pass to do so. There is After Care available on early dismissal first Fridays, for \$25 per child in K-6th grades. PreK and UPK students see little change to their day. School lunch is available for those students who attend After Care on early dismissal first Fridays. We ask that if your K-6 child needs to attend the After Care program, you RSVP using the link on the school webpage.

Before & After Care

Before & After Care programs are available for students that need supervision before the school day (7am – 7:45am) and / or after the school day from 3pm – 5:30pm. The Before School Care Program (BSP) is open to all grade levels. The After School Care Program (ASP) is offered to students in UPK, PreK, and K-6. While attending BSP and ASP, students are required to adhere to the same behavior expectations as during the school day.

The Before School Program will begin on the first full day of school. Doors open at 7:00 a.m. The After School Care will also begin on the first full day of school. After Care is offered from 3:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Students attending the After School Care Program should be sent with a snack and water bottle and may bring a change of clothes to change into after school. ASCA is not responsible for lost, forgotten, or misplaced clothing and shoes. ASCA staff are not permitted to assist students that are changing their clothes.

If your child is to be part of the Before & After School Care Programs, you must complete the Before & After School Registration Form prior to the start of school. Before & After School Care is a play-based program provided for working families. The programs are provided to ensure supervision while families are working. Please do not send your child to Before & After School Care for playdates.

Social Media

ASCA uses social media to share the various activities and successes of our students with the community. If you do not want your child's photo posted, please be sure to communicate this with the front office. In addition, because there are children whose parents do not want their pictures on social media, we ask that families refrain from posting pictures of other ASCA students unless they have explicit permission from the other families.

Yearbook

All Saints publishes a student created annual yearbook. Parents may purchase advertisements allowing for personal messages. Look for communications from the office around February for information on ordering.

Events & Activities

Meet the Teacher Night

Prior to the first day of school ASCA organizes a Meet the Teacher Night. This is a fun evening where families are invited to the school to see any updates to the facilities, locate their child's classroom, and drop off supplies. There will be ice cream treats and pizza available for attendees provided by the school and PTO. We encourage families to join us for this every year as things do change and we want all children to feel comfortable prior to their first day.

First Days of School

The first few days of school operate as 12pm early dismissal. This gives the students a chance to learn their new schedules, expectations of their teachers, and classroom routines. Before and After School are NOT offered on these early dismissal days. Students may dress down on these first early dismissal days. Full uniforms begin on the Monday of the first full week of school.

Back to School Night

Approximately the third week of September, a Back to School Night is scheduled in the evening for parents to meet with all their child(ren)'s teachers. This is an adult-only event as we want the teachers and parents to be able to talk freely regarding expectations and routines. This is also an opportunity to chat with the different vendors, clubs and committees that work closely with the school community.

Scholastic Book Fair

Each year, ASCA has a Scholastic Book Fair. Students and families may purchase books from the Scholastic Book Fair during the school day and on an announced special event. You can either send money in with your student or activate the online eWallet for a cashless shopping experience. A Book Fair flier with various selections and ordering information will be sent home during book fair time. Additional Scholastic fliers will be sent home throughout the school year for families to purchase books, however, these monthly orders are coordinated by your child's classroom teacher.

1,000 Book Club

Students from Pre-K through Grade 1 are eligible to participate in the school's 1,000 Book Club. This is an opportunity for students to read 1,000 books by the end of Grade 1. If the family chooses to participate, the student will be sent home with a *Read with Me* bag filled with 10 books coordinated by the librarian. The object is to read the books, return the bag, and then another bag of books will be sent home. If 1,000 books are read by the end of first grade, students will be given an award, a new book of their choice, and a gift certificate to a bookstore. Families may opt out of the Read with Me program.

Holidays

During the week prior to Christmas, the school community is invited to participate in various faith events and fun seasonal activities. These may include, but are not limited to, a spirit day, Advent Penance Service, Nativity story reading, festive wear day, Cookies with Santa, and more. Families will receive plenty of information ahead of time to prepare.

Catholic Schools Week is a week-long celebration of Catholic Schools that begins on the last Sunday in January and runs for an entire week. There are several activities and events for students and families to enjoy both within and outside the school day. Examples include the Diocesan Art Show Reception (select student work is on exhibit in the Empire State Plaza Concourse), food drive, class spelling bees, game show event day, school spirit day, schoolwide musical chairs event, bingo for charity, Scholastic Book Fair, and mass.

School Fundraisers

Every family (except UPK) has a \$300 profit commitment to raise additional funds for the school and its activities. This can be split up in a multitude of ways among the various fundraising opportunities throughout the year. We encourage families to select the fundraisers that they are most comfortable doing. We do not expect that families participate in every fundraiser.

Previous examples of fundraisers have included the Holiday Gift Catalog, Poppin Popcorn, World's Finest Chocolate, raffles, and the Color Run.

The percentage of the funds raised from each fundraiser may vary as it accumulates towards your mandatory \$300 family fundraising commitment. Opting out of fundraising is an option. If opting out, a direct payment of \$300 fulfills the required family fundraising commitment.

Out of School Fundraisers

To ensure transparency, we have outlined the anticipated monetary contributions for the year. These include any additional costs for school resources, or potential events and activities that are affiliated, but outside the school's financial budget. These contributions help us provide the best possible experiences for our students.

Throughout the year, we organize various fundraisers and events to support our programs and initiatives. From bake sales and fun runs to our annual gala, these events are vital to enhancing the educational experience for our students. We encourage all families to get involved and contribute in any way they can. Outside of school fundraisers are not mandatory.

The ASCA community cherishes its support from area businesses. Many times, these companies will offer the school an opportunity to raise money, while frequenting their business. A portion of sales will be given back to the school to amplify programming and resources. Typically, there is a window of time within which families may participate, and that will be communicated to you proactively.

Class Fundraisers

Part of being involved in the All Saints community is supporting all of our students, even those who are not in our own children's classes. These fundraisers can vary year to year, but historically, they've included raffles, t-shirt sales, or bake sales. Sometimes these events will benefit a specific class, such as the 8th grade's end of year field trip.

ABC Countdown

The last 26 days of school follow a themed calendar based on the alphabet. This calendar will be sent home from the school office and encourages students to participate in fun activities to celebrate the nearing of the end of school. This can include themed dress days, fun hats, as well as, a talent show.

Graduation(s)

The Pre-K and UPK classes will participate in a moving up / graduation event each June. Parents and loved ones are welcome to attend. These special ceremonies will take place before the last day of school. Parents will be given communications from their respective class teachers about attendance, attire, and time.

The 8th grade class's graduation and Mass is held at All Saints Catholic Church located off campus at 16 Homestead Street. Eighth graders may have their last day of classes, prior to graduation. Eighth grade students are required to attend all required exams that are scheduled after the last day of classes. (ie. Regents, FLACS Exam). Additionally, the 8th grade class holds an award night, off campus, before graduation. This is an opportunity to recognize the students for their scholarships, recognitions, and personal achievements.

Committees, Volunteering & Clubs

Our school thrives on the active participation of our families. Volunteer opportunities are plentiful, and your involvement is invaluable and greatly appreciated.

Parents and families can get involved by joining the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), helping with the Sports or Social Committees, the Drama Club, or volunteering time during any of the larger events such as Field Day or the annual Color Run.

The PTO is responsible for assisting with upholding the traditions of the school. They organize events that are held on the school grounds, celebrate a holiday or cause, and heighten school spirit. The PTO is self-sufficient, raising money only to support its own events. Examples of events include Catholic Schools' Week, Field Day, and celebrations for Christmas and Halloween.

The Sports Committee is a group of volunteers who oversee and organize athletic opportunities, teams, and events on behalf of the school. All Saints has teams in basketball, cheerleading, recreational volleyball, and new for 24-25 school year, cross country and soccer. The Sports Committee raises funds to improve and upgrade school facilities, and athletic equipment.

The Social Committee organizes activities that are held outside of the school. These can include roller skating, a night at the trampoline park, a fundraising event at a local supporting retailer, or restaurant. The funds raised are used to support student programming.

The Drama Club is open to students in grades 3 through 8. Auditions are held early in the school year, with a performance scheduled for the spring.

ASCA staff organize several after school clubs for students to participate in. There are grade/age specific clubs. Club sign-up information will be sent home each fall and spring, and the clubs take place after school over a set number of weeks. Since each club meets once per week, students may sign-up for multiple clubs. Clubs meet from 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Examples of previous clubs include Books & Cooks, Arts & Crafts, Chess, and Computers. Students that cannot be picked up by 4pm may attend the After School Care Program.

Benefits of Enrolling at a School Located in the City of Albany

All Saints Catholic Academy is one of the city's schools that may benefit from relationships with other organizations that help nurture the growth and development of our children. While not sanctioned by the district or the diocese, these organizations do have a lot to offer our students. Certain programs are age/grade-specific, but parents are encouraged to participate in community events and activities that suit them.

Care Options During School Vacations

ASCA has a wonderful partnership with JMU 4 Kids. JMU provides camp options for children during school breaks such as Christmas Break, February Break, Spring Break and during the summer. Camps are located on the ASCA campus, and other private schools located in Albany County. JMU offers a variety of camps, including day camp, sports camp, performing arts, and ninja camp. JMU gives a financial discount for ASCA students. More information about their schedules can be found on their website:

http://www.jmu4kids.com/page.asp?content_id=52691.

Albany Police Athletic League

Albany PAL has several programs available for school-age children. PAL offers after school programs, athletic programs, baseball and t-ball, as well as, mentoring. Once a member of the PAL community, children end up enjoying these opportunities for years to come. More information about PAL and their various programming is available here: <https://www.albanypal.org/>.

Westland Hills

Westland Hills offers rec and travel baseball and softball in the fall and spring. More information about their programs is available <https://www.westlandhills.com/home>.

Revision 10/30/24