



Community Handbook

2024 - 2025

AIM Academy
1200 River Road, Conshohocken, PA 19428
aimpa.org
215-483-AIM1 (2461)

Please complete the electronic acknowledgement form linked at the end of the handbook

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INTRODUCTION

WELCOME



Dear AIM Families,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year. We are thrilled to kick off another year of fearless learning and innovative teaching with our community as we embrace our theme: **Unleashing Innovation**.

AIM's history is built on the core value of Fearless Innovation. This year, as we embrace this theme, we are excited about the new spaces at AIM that will support our learners and our mission. From our newly redone athletic field to our new gardens, and of course the opening of our 17,000 square foot Global Innovation Hub ("The Hub") later this fall, we are creating environments that inspire exploration and learning. These spaces will provide our students with countless opportunities to discover, create, and innovate, fostering their growth and preparing them for the future.

It is a privilege for us to share in your student's and your family's journey here at AIM, and we look forward to collaborating and connecting with you in the weeks and months ahead. We are committed to supporting each student in their unique path to success and are excited to see the amazing things they will achieve this year.

Our AIM Community Handbook includes important information about our community and procedures that will help you and your child navigate their experience at AIM. We request that you take time to review the handbook so that you are familiar with our guidelines and that you complete and submit our required Handbook Acknowledgement form. For parents of our Middle and Upper School students, we ask that you review the Handbook as a family and be sure that you understand the expectations in our policies. Please don't hesitate to reach out to your division head with any questions during the school year.

We look forward to an exciting school year.

Sincerely,

Annette Fallon
Head of School
AIM Academy

HISTORY OF AIM

AIM Academy officially opened its doors in September of 2006 with 24 students in grades 2-7. Today, AIM serves approximately 400 students in grades 1-12 at AIM Academy and provides thousands of educators across the country with literacy professional development through the AIM Institute for Learning & Research®. AIM's commitment to excellence accounts for our dramatic enrollment growth and our reputation as an expert source on literacy and LD education. This commitment includes evidence-based academic programming, accountability through progress monitoring, and the focus on a cross-disciplinary team approach including speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, and school psychologists all mapping the path to individualized student growth and achievement to maximize potential. We are proud of the AIM graduates' 100% college acceptance rate.

Best practices are only as effective as the teachers who implement them. At AIM, you will find dedicated educators who have their special education, content-area and/or reading specialist certifications. Our teachers are committed to staying on top of the research and have logged over **2,000 hours in professional development** that directly enhances the instruction delivered to our students.

Related Services, such as speech-language, occupational therapy, and school-based psychological services, are essential components of the AIM Academy model. As educators we are taught the importance of the role of language acquisition and reading. We also understand the importance of fine and gross motor development, as well as the social and emotional well-being of children as it relates to academic success. But truly integrating these disciplines into an educational model is unique. Under the leadership of a team of full-time speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, and school psychologists and counselors, a state-of-the-art diagnostic-prescriptive approach is brought into every classroom at AIM Academy and supported through the knowledge transfer conveyed to each classroom teacher. Individual Speech-Language and Occupational Therapy is also available as an additional service.

In 2006, AIM Academy became one of the first eight Wilson Partner Schools in the United States. AIM Academy English Language Arts teachers are certified in the Wilson Reading System® and full-time Wilson Trainers at AIM have instructed thousands of teachers in Foundations, Wilson Reading System and Just Words® through the AIM Institute.

AIM works to further literacy research by partnering with researchers on ongoing studies, working with a Research Advisory Board to inform practices, and hosting our annual Research to Practice Symposium. AIM was the first education partner in the Haskins Global Literacy Hub and created an EEG lab on campus where volunteer students participate in ongoing neuroscience literacy research.

The AIM Institute for Learning & Research® was created as a center for educational excellence and professional development, disseminating to educators the latest research, technology, and best practices in the fields of literacy and language-based learning disabilities including dyslexia. In 2019, AIM Institute launched AIM Pathways, an online literacy professional training platform for teachers and education leaders that is based on the work we do in AIM Academy's classrooms and our Integrated Literacy Model.

AIM Pathways partners with schools, school districts, and state Departments of Education in more than 39 states training thousands of educators and education leaders a year in evidence-based knowledge and practice so that they can achieve the best outcomes for students in the classroom. New AIM faculty members also receive IDA-accredited AIM Pathways training to support their professional development. We are proud that 21 of our faculty members have received KPEERI certification from the Center for

Effective Reading Instruction.

AIM is closely affiliated with organizations committed to literacy including Haskins Laboratories at Yale, The Florida Center for Reading Research, various universities, the International Dyslexia Association, and The Dyslexia Foundation.

In the 2024-2025 school year, AIM opens with 163 full time Staff & Faculty on a 5-acre campus that includes a state of the art 100,000-square-foot facility.

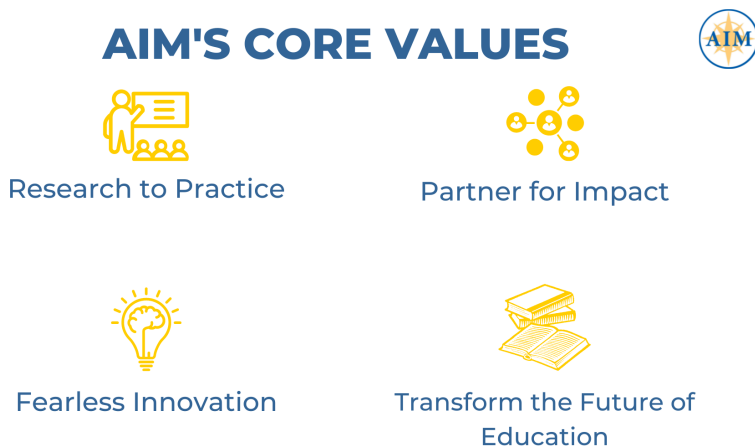
MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

Mission

- To *provide* extraordinary educational opportunities to children with language-based learning disabilities such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia, utilizing research-based intervention strategies and an arts-based learning environment that is college preparatory in scope and sequence.
- To *develop* a center for educational excellence and professional development to disseminate best practices to educators by providing access to the latest research-based curriculum, technology, and training.

Core Purpose and Values

AIM's Core Purpose is to transform and empower lives through literacy.



Philosophy

AIM Academy was created with the belief that children with language-based learning differences can and will thrive in a rigorous academic setting when they are taught by a highly committed, experienced, and creative faculty who have ongoing access to the latest research, best practices, technological resources, and experts in their field. We dedicate ourselves to putting research into practice every day. Our students thrive in classrooms that offer multi-sensory and experiential learning, and our programs are designed to foster self-esteem and social responsibility. Academic and intellectual development is further enhanced by an array of extracurricular activities and enrichment in the arts, athletics, and community service. It is our goal that, upon graduation, our students are prepared for the challenges, complexities, and choices available to them at the university level and beyond. Curiosity, collaboration,

compassion, confidence, and critical thinking are their tools for success.

Independent Students

AIM Academy believes that students must take responsibility for their learning on the path to a successful college career. Areas of responsibility include independence in the classroom, on daily homework, and in preparation for various projects and exams. Upper, Middle, and Lower School divisions include students in establishing a productive, welcoming, and enriching environment. Students work with teachers, school administrators, and each other to develop, plan, and organize school policies. The focus is on creating an environment that supports and rewards the students' progress toward becoming more independent in their decision-making and learning. The spirit and practice of creating such a climate is the responsibility of all members of the AIM Academy community.

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

AIM Academy has always celebrated differences and was founded on the principles of shedding labels and breaking down artificial barriers. At our core, we are dedicated to building and sustaining equity by actively embracing diversity in our community. Our approach to the critical work of equity and inclusion is driven by our values of respect, unity, and empathy. We recognize, reflect upon, and are meaningfully informed by the plurality of experiences that each student, family, and staff/faculty member brings to our community. We embrace all forms of identity including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status and class, faith and belief, age, ability, learning differences, and the broad range of human experiences and perspectives.

Our strength is in our ability to engage in open dialogue, question, examine assumptions, collaborate, embrace challenges, attune to all voices, and seek to understand one another. We are regularly working to increase the cultural responsiveness of our curriculum, professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, and thoughtful community programming. We recognize that a commitment to equity diversity and belonging requires attention across all layers of the institution in order to assure that our values are reflected in every aspect of our community. We are a community where everyone's differences are acknowledged, respected, and celebrated so that all members are safe being themselves and all voices are sought and heard. This strategic and research-driven focus on equity and inclusion is essential for AIM to fully realize its mission to provide extraordinary educational opportunities.

AIM ACADEMY WOLFPACK AND SCHOOL PRIDE

AIM Academy's Mascot is **The Wolfpack** and our Colors are **Blue & Gold**

The phrase 'Wolfpack' implies much more than our mascot, or our ability to lift weights, score a goal, or run a distance. It symbolizes a family that grows together, supports one another, and has fun together. We are the Pack when we come together around a cause. We are the Pack when we build the self confidence to speak up for our beliefs or model our words and goals in action. We are the Pack when we stand up for an AIM classmate or reach out to a member of our community who needs a friend. We are the Pack when we reflect the values of our school.

We are the Wolfpack when we do it TOGETHER!

PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This Handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the school year. Because the Handbook contains information about student rights and responsibilities, **parents and students are responsible for knowing its contents**. Please take the time to become familiar with the following information and keep this Handbook available for your use. It can be a valuable reference during the School year and a means to avoid confusion and misunderstandings when questions arise.

The School reserves the right to interpret the content of this Handbook, including the rules and regulations governing the academic and non-academic conduct of students. This Handbook is not a contract, nor is it intended to be so construed. The School reserves the right to modify and/or amend the content of this Handbook at any time during the year. If any written modification or amendment is made to this Handbook, a copy of such modification or amendment will be distributed electronically to students and parents.

Students who reach 18 years of age while enrolled in the School are bound by all student and parent obligations in this Handbook. Students' continued enrollment after reaching 18 years of age evidences the student's agreement with this requirement. In addition, even after the student turns 18, the School will continue to share all health/medical, disciplinary, grades, progress reports, and other information with the student's parents/legal guardians throughout the student's enrollment at the School.

If you have any questions about the Handbook or any of its policies, please contact Annete Fallon, Head of School (afallon@aimpa.org; 215-948-9380).

COMINGS & GOINGS

SCHOOL HOURS

The official school day begins at 8:00 am, with classroom instruction beginning at 8:10 am. The school day ends at 3:10 pm with carline and bus dismissal beginning by 3:15 pm.

Students arriving by car may be dropped off starting at 7:30 am. Students will be supervised in the following locations until the building entrances are open at 8:00 am.

- Lower School: Dining Hall (drop off at main entrance)
- Middle School: Gym (drop off at AIM Community Center - ACC)
- Upper School: Gym (drop off at AIM Community Center - ACC)

No students may be dropped off prior to 7:30 am unless arriving by bus or train. Our staffing before 7:30 is very limited and is dedicated only to those students whose school district transportation necessitates an earlier arrival time. Students arriving by car must wait in their vehicles until 7:30 am before entering the building for Early Drop Off.

Please arrive by 8:10 am to prevent disruption of first period classes. For further explanation, see the lateness section below.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The academic progress of AIM Academy children is, to a great extent, dependent upon continuity of regular routines. We ask for your close cooperation in making sure that your child attends school every day.

AIM Academy believes that attendance is an important part of becoming a successful student. We know that our students' presence in classrooms and their interactions with their teachers and with each other are hallmarks of the education we provide. As such, in order to be considered for promotion to the next grade, students must be in attendance for at least 90% of the days listed in the school calendar. Exceptions to this minimum number will be considered in the case of extenuating medical circumstances. Consideration does not guarantee approval.

Students with more than two cumulative unexcused absences are not eligible for Distinguished Honor Roll. Students with more than three cumulative unexcused absences are not eligible for Honor Roll. In the Middle and Upper Schools, attendance will be taken for each class period by the teacher. In the Lower School, attendance will be taken in each homeroom at the start of the school day. Daily attendance is recorded in the student information system and is reflected on the student's report card.

Consistent tardiness to school may result in additional reported absences. In the Upper School, chronic tardiness to first period may result in lunch detentions and a lack of credit for the classes missed.

If your child is ill or unavoidable circumstances arise, please report your student's absence in their [SchoolPass](#) account as soon as possible. If unable to access SchoolPass, parents may also call the attendance line (215-948-9301) or send an email to attendance@aimpa.org. You will be contacted if we have not heard from you by 9:00 am. Please contact the nurse at 215-948-9373 for any prolonged medical absence. All absences due to illness or injury require notification from a parent (guardian). For prolonged medical absences due to illness or injury, a health care provider's note is required.

We submit monthly attendance records to the local school systems as requested and have to state reasons for absences. Related services normally provided to your child on a day they are absent may not be made up. Families are nonetheless responsible for paying for each missed opportunity.

Please try to schedule dentist, orthodontist, and doctor appointments after school hours and arrange special treats, visits, and trips so they will not conflict with our schedule. If your child must leave school early for an appointment, or will return to school after an appointment, **a parent or guardian must come into the main lobby to sign the student in or out.** Students will not be permitted to leave or re-enter the building unless they are officially signed in or out. Parents of older students who drive are expected to notify the office of any schedule changes in advance of the student leaving the premises.

ATHLETICS ATTENDANCE

Any student-athlete absent from school the day of a scheduled game or practice session will not be allowed to participate in that game or practice. Student-athletes who are not able to be in school before 10:00 am may not participate in games or practices. Attending daily team practices and games are mandatory and part of the commitment required to being a member of the team. Attendance is taken every morning by the School.

Unexcused absences from practices may jeopardize retaining a position on the team, an opportunity to earn a varsity letter, and/or playing time at the coaches' discretion. Two unexcused absences will result in a 3 game suspension. Three unexcused absences will immediately result in the dismissal from the team.

Anticipated absences from practices may impact position on the team and playing time, not as a punitive measure, but for the safety of that individual, fairness to the rest of the team, and strategic reasons. If a student-athlete anticipates to miss practice or a game for some reason other than illness, the student must request permission from the coach. Multiple "excused absences" may impact position on the team. Three "excused" absences will result in sitting out the next game. For more information please review our Athletics Handbook or contact Dr. Bruce Nkala, Director of Athletics, (bnkala@aimpa.org).

FAMILY VACATIONS DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR

Please avoid scheduling your family vacation for days when AIM Academy is in session. Our teachers prepare their lessons for a set number of school days and students who miss even a day are being deprived of valuable instruction. Our staff is prepared to help students who miss school because of illness or absences that cannot be prevented. Students at AIM Academy are particularly in need of the constancy of daily work and the daily structure we provide.

On occasion, when a family has given the Division Head two weeks' notice of a planned absence, the School may approve such an absence. Such approval is given for important family, cultural, religious, or educational events. The student's good academic standing, fulfillment of school obligations, and satisfactory attendance record will be considered. Subject to teacher's input and a review of the student's attendance records, and if the request meets these standards, the Division Head will give permission for an approved absence (see *Appendix I* for the *Request for Approved Absence* form).

Any related services missed due to family vacations/travel will not be eligible for make-up or refund.

LATENESS

AIM Academy strives to make every minute count in the school day. Students thrive when they arrive on a timely basis and are able to organize their materials and check in with their homeroom teacher or advisor before the first period begins. Please ensure that your student arrives promptly. After 8:10 am, Lower School, Middle and Upper School students must sign in at the front desk and students are given a late pass from the front desk in order to be admitted to class after they enter the building.

ID BADGE POLICY

ID Badges are issued to Middle School and Upper School students at the start of the school year. **Students are required to wear it visibly on a lanyard or retractable belt fob.** Random checks may occur to ensure that students have their badge each day.

This badge will give each student access to AIM Academy and the ability to operate the doors throughout the buildings. **All doors will always be locked for safety purposes and can only be opened with an ID badge.** The loss of this card must be reported immediately to the Front Desk Administrator for deactivation in order to ensure the security of AIM Academy. ID badges may never be loaned, even for a brief time, to another student or non-AIM person for any reason. If a student does not have their ID badge, they are not to ring the bell at exterior entrances, knock/bang on doors, or ask faculty/staff

members to let them in. Instead, they are to report to the Front Desk for entry.

In the event the student loses their badge, they must report to the Front Desk Administrator so it can be deactivated and a new badge issued. If the student forgot their badge at home, the Front Desk Administrator will provide the student with a loaner badge for the day. This badge must be returned at the end of the school day.

TRANSPORTATION

Parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from school except for those whose school districts are responsible. Neighborhood carpools are created by parents. The parent-student directory in Veracross should facilitate your making the necessary arrangements.

If a funded student receives bus service from a jurisdiction, it is the parent who ensures that communication regarding problems or changes on the bus is maintained.

AIM ACADEMY Transportation Information 2024 - 2025

Kindly contact your school district with any questions or concerns regarding transportation.

Abington	215-884-0421
Cheltenham	215-517-1319
Colonial	610-834-1670, x 2157
Haverford	610-853-5929
Lower Merion	610-645-1939
Marple Newtown	610-359-4299 (in partnership w/ Radnor)
Methacton	610-489-5000, x 25105
Norristown	610-630-5000, option 6
North Penn	215-853-1139
Philadelphia	215-400-4350
Radnor	610-688-8100, x 3367
Springfield	215-233-6095
Tredyffrin-Easttown	610-240-1680
Upper Dublin	215-646-7778
Upper Merion	610-337-1092
Wissahickon	215-619-8114, x 1800/1810

MORNING ARRIVAL

7:30-8:00 am - Early Drop Off (Lower School to Dining Hall; Middle/Upper School to Gym)

8:00-8:10 am - Regular Drop Off at Main Entrance

After 8:10 am - Student is late and must sign in at front desk and receive a late pass

Early Drop Off (7:30 am - 8:00 am): ALL students arriving early should report to their assigned location immediately upon drop off. Students will be supervised in these locations and sent to classes at 8:00 am.

- Lower School: Dining Hall (drop off at main entrance)
- Middle School: Gym (drop off at AIM Community Center - ACC)

- Upper School: Gym (drop off at AIM Community Center - ACC)

PLEASE NOTE: No students may be dropped off prior to 7:30 am unless arriving by bus. Our staffing before 7:30 is very limited and is dedicated only to those students whose district transportation necessitates an earlier arrival time. Students arriving by car must wait in their vehicles until 7:30 am before entering the building for Early Drop Off.

Bus and Train Transportation (ALL DIVISIONS): All buses and vans are asked to drop off Lower, Middle, and Upper School students at the main entrance starting at 8:00 am (see Early Drop Off procedures for buses arriving before 8:00). (If arriving before 8:00 am, they are asked to drop students off at the Early Drop Off locations listed above.)

Train riders should head to campus immediately upon arriving. Train riders must cross River Road ONLY at the crosswalk located at the three-way stop at the intersection of River Road and Manor Road. Parents of train riders should continually remind their students that safe and respectful behavior is expected at the train station at all times.

Car Drop Off (ALL DIVISIONS): Lower, Middle, and Upper School parents are asked to drop students off at the main entrance starting at 8:00 am. Please pull as far forward as possible along the front sidewalk (all the way to the River Road exit). This allows for faster and safer drop off for everyone. Students are not permitted to cross the parking lot without parent supervision.

Late Arrival: After 8:10 am, students are considered late. Please drop off your student(s) in front of the main entrance to receive a late pass from the front desk. Students must be dropped off along the sidewalk in front of the main entrance or escorted into the building (students may not cross the parking lot or traffic lanes without a parent present).

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL

Afternoon dismissal for all students will take place beginning at 3:10 pm, at which time:

Upper School

At 3:10 pm, Upper School students are released from class immediately to report to their transportation or afterschool program. We count on Upper School students to be accountable for their own dismissal and therefore do not check them out through SchoolPass unless they ride a bus. Students are responsible for ensuring that they do not miss their bus, train, carpool, etc. or arrive late to their scheduled activity.

Train riders should walk directly to the train station to await their train. Only students who are taking the train may wait at the train station. Non-train riders may not loiter or gather with friends in this location.

Bus riders should report outside of the main entrance and check in with AIM staff before boarding their bus.

Carline students should walk directly to the Manor Road parking lot to meet their ride. We count on Upper School students to be accountable for their own dismissal, and therefore do not check them out through SchoolPass unless they ride a bus. To pick up an Upper School student, parents should find an open parking spot in the Manor Road lot and wait to leave until your student enters the vehicle.

Student Drivers should park in the Manor Road parking lot during the school day. Student drivers who are staying after school may NOT move their vehicles to the main parking lot until after 3:30 pm when

general dismissal activity has ended.

Lower and Middle School

Lower and Middle School students remain in their classrooms until called to their transportation through SchoolPass or sent to the GRC to await the start of afterschool activities.

Train riders will remain in classrooms until 3:17 when they will be sent directly to the train station. This is to minimize the “down time” spent waiting at the train station and allows 10 minutes for students to walk one block and cross the tracks before the train’s scheduled arrival.

Bus/Van riders will remain in classrooms until individually called to the main entrance to board their bus/van. Upon arrival, AIM staff checks in each bus/van and students scheduled (in SchoolPass) to ride that vehicle on that day will be called to the main entrance. Students are then checked off the list as they board their bus/van.

Carline students will remain in classrooms until individually called to the AIM Community Center (ACC) to meet their vehicle. Please be patient as our first group will be coming from their classrooms and will need a minute to get to the carline location. You should expect the carline to begin moving at 3:15 p.m. To enter the Lower and Middle School carpool line, cars will proceed on River Road and turn into the last AIM entrance. Lower and Middle School parents who are picking up their children are asked to form a single car line as directed. Carline students will continue to be called down until 3:30 pm or until no cars remain in the carline. After 3:30 pm, any remaining students will be brought to the front lobby or sent to Homework Club to await pick up; parents arriving after this time must park and go to the front desk to pick up their student.

If you are unable to wait until the end of carline to leave campus with your student, please plan to pick them up prior to 3:10 pm. You must park and enter the main building to sign the student out. Please do not “skip line” or deviate from AIM’s carline procedure, as it slows down our process for everyone and may cause an unsafe situation for students and staff.

Students are to go home by bus or car as indicated in [SchoolPass](#). SchoolPass is a web and app based service that allows parents to indicate daily dismissal plans for their students and make changes in real time. If there is a change in plans, parents **must update their student’s SchoolPass account no later than 3:00 pm on the day of the change**. If unable to access SchoolPass, parents may also call the **transportation line (215-948-9301)** or send an email to transportation@aimpa.org. Videos about how and when to use the app can be found [here](#).

Please note that school districts do not permit non-resident students to board public school buses under any circumstances. Therefore, other arrangements need to be made if students on separate school buses are planning to go home together.

PARKING ON CAMPUS - AIM COMMUNITY PARKING POLICY

All AIM community members that have a vehicle on campus must have a parking tag hung from the rear view mirror of their vehicle. Parking tags can be requested from Alysha Cook (acook@aimpa.org) or Sally Lieberman (slieberman@aimpa.org), our front desk administrative assistants. Special parking accommodations will be communicated for community events (i.e. Commencement, Open House, Institute Training). All visitors during the academic day must park in the visitor parking spaces near the main entrance. If all visitor spaces are full, a visitor's parking sign must be picked up at the front desk and displayed on the dash of the vehicle. Visitors after the academic day do not need a visitors parking

sign and may park in open spaces closest to the facility they will be visiting. Any vehicle in the parking lot during the academic day without a parking tag, or visitors sign on the dash, is subject to towing; this includes vehicles in the Manor Road lot.

STUDENT PARKING AND OFF-CAMPUS PRIVILEGES

Student parking is a privilege that is limited to 35 parking spots and will be decided first by seniority, and then on a first come first served basis.

Student drivers must request a parking permission form from Dr. Justin Schwartz (Assistant Head of Upper School, jschwartz@aimpa.org). Once signed by a parent, Dr. Justin Schwartz will give them their numbered hang tag (note the tag number does not correspond to a particular parking spot). That tag must be hung on the rear view mirror and returned at the end of the school year regardless of if they are returning the following year, if they graduate, or if they will no longer attend AIM.

Students can only park in the Manor Road parking lot on the corner of River Road and Manor Road. Student drivers may not be in their vehicle, unless they are leaving campus, or have any other students in their vehicle at any time that their vehicle is on campus. If a student is departing campus in another student's vehicle, written permission (via email to transportation@aimpa.org) must be provided by the parents/guardians of both students prior to departure.

Student drivers who are staying after school may NOT move their vehicles to the main parking lot until after 3:30 pm when general dismissal activity has ended. Any reckless behavior or dangerous driving around campus will result in a loss of parking privileges. The speed limit in our parking lot is 5 miles per hour. Exceeding that limit will also result in a loss of parking privileges.

Also as a privilege, Seniors are allowed to have lunch off campus. Dr. Schwartz will give out permission forms to both student drivers and non drivers. In order for a student to leave campus for lunch (as a driver or a passenger) their form must be signed by a parent or guardian. While off campus, students are responsible for following all behavior rules and regulations found in this handbook. Missing lunch meetings, lateness to fourth period, or reckless behavior will result in a loss of off campus lunch privileges.

SCHOOL CLOSING/DELAY INFORMATION

Our KYW website school closing number is 694. If school is canceled/delayed or closed due to weather, the decision will be made by 6:00 am.

The following are the five ways to check and/or verify school closings or delays:

1. **Community Notification System:** This system will automatically notify you via phone, email and text.

2. **School Website:** Closing or delay will be displayed on the main page.

3. **Television: 6abc (Channel 6):** AIM Academy will be listed by name at the bottom of the screen. *Please note that sometimes there is a delay from the time that we inform the TV channels to the time that they post the information.*

CBS (Channel 3): AIM Academy will be listed by name at the bottom of the screen. *Please note that sometimes there is a delay from the time that we inform the TV channels to the time that they post the*

information.

4. **Online:** www.KYW1060.com: AIM Academy will be listed by name at the bottom of the screen. *Please note that sometimes there is a delay from the time that we inform the TV channels to the time that they post the information.*

5. **Telephone:** Call AIM Academy @ 215-483-2461 and listen to the voicemail message for further instructions regarding school closings/delays.

COMMUNICATIONS

Community Notification System - We use a rapid communication service for notification of school closings, delays in opening, and early closings due to any circumstance. This system allows us to deliver messages within minutes. The system is programmed with all available telephone numbers (Home, Work and Cell) and email addresses as provided in Veracross. **It is crucial for you to keep Veracross updated on all personal and home contact information so that the system can be activated for school communication as quickly and efficiently as possible.**

We ask parents to use [SchoolPass](#) to make changes to arrival/dismissal plans as soon the change is known. If unable to access SchoolPass, parents may also call the **transportation line (215-948-9301)** or send an email to transportation@aimpa.org.

Forms, checks, or other written messages can be mailed, given to a member of the staff, or left with the receptionist at the front desk.

AIM Academy Parent/Student/Staff Directory - The AIM Academy directory can be accessed online through the [Veracross Parent Portal](#) and via the **Veracross Directory App**. The link to the directory at the top of the portal allows parents to search for families who live nearby, and to search by class as well as alphabetically. The directory app, for iOS and Android devices, allows you to look for members of the AIM community by class, program, grade, etc. Just download from the App store or Google Play and log in with your Veracross credentials. ***Names and addresses of AIM Academy students and parents are not to be put on mailing lists and used for personal interest and/or personal solicitation. Parents can control what personal information is shared by updating their directory preferences in the Veracross portal.***

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM & STUDENT LIFE

GRADING AND HOMEWORK POLICY

Lower School

The purpose for assigning homework in the Lower School is to provide students with the opportunity to practice previously taught concepts, to increase reading fluency, and to develop executive functioning skills. Any homework assigned is meant to be done entirely by students and with minimal support from parents and caregivers as the goal is to see what students are able to do independently, with the exception of reading fluency homework which may need to be monitored by parents or caregivers. If at any time your child feels a particular homework assignment is too difficult, please alert their teachers so they can use that information to adjust instruction. Additional enrichment, as well as modified homework

expectations, can be provided on an individual need basis when requested.

Middle School

Homework is for review, fluency, practice, deepening of understanding, preparation, and development of executive functioning skills. Homework is assigned at AIM Academy according to a child's needs and abilities in a given content area and grade level. In Middle School, families should expect anywhere from 1-2 hours of homework per night, with occasional assignments over the weekend. Homework may account for 15-25% of a student's overall grade. Additional enrichment, as well as modified homework expectations, can be provided on an individual need basis when requested.

Students in the Middle School receive letter grades on the traditional A - F scale based on individual growth, and preparation for AIM's Upper School college preparatory program. Middle School teachers are well aware of the social, emotional, and behavioral well being of our student population, and the effect a failing grade can have on any of our students' self-concept. Failing grades may be avoided in lieu of promoting and celebrating the individual growth of students in the 6th and 7th grade. Students entering the 8th grade at AIM are transitioned into a grading expectation that allows for more individual accountability for a student's overall performance (Assessments, Projects, Engagement, and other in-class and homework assignments). Students can be awarded any of the following recognitions during a given marking period:

Grade Scale: A+ (100-97), A (96-93), A- (92-90) B+ (89-87), B (86-83), B- (82-80) C+ (79-77), C (76-73), C- (72-70) D+ (69-67), D (66-63), D- (62-60), F (59-Below)

Distinguished Honor Roll: Students receiving an A- or greater in all subjects with no more than 2 cumulative unexcused absences.

Honor Roll: Students receiving one B and an A- or greater in all other subjects with no more than 3 cumulative unexcused absences.

8th Grade Honor Society: The *8th Grade Honor Society* serves to recognize outstanding 8th grade students. More than just an honor roll, members of the Honor Society have demonstrated excellence in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Students in this select group are considered by a team of administrators, psychologists, and teachers based on the following criteria:

- Honor Roll
- Impeccable attendance
- No disciplinary referrals
- Leadership qualities
- School spirit and commitment to the principles of AIM

Upper School

In the Upper School, grades A - F are given and GPAs are reported on a 4.0 scale.

Distinguished Honor Roll: Students receiving an A- or greater in all subjects with no more than 2 unexcused absences.

Honor Roll: Students receiving one B and an A- or greater in all other subjects with no more than 3 unexcused absences.

LUNCH AND SNACK

AIM Academy offers lunch for purchase through our partner [the Yay Company](#). The Yay Company provides a more traditional cafeteria style dining experience to give students freedom of choice and flexibility.

The Yay Company (formerly Yay! Lunch) provides completely overhauled services and is prioritizing quality in its services.

Pre-Ordering and On-Site Purchases: Families will be able to pre-order meals for convenience and the ability to plan ahead, but students will also be able to purchase a variety of both hot and cold meal items each day in our dining hall if desired without pre-ordering.

Accounts: Each student who would like to purchase items will need to have a Yay account that will be billed each week. Each student who signs up will have a unique ID and PIN number to ensure accounts cannot be shared or used by anyone else. Daily spending limits can also be set by parents.

Healthy Options: The Yay Company has a strong commitment to healthy choices for students and will only serve “good for you” snacks, meals and items. Yay Company describes this as: “A modern, exciting take on a cafeteria, our Yay Cafe will serve hot, fresh meals every day, with delicious sandwiches, salads, fountain drinks, healthy snacks, fresh produce and more available daily.”

Used Yay in the Past?: If you used Yay in the past, you can update your account using your original login method.

Visit our [Lunch Page](#) for the resources you need to create and sign up for an account, as well as contact information for the Yay Company should you have specific questions regarding daily operations.

For internal feedback or questions please feel free to reach out to Lindsay Brown (lbrown@aimpa.org) who will remain our internal point of contact for the lunch program this year.

Learn more about registering for this optional service [here](#).

For those families not participating in the lunch program, AIM Academy strongly encourages students to bring lunches to school that will benefit their readiness to learn and overall academic success. Research shows a direct correlation between good nutrition and academic achievement and performance. Parents should provide an appropriate amount of food for their student for the day, including a nutritious snack.

For families of students who have a long bus ride, please provide an ample snack for the commute each way so that your child is well-nourished throughout their entire time away from home. Please ensure that Lower School students bring a healthy mid-morning snack for each day. It is important for the students to eat a snack to fuel their brains and focus their energies prior to lunch. Recommended options include fruit, yogurt, cheese, granola bars, pretzels, or vegetables.

COLLEGE COUNSELING

AIM Academy has developed a comprehensive college and postsecondary learning planning process which begins as students enter AIM’s Upper School, and continues through senior year as students discern their best fit options for learning after graduation. The process is shared with parents and students and includes benchmarks for counseling sessions, standardized test preparation, campus visits, essay writing, development of a college list, application, and decision. A timeline and calendar are provided to students and parents, along with an individualized roadmap based on each student’s interests, abilities,

and preferences.

AIM Academy is committed to ensuring that all students are well-prepared for successfully participating in the ACT test for college acceptance. ACT Prep classes are provided as part of the school day. These courses provide both group and individual support and have resulted in students making significant gains in their ACT scores.

An annual spring College Fair, fall College Tour, and visits from college representatives throughout the year provide opportunities for our students to explore college options. We focus our college advising on genuine and personal knowledge of students, campus environments, and levels of academic support available. AIM understands that the process of determining the right fit college is based on the particular needs and expectations of individual students, and we are committed to finding this fit.

AIM Academy is a member of the Pennsylvania Association for College Admission Counseling (PACAC) and the National Association of College Admission Counseling (NACAC) and adheres to ethical practices in college admissions.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

We are excited to offer some amazing extracurricular activities for students, including a variety of sports, robotics, and arts, that will appeal to students of all ages. In addition, AIM Homework Club will be available for Lower, Middle, and Upper School students who sign up for After School activities but cannot be picked up until 5:30 pm Monday through Thursday. Please review the extracurricular options in the parent portal on Veracross, and note that students are welcome to participate in multiple activities where schedules do not conflict. Follow the steps on Veracross to register per activity. Please contact Dr. Bruce Nkala, Director of Athletics, (bnkala@aimpa.org) with any questions.

AFTER SCHOOL HOMEWORK CLUB

AIM Academy understands that many families require after school care and we are pleased to be able to offer the AIM Homework Club (\$25 daily fee associated with this program).

The After School Homework Club meets on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 3:15-5:30 pm. The club allows students to get a jumpstart on everything they learned in the classroom and to continue to work on it with an AIM teacher present. Parents have two options for their child attending homework club:

1. **Recurring:** Students can be signed up for a day or multiple days on a recurring basis (i.e. Every Monday for the entire “fall season”). To confirm day(s), parents should email homeworkclub@aimpa.org to register for each season (fall, winter, spring). Please note parents should “re-register” for each season.
2. **Drop In:** Students can drop in any day the club is offered. Whether it’s an unexpected emergency, logistical challenge, or so their student can drop in before or after another activity, parents can send an email to homeworkclub@aimpa.org the day of to confirm the need. If you would like more information about the Homework Club, please email homeworkclub@aimpa.org.

ATHLETIC PROGRAM

At AIM Academy, athletics is an integral part of a program that incorporates many areas of learning. Through involvement in interscholastic sports, as well as our fitness and wellness programs, students gain self-confidence and discipline, which also supports their emotional and social development. Athletics contribute to a well-rounded education for each student, by providing competitive and equitable sports programs that strive for achievement and excellence, with an emphasis on the health and personal development of all student-athletes. Our goal is for our student-athletes to always have a feeling of accomplishment while building school spirit and a constant sense of community. A philosophy that reflects our commitment to coach the way that we teach, assures that every student feels valued and supported.

AIM Academy is a member of both the Penn-Jersey Athletic League and the Pennsylvania Independent Schools Athletic Association (PAISAA). Upper and Middle Schools offer a variety of interscholastic as well as fitness and wellness options in each season. We encourage students to take full advantage of these opportunities to build character and establish values both on and off the field.

AIM also offers a variety of after school Jr. Wolfpack sports and activities for Lower School students.

TUTORING CENTER

AIM's Tutoring Center provides tutors who are trained to deliver individualized and prescriptive instruction which is tailored to meet the needs of each student. Tutoring ranges from teaching reading readiness skills to providing remediation in specific academic areas. Tutoring might also focus on helping students to learn study skills and organizational strategies so students can independently and effectively complete their academic work. Tutoring services are available for children in grades 1 through 12, and also for students attending area schools. Sessions typically take place at AIM, but they can also be done remotely. Scheduling sessions are agreed upon by parents and the tutor, and might occur before school, during school, or after school hours. In an effort to provide consistency and attain maximum benefit, it is recommended that tutoring should occur at least two times a week. Less than that would likely be unproductive. Parents who are interested in having a tutor work with their child should complete the [online tutor application](#), located under the "Integrated Services" tab on AIM's website. Please contact Dr. Christy Barbone (cbarbone@aimpa.org) with any questions.

SOCIAL EVENTS

The Middle and Upper Schools host a wide variety of social events that are thoroughly enjoyed by all students. These activities include an annual Upper School prom, dances, ski trips, BBQs and many other opportunities for students to get to know their classmates and others outside of the traditional academic environment. The student body at AIM Academy is very involved in the planning of these ongoing activities. Lower School events often include family members and feature a variety of gatherings such as Trunk or Treat, Interactive Humanities Night, Drop Everything and Read Day, and other seasonal activities.

STUDENT FIELD TRIPS

We limit the number of trips for our students to those directly related to subject areas under study. Teachers must delineate very specific objectives for each trip. We make use of trips to reinforce what has been learned in classrooms. Behavior expectations are discussed before our students go on trips. Various

permission slips may be required depending on the location, length, and distance of each individual field trip.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES/CELEBRATIONS

If you are interested in sending snacks or treats to school for a child's birthday, please contact your Division Head or teacher to coordinate regarding allergies. When you are planning parties and celebrations, please be kind and inclusive. For example, please do not distribute invitations at school or bring gifts to school. We encourage students and families to hold parties on weekends, if possible, and to be inclusive when hosting social events. This focus is incredibly important to building confidence and a sense of community for all students.

STUDENT REPORTS AND CONFERENCES

For the 2024-2025 school year, Parent Conferences in October and February will be scheduled over Zoom to provide for less disruption in families' days and to maximize conversation time with teachers.

Lower School

In Lower School, student progress reports are developed for each student and shared with families at the end of each academic quarter. Family conferences are held two times during the year in October and February, with an optional third conference available at the end of the school year. During conferences, families will meet with their child's teaching team and any pertinent members of the Related Services Team, including Speech and Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and/or the School Psychologist, to receive updates about academic and social-emotional growth and to review progress monitoring reports.

Middle School

In Middle School, parent conferences are held two times during the academic school year in October and February. Please note, this year we will be instituting two full days (8:00 am to 3:15 pm) for parents and families to schedule their conference times with teachers. These conferences typically last 12 minutes with each individual teacher. Parents are encouraged to utilize the October conference times to discuss goal setting, and our February conference times to review progress and discuss academic plans for the remainder of the school year. Our Related Services team, including the Speech and Language Pathologist, the Occupational Therapist and/or the School Psychologist, are also available for individual conferences in October and February. End of the year conferences are optional, and should be scheduled with teachers 2 weeks in advance of the last day of school.

Upper School

In the Upper School, parent conferences are held twice during the academic school year in October and February. Parents will have the opportunity to sign up for 15-minute conferences with all of their child's teachers. Teachers will be ready to present student progress, show work samples, and discuss academic plans for the remainder of the school year. Our Related Services team, including the Speech and Language Pathologist, the Occupational Therapist and/or the School Psychologist, are also available for individual conferences in October and February.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

From the opening of our doors, we have expected students to participate in their community by acting as advocates for themselves, their peers and their learning. Through community service, we take this a step further and ask students to consistently reflect on their connections to learning as they exist outside of the classroom.

The Community Service program at AIM Academy has three main goals:

- *Live It To Learn It:* To provide students with relevant hands-on learning experiences both locally and globally.
- *Local and Global Citizenship:* To instill students with a sense of social responsibility, thereby fostering an understanding of themselves as local and global citizens.
- *Multicultural Pride and Understanding:* To empower students to take purposeful action in their learning as they broaden their understanding of cultures, realities and lifestyles.

The promotion of reflective, meaningful connections to learning begins early in the AIM Academy Lower School with a variety of learning activities including raising money for *Moving Windmills* and participation in MiniTHON. Students in AIM's Middle School begin in 6th grade by participating in long-standing partnerships with public service organizations including SHARE Food Project, the State of Pennsylvania, and the Teton Science School. These partnerships directly connect students to relevant hands-on experiences surrounding the Middle School curriculum. Upper School students must complete 100 quality hours of community service with as many organizations as they wish. Many students choose to serve in local community organizations, but many also provide valuable service to AIM by volunteering at after school or weekend events, within the Athletic and Drama Departments, and during AIM's summer program. The Student Council, Community Service Club, and Eye To Eye also provide many opportunities for Upper School students to complete their hours.

AIM Upper School students have a 100-hour community service graduation requirement. Students can log their hours on Veracross.

Partner for Impact: To create meaningful and reciprocal experiences for its students, AIM Academy has worked to develop a portfolio of community partners from the Philadelphia area and beyond. These partners allow the students of AIM Academy in our service clubs to immerse themselves in a meaningful, familiar place where they can use their skills to help build the community around them.

Why Service Learning? The AIM Academy curriculum is built around the idea of students having a deep connection to the concepts they are being asked to master. As a means to bolster its curriculum for its students to take the most away from their experience, service learning provides relevancy, builds empathy, generates community, and gives students a voice.

Service Learning Resources: For additional information about Service-Learning visit the following organizations' websites:

- National Service Learning Clearinghouse: www.servicelearning.org
- National Youth Leadership Council: www.nylc.org

HEALTH

AIM HEALTH SERVICES TEAM

Thea Maurer, BSN, RN, CNRN, NCSN
Student Health Services Coordinator
tmaurer@aimpa.org

Lindsay Brown, RN, BSN
Health and Wellness Coordinator
lbrown@aimpa.org

Health Office Phone: 215-948-9373

STUDENT HEALTH RECORDS

AIM Academy partners with **Magnus Health SMR** to streamline management of required student forms including health-related forms using a secure, HIPAA-protected system. To complete necessary forms and share COVID-19 vaccination information, access the Magnus Health Portal (your username and password are the same as your Parent Portal login) through the link on your Parent Portal. Please contact nurse Thea Maurer at tmaurer@aimpa.org with any questions or if you have difficulty accessing the Magnus system.

COVID-19

AIM is proud to have a high vaccination rate among our vaccine eligible community and strongly encourages anyone eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine to be fully vaccinated. If your student has been fully vaccinated, it is important that this information be shared on their Magnus Health portal. AIM follows the recommendations of the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov) regarding individuals exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 or determined to be close contacts. We urge **all** members of our community to honestly assess any [symptoms of illness \(even mild ones\)](#) when determining when to go to school or when to choose to wear a mask while on campus.

Please reach out to covidsupport@aimpa.org with any questions.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

Yearly physical forms are required for all students entering 1st and 3rd grades and all students entering 6th through 12th grade. For new students entering 2nd, 4th and 5th grades, health records from your child's former school are acceptable. Students will not be permitted to attend classes or participate in any school activity, including athletics, until all medical, health, dental, and emergency information forms are on file with Magnus Health SMR. Physical examinations will be accepted if completed in the previous 12 months. A dental form must be completed for new students and students entering 3rd and 7th grades.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

Pennsylvania state law mandates specific health screenings for various grades during the academic year. The nurse performs the screenings, which include growth, vision, and hearing, typically in the fall. Parents will be notified in writing of students who do not pass the health screenings with a referral to the appropriate health care provider. Please contact the health office if you have any questions or concerns about these services.

ILLNESS OR INJURY

If your child is experiencing symptoms requiring them to stay home or has another illness or injury, please **report your child's absence through their [SchoolPass](#) account**. If unable to access SchoolPass, parents may also call the attendance line (215-948-9301) or send an email to attendance@aimpa.org. Please contact the health office for any unusual or prolonged medical injuries or illnesses. This will help us better prepare and support your child upon his or her return to school. Parents are **required** to immediately notify the health office upon diagnosis of a communicable disease such as chicken pox, conjunctivitis, COVID-19, Fifth disease, impetigo, influenza, measles, pinworm, pediculosis (lice), pertussis (whooping cough), strep throat, scabies, scarlet fever, or ringworm.

The school nurses, coaches, and various members of the AIM Academy faculty and staff have been trained in first aid, CPR and the use of our state-of-the-art defibrillators.

Students are not permitted to excuse themselves from school when ill, but must see the nurse for evaluation. Unless it is an emergency situation, students must obtain a pass from a teacher to visit the nurse. Parents/guardians must be contacted prior to dismissal from school. Parents are notified if a student is ill or has an injury that requires further medical evaluation. Transportation for medical evaluation is the responsibility of the parent/guardian for non-emergency situations. If a serious illness or injury occurs, the nurse, faculty, staff, or administration will activate the 911 emergency system for transportation to the hospital. The emergency medical information form must be updated yearly with all the other health forms. The health office should be updated on any changes during the school year.

MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

In accordance with the school's drug policy, students are not permitted to carry or self-administer any prescription or non-prescription medications without prior authorization. Families must submit written documentation to the health office for notification and approval of any self-administered medications while on campus. Currently, the only approved self-administered medications are asthmatic metered dose inhalers, insulin for diabetic students, and emergency anaphylactic medications (EpiPens). All other medications must be administered in the health office and follow the medication policy protocol.

MEDICATION POLICY PROTOCOL

Please contact the health office to discuss the policy for administering prescription medications during the school day. Medication to be given on a regular or "as needed" basis requires a written prescription/authorization from your child's healthcare provider each academic year. This includes EpiPens and inhalers, as well as oral medications. Please ask your child's healthcare provider to complete the Request for Administration of Medication in School form.

Medication that needs to be given for treatment of an acute nature, such as oral or topical antibiotics,

requires a note from your health care provider stating the time of day as well as the length of treatment. All medications must be delivered to school in the original prescription labeled container. Medications can be returned home on a daily basis if needed. Medications should be picked up by the parent at the end of the school year.

COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS & STANDARDS

All students have the right and responsibility to learn in a positive environment, and we want all students to be successful members of the AIM community. We have the following community expectations:

- Everyone in the AIM Community must be safe.
- Everyone in the AIM Community must act in a way that allows others to learn.
- Everyone in the AIM Community must treat others with kindness, courtesy, and respect.

Overall, we are intentional in building strong classroom communities where students feel known, valued, safe, and respected. Building rapport, getting to know students as people and as learners, celebrating all facets of student identities, and maintaining strong communication with students is central to collaborating with students and helping them achieve success.

AIM Academy Norms of Community Engagement - Faculty, Students, & Families

- **Every Voice Matters.** We commit to being mindful participants when sharing in classes and meetings. We understand that it is important to create space for everyone's perspective to be heard before decisions are made. If there are quieter voices in our gathering, we will work to draw those perspectives out and if there are louder voices in our group, we will feel comfortable asking them to make room for everyone.
- **Forge Partnerships.** In the creation of academic, social, and behavioral plans and during the process of decision-making, we strive to create a unified front among constituents. Through the forging of partnerships, the expectation is that our actions, thoughts, plans, and behaviors are trusted and owned unanimously by the group.
- **Value Diverse Perspectives.** We intentionally strive to build a diverse experience because there are diverse expectations across the community. We all respect what we each bring to the table in mission-critical conversations. We collaborate often because ideas are best formulated in teams.
- **Respectful Discourse.** There is a vulnerability in sharing thoughts and ideas with others, and we believe all work is personal. As part of our commitment to collaborative practice, we also commit to functioning with courteous and respectful discourse always. We will be proud of our processes and outcomes; this is reflected in how we use our words and how we honor and assess one another's ideas.
- **Be Thoughtful.** While we operate under aggressive timelines in an effort to be efficient and innovative, at AIM we commit to moving thoughtfully through them. We agree to avoid making decisions about individuals, programs, or our school impulsively, while recognizing the importance of being decisive.
- **Benefit of the Doubt.** Assume everyone at the table is working hard and is trying to move toward the stated goal of the work and the mission of the school. We assume the best of intentions always. We seek to understand why certain comments and decisions were made before drawing conclusions and always ask ourselves "*Do I have all of the information?*" before assuming we do. We resist easy assumptions and put our shared history in context - just because it once was does not mean it will be forever.

- **Lead with Compassion & Empathy.** We are proud to be a shelter for students and families who have been misunderstood elsewhere and for educators who thrive in an environment of understanding. We must lead with empathy and compassion in all exchanges with one another and speak to and of each other as if each were our own family. The work we do is tough and the need to remind one another about empathy, especially when it is most difficult, is paramount.

AIM FORS

We AIM for **responsibility, respect, inclusion, and creativity** at AIM Academy. These are the core principles that guide how we engage and interact with each other. The principles of **responsibility, respect, inclusion, and creativity** define how AIM scholars, staff, and faculty treat each other in the halls, classrooms, in conversations, and actions. We believe these principles are lifelong traits to be developed and celebrated by all stakeholders. Students and faculty who go above and beyond in exemplifying these traits will be acknowledged in various ways as we continue to be a community where everyone belongs.

STUDENT SUPPORT

All students need a safe and supportive school environment to progress academically and developmentally. Starting with our teaching staff, AIM has multiple layers of support in place to help ensure students are well positioned to benefit from their time at AIM both in and outside of the classroom. Each division has a School Psychologist and School Counselor. Curriculum and Instructional Leaders support all three divisions, as do a team of Speech-Language Pathologists and Occupational Therapists. Lower, Middle, and Upper School divisions have a Dean of Students. Access more detailed information on our Integrated Services [here](#).

AIM does not permit students to attend therapy sessions (in person or online) with non-AIM professionals while on campus.

FACULTY AND STAFF CONDUCT

Safety is our number one goal with respect to behavior.

AIM Academy provides our students with the highest quality services available. We are committed to creating an environment for students that is safe, nurturing, empowering, and that promotes growth, success and a feeling of belonging. No form of abuse will be tolerated, and confirmed abuse will result in immediate dismissal from school. AIM Academy will fully cooperate with authorities if allegations of abuse are made that require investigation.

AIM faculty and staff are expected to exercise professionalism and behavior fitting of their position at all times. Our commitments are guided by the NAIS' [Principles of Good Practice](#). The professionalism and behavior of AIM employees embodies the elements of unwavering good judgment in all decision making, respectful interaction with others, and the following beliefs regarding interactions with students and peers.

All employees at AIM complete a minimum of 3 hours of training every five years on child abuse and sexual misconduct recognition and reporting in compliance with Act 126 of 2012 "Child Abuse Recognition and Reporting Training."

HOME - SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

AIM Academy subscribes to the Principles of Good Practice published by the National Association of Independent Schools. The philosophy expressed in the **NAIS Principles of Good Practice** guidelines for “Parents Working with Schools/Schools Working with Parents” (PGPs) is consistent with the mission and core values of AIM Academy. Recognizing that emotions associated with children can at times run very high, these principles describe AIM’s expectations for interpersonal conduct.

Preamble: The following principles provide common ground for interaction between independent school professionals and their many constituents (parents, students, colleagues at other schools, and the public). The **NAIS Principles of Good Practice** for member schools define high standards and ethical behavior in key areas of school operations to guide schools in becoming the best education communities they can be, to embed the expectation of professionalism, and to further our sector’s core values of transparency, excellence, and inclusivity. Accordingly, membership in NAIS is contingent upon agreement to abide by the spirit of the PGPs.

Overview: Parents and independent schools work together to create and sustain effective partnerships. The following principles describe the respective roles and responsibilities of both partners.

Principles of Good Practice:

Parents Working with Schools

1. Parents recognize that effective partnerships are characterized by clearly defined responsibilities, a shared commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication, mutual respect, and a common vision of the goals to be reached.
2. In selecting an independent school, parents seek an optimal match for the needs of the student, their own expectations, and the philosophy and programs of the school.
3. Parents are familiar with and support the school’s policies and procedures.
4. Parents provide a home environment that supports the development of positive learning attitudes and habits.
5. Parents involve themselves in the life of the school.
6. Parents seek and value the school’s perspective on the student.
7. When concerns arise, parents seek information directly from the school, consulting with those best able to address the concerns.
8. The school suggests effective ways for parents to support the educational process.

Schools Working with Parents

1. The school recognizes that effective partnerships are characterized by clearly defined responsibilities, a shared commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication, mutual respect, and a common vision of the goals to be reached.
2. The school clearly and fully presents its philosophy, program, and practices to parents during the admission process and encourages dialogue that clarifies parental expectations and aspirations for the student.
3. The school seeks and values the parents’ perspective on the student.

4. Teachers and administrators are accessible to parents and model candid and open dialogue.
5. The school keeps parents well informed through systematic reports, conferences, publications, and informal conversations.
6. The school defines clearly how it involves parents when considering major decisions that affect the school community.
7. The school offers and supports a variety of parent education opportunities.
8. The school suggests effective ways for parents to support the educational process.
9. The school actively seeks the knowledge it needs to work effectively with a diverse parent body.

DRESS CODE

Our Philosophy: AIM Academy's dress code seeks to create an atmosphere that is conducive to learning. It supports equitable access to self-expression and body positivity. As such, we understand that clothing can contribute to a sense of pride and professionalism and that wardrobe choices depend on tastes and values. We expect students to dress appropriately for the school day and for any school events. Faculty and staff reserve the right to enforce the dress code in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

Students *cannot* wear any piece of clothing or accessory that:

1. Contains offensive language including violent words, hate speech, and profanity.
2. Depicts offensive images or images of illegal activity including violence, pornography, guns, drugs, alcohol, vaping, or any other images that may strain community relationships.
3. Shows underclothes or reveals body parts typically covered by a one-piece bathing suit (chest, buttocks, nipples, navel, and genitals).
4. Covers heads or faces (unless for religious purposes). This includes hats and hoods (though hooded sweatshirts are permitted but cannot be worn over head during school day).
5. Impedes a safe learning environment, safe movement around campus, safety when outside during all types of weather, or safe execution of emergency protocols.

If the dress code is violated, the student will be asked to put on a clean, AIM article of clothing for the remainder of the day.

Mask Guidelines: For students and staff opting to wear face masks during the school day, we seek to limit the visual distraction masks may cause when individuals interact with each other on campus. Masks should be solid colors or patterns; AIM logos are permitted, but no commercial or political slogans, lettering, sequins or similar.

STUDENT-TO-STUDENT INTERACTIONS

Student-to-student sexual activity and sexualized behaviors often remain unreported in organizations because parents and educators are not comfortable documenting these situations, or may not know how. Most serious incidents of student-to-student abuse are preceded by more subtle incidents such as name-calling, taunting, or roughhousing. Interrupting these interactions early and establishing and communicating standards of conduct can keep the school environment safe. AIM Academy recognizes that the following interactions are high risk and should be prohibited:

- Hazing
- Bullying
- Derogatory name-calling
- Inappropriate touching
- Roughhousing
- Games of Truth or Dare
- Singling out one child for different treatment
- Ridicule or humiliation

BULLYING

AIM Academy is committed to providing all students with a safe and nurturing environment. In accordance with Pennsylvania Law H156 (2013), the *Pennsylvania Safe Schools Act (PASS)*, and the Timothy J. Piazza Antihazing Law S1090 (2018), AIM has adopted a zero tolerance policy on bullying which is integrated into the school Code of Conduct.

Bullying is defined as an intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students which occurs in a school setting. The act is severe, persistent, or pervasive and has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education, creating a threatening environment, or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school. "School setting" is defined as the school, school grounds, in school vehicles, at a school bus stop, or any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.

All forms of bullying will not be tolerated. Students who engage in bullying behavior will be disciplined by the Dean of Students and/or Division Head accordingly. This could include, but is not limited to, detention, suspension, or in severe cases, expulsion. Parents will be contacted immediately and students may be placed on probation for a designated period. Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying can take on various forms, including:

- **Physical bullying** is when one engages in physical force against another, such as by hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.
- **Verbal bullying** is when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as by belittling or calling someone hurtful names.
- **Nonverbal or relational bullying** is when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation, gossip, or intimidating another by using gestures.
- **Sexualized bullying** is when bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Examples of sexualized bullying behaviors include sexting, bullying that involves exposures of private body parts, and verbal bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.

What is bullying vs. what is not?

It is important to distinguish bullying from other unkind, mean and harmful behavior. Calling someone a name or pushing someone once, being rude or having an argument with someone is not bullying. Of course, these behaviors should be addressed but may have different consequences and interventions, which is why the distinction is critical. To be defined as bullying, all three components must be present: (1) repeated actions or threats, (2) a power imbalance and (3) intention to cause harm. If bullying is identified correctly, there are various ways to address it. (Source: [ADL](#))

HAZING

Hazing refers to any activity expected of an individual joining or participating (or to maintain full status) in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, endangers or risks emotional and/or physical harm to that person *regardless* of that person's willingness to participate. Students and others associated with school sanctioned organizations are prohibited from any type of hazing. AIM does not tolerate any form of hazing in our community. Per Pennsylvania's Timothy J. Piazza Antihazing Law, AIM provides safe harbor (from prosecution or civil liability, not from student discipline) for those who report violations.

SEXTING

Students should be aware that sending, sharing, viewing or merely possessing sexually explicit photos, images and messages, text messages, emails or other sexually explicit or suggestive materials via a computer, digital device or cell phone (commonly known as "sexting") may subject a student to criminal charges under federal and state laws. The types of crimes that can be implicated by sexting include child pornography, obscenity laws, harassment, indecent exposure, and endangerment. In addition, using a digital device or computer to solicit a minor under the age of 16 to meet up with the intent to engage in a sexual act can also lead to criminal charges, even if it is mutually voluntary between the two students.

AIM does not tolerate sexting activity, and it is cause for disciplinary action up to and including a requirement to withdraw. If sexting is suspected, the school can seize a student's cell phone, computer or other electronic device and will turn the device over to law enforcement authorities. Any student, faculty, staff member, or parent with questions or concerns about sexting, including being the unwilling recipient of a sexual image, should speak with the student's dean or other school administrator.

CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying is the use of electronic technology to torment, tease, and or humiliate others. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets, as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites. AIM students are educated about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and Cyberbullying awareness and response.

Since every AIM student is a representative of the school at all times, it is expected that students reflect community values when online. We monitor cyberbullying using our on/off campus filtering program installed on all AIM issued technology. Students who are in violation of the Acceptable Use Policy or the Cyberbullying Policy, whether on or off campus, during or outside of school hours, and at any time of the year, may be subject to disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may range from team meetings, to detentions, to referral to appropriate authorities including police, to expulsion.

Specific instances related to Cyberbullying include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Sending hurtful messages to someone through email, text, Instagram, Tik-Tok, Twitter, or any other communication platform.
- Sharing insensitive, hurtful, untrue, or defamatory statements online about other students in Social Media posts or in private messages.
- Taking or sharing photos or videos without consent from the people in the photos or videos.
- Logging into another student's account. Someone will gain access to another student's email and use this person's email address to send hurtful messages to other students impersonating the

compromised student.

- Generally - Behavior that would not be acceptable in person, away from computers, is also not acceptable on computers, phones, or online.

What parents can do to help:

- Learn about the internet - know what tools are available for use and misuse by your child and their peers.
- Talk up values - the technology may have changed, but kindness and decency should still be at the top of everyone's list.
- Guard passwords - tell your child not to share with friends and to change passwords frequently.
- Talk to your child - make sure your child comes to you when targeted for abuse.
- Keep copies - print out and save any offensive emails, IMs, blogs, etc.
- Report the incident to the proper authorities.
- Stress the internet's impact - an email sent to one person, can be resent to hundreds. Old emails, IMs, and posts may resurface and get even a well-meaning person in trouble.
- Remind your child that even though they may feel anonymous online, they are not.
- Encourage your child to think before clicking, posting, or sending.

Contact helpdesk@aimpa.org for any technology questions and needs.

PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

Regardless of age, caring for others and showing affection are important parts of life. However, overt displays of affection between two people may cause discomfort or embarrassment to others. Being overly affectionate in school creates an environment that is not conducive to concentration and learning. Therefore, students should refrain from inappropriate, intimate behaviors on campus or at school related events and activities. Students are expected to show good taste and conduct themselves respectfully at all times. Students must adhere to changes in this policy when our community is operating under temporary health-related guidance (e.g., pandemic protocols).

***Behaviors that are appropriate/inappropriate between:** children and teens of opposite genders, children and teens of the same gender, children and teens that identify as gender-fluid/neutral, or children and teens whose gender differs from their physical presentation.

<i>Appropriate (with consent)</i>	<i>Inappropriate</i>
Holding hands	Frontal hugging
Handshakes	Kissing
High fives	Tickling
Walking arm in arm	Wrestling
Sitting close	Sitting on someone's lap
Patting someone on the back	Compliments related to body/physique
Shoulder-to-Shoulder hugs	Piggyback riding
	Massaging/rubbing backs, arms, legs

AIM ACADEMY NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

AIM Academy is committed to a policy of non-discrimination in all aspects of our community's actions and relationships on any basis including but not limited to race, religion, ancestry, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, familial status, disability, veteran status or national origin. As required by Title IX, AIM does not discriminate on the basis of sex. Please direct any complaints to our Title IX Coordinator, Cheryl Ferst at 215-948-9354 or cferst@aimpa.org.

IDENTITY EXPLORATION AND AFFIRMATION

Children and adolescents explore how they fit into society by learning and embracing various identities and their intersections. As some young people go through this, they may find a shift in their pronouns or their name is an important and helpful step in defining who they are. At AIM, we work to provide students with a varied curriculum of stories, authors, and content as well as offer affinity groups based on student interest and composition to support this key developmental step. By working in partnership with families, we support each student's choice to be called by the name and pronouns that they feel affirmed by here at school. We are committed to supporting students in their journeys with their names and pronouns and to working with families who need support and/or resources in navigating these processes.

In the event that parents or caregivers and a student would like to make a formal request to change a student's name, we ask that the parents or caregivers put this request in writing to the Divisional Head. This will initiate steps that may include adjusting school databases and records; such steps may require proof in the form of legal documentation of the name change.

POLICY ON IDENTITY-BASED DISCRIMINATION AND BIAS

Philosophy - AIM Academy's commitment to providing extraordinary educational opportunities to children with language-based learning disabilities recognizes that learning differences are only one of many intersecting identities that students bring to school each day. In order to achieve their full potential as independent learners, students require and deserve a learning environment free from the identity-based discrimination and prejudices that limit the brain's intellectual capacity, the "malleable information processing power [which] grows through neuroplasticity" (Hammond, 2015). As a research-to-practice institution, our approach to bias and discrimination is informed by the wealth of scientific studies linking racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice to deleterious impact on cognitive function, executive functioning, social-emotional learning, and mental and physical health.¹

As an institution committed to acknowledging and disrupting harmful systems of oppression, AIM Academy strives to proactively educate all community members on the power dynamics of privilege and marginalization, and the many ways they manifest, both between individuals and in society. We are guided by the wise words attributed to **Dr. Maya Angelou**, "I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better." In this spirit, AIM seeks to equip students, staff, and families with the

¹ *The Effects of Oppression on the Learner's Brain*, The National Equity Project;
Cognitive Costs of Contemporary Prejudice, Group Processes and Intergroup Relations;
Stress in America: The Impact of Discrimination, The American Psychological Association;
Physiological Responses to Racism and Discrimination: An Assessment of the Evidence, American Journal of Public Health

knowledge, skills, and experiences that allow us to “do better” as we work to transform ourselves, our school community, and the wider world that will benefit from our students’ active allyship and leadership.

When bias-related incidents are brought to the school’s attention, AIM will address them in a responsive, multifaceted manner. We incorporate **restorative practice** to repair harm and **transformative justice** to address the root causes of the inequity, alongside other accountability measures and disciplinary action when appropriate, as described in the Policy section below. A committed **zero indifference** approach to consistently addressing biased, prejudicial, and discriminatory attitudes and behaviors is expected from all AIM students, faculty, administrators, who will partner with families to support the goals and values described in our [Equity & Diversity Statement](#).

Key Concepts - Because some terms and concepts within this policy may not be familiar to all community members, readers may find it helpful to consult this collection of [Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity Vocabulary](#), as well as this [Glossary of Racial Equity Terminology](#) and [Glossary of LGBTQ+ Key Terms](#).

Policy - AIM Academy does not tolerate discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, ethnicity, disability, neurodiversity, sex, gender identity, gender expression, faith, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, national origin, or any other group protected under federal, state, or local law. Such discrimination towards community members of historically marginalized communities, including people of color, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and members of religious minorities, is especially egregious and will be subject to swift and serious response. While bias itself may be *conscious or unconscious*, and prejudicial words, images, and actions *intentional or unintentional*, the negative impact of **bias-related incidents** on individuals, groups, and the community at large is nonetheless harmful, compromising the safety of our whole learning community and disproportionately affecting its members with more than one marginalized identity.

As such, AIM Academy is committed to documenting and responding to all such incidents, examples of which may include, but are not limited to, intimidating comments or messages, defacement of posters or signs with offensive epithets or symbols, vandalism of personal or school property, use of racial, ethnic, or other slurs, and ridiculing someone’s language, accent, or cultural traditions. Any community member who is victimized by, or becomes aware of such behavior, is urged to immediately notify the **Bias-Related Incident Response Team** following the procedures outlined below. AIM Academy is committed to preventing any retaliation or threats of retaliation towards the reporting individual(s), and any attempt at such retaliation will be dealt with severely and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Please note that just because the expression of an idea or point of view may be offensive or inflammatory to some, it is not necessarily a bias-related incident. AIM Academy values freedom of expression and active participation in academic discourse, recognizing that students must learn to engage respectfully and thoughtfully with challenging topics. While this value of openness means that discussion of sensitive topics is welcomed and encouraged, it does not allow for harassment, *ad hominem* attacks, or discriminatory language that targets an individual or group based on a marginalized identity.

This policy applies to:

- Faculty, Staff, and Students who are on the school grounds (indoors, out of doors, in private vehicles) or in school transportation vehicles at any time of day or any day of the year.
- Faculty, Staff, and Students who are in the virtual classroom setting, or engaging in AIM-sponsored

distance learning activities through school-owned or school-managed technology at any time of day or any day of the year.

- Faculty, Staff, and Students who are attending any off-campus school activity, such as field trips or athletic, social, or cultural events at any time of day or any day of the year.
- Students attending a function at another school at any time of day or any day of the year.
- Any incident that occurs off campus during school hours while school is in session.
- Any incident in which AIM Faculty, Staff, and Students(s) utilize any electronic medium (including, but not limited to, email, social media accounts, text messages, and web-based networks) to engage in identity-based bias and discrimination that targets and/or directly impacts an individual or group within our school community based upon their actual or perceived identity, at any time of day or any day of the year.

Students must also be aware that they represent AIM Academy, directly or indirectly, when they attend any public or private event. Additionally, AIM Academy reserves the right to discipline students whose conduct outside of school, including within the digital sphere, is incompatible with the school's standards.

Prevention - AIM Academy will address individual, institutional, and systemic identity-based oppressions, including racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, classism, and xenophobia, through proactive education for all students and staff. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Regularly assessing and adapting curriculum and instruction to ensure that topics, texts, and materials reflect the racial and cultural diversity of our school and world, with an explicit focus on the histories, perspectives, and experiences of historically marginalized and minoritized groups.
- Delivering evidence-informed instruction about identity, power, and privilege in a developmentally appropriate manner to students across all divisions.
- Providing opportunities for all faculty and staff to engage in ongoing professional development on the topics of diversity, equity, inclusion, restorative practice, and social justice in education.
- Creating spaces for direct engagement and coalition-building, including student Affinity Groups and clubs or extracurricular activities focused on equity and justice.
- Training faculty, staff, and students on the procedures and protocols outlined in this policy.
- Offering relevant information, resources, and discussion-starters to families via regular school communications and newsletters.

Reporting - To more consistently track and respond to occurrences of prejudice, discrimination, and identity-based harassment, AIM Academy has instituted a **Bias-Related Incident Reporting Protocol**, informed by guidances from the National Association of Independent Schools, and modeled after similar protocols at institutions of higher education. Any member of the AIM community who becomes aware of an incident motivated by bias against a targeted individual's or group's *actual or perceived* race, ethnicity, disability, sex, gender identity, gender expression, faith, neurodiversity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, national origin, or other protected group identity is strongly encouraged to submit a report using one of the following methods:

- A verbal report may be made directly to a member of the **Bias-Related Incident Response Team**, which includes the Coordinator of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, Head of School,

Associate Head of School, Division Heads, Deans, and other members of the staff who have completed specific training on restorative and transformative justice practices. A written report may be submitted using the online [Bias-Related Incident Reporting Form](#), also found in Veracross, which will be received and responded to by the individuals named above.

- Students or their families may submit anonymous reports, and while these *will* be included in annual data reports about bias-related incidents, they *may* not necessarily result in disciplinary action or restorative measures. Resulting interventions will occur at the discretion of the Bias-Related Incident Response Team based upon the depth of information provided.
 - Reporters may also protect anonymity by submitting a verbal report as described above, in which case the involved Bias Related Incident Response Team member will act as a liaison between the reporting party and Response Team.
- Incidents of actual or threatened retaliation towards reporting parties should also be communicated, so that AIM can make all reasonable efforts to protect those who report harassment and/or provide information during an investigation of such incidents, as well as to hold the retaliating parties accountable.
- If the incident in question involves students at AIM and at another school, AIM Academy will promptly notify the appropriate administrator(s) so that both schools may take action.

Intervention - As an institution fundamentally rooted in the knowledge that students learn best when they are regarded and approached as unique individuals with their own strengths and growth areas, AIM Academy stresses the importance of meaningful interventions intentionally designed to address the needs of those directly involved in each bias-related incident. With that said, these general guidelines describe AIM's orientation toward this work and outline the steps involved in responding to each Bias-Related Incident Report:

- Upon receipt of a report, whether verbal or written, members of the Bias-Related Incident Response Team will promptly develop a plan to investigate the situation based upon the information provided by the reporting party.
- Based on the information gathered from this investigation, the response team will take appropriate action, which may include any combination of **disciplinary consequences, restorative practices, and transformative justice actions**.
 - Depending upon the severity of the offense, **disciplinary action** may be taken, up to and including academic probation, suspension, or expulsion. Please see the Disciplinary Action section of this Handbook for more information.
 - The Director of College Counseling may be required to report disciplinary sanctions to institutions of higher education that have accepted involved Upper School students.
 - In extreme circumstances that could constitute criminal behavior, law enforcement officials may be notified.
 - **Restorative practices** in education seek to create just and equitable learning environments, build and maintain healthy relationships, and repair harm and transform conflict. Whenever possible, all community members involved in or impacted by a bias-related incident will be invited and encouraged to participate in restorative justice practices, which may include, but are not limited to, facilitated conversations, written impact and/or accountability statements,

educational opportunities for individuals and/or groups, mediated accountability circles, and public or private actions and reflection statements which demonstrate learning and repair harm.

- AIM will make every reasonable effort to ensure the safety and well-being of those negatively impacted by a bias-related incident throughout the restorative practice. However, in the event that a reporting party wishes to remain anonymous, or feels that participation in restorative practice would perpetuate or create further harm, there is no imperative for direct involvement. *The offending individual(s) may still choose to engage in restorative justice*, either instead of, or in tandem with disciplinary sanctions, as determined by the Response Team.
- During the investigation and response process, individuals named in the report may be temporarily removed from campus, or prohibited from accessing certain spaces. Such measures are *not* intended as a disciplinary consequence, but may be utilized on an as-needed basis in order to create time and space to support a successful restorative process for all parties.
- Faculty, Staff, and Students who repeatedly engage in harmful, discriminatory behaviors, demonstrate unwillingness to engage fully with the restorative justice process, or who fail to follow through with agreed-upon accountability measures may be subject to escalated disciplinary consequences as described above.
- **Transformative justice** in education seeks not only to respond to incidents of identity-based discrimination and harassment, but to identify and address the underlying conditions which originally created and/or perpetuated the inequity. When the investigation of a bias-related incident indicates a need for change in policy, procedure, or programming, AIM will make every effort to prioritize the planning and implementation of such changes.
- When necessary or requested, AIM's team of school psychologists and counselors will provide counseling or referrals for outside services for all involved parties, including both those who have caused harm, and those who have been harmed.
- Data on the number and nature of bias-related incidents will be collected, considered, and periodically shared with the community as a gesture of institutional transparency and accountability. Identifying details, as well as the specifics of incidents and consequences (aside from mutually agreed upon public accountability actions), will remain confidential. Over time, this data will be utilized to assess cultural climate at AIM, gauge the efficacy of interventions, and inform initiatives and action plans in the realm of institutional diversity, equity, and inclusion.

SAFE 2 SAY SOMETHING POLICY & PROCEDURE

In 2018, the General Assembly passed Act 44 mandating the establishment and use of the [Safe2Say Something](#) (S2SS) anonymous reporting system by every Pennsylvania school entity by January 14, 2019.

S2SS is a life-saving and life-changing school safety program that teaches students, educators, and administrators how: (1) to recognize the signs and signals of individuals who may be at risk of hurting themselves or others, and (2) to anonymously report this information through the S2SS app, website, or 24/7 Crisis Center Hotline. The following provides an overview of how the program works and will be

implemented in schools:

How it Works

1. A tip is submitted via mobile app, website, or phone call—arriving first at the S2SS Crisis Center.
2. Crisis Center analysts vet and triage the tip, then engage the tipster in anonymous two-way chat in order to provide detailed and immediately-actionable information to schools and dispatch.
3. Crisis Center analysts deliver the tip to the impacted school and, as needed, local law enforcement via 911 County Dispatch.
4. The school and, as needed, local law enforcement, assess and intervene with individual(s) at risk.
5. The school then closes out the tip and reports actions taken as a record for their school.

Program Background - The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) has established S2SS and will manage and maintain the program. The OAG, in partnership with Sandy Hook Promise (SHP), a leader in anonymous reporting systems, has built out the app, website, and PA-based 24/7 Crisis Center. SHP is a national non-profit committed to creating safe schools and communities through their four evidenced-based Know the Signs intervention programs. To date, SHP has delivered its programs to 10,000+ schools and trained 5+ million youth and adults in every state resulting in countless suicide, school shooting, and firearm threat interventions and countless bullying, drug use, and other acts of violence and victimization interventions.

Tip Processing - OAG Crisis Center analysts are trained to vet and triage tips by: (1) conducting 2-way anonymous dialog with tipsters to gather missing information and ensure enough information is provided for schools and local law enforcement to act upon, (2) categorizing each tip as either “Life Safety” or “Non-Life Safety,” for ease of prioritization by tip recipients, and (3) delivering the tip to the impacted school and, when needed, its local law enforcement via 911 county dispatch.

Tip Response and Management - The S2SS platform allows users (Crisis Center analysts, school entities, and 911 County Dispatch) to access / manage tips and coordinate interventions on both their PC and mobile device. Additionally, the platform allows for real-time 2-way dialog with tipsters and the viewing/sharing of attachments (such as screenshots or videos) uploaded by the tipster. The platform permits communication between school / dispatch users on each tip, allowing for up-to-the-second information-sharing and action that all see and read at the same time— as one of the MOST critical pieces of information needed for a Life Safety issue is a child’s address. This address must be passed to 911 Dispatch to pass to the local law enforcement to act upon. This exchange can take seconds, helping to act quicker to save lives.

A district, charter school, cyber charter school, private school, nonpublic school, intermediary unit, and/or area vocational-technical school must have an assigned S2SS Lead to coordinate the establishment and training of a 3-5-member team who receive and act upon tips submitted to their school(s). Additionally, the team will help maintain and sustain S2SS long-term in partnership with Sandy Hook Promise local coordinators, who will in turn support the efforts of the S2SS Admin-Lead. Training for S2SS Leads is 3 hours, while team members require 2 hours. Both require a minimum of 30 minutes of uninterrupted practice time to learn the system; 45 minutes if you are less tech-oriented.

County-based 911 dispatches must have an assigned S2SS Lead to coordinate the setup and training of their personnel to action against life safety tips. Dispatchers will use the S2SS platform to view and act upon the tip, conduct 2-way dialog with a tipster, communicate with the school team, and act against the tip by dispositioning to local police jurisdictions. Training of S2SS Leads takes 2 hours and is delivered by external experts and requires a minimum of 30 minutes of uninterrupted practice time. Dispatch team

/ personnel training will take 2 hours, including 30 minutes of practice time.

At the conclusion of school and police investigation and intervention (as needed), all tips will be closed out by school personnel only. Districts, charter schools, cyber charter school, private school, nonpublic schools, intermediary units, and/or area vocational-technical schools can then run reports to analyze the types, times, etc. of tips received and, over time, view trends to demonstrate where change is taking place or is needed.

Student Awareness - Students, educators and administrators have the opportunity to be trained annually to recognize the signs and signals of individuals who may be at risk of hurting themselves or others along with how to use the S2SS anonymous reporting system to submit tips of the signs and signals they observe. Training takes 1 hour and will be made available via an interactive training course and the downloading of materials to self-lead and/or direct S2SS certified trainers (where availability exists).

S2SS will be sustained via support by Sandy Hook Promise's School Outreach Coordinator, in-school awareness materials (at no cost), annual training of new incoming classes and educators/administrators, and, *critically*, establishment of in-school student clubs (existing or new clubs) to empower students to create sustained change. This policy will also be annually reviewed and changed as necessary to maintain compliance with the state regulations.

POLICY ON DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Philosophy - AIM Academy is committed to the safety and well-being of its students and to providing an environment that promotes academic, social, physical, and emotional growth. Our students live in a complicated, and often-times stressful, world that can lead some children to make poor choices with regards to use of illegal drugs, prescription drugs, and alcohol. These poor decisions can have long term consequences and can pose a significant risk to a student's health and ability to develop and function at his or her fullest potential. Through a variety of proactive measures, AIM Academy strives to educate our students about the risks of using drugs and alcohol in order to prevent them from engaging in these activities. If it comes to the school's attention that a student is using drugs or alcohol, AIM will initiate actions designed to end use and promote the health of the student. A strong and consistent effort by students, faculty, and administrators, in partnership with parents, will best serve the overall goal of keeping all students safe and healthy.

Policy - In short, the Drug and Alcohol Policy for AIM Academy can be summarized as such: The use or possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco (and tobacco related items such as vapes) and/or the misuse of prescription drugs has no place in our community and is forbidden. Students found in violation of this policy will face disciplinary consequences on the first offense and depending on the nature of the violation may be subject to separation or expulsion.

If it is suspected that a student is in possession of an illegal substance, contraband, or potentially harmful items, AIM reserves the right to search their personal belongings, including lockers, sporting bags, and backpacks. Searches will be conducted in the presence of the Dean of Students, Division Head, or other members of the division-specific leadership team. In addition, in the school's ongoing efforts to maintain a substance free and safe school environment, the school may choose to conduct a random search of any area of the school premises as well as any item of a student's personal belongings or items in a student's possession at any time and without prior notice.

This policy applies to:

- Students who are on the school grounds (indoors, out of doors, or in private vehicles) or in school transportation vehicles at any time of day or any day of the year
- Students who are attending any off-campus school activity, such as field trips or athletic, social, or cultural events at any time of day or any day of the year
- Students attending a function at another school at any time of day or any day of the year
- Use that occurs off campus during school hours while school is in session

Students must also be aware that they represent AIM Academy, directly or indirectly, when they attend any public or private event. AIM Academy reserves the right to discipline students whose conduct outside of school is incompatible with the school's standards.

Awareness and Prevention

AIM Academy believes that the best way to protect its students is to promote awareness of the risks of using, or even experimenting, with drugs or alcohol. This formal education includes:

- A prevention program delivered to Middle and Upper School students each year by the Caron Foundation or other professional agency specializing in substance use/abuse prevention.

Proactive Health Intervention

AIM Academy supports students who voluntarily acknowledge their drug or alcohol problem and seek help to overcome it.

- Students or families who seek out help through a faculty member or an administrator, prior to a violation of AIM Academy's drug and alcohol policy, are given appropriate guidance and support without any disciplinary action. In most cases the student or family will be referred to the School Psychologist, who will recommend an evaluation by a professional drug and alcohol counselor. Parents will be involved in the formulation of a treatment plan.
- A student who has a concern about a fellow student's use of drugs or alcohol is encouraged to bring this to the attention of the Division Head, the Dean of Students, the School Psychologist, or another trusted member of the faculty. The school will share the information, without naming its source, with the student's parents. Protecting a friend means getting him or her needed help, not keeping the need for help a secret.

Disciplinary Consequences of Use and Abuse

It is difficult for any school to develop a complete and unassailable policy that covers every possible situation and contingency. In addition, AIM Academy prides itself on differentiating the overall educational and social experience to best suit the needs of each of its students. With that in mind, AIM has developed a set of guidelines to be used in the event that a student is discovered or suspected of acting in a way that is contrary to our stated policy on drugs and alcohol.

In general, every student found in violation of this policy will be placed on disciplinary probation. Disciplinary probation lasts from a minimum of the remainder of the current school year to graduation. Students should know that any subsequent major disciplinary offense at any time during the student's remaining AIM Academy career will be dealt with severely and may result in expulsion. Disciplinary probation may include the requirement for continued drug testing with the results provided to the school. During disciplinary probation, if a student fails to fully cooperate with an evaluation and any recommended treatment, AIM Academy may take whatever action it deems appropriate, including handling it as a disciplinary matter with consequences as set forth in this policy.

- The sale or distribution of alcohol, prescription drugs, or illegal drugs may result in expulsion with no possibility of readmission, and law enforcement officials notified.
- Any student found to be or suspected of being in possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, inappropriate prescription drugs, or any paraphernalia associated with these substances will be subject to major disciplinary action. This action may include multi-day suspension or expulsion, and police involvement.
- Any student suspected of being under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or inappropriate prescription drugs may be subject to major disciplinary action. This action may include suspension or expulsion, and police involvement.
- In addition, AIM reserves the right to require that a student who violates the drug and alcohol policy agree to undergo a comprehensive drug and alcohol evaluation conducted by a school-approved qualified drug and alcohol addictions professional. The evaluation may include drug testing. Treatment recommendations made by the professional must be shared with AIM. AIM Academy may also require that the student follows the recommendations for ongoing treatment as a contingency to the student's continued enrollment.
- Any student promoting drugs in any manner, i.e. "talking up" or "bragging" about drug or alcohol usage, or writing inappropriate comments about these activities will be subject to disciplinary action. This action may include detention or suspension. In addition, AIM may require that the student undergo a comprehensive drug and alcohol evaluation conducted by a school-approved qualified drug and alcohol addictions professional. Recommendations made by the professional must be shared with AIM. AIM Academy may require that the student follows the recommendations as a contingency to the student's continued enrollment.
- Parents will assume responsibility for payment for any drug testing or comprehensive drug and alcohol evaluation conducted by a school-approved qualified drug and alcohol addictions professional.
- Any student discovered to be knowingly in the presence of prohibited substances on the AIM Academy campus or at any school related activity or event, but does not consume or use prohibited substances and does not violate the above rules and regulations in any way will, at a minimum, be placed on disciplinary probation.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

In an effort to keep all students safe, AIM Academy has adopted rigorous and explicit procedures to address child abuse of any kind. All faculty and staff receive extensive annual instruction in how to identify, prevent, and respond to incidents of child abuse. Additionally, students receive information on how to recognize and avoid potentially harmful situations. Similar workshops are also offered to parents. For additional, specific information, please refer to *AIM Academy's Abuse Prevention Policy and Procedure Handbook*, which is available to parents upon request.

OFF-CAMPUS CONTACT

Many cases of organizational abuse occur off campus and after school ends during the summer. This contact outside of regularly scheduled activities may put school personnel, students, and our school at increased risk. Our school has determined that the following forms of outside contact are appropriate and inappropriate:

Appropriate Outside Contact

- Taking groups of students on an outing
- Attending sporting activities with a group of students
- Attending functions at a student's home, with parents present
- Home visits, with parents present

Inappropriate Outside Contact

- Taking one student on an outing without the parent's written permission
- Visiting one student in the student's home, without a parent present
- Entertaining one student in the home of school personnel
- A lone student spending the night with school personnel

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Sexual harassment may be defined as any unwelcome sexual behavior that makes a student feel uncomfortable or unsafe. Sexual harassment may be physical, verbal, or nonverbal. It may include situations in which some benefit is promised for sexual conduct or situations in which sexual conduct as a whole creates a hostile or offensive environment. In order to maintain a learning and working environment which promotes self-worth and respect for the dignity and worth of others, it is the policy of AIM Academy to prohibit sexual harassment and to provide education about the problem of sexual harassment. The policy is designed to provide guidelines for a prompt and appropriate response to allegations of sexual harassment as well as guidelines for a prompt and appropriate remedy of an instance of sexual harassment. A student who believes that they have been subjected to sexual harassment has the right and is encouraged to file a complaint. They may direct the complaint to Associate Head of School or Head of their respective division for sexual harassment. A complaint may also be initiated by a student's parent or guardian.

THREAT ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN AND WEAPONS POSSESSION

AIM Academy is committed to creating and maintaining an environment in school where students, teachers, parents, and others feel safe. To this end, AIM Academy has established a protocol for responding to student threats/high risk behaviors. To view a complete copy of this Action Plan, please contact the Psychology Department.

The federal *Gun-Free Schools* prohibits student possession of guns in schools and in Pennsylvania, state law provides that a person commits a misdemeanor of the first degree if they possess a weapon in the building of, on the grounds of, or in any conveyance providing transportation to or from any elementary or secondary educational institution. "Weapon" is defined as "any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchuck stick, firearm, shotgun, rifle and any other tool or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury."

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES AND ACTION

Every student at the AIM Academy is expected to arrive each day with a willingness, openness, and determination to learn and achieve. Every teacher at the AIM Academy is committed to working with

our students every day to inspire them to reach for success. AIM Academy's disciplinary system is based around our expectations that:

- Everyone in the AIM Community must be safe.
- Everyone in the AIM Community must act in a way that allows others to learn.
- Everyone in the AIM Community must treat others with kindness, courtesy, and respect.

Students are expected to adhere to our community expectations and specific policies and procedures outlined above. Students must also be aware that they represent AIM Academy, directly or indirectly, when they attend any public or private event. Additionally, AIM Academy reserves the right to discipline students whose conduct outside of school, including within the digital sphere, is incompatible with the school's standards.

As an institution actively working to combat bias and discrimination, we recognize that disciplinary measures are not always enacted in a way that is just and equitable for all students. In order to disrupt patterns of inequitable disciplinary processes, AIM commits to:

- Training all faculty and staff on implicit bias--what it is, how it manifests, and how it affects interactions in the educational context, including student discipline and student learning outcomes.
- Purposeful implementation of interventions to mitigate the impact of implicit bias in education, including:
 - responding to perceived student misbehavior with dialogue, understanding, and other empathic principles
 - creating feelings of social belonging for all students by doing community-building activities that allow space for sharing and exploration of students' identities and experiences
 - seeking feedback of community members in the process of examining and revising policies and practices related to community rules

Philosophy - The disciplinary process and procedures are based on a philosophy of restorative justice (RJ). RJ practices allow us to recognize how the transgressing student, victim, witnesses, and guiding adult are all impacted by the harm that occurred, and will all benefit from a reparative or restorative process to feel safe again in the school environment. Applied in various ways, RJ practices always ask all people involved - What happened? What harm was caused? What needs to happen to repair the harm?

Students and adults learn about each other's perspectives, build empathy and understanding, and develop a greater sense of trust in one another and in the community. The transgressing student is given the opportunity to repair harm by acknowledging their actions, expressing remorse, and taking action based upon other's needs to repair trust and a sense of safety. Aggrieved parties are able to share their experience, offer forgiveness, and make amends. The school works to provide a chance to rebuild relationships after a misstep and to foster empathy and accountability to help the greater community feel safe and more connected. No matter the level of severity of a rule violation, even when a student is asked to leave the school community permanently, the RJ process strengthens compassion and empathy for others and humanizes the experience of mistake-making.

Procedures - Upon receipt of a report of action that may violate one or more of AIM's behavioral expectations, whether verbal or written, the Division Head, Dean of Students, Counselor, and/or School

Psychologist will promptly develop a plan to investigate the situation based upon the information provided by the reporting party. During the investigation and response process, individuals involved in the situation may be temporarily removed from campus, or prohibited from accessing certain spaces. Such measures are *not* intended as a disciplinary consequence, but may be utilized on an as-needed basis in order to create time and space to support a successful restorative process for all parties.

Action - A wide range of actions can be taken in response to undesirable behavior and breaches of trust, including, but not limited to: warnings, demerits, work assignments, withdrawn off-campus privileges, withdrawing eligibility for special events or extracurricular activities, detention, disciplinary supervision, disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. The level of disciplinary response for any violation of school rules or policies will depend on a variety of circumstances. AIM reserves the right in its sole discretion to alter our approach to restorative justice and disciplinary procedures to respond to a particular situation.

Learning from Our or Other's Mistakes - The school reserves the right to raise at any school meeting or through school communication any issue of discipline regarding a student for the purpose of furthering the educational and learning exposure of students and the school community overall.

Disciplinary Supervision - A student will be placed on disciplinary supervision through a behavior contract when student behavior becomes so disruptive or inappropriate that it is judged by the administration to be in need of systematic remediation beyond what is available under the usual structures. Disciplinary supervision may also come as a consequence of a specific violation of school rules such that a formalized long-term strategy seems advisable for ensuring that the student can function within the community's rules and expectations.

Disciplinary Probation - Placing a student on disciplinary probation signifies our formal questioning of the student's ability to continue at AIM. Should a student get into any additional disciplinary trouble during that time, the consequences will be more severe than they would be otherwise, and may include suspension or dismissal. Violation of a major school rule during the period of probation may well result in permanent dismissal. A student on probation should demonstrate by a marked change in attitude and behavior that they wish to remain at AIM. A student on disciplinary probation may be dismissed from the School for a specific incident, or at such time as the Head of School determines, in their sole discretion, that dismissal is warranted. AIM reports probation and suspension only in response to direct questions posed by colleges and universities on their applications. If a student applying to college has been placed on probation or suspended, they are obligated to answer these questions truthfully. Disciplinary probation becomes a permanent part of a student's record.

SUSPENSION

When a student receives an in-school suspension, the student is generally required to report to the GRC for a supervised suspension from 8:10 am until the end of the school day. The student should pack their own lunch. A parent must drop off and pick up the student. The student will be given a list of assignments which will be completed independently and turned in at the end of each day or other stipulated time period. These completed assignments should demonstrate satisfactory mastery of academic material. Any graded work will be counted to its full value.

During an out-of-school suspension, a student remains at home. The student will be given a list of assignments to complete independently during the suspension. All graded work will be counted to its full value.

Period of Suspension - The period of suspension starts the moment the Head of School receives and approves the recommendation from the Division Head or Dean of Students and ends at midnight of the last day of suspension. The period of suspension includes both the number of school days for which a student has been suspended and all days between the first and last day of suspension when school is not in session (weekends, holidays, in-service days, etc.).

During the entire period of suspension, students may not participate in any school-sponsored events, including dramatic productions, field trips, class meetings, social activities, or athletic practices or competitions (home and away). The student returns to full participatory status on the day following the last full day of suspension.

For example, a student-athlete-performer who is suspended on a Tuesday afternoon for four school days is ineligible to participate in the athletic competition that afternoon as well as the play that weekend. They would return to the community the following Tuesday morning, having served four school days of suspension plus the intervening weekend. Any deviation from this policy must be made by the Head of School.

The parents of the suspended student will discuss the disciplinary action with the Head of School, the Division Head and/or the Dean of Students. The student will be placed on disciplinary probation and privileges are lost for a determined period of time.

In some circumstances, the school may exercise its right to separate a student from the community for a period of time, or expel a student entirely.

Suspension, separation, or expulsion may be considered a change of status for a student. See below for related expectations and procedures for colleges.

Reporting Suspensions and Change of Status to Colleges

The school reports probation, suspension, and changes in enrollment status (e.g. Dismissal, expulsion, and/or withdrawal) as part of the student's record to all colleges and universities to which a student submits an application. In the application process, the student is obligated to answer questions of disciplinary action truthfully, thus self-reporting probations and suspensions. When reporting the incident, the student will be asked to provide contextual information regarding the probation or suspension. The student must work with the college counseling office to determine how that information will be communicated to the receiving institution. If a student is convicted of a misdemeanor or felony before or during the application process, they are obligated to answer questions regarding these infractions truthfully and to update their application as requested by the colleges. The student will work with the college counseling office to determine how that information will be communicated to the receiving institution.

In addition to the student's self-reporting of probations, suspensions, and changes in enrollment status, the college counselor is also ethically bound to provide information regarding any disciplinary infractions that are on the student's permanent record. The college counselor will work directly with the student, family, and Head of Upper School / Dean of Students to ensure reporting that is consistent with the infraction, and that the incident is reflected accurately within the student's record.

If a student is placed on probation or suspended during their Senior year after they have submitted their college or university applications, the student and college counselor are ethically bound to report the incident to each college the student has submitted an application to. Students are given two weeks to self-report this information; AIM will also notify colleges and universities after this two-week period. Students and families are strongly encouraged to work directly with their college counselor and the Head

of Upper School / Dean of Students to ensure accurate, factual, timely submission of self-reported information that is in accordance with the college counselor's reporting.

If a student is dismissed or withdraws from AIM during the Senior year, AIM will send written notification to all colleges to which the student has applied two weeks after the change in enrollment status. The student is encouraged to report this information before it is reported by AIM, and provide context for this change in status.

It is the expectation of the college counseling department and teachers that the student's academic performance and conduct remain at a level consistent with that described in their submitted letters of recommendation. In the event of substantial changes, AIM will report these changes to colleges and universities to which the student has applied. Changes in the student's Senior year courses will also be reported to colleges and universities to which the student has applied.

As stated above, any student suspected of being in possession of or under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or inappropriate prescription drugs will be subject to major disciplinary action. This action may include suspension or expulsion, and police involvement. Disciplinary actions of this nature occurring at any time in a student's Upper School career, regardless of length, are reported to colleges or universities to which a student is submitting an application.

TECHNOLOGY

Computers and internet access is made available to students, teachers, staff, and administrators. Access is integral to the educational mission and purpose of our institution. We utilize technology in a variety of ways throughout nearly every facet of school operations including: instruction, activities, service, research, and administration. AIM's technology resources are provided for educational use. The objective is to provide our students with the tools that will assist them in their educational pursuits and to promote creativity and learning. AIM is committed to the use of technology tools for accommodation, research, worldwide resource sharing, communication, content creation, and storage of student work.

Depending upon a student's division and academic needs, faculty may use a variety of platforms/accounts for student assessment purposes. All faculty, students, and parents are assigned a Veracross Account that provides a portal to grant private access to internal school information as well as individual student records. Additionally, all AIM students will be assigned a G Suite account. In order to ensure appropriate use, AIM reserves the right to monitor, access, and disclose files contained, stored, or transmitted using school equipment or services/platforms.

Responsibilities: The efficient operation of AIM's technology resources relies upon the proper conduct of its community of users, who must adhere to school guidelines. **The guidelines set forth in the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)** are provided so that students are aware of their responsibilities. Student responsibilities require ethical and legal use of school and network resources. If a community user violates any of these terms and conditions, their access may be terminated, future access could be denied, and disciplinary action may occur. The signature(s) at the end of the AUP is (are) legally binding and indicate(s) the party (parties) who signed has (have) read the terms and conditions carefully, understand(s) their significance, and agree(s) to abide by the stated terms.

The Acceptable Use Policy applies to all students, all faculty/staff members, and all visitors to AIM's campus (both adults and minors) including parents and subcontractors. **All AIM students in grades 5 through 12 and parents/guardians of students in grades 1 through 12 must sign this Policy form**

before students may use any school technology. Acknowledgement of the Technology Use Contracts and AUP forms are signed as part of your handbook acknowledgement form and must be completed on an annual basis at the beginning of every school year.

Filtering: AIM Academy uses a content filtering system for safety purposes. As such, we set our filters to comply with CIPA (Children’s Internet Protection Act) regulations. The purpose of AIM’s filtering system is to block websites containing inappropriate content, as well as various social media tools, websites, and games that are distracting and non-educational. Even though the content filtering system is automatically maintained and updated on a daily basis, it is impossible to prevent access to all materials that may be deemed objectionable or inappropriate. For this reason, all technology usage on campus by students must have faculty approval and supervision. Parental/guardian consent for students to utilize the technology tools that AIM provides is required. Parents/guardians should consider the extent to which they will allow their children access to the Internet at home.

Students are not permitted to: alter, change, modify, repair, or reconfigure settings on their school-issued computers or devices; this includes deleting any cookies and/or history, and the resetting of time and/or date on a school device. Students must have faculty/staff and parental approval to use any non-AIM devices (ex. Phones, tablets, laptops). Students may not make any attempts to circumvent AIM security measures. The use of websites to tunnel around firewalls and filtering software is expressly prohibited. The use of websites to render a user anonymous internally is also prohibited.

AIM AUP TERMS AND CONDITIONS

(Students and parents/guardians must both read and sign AIM Academy’s Technology Use Contract AUP as part of the Handbook and AUP Acknowledgment Form)

1. **Acceptable Use:** Network/Internet use must be consistent with the educational objectives of the school. Students will use only their school-assigned usernames and passwords to gain access to AIM resources.

School authorities have the right to confiscate personally-owned technology devices that are in violation and/or used in violation of school policies.

2. The following are considered ***unacceptable uses*** of the AIM technology:

- **Attempting to obtain access** to restricted sites, servers, files, databases, etc.
- Unauthorized access to other systems from school computers (e.g. “hacking”).
- **Downloading non-approved software** (i.e. non-educational or entertainment-only).
- **Use of non-educational Internet games.**
- Use of technology, whether brought from home or provided by the school, for personal activities. Use of any technology device, platform, software, or website on AIM’s campus **must be related to educational purposes.**
- Use of any technology to **view, download or transmit** sexually explicit or pornographic material.
- **Transmission of any material in violation of any law** is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secrets.
- Use of AIM technology or Apps to **communicate personal information** about yourself or others outside of the AIM community is prohibited; this includes but is not limited to name, addresses, email address, school name, phone numbers, and/or financial information.
- **Posting, Sending, or discussing classroom meeting ID’s is prohibited.** AIM may use remote

learning resources such as Zoom and Google Classroom, students are not to publicly discuss or post meeting ID's or details about virtual classes.

- Students are not permitted to send or take **photographs or video** with their phones on school property or at school events without the advance permission of AIM Academy.
- **Vandalism** is not permitted and will be strictly enforced. Vandalism is defined as any attempt to harm or destroy data of another AIM user or of another agency or network that is connected to the Internet. Vandalism includes, but is not limited to, the uploading, downloading, or creation of computer viruses. Vandalism also includes intentionally making computer systems inoperable by deleting, disconnecting, or disabling components. Vandalism also refers to the defacing of school equipment including, but not limited to, drawings, markers, or stickers.
- **Harassment, intimidation, or bullying**, including any intentional electronic, written, verbal, or threatened physical act, also called cyber bullying, is not acceptable. (*AIM's Bullying and Cyber-bullying policies are elaborated in further detail in AIM's Student Behavior Expectations Section.*)

3. **Privileges:** Network/Internet use is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a loss of technology privileges, disciplinary action, and/or referral to legal authorities. At the discretion of the school administration, student user access to AIM equipment and /or accounts may be denied, revoked, or suspended as a result of misuse of technology privileges. Laptops and equipment issued or loaned to students, faculty and staff are the property of AIM and must be returned upon request.

4. **Net etiquette:** Students are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include (but are not limited to) the following: Be polite. Do not be abusive in your messages to others. Use appropriate language. Any language should be considered appropriate in a school setting.

5. **Services:** AIM makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the technology services it is providing. The school will not be responsible for any damages an individual suffers while using its devices and systems. These damages include any incident or loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by negligence, errors, or omissions.

6. **Security:** If a student identifies a security problem, they must notify school personnel immediately. The student may not demonstrate the problem to other users. Students may not use the Internet to discuss or disseminate information regarding security problems or how to gain unauthorized access to sites, servers, files, etc.

7. **School Account:** Students will be issued student accounts and passwords. If any information on a student's account changes or the account password is lost or stolen, it is the student's responsibility to notify school personnel.

8. **G Suite accounts:** AIM Academy provides students with G Suite accounts. The G Suite includes free, web-based programs including email, document creation tools, shared calendars, and collaboration tools. AIM teachers will be using the G Suite for lessons, assignments, and communication. The G Suite is also available at home or anywhere with Internet access. Parents are responsible for monitoring their child's use of technology when accessing programs from home. Students are responsible for their own behavior at all times. Acceptable Use (Privacy and Safety) rules apply to student's use of the G Suite; its use is primarily for educational purposes. **Lower School students:** Email has been configured for emailing within aimpa.org only, enabling students to share work with their teachers and classmates, but not the outside world.

Students/Community Members may use Apps for personal use at home subject to the restrictions below and any additional school rules and policies that may apply:

A. Privacy: *Students should have no expectation of privacy in any system provided by AIM, including Google Apps and AIM-owned devices.* School administrators and parents/guardians may have access for monitoring purposes. Access may be granted to law enforcement and other authorities in AIM's compliance with appropriate laws.

B. Limited personal use: *Apps, sites, email, and groups are not public forums; Apps provided by AIM are extensions of AIM classroom spaces.* Students may use Apps tools for personal projects while at home, with parental permission, but may not use them for:

- Unlawful activities
- Inappropriate sexual or other offensive content
- Threatening another person
- Misrepresentation of AIM Academy, staff or students

9. Safety: Students may not use AIM resources to post personal contact information about themselves or others; including last names, addresses, and phone numbers outside of the AIM community.

- Students agree not to meet with someone they have met online without their parent's approval and participation.
- Students will tell their teacher or other school employee about any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Students are responsible for the use of their individual accounts and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account. ***Under no conditions should a student provide their password to another person.***

10. Access Restriction – Due Process: Access to Technology at AIM is considered a privilege accorded at the discretion of its teachers and administrators. AIM maintains the right to immediately withdraw access when there is reason to believe that violations of law or school policies have occurred. In such cases, the alleged violation will be referred to the Director of Information Technology and the Division Head for further investigation and account restoration, suspension, or termination. AIM also reserves the right to immediately suspend any user account suspected of inappropriate use. A student's Technology Use Contract may be terminated as part of such action; students in such cases will be required to return AIM Technology to the school.

AIM's Guidelines for Access to Laptops, iPads, and/or Student Accounts: Lower School students granted computer access at school must understand all guidelines outlined in the AUP. Their user agreement is formalized through the parent /guardian's signature on the application. In signing, parents agree to speak with their students regarding their responsibilities with regard to technology use at AIM.

Middle and Upper School students granted a laptop for use at home and school, and/or student accounts, will be granted access as long as they are current students and agree to the following conditions:

- a. All users must read and agree to follow all guidelines outlined in the AUP.
- b. Students must obtain parent/guardian(s) signature(s) on the AUP and Technology Use Contracts.
- c. A binding agreement is formalized via the student and parent/guardian's signatures on said forms.

TECHNOLOGY USE CONTRACT

AIM students understand the responsibilities they have for the use and care of AIM technology - issued to them for educational purposes.

- Violations of AIM's Acceptable Use Policy, School Behavioral Expectations as outlined in our handbook, and/or Bullying Policy will suspend a student's eligibility for the school laptop program.
- Students (5-12) will have the privilege of taking the laptop issued to them off campus; they will be expected to comply with requests from the technology department for training and maintenance. If in a remote or hybrid model, all grades (1-12) will take their AIM laptop or iPad off campus.
- Issued laptops will be checked back into the Technology Department upon request for maintenance and upon starting the exit procedure from AIM Academy.
- Students 1-12 are required to have their laptops or iPads and chargers with them each day at school.
- Students are responsible for keeping their laptops in secure and safe locations.
- The student and parent will assume the risk of loss by theft, destruction, or damage of school technology; AIM will charge the lesser of the repair or the replacement cost.
- By signing AIM's Technology Use Contract, the parent/guardian agrees to be responsible for the loss/damage to school laptops and/or tablets; the cost of repair for such damage that is not covered by warranty.
- Parents/guardians/students are **not authorized to attempt repairs** themselves or to contract with any other individual or business for repair of the laptop, including bringing a Mac to the Apple Store. All repairs must be done through the tech department to maintain our warranty status.
- Students are not to deface school laptops in any way; examples include attaching stickers to any part of the computer or writing names or painting pictures on the exterior.
- Upon request, the student agrees to deliver the computer to AIM staff for technical inspection or laptop audit.
- School devices should not be left for extended times in places where they will be subject to extreme temperatures or humidity (i.e.: cars or outside on cold or hot days).

AIM's CELL PHONE AND DEVICE FREE POLICY

If a student is found in violation of AIM Academy's cell phone and personal electronic device policy, devices may be collected and held by AIM Academy faculty/staff. Repeat occurrences will garner further disciplinary action.

Lower School Policy:

For Lower School students, cell phones and personal electronic devices (i.e. smart watches, wearables, iPads, handheld video games, etc.) must be turned off and stored in a cubby or locker while inside the school building, including during Early Drop Off and/or after-school activities or Homework Club. If a device is out without teacher permission, it will be collected and held until the end of the school day.

Middle and Upper School Policy:

All cell phones and personal devices will be turned off, collected by advisors, and secured for the duration of the school day. At the end of the school day, students will receive their devices prior to dismissal.

In case of an emergency and you need to get in touch with your child, you should call the main school phone number (215) 483-2461 to speak with the front desk receptionist who will pass along a message to your child's teacher.

If there is a change in transportation plans, parents must update their student's SchoolPass account no later than 3:00 pm on the day of the change and email Nick Gregorio at transportation@aimpa.org. If unable to access SchoolPass, parents may also call the transportation line (215) 948-9301. We will then make sure your child is aware of any changes.

If a student has a documented medical condition that necessitates the use of a cell phone during school hours, we ask that families reach out to the Division Head and the school nurse to develop an appropriate plan.

Please discuss this cell phone and electronics policy with your child before school begins. Please contact your child's Division Head if you have questions or concerns.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USE GUIDELINES

"Technology will never replace great teachers, but technology in the hands of a great teacher can be transformational." - George Couros

Principles:

- Rather than forbid, we as an institution will educate our learners about AI in order to prepare students to be critical, effective, and ethical users of this powerful technology.
- School leaders will continue to work with the faculty to decide where in the curriculum AI skills and competencies will be introduced, while individual teachers will have the autonomy to decide how (and even if) to incorporate this technology into their courses.

Guidelines:

- There are times when it is appropriate for students and teachers to use generative AI and there are times when it is not.
- Since generative AI can and does generate inaccurate and biased results, students need to be taught how to critically evaluate its outputs.
- In keeping with ethical and transparent practices, content generated by AI should be acknowledged and/or cited.

- Continue to prioritize human connections while also recognizing that AI is just an additional tool that can enhance teaching and learning within the context of a transparent and honest student-teacher relationship.
- AI is a rapidly-changing technology that will require ongoing learning and reevaluation throughout the years to come; our approach needs to be adaptive and flexible.

Feedback and Concerns

We welcome feedback on our use of AI. Students, parents, and staff are encouraged to share their experiences and raise any concerns. Please contact Aaron Brill, Director of Innovation Technology (abrill@aimpa.org) should the need arise.

SUPPORTING AIM

THE OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

As with all independent schools, tuition only covers a portion of what it costs to instruct each child. The AIM Fund - AIM's annual fund campaign makes everything possible. As the school's largest fundraising campaign, AIM Fund gifts are unrestricted and directly and immediately support school activities to address unforeseen needs, take advantage of new opportunities, and make AIM affordable to as many families as possible. **The campaign kicks off each year in September** and no matter how large or small, contributions are vital to the financial well being of AIM and demonstrate a collective commitment from our community to AIM's philosophy and mission. Every year, our goal is to reach 100% participation from our Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, and parents. AIM only asks that your gift be personally significant for your family. The only gift too small is no gift at all.

The second major fundraising effort is the annual **AIM for the Stars Gala**. Each year, we honor an individual who has been successful in his/her field regardless of his/her learning disabilities/differences. You can become our partner through Corporate Sponsorships, donations to our silent auction, or joining us at the event.

Your tax dollars - Your Choice: You can redirect your PA state tax liability to AIM scholarships for families in need by participating in the **PA Tax Credit Program (EITC/OSTC)**. This win-win program allows business owners and eligible individuals to redirect PA state tax dollars (minimum of \$6200 tax liability) and earn a substantial tax credit for up to 90% of certain PA taxes when you make a contribution to AIM Academy for student scholarships. You can participate by joining a Special Purpose Entity (SPE) such as AIM Scholarship LLC, BLOCS, OR Central PA Scholarship Fund. Contact us today for more information!

You can make a pledge or gift any time at www.aimpa.org/donate. If you'd like to learn more about giving to AIM or have questions, please contact the Office of Institutional Advancement at development@aimpa.org.

AIM PARENT COMMUNITY (APC)

The APC is a wonderful AIM community organization for our families to get involved and support various school-wide initiatives, division-level programs, and grade-level events. We are very grateful for our enthusiastic family volunteers who work in partnership with the school.

DIVISION LEVEL LEADS:

Huge thanks to our APC Division Level Leads for Lower, Middle and Upper Schools for the 2024-25 school year:

- Rebecca Goslee - Lower School
- Liz Meyer - Middle School
- Alison Ballantine- Upper School

Division Level Leads will work with parent coordinators and volunteers to organize three community events for their division and assist the APC with school-wide events. They will meet with school leaders in their division and support communication between the school and parent coordinators.

AIM PARENT COORDINATORS:

- 1st and 2nd Grade - Barbara Delaney
- 3rd Grade - Alison Barnes
- 4th Grade - Sheanna Bias and Lezlie Madden
- 5th Grade - Amy Lockwood
- 6th/7th/8th Grade - Middle School Division Lead will coordinate parent volunteers as needed
- 9th Grade - Armanda McClincy
- 10th Grade - Stephanie Forbes
- 11th Grade - Deanna Loughnane
- 12th Grade - Colleen Costello

AIM Parent Coordinators are key communicators between the APC and classroom teacher or advisor and grade-level families. They assist the APC with events by creating sign-ups and gathering items from families, welcome new families to the grade, and organize at least one grade-level get-together per year.

BUSINESS OFFICE

BILLING AND TUITION POLICIES

AIM Academy is committed to keeping our tuition rates as reasonable as possible while providing your child with the best possible education. The following tuition and fees have been approved by the Board of Trustees for the 2024-2025 academic year.

TOTAL Tuition for Grades 1 - 5: \$39,500

TOTAL Tuition for Grades 6 - 8: \$44,800

TOTAL Tuition for Grades 9 - 11: \$45,300

TOTAL Tuition for Grade 12: \$46,800

Our tuition reflects the cost of our highly individualized, quality education. AIM Academy is classified as a nonprofit educational institution and all our funds go to providing the finest education possible for our students.

Charges for Occupational Therapy, Speech/Language Therapy and Psychological Services are not included in the regular tuition. If it is felt that your child would benefit from any or all of these services, you will be contacted about the recommendation and fees before they begin receiving such services. The regular tuition does cover some preliminary screening and consultation by the Speech-Language Pathology, Occupational Therapy, and Psychological Services Departments.

Fees for therapy and diagnostic services should be sent directly to the school, on the due dates indicated, even if parents are seeking reimbursement by health insurance. AIM Academy does not submit bills to insurance companies and cannot wait for parents to collect insurance payments. If you plan to seek reimbursement, it is often helpful for you to obtain a physician’s referral prior to starting services.

If for any reason your child is withdrawn from AIM Academy after May 1st when the child has been enrolled for the following school year, you remain responsible for the tuition for the upcoming school year. If the tuition payments and the non-refundable deposit are less than the prorated amount, you remain obligated for the balance. No deduction of tuition can be made by the school for student absences.

TUITION PAYMENT PLANS

AIM Academy partners with **FACTS** to provide our families with flexibility in making their tuition payments. Using a tuition management service allows us to provide you with better payment options to accommodate your financial needs. The three payment plan options are as follows:

Plan	Due Dates
1-Pay (annual) <i>Tuition refund insurance is optional, unless you receive a financial aid award</i>	June 1
2-Pay (60% / 40%) <i>Tuition refund insurance is required.</i>	June 1, November 1
10-Pay (monthly auto-debit) <i>Direct debit authorization and tuition refund insurance is required.</i>	June through March

FACTS Finance and Late Fees are as follows:

- 2.85% Service fee to use a Debit or Credit card
- \$30 is the returned payment fee
- \$25 Fee if fee is late/returned a second time

Billing and FACTS questions should be directed to: business@aimpa.org

Tuition Refund Insurance - The [Tuition Refund Plan](#) is mandatory for families selecting the 2-pay or the 10-pay payment plans and for families who receive a financial aid award. It is optional for the 1-pay payment plan. The cost of the Tuition Refund Plan is 1.4% of the tuition minus deposit. It covers only a portion of the tuition obligation and has an attendance requirement.

School District Reimbursement - If a Public School System assumes funding for your child after you

have signed a contract, a reimbursement of the tuition deposit and the tuition payments will be given to you upon AIM Academy's receipt of payment from the public school system. In the event that AIM Academy is notified by a jurisdiction of the withdrawal of your child's funding, the parents will be required to pay the remaining balance of tuition owed by the school district, within 30 days of notification. AIM reserves the right not to re-enroll or not to continue to enroll any student if School faculty, staff, or other personnel are subpoenaed by any parent or guardian of the student to testify or provide discovery in any judicial or administrative proceeding.

Miscellaneous Fees - Provided as required.

Technology Mandatory Fee: \$75 insurance premium per year (Grades 1-12)

Tax Deductions - In most cases, tuition at AIM Academy is tax deductible as a federal itemized deduction under Special Education medical expenses. For further information consult a qualified tax advisor.

Optional Expenses - Occasional overnight trips are taken to enrich the academic program. Some may require an additional charge. Some financial aid is available to those who qualify. Student/family-led fundraising endeavors to defray trip costs may be approved. Requests for fundraising activities should go to the attention of the Development office and appropriate division head.

TUITION ASSISTANCE

AIM Academy is committed to offering tuition assistance in order to make our program accessible for all families. We use FACTS to assess need, taking into account a family's assets, income, expenses, and debts. To get started, please visit our website to access the FACTS application.

For questions regarding Financial Aid at AIM Academy, please email: financialaid@aimpa.org.

RE-ENROLLMENT CONTRACTS

Re-enrollment contracts for the following school year are released annually in January and are due back three weeks later. A signed enrollment agreement plus a 10% nonrefundable deposit is required for enrollment.

For questions regarding re-enrollment at AIM Academy, please email: admissions@aimpa.org

ENROLLMENT FOR STUDENTS RECEIVING FUNDING FROM SCHOOL DISTRICT

If AIM Academy has a copy of a current, fully executed agreement where AIM is named as the payee, then the Business Office will accept a \$1,000 deposit for enrollment. The school district will be billed directly for the payment. The deposit will be refunded to the family once AIM receives full tuition payment from the school district.

If no settlement agreement or no letter of proof of the settlement is provided, then a full 10% deposit will be required and the family will be responsible for making regular tuition payments until the school district issues a payment to AIM. The deposit and any additional tuition payments will be refunded to the family once AIM receives full tuition payment from the school district.

If the settlement agreement provides that the payee is not AIM but the family, then a full deposit will be required with the expectation that the funds be transferred immediately to AIM on receipt of the funds from the school district by the family.

If no payments are received by August 31st, your child will not be able to attend school at the start of the academic year in September.

Communication with the Director of Enrollment Management about the status of a pending school district agreement will ensure that an enrollment space will be held unless the grade reaches capacity. In the event that the grade is close to capacity, the Director of Enrollment Management will inform the family and discuss enrollment options at that time.

For questions regarding enrollment at AIM Academy, please email: admissions@aimpa.org

PRIVACY OF STUDENT RECORDS

AIM Academy complies with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. This Act provides that the students' parents have the right of access to all records of their children and the right to a hearing to challenge the content of those records if the parents believe that the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's rights. Further, the Act prohibits the release of any student's records to an individual, agency, or organization, without the parent's written consent. The rights accorded to parents under the Act pass to students or former students at age 18.

Parents must notify the Head of School in writing of their intentions to review the records of their child at least 5 days prior to the intended review. These requests will be included in the student file and the parent/s will fill in the necessary information on the file log sheet. This should include the name of the reviewer, the month, day, year and purpose of the review. This log sheet must be filled in by any person who has been given permission to review the file.

No directory information concerning the students in attendance at AIM Academy may be disclosed without the parents' consent. The school will not include names and addresses in the directory or distribute it without the signed consent of the parents. Parents/guardians are required to indicate their preference in Veracross for disclosure of names, addresses, and other personal contact information. Veracross will default to showing all information unless this preference is changed in the portal.

RELEASE OF STUDENT RECORDS

All requests for student records, teacher recommendations, forms or checklists from schools, families and/or outside professionals must be submitted using the applicable form on our website at least 10 school days before the records, etc., are needed.

To facilitate the process, AIM requires a release of records and a complete request form for sending student records to receiving schools, families, or outside professionals.

Families should use the *Request by Parent* form available on our website's [Records Request page](#) to request records. If a request is initiated by another school or an outside professional, they will use the *Request by School/Organization* form.

In cases where no signed release is on file and you want to allow us to process requested items at a later date, you may complete AIM's [School Records and Transcript Release Form](#) and email it to

admissions@aimpa.org. This enables us to process requested items at a later date (eg. updates to a school district) with only the completion of the request form.

GENERAL INFORMATION

CRISIS PLANNING

A copy of the AIM Academy Emergency Plan is on file in the Business Office. This plan includes an outline of fire drill requirements and all other emergency procedures.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The main school phone number is 215-483-AIM1 (2461). The address is 1200 River Road, Conshohocken, PA 19428. The fax number is 215-483-4597. Please visit and “like” AIM Academy on its [Facebook page](#), [Twitter feed](#), [Instagram account](#) and via [LinkedIn](#).

APPENDIX A: AIM Academy Request for Approved Absence 2024-2025

This request, complete with signatures, should be submitted to the Division Heads at least TWO WEEKS in advance of the requested absence. **School policy does not permit the approval of extended school vacations.**

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

From the AIM Community Handbook: The academic progress of AIM Academy children is, to a great extent, dependent upon continuity of regular routines. As staff here at AIM we value the importance of our day-to-day programming and the individualized instruction we offer our students. We ask for your close cooperation in making sure that your child attends school every day according to our Yearly School Calendar (Located in the Parent Portal). AIM Academy believes that punctuality and attendance is a vital aspect of becoming a successful student. Student accolades such as Distinguished Honor Roll and the ACE Program can put a student's eligibility into jeopardy for not adhering to the AIM attendance policies and expectations. Lastly, in order for a student to be considered for promotion to the next grade, students must be in attendance for a minimum of 160 of our scheduled school days.

On occasion, when a family has given the Division Head two weeks' notice of a planned absence, the School may approve such an absence. Such approval is given for important family, cultural, religious, or educational events. The student's good academic standing, fulfillment of school obligations, and satisfactory attendance record will be considered. Subject to teacher's input and a review of the student's attendance records, and if the request meets these standards, the Director will give permission for an approved absence (see *Handbook* for further details).

Date of requested absence: _____ to _____

Reason: _____

Parent's Signature: _____ Advisor's Signature: _____

College Counselor (for college visits only) _____

Teachers: sign below if: a) the student is in good standing in your class; b) the student understands his/her responsibility to plan for make-up work; and c) this plan minimizes the extra effort required of the teacher. Course/Sport/Activity* Teacher/Coach Name Teacher/Coach Signature *Activity signature needed when a student has a major commitment, as to a drama production.

Division Head Signature: _____ Date: _____

Handbook and Acceptable Use Policy Form Acknowledgement 2024-2025

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Please review the AIM Community Handbook, which contains our Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), with your child. **When you have done so, please complete and electronically acknowledge the following via the acknowledgement form you can access in your [Veracross Parent Portal](#).**

“My child(ren) and I have received and reviewed the Community Handbook. My child understands their expectations as an AIM community member and student, including our Acceptable Use Policy for appropriate use of technology.

As a parent or guardian, I agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the school as set forth in the community handbook. I understand that the school believes that a positive and constructive working relationship between the school and the parent or guardian is essential to the fulfillment of the school's mission.”

Middle and Upper School families should acknowledge on form completion that they have reviewed the handbook and community expectations with their student(s).

Look for the acknowledgement form here:

