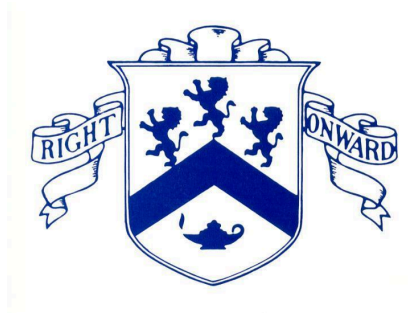


Doane Academy



2026-2027 Lower School Student & Family Handbook

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609-386-3500 (Phone)
www.doaneacademy.org



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Doane Academy
Since 1837



An Independent Episcopal Day School
Grades PreK-12

Mission

Doane Academy, an independent Episcopal day school, ages 3 through 12th grade, provides an exceptional college preparatory program while cultivating character development and nurturing the emotional maturity essential in preparing students for life.

We develop intelligent, capable individuals within a community where all are known, loved, and strongly encouraged to discover their unique potential.

Values and Beliefs

- Academic Excellence. Doane Academy encourages development of the highest standards of knowledge, inquiry, creative expression and academic success.
- Character and Social Responsibility: Doane Academy inspires integrity, responsibility for improving the lives of others, and cultural sensitivity.
- Diversity: Doane Academy is a diverse community strengthened by the sharing of different ideas, beliefs, and cultures.
- Faith and Fellowship: The Episcopal values of love, service, and compassion inspire Doane Academy, a multi-faith community that cultivates belonging and provides members with the opportunity to reflect on their relationship with God.
- Leadership: Doane Academy believes that good leaders are those who inspire and work with others in achieving extraordinary goals

Who's Who in Lower School

Head of School

- Erin P. Mayo

Head of Lower School and Director of Auxiliary Programs (Summer Camp, After School Clubs and Aftercare)

- Kathleen Keyes

Dean of Lower School and Director of Learning Support

- Jenn McDonough

Lower School Faculty

- PreK Teachers
 - Christine Robles
 - Olivia Wiley
- Kindergarten Teacher
 - Imani Wingfield
- Grade 1 Teacher
 - Sara Krauss
- Grade 2 Teacher
 - Kristin Rusinko
- Grade 3 Teacher
 - Nicole Tomcho
- Grade 4 Teacher
 - Evelyn Richardson- Thomas
- Grade 5 Teacher
 - Denise Conner
- Art
 - Brook Julian
- Music
 - Dr. Shelley Zuckerman
- Wellness
 - Davis Graham
- Spanish
 - Mariana Oropeza
- STEAM
 - Melanie Arzayus
- Library
 - Stacy Anderson
- Band
 - Adrienne Mazar (Grades 4-12)

Student Support

- School Counselor
 - Dr. Enid Flagg, Health and Wellness Director
 - Lauren Breslin
- Learning Support
 - Jenn McDonough, Director of Learning Support

- Beth Conaway, Reading and Writing Learning Support
 - Stacy Anderson, Math Learning Support
- School Nurse
 - Nurse Roxanne Blow
 - Jessica Kendall, Assistant School Nurse and Athletic Trainer
- Chaplain
 - Donte Milligan

Operations & Family Support

- Admissions
 - John Stevens
 - Claudia Buzsko
- Attendance
 - Mary Ann Sieb
- Business Office
 - Jonelle Diaz
- Aftercare
 - Kathleen Keyes
 - Mariana Oropeza

Lower School Academic Overview

In the Lower School, we strive to bring the mission to life every day by knowing, loving, and encouraging our students, recognizing each of them as the unique, intelligent, capable individuals they are. Each learner comes into our classroom full of different questions, interests, and strengths, and we help them to name, appreciate, and grow their abilities--not only in academic areas like math, literacy, language, and research, but in social-emotional areas like character, leadership, social skills, executive functioning, and artistic expression.

We encourage all students to discover their unique potential with thoughtful, differentiated instruction and curriculum that inspires deep thinking and enduring understanding. The skills and habits of mind that children build in the Lower School are the foundation for the rest of their academic journey.

Here is more specific information about our curriculum and instruction:

- **Being a Reader will be piloted in Grades K, 1 and 2 for the 2026-2027 school year.**
It is the intention to roll out the program to Grades 3, 4 and 5 in 2027-2028. Being a

Reader integrates research-based best practices in reading instruction with explicit social skills development, creating competent readers who love to read, learn from, and talk about books.

- Aligned with the science of reading, the program features:
 - A systematic scope & sequence
 - Robust reading comprehension and vocabulary instruction
 - Whole-class, small-group, and individual approaches
 - Diverse, high-quality fiction and nonfiction texts
 - Integrated social skills instruction that creates a collaborative, respectful, and supportive learning community
- We take a **workshop approach to reading**, which gives students the opportunity to practice research-based reading skills in “just right” books and to receive individualized coaching from their teacher that continually pushes them to progress to the next level of fluency and comprehension. This approach encourages and supports children to see themselves as capable and independent readers, surrounded by a community of other avid readers with whom they talk about books and build a lifelong love of reading.
- **FUNdations** is a multisensory, systematic program that unites spelling, handwriting, and word study, giving children the explicit instruction they need to develop their phonemic awareness and build their knowledge of phonics and morphology. FUNdations is used in our prekindergarten through first grade classrooms.
- **Patterns of Power** is research-based authentic grammar instruction for our first through fifth grade students. The foundation of the Patterns of Power Family of Resources, uses literature models to inspire student choice and meaning-making through the practical application of standards. The Patterns of Power process is a set of six invitations focused on a specific grammar learning target that becomes a focus phrase (I-statement): Invitation to Notice, Invitation to Compare and Contrast, Invitation to Imitate, Invitation to Celebrate, Invitation to Apply, and Invitation to Edit.
- **Heggerty** is a fun and effective curricula that is designed to build essential phonemic awareness, phonics, and writing skills, for our prekindergarten through first grade students giving them a strong foundation for reading success.
- **Illustrative Mathematics**’ collaborative model invites our kindergarten through fifth grade students to talk and write about math, listen to each other’s ideas, justify their thinking, and critique the reasoning of others to further develop their mathematical understanding. Illustrative Mathematics is a coherently sequenced program based on the standards and research-based learning trajectories to support students’ learning in these early years. Illustrative Mathematics is rigorous, problem-based, and fully aligned to the standards, with coherence across grade bands.
- Our student-centered **writing workshop** is a spiraling curriculum that continually revisits and builds on the skills needed to write informational, persuasive, and narrative pieces. Students learn a writing strategy and immediately put it into practice in their own writing, engaging in a process that includes drafting, revising, and editing. Each child learns to “read as a writer,” on the lookout for the engaging and important craft moves a published author makes and ready to apply those moves to their own writing.

- We take an **inquiry-based approach to social studies**, integrating history, civics, geography, and economics through investigation and action. Each unit of InquirEd study launches with a compelling question that sparks curiosity, moves through a sustained investigation of content, and culminates when students use their learning to create solutions that make an impact on the world around them. Students engage in research and critical thinking as they learn how to collaborate, craft their own questions, evaluate evidence, and take informed action.
- Our **social-emotional curriculum, Changemakers**, supports students in acquiring and applying the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions, achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions. We implement evidence-based practices recommended by the Collaborative for Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL). We follow the same sequence of fifteen units in each grade level, giving students consistent practice and reinforcement while adding to the previous year's foundation and building in complexity over time. These units are: safe relationships; brain; breath; feelings; body; impulse control; gratitude; optimism; grit; resilience; perspective taking; empathy; kindness; compassion; and hope.
- **Art, Music, PE, Library, STEAM, and Spanish** are based on experiential learning, honoring students as young scientists, artists, athletes, and global citizens. Specialist teachers integrate their curricula whenever possible, building multidisciplinary projects. **Technology** is integrated into all subject areas and students. Our goal is not simply to replace traditional materials with digital ones; we also investigate the ways that new technological tools can transform our teaching and assessment, allowing us to modify and redesign learning tasks and projects in ways that engage and empower each child.

Reporting Student Progress

In the Lower School, **the school year is divided into two semesters**. At the end of each semester, teachers share a report card that includes grades in reading, writing, word study, and math for students in grades one through five, a checklist of standards-covered during a semester for all students, as well as thoughtful narrative feedback. Our goal is not only to provide families with a window into their child's learning and a comprehensive overview of their progress, but also to inspire and facilitate conversations at home. Each classroom teacher will explain the grading system and that grade level's report card as well as overall communications as part of their **Back to School Night presentation in mid September**.

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at the beginning of the year and halfway through each semester. In late August or early September, we begin with a Getting-to-Know-You listening conference in which each child's family has the opportunity to share their insights, experiences, and goals for the year. **Conferences** will occur this year in **November and February**. We request that all parents schedule a conference at that time; the grade-level teachers will send out online sign-ups well in advance of the dates. Students do not attend school when conferences are scheduled so teachers are free to confer with parents. It is strongly encouraged that parents attend conferences in person to be able to see their student's

work, but a video conference can be requested.

Teachers will keep parents apprised of their children's progress between marking periods by phone calls, e-mails, or additional conferences if necessary. Parents with particular questions or concerns are encouraged to contact their child's teachers directly.

Regular, ongoing academic assessments give us insight into areas of challenge where we can focus targeted instruction that will support all learners' needs and enable them to thrive.

- **DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills)** is a set of quick, one-minute assessments used to evaluate foundational reading skills in children from kindergarten through fifth grade.
 - What DIBELS Measures:
 - Phonemic Awareness: Hearing and manipulating individual sounds in spoken words
 - Phonics/Alphabetic Principle: Sounding out letters and written words
 - Reading Fluency: Reading stories easily, accurately, and at an appropriate pace
 - Vocabulary: Understanding and using a variety of words
 - Comprehension: Understanding what is read
 - How the Testing Work:
 - Benchmark Testing: DIBELS is administered three times a year (Fall, Winter, and Spring).
- **Assessment tools for reading include teacher conference notes, retellings, and rubrics.** Conference notes are brief comments teachers write about events and interactions observed and conferred about during reading. Comments describe behaviors, processes, and attitudes. Teachers can learn a lot from retellings including how readers construct meaning—their abilities, strategies, and processes. Retellings can be done orally or in written form. Rubrics are some form of a list of essential skills and strategies in a certain content area.
- **The Being a Reader program by Collaborative Classroom** uses an integrated, four-part assessment system designed to guide instruction in real time:
 - Placement Tools: Used at the beginning of the year or when a student enters the classroom, these tools determine the appropriate foundational skills or small-group reading level for each student.
 - Formative Assessments: Embedded directly into daily lessons, these observational tools allow teachers to check student understanding, engagement, and reading behaviors on the spot without disrupting learning.
 - Progress Monitoring Tools: Ongoing, data-driven checks used to track whether students are mastering specific phonics skills, high-frequency words, and reading fluency as they move through the units.

- Summative Assessments: End-of-unit and end-of-year evaluations that measure overall growth in reading comprehension, vocabulary, word study, and spelling
- **The FUNdations Unit Test** measures a student's knowledge of concepts that are taught in a specific FUNdations unit. FUNdations Unit Tests are administered at the end of each instructional unit. The benchmark is 80% for each test.
- **Teachers monitor and assess student progress by reviewing the Patterns of Power Student Notebook.** Students will use this notebook along with the lessons to record their thinking through their writing. Seeing this thinking on paper allows teachers to determine whether or not the students grasp the concepts or the standards, and more importantly, specifically drives in what areas students might need extra help.
- **Heggerty's assessments** are grounded in the Science of Reading and provide teachers with the information they need to help all students become strong readers. These assessments take place approximately three times a year. The assessments focus on phonemic and phonological awareness.
- **Assessment tools for writing workshop include teacher conference notes, portfolios of writing samples, rubrics, checklists, and self-evaluation.** Conference notes are brief comments teachers write about events and interactions observed and conferred about during the Writing Workshop. Comments describe behaviors, processes, and attitudes. Portfolios of writing samples is a record of the writer's journey. It should include writing and other notes children keep such as their writing plan, checklist of strategies they have used, or what they have learned in peer conferences. Rubrics are some form of a list of essential skills and strategies in a certain content area. Checklists make recording observations simpler, as they are designed to help remind teachers and writers of the types of behaviors, processes, and understandings teachers are looking for during their observations/conferences. Self-evaluation gives writers time to self-reflect, evaluate, and assess the qualities of their own writing; this keeps them growing. At the end of the unit, writers self-evaluate their published piece using the rubric.
- **At the end of each Illustrative Mathematics unit there is a summative assessment.** These assessments have a specific length and breadth, with problem types that are intended to gauge students' understanding of the key concepts of the unit while also preparing students for new-generation standardized exams. Problem types include multiple-choice, multiple response, short answer, restricted constructed response, and extended response. Problems vary in difficulty and depth of knowledge.
- **MAP Growth Assessment is a standardized assessment that measures achievement and growth in Kindergarten through Fifth Grade math, reading, and language usage.** It provides teachers with accurate, actionable evidence to help inform instructional strategies regardless of how far students are above or below grade level. It also connects to the largest set of instructional content providers, giving educators flexibility in curriculum choices. **MAP Growth Assessment is administered three times a year.**

We regularly use an online classroom management platform and app to share photos and videos, giving you a window into your child's school experience and everyday learning adventures. Families will receive a Year at a Glance (YAAG) calendar that contains the dates of all events that are currently planned at Doane Academy. There will be additional dates noted as other events are added.

- In addition, families will receive a weekly email that contains a "Week at a Glance" or WAAG. This will serve as a reminder for any upcoming events for the week.

The Head of Lower School and the Lower School Dean stay closely connected to each teacher and student, and are always available to discuss classroom concerns; however, **it is expected that you will make initial contact with your child's teacher if a concern arises.**

Homework

Lower School teachers assign homework with a goal of helping families to understand and appreciate what their children are learning. Homework builds on skills and content learned during the day, and does not introduce new material. **Weekly homework in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and word study will be given by the classroom teacher on Monday with a return date of Friday. Homework, in grades 1-5, will receive a percentage of COMPLETION grades.** No homework is assigned over holiday breaks. Each teacher will share more about their homework model at Back to School Night. While homework expectations will vary from grade-to-grade, one consistent homework expectation is independent reading for an age-appropriate amount of time. Here are some ideas about how to promote your child's enjoyment of their at-home reading homework.

Lower School Student Expectations Overview

Our goal is to create a structured, supportive, and respectful community in which the teacher takes an authoritative stance toward classroom management and following through on unmet behavioral expectations. This means that the teacher is not authoritarian (do exactly as I say) or permissive (do whatever you want); instead, they focus on building strong relationships, providing firm boundaries, setting logical consequences, being consistent, validating students' experiences and emotions, and modeling care and empathy. Students collaborate to develop classroom expectation at the beginning of the year and engage in conversations about why those expectations are important (for example, we raise our hands and share airtime because everyone's voice is important, because we all deserve an opportunity to share our ideas and to be heard, and because we get to a better idea at the end if we hear lots of perspectives along the way). We proactively teach social-emotional skills to help students practice self-awareness, manage their emotions and behaviors, take others' perspectives, make responsible decisions, offer an apology of action, build resilience, and solve problems.

Even with this proactive teaching in place, we expect that students will sometimes act out of alignment with classroom expectations. This is part of learning how to be in community with others. Our goal is to ensure that missteps are experiences that lead to growth. We know that children are most likely to engage in inappropriate behavior when one of their fundamental human needs (for relatedness, competence, or autonomy) is not being met. Before we choose how to respond, we do our best to understand what the student is telling us through their behavior. That way, we can create an effective plan, along with setting a logical consequence and offering an apology of action, that will help them grow their skills and meet classroom expectations. These are a few of the developmentally appropriate mistakes we see students make in the lower school:

- Interrupting and calling out while others are talking
- Getting very upset when their work isn't "perfect" and erasing it all or ripping it up
- Bumping or jostling one another in an argument over line order
- Inserting themselves into a conflict that doesn't involve them and escalating it through gossip
- Having a difficult time sharing and grabbing an item away from a classmate
- Name-calling
- Getting into a conflict about the rules of a game at recess and yelling at a classmate
- Not including a classmate in a conversation or activity that they want to join

Responding to minor missteps and inappropriate behavior in the lower school

When a student has made a mistake, we address it immediately with a reminder and/or redirection (e.g. "We use kind words with our friends" or "We walk in the halls"). When a reminder/redirection is not effective, we employ natural and logical consequences to help students understand the impact of their behavior. Our goal is to ensure that the consequences are consistent, related to the behavior, respectful of the student, and reasonable for the student to carry out. Along with the logical consequence, a student will offer an apology of action to whomever was affected. Some of the most common consequences are to fix something that you broke, to lose a privilege, to take a break (either in the "peace corner" or in a buddy classroom), and to make an apology of action. Here are some examples of how that might play out in a few common scenarios:

- A child who makes a mess will clean it up.
- A child who is given the opportunity to choose their own seat and then has difficulty concentrating will have that privilege taken away; the teacher will choose where the child sits.
- A child who is arguing during a game at recess will take a break from that game and engage in reflective time with a teacher.

Teachers use their expertise and discretion to determine if they need to let a child's family know about a behavioral incident. Teachers generally will not communicate home for minor incidents where a child is easily redirected and is able to take responsibility for their actions. If a child

makes the same mistake several times and a pattern begins to emerge, the teacher will let the family know and engage in conversation about possible causes and effective responses or interventions. The teacher may suggest to the family that they implement a daily or weekly behavior log in order to track the impact of the chosen intervention over time.

Responding to major missteps and inappropriate behavior in the lower school

There are rare occasions when a child makes a more serious mistake, such as causing physical harm to someone else, stealing, cheating, lying, or damaging/misusing property. In these uncommon situations, the family will be notified as soon as possible and the head of lower school will become involved in the disciplinary process. The head of lower school will determine appropriate consequences in consultation with the head of school and will keep the family informed every step of the way. Some actions, such as causing physical harm, will result in the family being called to readily pick up their child and for the student to remain at home for a period of at least one day.

A note on the word “bullying”

Bullying is an extremely serious offense that can cause children to experience negative physical, social, emotional, academic, and mental health issues. Bullying involves many incidents of persistent meanness that take place over an extended period of time and that are specifically intended to harm someone or make them feel scared. Bullying often includes a component of unequal power, where someone with greater social power consistently belittles or intimidates someone with less social power.

What we have noticed in the last few years is that the word “bullying” has become a default to describe an individual incident of meanness or teasing and the word “bully” has been used as a label. Such labeling is inaccurate and harmful. While individual incidents will occur on occasion in any lower school, bullying is not something that we have seen taking place in Doane’s lower school.

We take the potential for bullying quite seriously if we observe that a pattern of meanness is beginning to emerge or that a school experience is causing negative mental health issues for a student. However, our proactive measures and our immediate responsive actions generally ensure that individual incidents do not escalate. When a student has been on the receiving end of meanness or teasing, we make certain that they are given the attention and time they need to feel safe and heard.

Communication Norms and Expectations for Faculty and Families

Clear norms and expectations lead to more effective communication and problem-solving, and a stronger school-family partnership. Norms are particularly helpful in situations that bring up big emotions. Many of us in Doane’s lower school are parents as well as educators, so we have

been in your shoes—we know it can be unsettling when your child comes home feeling upset about an event that happened at school. These are the communication guidelines that have served us well as both parents and educators in all situations, but especially in these more challenging moments.

Our expectations of ourselves:

- We believe that every child is “good inside” and we value and celebrate all of our students.
- We build a strong relationship with every child, getting to know their unique personalities, strengths, gifts, and talents. We work to make sure that every child feels known and loved in a community of inclusion and belonging.
- We differentiate our instruction to encourage the unique potential of every student.
- We engage in authoritative classroom management and setting clear expectations-. Our goal is not to control students or to enforce a mindset of compliance—instead, we aim to build students’ skill and agency. We bring a warm and responsive demeanor to the classroom, ready to strike the balance of being firm and loving as we set clear, consistent boundaries and ensure student safety.
- We commit to giving students a voice in constructing classroom expectations and to deploying positive reinforcement and logical, consistent consequences in a flexible, fair, and equitable manner.
- We approach families with respect and honor for the expertise they hold about their children, knowing that we are on the same team and share the same goals.
- We honestly and compassionately communicate with families if we start to notice a pattern in a student’s behavior so we can learn from parents’ insights and observations of what is happening at home.
- We call home as soon as possible if your child has made a serious mistake, such as injuring someone else.
- We do our best to let you know by the end of the day if your child is involved in a physical incident during the school day that upset them, even though they were not hurt. Sometimes we may need to send a quick email rather than making a call, but we are always open to a longer conversation as a follow-up to that email.
- We respond to emails or calls from a family within 24 hours (unless it’s a weekend).

Our expectations of you:

- Read all school communications thoroughly and fill out paperwork within 48 hours when requested.
- Follow school procedures, as outlined in the lower school handbook, that ensure your child’s safety: report absence and expected tardiness by 7:30 am and communicate changes to your child’s usual dismissal routine by noon.
- Ensure that your child arrives at school before 8:10 am and is picked up by 3:20 pm.
- Attend all conferences and Back to School Night; participate in additional events when you are able (e.g. homecoming, cultural block party, and kite festival).
- If you would like to talk to a teacher or administrator, email to set up a phone call or a meeting. It is important to talk directly with a teacher before contacting an administrator.

- If a concern or a question arises, contact your child's teacher. Please do so promptly, as we think it is important to talk through an issue when it first comes up and before it potentially escalates to something more serious. The whole lower school team cares deeply about your children, and we want to know when something is bothering them so that we can address it quickly.
- Approach us with respect, curiosity, trust, and an open mind. Remember that an adult perspective often includes information of which a child is not aware and that we have your child's best interests at heart.
- Honor and respect our perspective and our expertise. Be open to hearing about what we observe at school, knowing that children can often show different sides of themselves at school and at home.
- Be ready to help your child engage in perspective-taking. Support your child in practicing empathy for their classmates and considering the larger context when they are upset about something.
- Practice an empathetic mindset toward all other members of our school community, including students, faculty, and other families. Refrain from gossip and unhealthy group texts.
- Unless you have a close relationship with another parent/guardian, do not contact them directly with a concern about an interaction between your two children. Instead, inform the school of your concern so that we can provide context and determine the next best steps.
- Follow through within 30 days when we recommend outside services for your child (e.g. a learning evaluation, occupational therapy, speech, or counseling).
- Be thoughtful in your language choices when speaking with us and your child. In particular, we ask you to be mindful of the word "bullying" and avoid using the word "bully" to label children.

Materials Needed

Lower School students and families will receive communication in August, from their child's classroom teacher, about materials and supplies needed for the school year.

Absence

You must contact the school **by 7:30 am** on any day that your child will not be in school or on any day that they are expected to arrive late. This will allow the school to keep accurate attendance records and thereby ensure the safety and well-being of each student.

If your child will be absent or tardy, or needs to leave early, you may call or email anytime, 24 hours a day, to **leave a message at the main desk (609-386-3500) or email attendance@doaneacademy.org**. *Your message should include: your name, your phone number, your child's name, your child's grade level, and the reason your child will be absent,*

tardy, or needs to leave early. Not having this information in a timely fashion is worrisome and time-consuming for the staff. We appreciate your cooperation with this very important protocol.

Absences for Religious Reasons

We are proud of the religious diversity of our student body and seek to support students' various faith traditions. We recognize that a student might need to miss school to fulfill the tenets of their religion and, in these cases, a student will not be penalized in any way for such an absence. We only ask, as with any other absence from school, that the school be notified in advance of the absence, including the reason for that absence.

Impact of Absence on After-School Activities

Students who miss the academic day may not participate in after school activities.

Vacation

Regularly scheduled vacation times are listed in the school calendar. Interruptions in a child's regular class attendance should be avoided. **Parents are strongly discouraged from taking their children out for a vacation at times when school is in session.** However, if a family commitment necessitates a student's absence, *parents must make all necessary arrangements with the classroom teacher and school administration 30 days in advance.* Under normal circumstances, parent permission automatically excuses an absence, but the School reserves the right to define an absence as unexcused with or without parent permission. The student will need to complete missing assignments – including making up any missed assignments – in a timeframe delineated by the teacher. *Failure to complete missing assignments within the specified time line may be reflected in the child's academic progress, as shown on their report cards.*

Lower School Arrival Procedures

- Please plan to arrive at school by **8:00** am so that children are ready to begin their day promptly at **8:10 am**. An on-time arrival allows students to engage in the routines that not only help them transition smoothly into their school day, but also enhance and strengthen their essential executive function skills.
- Students are **not allowed on campus before 7:30 am**. Students who arrive between **7:30-8:00** am will report to the Katherine Potts Library (Odenheimer, second floor), where supervision is provided. Students are not allowed in any other classrooms prior to **8:00 am**.
- No one is allowed to park on Riverbank, the road in front of the school. This area must be kept free for buses.
- **If you are running late, you must call the main desk (609-386-3500) to let us know.**

If you arrive after 8:00, please park in one of the visitor spots located adjacent to the Chapel. You must escort your child to the Fisk Portico entrance, inside to the front desk, and sign your child into school.

Tardiness

In order for your child to benefit fully from their educational experience and not disrupt the classroom schedule and the learning of their peers, **it is important that students arrive at school no later than 8:00 am.** This will ensure that they are prepared to participate when the school day begins at 8:10 am.

Lower School Dismissal Procedures

- **The school day ends at 3:20 pm.** Lower School students are allowed on school grounds after dismissal time only if they are under the supervision of a teacher. Normally, at the close of school, Lower School students will be escorted to one of three places: After-Care Program, Parent Pickup, or Bus Pickup Area. If they have signed up for an after-school program other than After-Care, students will be told of the special arrangements they need to follow to get from their classrooms to the location of the activity.
- Parent pickup for students in PreK through 5th Grade is at the Fisk Portico. **Parents should remain in their vehicle as they queue up in the main parking area.** Students are not allowed to walk to a car until the teachers supervising Parent pickups have arrived to escort them. Please do not encourage your child to break the rule.
- It is suggested that you sign up to receive [notifications](#) about openings for the Burlington-Bristol Bridge. This can be a great way to stay informed about traffic patterns, especially since Doane Academy is at the base of the Burlington-Bristol Bridge. You can plan your routes more efficiently and avoid any potential delays caused by bridge openings.
- Parents are asked to pick up their children on time. *Students who are not picked up by 3:30 pm will be brought to after-care and a \$15.00 late pick up charge to the family will be incurred in half-hour fee increments.* Families who cannot be here at dismissal time should make arrangements for the After-Care Program, at an additional fee. **Drop-in after-care is available in emergency situations for \$30.00, with cash or check payment expected at time of pick up.** If you do need to utilize drop-in after-care, please send an email to your child's classroom teacher as well as MaryAnn Sieb (msieb@doaneacademy.org), Florence Lespinasse-Aldrich (flespinasse-aldrich@doaneacademy.org), Mariana Oropeza (morepeza@doaneacademy.org), and Kathleen Keyes(kkeyes@doaneacademy.org)
- Once students board a school bus, they should not leave that bus until they arrive at the assigned bus drop-off area at, or near, their home.
- Parents planning an alternate pickup arrangement on a particular day must **email Mary**

Ann Sieb (msieb@doaneacademy.org) and Florence Lespinasse-Aldrich (flespinasse-aldrich@doaneacademy.org) before noon and CC their child's teacher on that email. For last-minute changes, due to an emergency, make sure to call Mary Ann Sieb and/or Florence Lespinasse-Aldrich at the front desk (609-386-3500) and they will make sure to communicate the change to the classroom teacher. **If plans are made to visit another student's home, written permission is required from both families. Either family can email Ms. Sieb and Ms. Lespinasse-Aldrich to communicate the plans for the playdate and CC the second family, who should then respond to confirm the plan. Please note, students may not accompany a friend home on the bus unless they routinely ride the same bus. Changing bus routes to accommodate a visit is also not possible.**



Safety Reminders for Dropoff and Pickup at Fisk Portico

Morning Drop Off:

- Drive at a safe and slow speed in the parking lot and after you take a right out of the lot onto Riverbank.
- **Do not pass cars ahead of you in line.**
- **We ask that parents stay in their cars at all times** while in the car line. If your child needs help getting out of their 5 point harness, please reach back to unlock the clip fastened near the legs and if needed, a staff member will assist by unlocking the clip near the chest. Students are encouraged to grow in their independence with this skill as the year progresses. If your child is in a booster seat or just uses a seat belt, please have them unlock the seat belt and exit their car on their own.
- We expect that all children walk into school independently to help build their autonomy.
- **Do not park in any of the numbered spots**, which are assigned to faculty and staff who may not yet have arrived.

Afternoon Pickup:

- **Drive at a safe and slow speed** in the parking lot and after you take a right out of the lot onto Riverbank.
- **Do not pass cars ahead of you in line.**
- **We ask that parents stay in their cars at all times** while in the car line. If your child needs help getting into the car, one of the staff members on duty will assist them.
- **Each Family will be given 4 placards with the Doane Logo and their child's first name on it. They are to be placed on the front dashboard or near the windshield so that faculty can see the sign clearly. Each person that regularly picks up the student should have a placard. If there is a deviation from the regular pick up, please notify admin before pick up.**
- If your child is delayed in exiting the building, we will ask you to pull into a parking space to wait for them in order to keep the line moving.
- If your child needs your assistance to buckle their seatbelt, **pull over into one of the visitor spots alongside the Chapel so that you can get out of the car to assist.** Alternatively, you can park in any spot in the parking lot (numbered or visitor) when you first arrive, and walk over to Fisk Portico to pick up your child.

After Care Program

The After Care program provides a safe and secure environment for children from **3:25-5:30** pm. Students enjoy outdoor play and get the opportunity to begin homework. School rules apply to this after-school program. Information regarding registration and fees is shared with Lower School families in mid-August, before each school year begins. **Upon sign up, families have the option to register to be billed annually through the FACTS Tuition system or monthly.**

Aftercare does not run on inservice/half days or days when school is closed. While we understand that emergencies can infrequently arise, our staff is contracted to work until **5:30 pm** and it is an inconvenience for them to stay late. After care ends firmly at 5:30 pm. **Any families who are late for pickup more than once will incur a fee of \$30.00 per half hour they are late (starting with their 2nd late pickup).**

Drop-in after-care is available in emergency situations for \$30.00, with cash or check payment expected at the time of pick up. If you do need to utilize drop-in after-care, please send an email to your child's classroom teacher as well as MaryAnn Sieb (msieb@doaneacademy.org), Florence Lespinasse-Aldrich (flespinasse-aldrich@doaneacademy.org), Mariana Oropeza (moropeza@doaneacademy.org), and Kathleen Keyes (kkeyes@doaneacademy.org)

After-Care takes place in the Odenheimer building, first floor, room 102 and students spend time on the playground when weather permits.

No snacks are provided in the After-Care program. Please pack a healthy after-school snack for your child(ren) on any day that they are registered for our After-Care program. In addition, we encourage you and your child to make sure to pack a fun, high-interest independent reading book in their backpack; research shows that daily reading practice has a huge payoff in cognitive development and academic success.

All Lower School students are discouraged from bringing personal electronic devices, including cell phones, to school. If they do bring a device to school, it must remain turned off in their backpack throughout the day, including at After-Care.

Parents will park, walk over to Fisk Portico, into Doane to pick up their children from After-Care. A phone number will be provided to After-Care families to make direct contact with the supervisor if necessary.

Leaving Campus

No student may leave campus during the school day without prior permission and adult supervision of persons listed on file. Students needing to leave during the day must bring a note from home and be excused by their teacher. When a student has been excused from their classroom, they should go to the main desk, where they will wait for an adult that is listed on file. When their parent/guardian or adult on file arrives for pickup, they should ring the bell at Fisk Portico to come in, meet their child at the main desk, and sign them out.

Chapel

Chapel services are an integral part of the program and the environment that Doane Academy offers. While the chapel service is conducted in the Episcopal tradition, we are proud of the religious diversity of our multi-faith community, and our goal is for the service to provide students and faculty of all faiths with an opportunity to reflect on their spirituality and their relationship with God. If a student or teacher's religious affiliation prevents them from actively participating in the service, we simply ask them to be respectful of others.

School Families

The School Family program is a central part of Doane's culture and represents its emphasis on character education across all grades. Each student enrolled at Doane Academy is welcomed into one of 14 School Families. Each School Family is named after a significant individual from the school's history. School Families play an essential role in building community across all ages and disciplines at Doane, creating a deep sense of belonging as older and younger students develop positive relationships and build leadership skills. Students and teachers remain in the same family throughout their time at Doane, thereby creating friendships that grow, evolve, and deepen over the years. Each School Family meets bi-weekly for 30 minutes and has at least two faculty "parents" who help coordinate activities, discussions, celebrations, and school service projects.

All School and Lower School Meetings

On alternating weeks, Lower School students will participate in either an All School Meeting or a Lower School Meeting.

In All School Meetings, K-12th graders come together as a community to highlight student accomplishments, discuss issues that impact the entire school, and give students an opportunity to share their talents. It is a time when all can see that they are a part of something larger than themselves.

In Lower School Meetings, PreK-5th grades gather in order to listen to stories, share projects and ideas with one another, honor holidays and heritage months, and celebrate their learning. Each meeting includes an opportunity to reflect on a theme related to social-emotional learning, such as collaboration; gratitude; growth mindset; and leadership.

Lunch

Students bring lunches to school or have the opportunity to buy lunch using our declining balance debit card system.

Our food service provider, Princeton Food Management Systems, provides a variety of appetizing, healthful lunches as well as various snacks and treats. Mrs. Bonnie Zaczek

bzaczek@doaneacademy.org is the main point of contact for Food Services related questions.

There are two very important steps that need to be completed in order to purchase lunch.

1. Families **MUST** opt in on the form linked [here](#) in order to be able to purchase food. By not completing this form, it is understood that you are choosing to opt out.
2. Families **MUST** log into MySchoolBucks.com and fund that account before any purchase can be made. Once the account is funded, parents will be able to see the purchases made on their child's account at any time, simply by logging into [MySchoolBucks.com](#). *There is a surcharge for all funds added by credit card electronically. Cash or check may be presented to the cashier but must be added to the account for purchase. No individual cash purchases will be permitted.*

Other Helpful Reminders

- **It is your responsibility to check your child's MySchoolBucks account on a regular basis** to make sure that you are aware of their purchases. We recommend that you engage in regular conversations with your child about what they are purchasing.
- **If your MySchoolBucks account goes down to a zero balance, your child will not be able to purchase any items.** If your account has a zero balance and you have not packed a lunch, a school administrator will be in contact with you. While we will ensure that your child does not go hungry, we expect that this will be a very rare occurrence and will institute consequences if it happens on a regular basis.
- Note that you can set up your MySchoolBucks account to automatically refill if you enter your credit card information, which will avoid any zero balance situations.
- Lower School families **must** pre-order lunches for their children. Pre-ordering has many benefits for Lower School students: it allows more time for children to eat and socialize, gives families the opportunity to make healthy choices that nourish their children, and results in less food waste. The Google Form to order lunch will be sent home prior to the first day of each month.
- The price of lunch includes a small water, milk or juice, the main entree and side that is included. Any other items added are considered "snacks".
- PFMS offers a variety of snacks that your child can purchase to supplement their pre-ordered entree. Please discuss with your student what kinds of snacks and how many they should purchase. LS Students are strongly encouraged to purchase healthy snacks and refrain from purchasing sugary snacks or drinks.
- It is recommended that you check My School Bucks frequently to ensure that your student is following your guidelines.

Packing a Lunch

Please be aware that, due to time constraints and safety concerns, we are unable to heat up foods brought from home. **Therefore, foods that need to be heated are not permitted unless there is a dietary need that is communicated to the Head of Lower School and the School Nurse.** Parents may wish to place foods that need to be kept warm into a thermos

when packing their child's lunch. Likewise, it would be beneficial to include a small ice pack in your child's lunch bag/box to keep foods cool.

Students must not trade or share lunches with one another due to allergies and to maintain the balanced nutritional integrity of the child's lunch that a family prepared for their child. Candy, gum, and carbonated sodas are not permitted.

Snack

Please pack a healthy snack for your child each day that is low in sugar. For ideas, please consult this recommended snack list from the Center for Science in the Public Interest:

<https://cspinet.org/protecting-our-health/nutrition/healthy-school-snacks>

Please also pack a reusable water bottle each day. Students will have the opportunity to refill it, as needed, at our contactless water filling stations.

Recess

All Lower School students have at least one daily opportunity for free, constructive play on the playground (or, in inclement weather, in a designated indoor area). Recess provides opportunities for fun, games, movement and engaging interactions between peers. Students are asked to play only in the assigned area and in a safe way. No one is allowed to leave the recess area without permission from the teacher in charge. Parents should ensure that their children have appropriate layers for the season and the weather. All children are expected to participate in outdoor recess.

Library

The Lower School Library is called The Katherine Potts Library and is located on the 2nd floor of Odenheimer. It has been created in remembrance of a former Doane Academy student, Katherine Potts, who passed away after her year in kindergarten.

Library Book Borrowing

Students in the Lower School are encouraged to develop a love of reading through regular visits to the library. Students may borrow library books according to the guidelines established by the Lower School librarian and are expected to care for all materials while they are checked out. Books should be returned by their due date so that others may enjoy them. If a library book is lost or damaged beyond normal wear and tear, families will be responsible for the cost of replacement. Students with overdue or missing books may have borrowing privileges temporarily paused until the item is returned or the replacement cost has been resolved. We appreciate your partnership in helping students develop responsibility and respect for shared resources.

Field Trips

No child may take part in a field trip unless the proper release form is signed by a parent or guardian and returned to the school prior to departure. These forms, along with an explanation of the field trip in question, will be brought home by the student prior to the trip. Unless otherwise specified, students are expected to maintain both dress and disciplinary codes while away from campus.

School personnel act as chaperones on all field trips. If a student going on a trip has a significant health condition, we may ask a parent or guardian of that student to join us in order to supervise their own child. However, they will not supervise any other children on the trip.

Support Services

At Doane Academy, we provide the following Support Services:

- Full-time School Nurse
- Part-Time Assistant School Nurse and MS/US Athletic Trainer
- Full-time School Counselor and Director of Student Wellness
- Full-time School Counselor
- Full-time Director of Learning Support
- Two Part-Time Academic Support Teachers: Reading/Writing and Math
- Part-time Speech Therapist (Kindergarten-Fifth Grade)
- Access to a New Jersey State provided Child Study Team

The Nurse's Office is located on the first floor of Odenheimer and is staffed by a full-time Registered Nurse. A second Nurse's Office is also located on the first floor of Odenheimer and is staffed by a part-time assistant nurse and Athletic Trainer for Middle and Upper School students. Nurses and the trainer focus on maintaining and enhancing age-appropriate self-care, health, fitness, and independence in keeping with the School's "education for life" mission statement. The nurse and athletic trainer are available to students and faculty regarding any and all serious inquiries or health related issues. Small bumps and scrapes that occur in the classroom or on the playground will be referred to the nurse only if the teacher's best judgment rules the situation as serious or if the student's reaction to the condition is disruptive.

Note: All students are required to have a current (within 365 days) physical by their primary care provider and submit to the school nurse before they are permitted to attend classes. If the physical evaluation form expires (older than 365 days) during the school year, a current physical evaluation form needs to be completed and submitted. **"Consent to Treat" and "Over the Counter Medication Consent" forms must be completed for each student prior to the start of classes;** these forms will be provided by the school nurse. Any medication, including "over the counter" products brought to campus, must be submitted to the school nurse with the dosage and times of its administration clearly marked. Students are not allowed to be in possession of any medication without permission from the school nurse. **All students**

diagnosed with asthma must have an “Asthma Action Plan” from the student’s primary care physician. Also, all students diagnosed with food allergies must submit a “Food Allergy Action Plan” from the student’s primary care physician. Any student requiring medications (prescribed or over the counter) should contact the school nurse for directions.

Student Illness:

Communicable Disease–Exclusion and preventing transmission:

As per CDC best practices, Students with **symptoms of a respiratory virus* should stay home and away from others until:

- **The student is fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication AND**
- **Symptoms are improving**, which means the student is no longer feeling ill and able to participate comfortably in educational and other activities as they did before they were ill. **Any remaining symptoms, such as cough or runny nose are mild and infrequent.** Students can then return to normal activities, but they **should take additional precautions for the next five days when they are around other people indoors.**
 - These precautions include:
 - Practicing good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
 - Physical distancing when around others
 - Testing for respiratory viruses to determine next steps such as treatment.

**Symptoms include: fever, chills, fatigue, cough, runny or stuffy nose, sneezing, and headache, chest discomfort, chills, decrease in appetite, diarrhea, muscle or body aches, vomiting, and wheezing.*

Other illnesses:

If a student is feeling ill, or shows signs of illness prior to coming to school (i.e., fever, runny nose, sore throat, nausea/vomiting) the student should remain at home. **Students should remain at home until they are symptom free without the assistance of medication (Tylenol, Advil, Motrin, etc.) for a full 24 hours.**

If a student falls ill or is injured during school hours, the nurse will call you. Emergency contact numbers on file should be kept updated. Emergency contact numbers should be readily available by phone. **Students must be picked up within one hour of notification if the student is sick or injured.**

Our full-time School Counselors are available to meet with students directed to their offices by either a faculty member or at the request of a parent. Additionally, the school counselors lead group discussions with students covering developmentally appropriate topics designed to aid students in their development of healthy habits.

Students Kindergarten through Fifth Grade may become eligible for speech services through an evaluation process. All students new to Doane Academy, up to Grade Three, are screened by our Speech Therapist. Should the Speech Therapist determine that a child is in need of additional support, the parents will be notified and asked to consent to an evaluation. Sessions with the Speech Therapist will occur as a pull-out during the regular school day.

Student Wellness

Our full-time School Counselor and Psychologist provide services to our students which focus on the emotional wellness of our students and community. These services include school counseling, or guidance, lessons that support each student with developing their emotional resilience by strengthening their self-awareness, positive mindset, coping strategies, healthy social skills, and self-advocacy, thereby reducing risk factors before issues arise. Unfortunately, trauma and mental health challenges are a challenging yet real part of life, even among elementary-aged children. The school counselor and psychologist are available to meet with students directed to their offices by either a faculty member, at the request of a parent, or per the request of a student. When appropriate and time permitted, the school counselor and psychologist may provide short term counseling or small group counseling to students - this is with the permission of parent(s)/ caregiver(s). Supporting the wellbeing of our children often requires a team approach, and the school counselor and psychologist may work with parent(s)/ caregiver(s), teachers, specialists and, when appropriate, outside professionals.

If a student appears to be struggling with intense emotions or behaviors and/or if it is observed that a student's social, emotional, behavioral, or cognitive issues are having a negative impact, these concerns will be communicated and it may be recommended that they receive additional support outside of school. This additional support may include an external evaluation and/ or services (e.g., therapy, skills training, coaching, etc.) that will support the student's well being and learning. Whenever possible, resources for additional support are provided. When external services are in place, the school may request a *release of information* to consult and collaborate with the outside mental health professional. This release is used for collaborative purposes and intended to best support the wellbeing of the student in the school setting.

Crisis Prevention and Intervention

We integrate developmentally appropriate, student-centered educational materials into the curriculum, guidance lessons, and student wellness presentations which emphasize self-care and emotional wellness. These materials center on strategies that strengthen emotional resilience, safe and healthy decisions, and help seeking strategies for oneself and others.

Any time a peer, faculty member, staff member, or other school employee has a concern that a student has expressed thoughts of harm to self or others or engaged in behavior that raises either as a serious concern, the student shall be seen by the school counselor or psychologist, whenever possible, within the same school day. The school counselor and psychologist are equipped to respond to crises through: immediate de-escalation; providing a calm, safe space; counseling to increase insight into the student's experience, identify the student's supports and resilience along with areas of concern, and to determine necessary next steps. This also includes consulting and collaborating with teachers, administrations, and families to implement immediate next steps that support the child's safety and wellbeing but that also considers the safety of the school community.

The school counselor and/or the school's psychologist will make the Head of Lower School and Head of School aware of the situation as soon as reasonably possible. It's important for families to understand that school counselors have both an ethical and legal responsibility to take appropriate action when a student is identified to be at-risk for harm to self or others - this includes crisis intervention and mandated reporting. The Head of Lower School will contact the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) on the same day and communicate next steps; the school counselor and/or psychologist will provide guidance and support in completing them.

It is essential that we ensure the safety of every student on our campus, and so there are instances in which a student experiencing a mental health crisis is not permitted to be on campus. In these cases, requirements to be met prior to returning to campus may include one or more of the following:

- Scheduling and having an appointment with an out-of-school mental health provider
- Completion of a [release of information](#) for the purpose of consulting and collaborating with out-of-school mental health providers (e.g., in the development of a coping plan)
- Completion of an *informed consent form* for the purpose of the student receiving short-term counseling in school
- Scheduling and having a safety assessment appointment (e.g., SCIP, Crisis Mobile Response, local crisis center, etc.)
- Acquiring and sharing a letter stating the student's appropriate level of care and/or approving the student for in-school learning and/or after school activities/sports
- Acquiring and sharing a coping or safety plan created by an out-of-school mental health provider
- Verifying in writing that services (e.g., risk assessment) were provided (e.g., letter from current mental health provider, discharge instructions, post-intake instructions)
- Engaging in follow up services (e.g., outpatient counseling) and/or a coping/ safety plan

When a student is out of school due to a crisis or moment of extreme dysregulation, the Head of Lower School or Head of School will reach out to the family to discuss how to best support the student's successful transition back to school. This may involve the support of the school counselor or psychologist to best support the emotional and/or behavioral needs of the student.

It is important that families understand that the safety of our students is our primary concern. The implementation of a comprehensive crisis plan which includes prevention, intervention, and postvention components prioritizes the health and wellbeing of all students.

Academic Enrichment Pilot Program 2026-2027

Developing the Whole Student in the following ways

- Providing a more robust in-house learning support

- Deputizing current faculty to provide support
- Addressing and is tailored to specific learning gaps
- Closing academic gaps quickly
- Increasing student confidence
- Prioritizing consistent tutor-student relationships aligned with our Mission

Key Characteristics

- Smaller Group Size
 - A lower student-to-tutor ratio
 - Grade level tutoring session groupings:
 - K-1
 - 2-3
 - 4-5
- Consistency
 - Students meet with the same tutor regularly to build trust
- Embedded in School Day
 - Tutoring occurs during school hours
- Data-Driven/Aligned
 - Uses assessments to inform instruction tailored to student needs and aligns with classroom curriculum
- Targeted
 - Focuses on foundational skills in math and reading/writing

Frequency Options

- Tutoring to take place during **LS Academic Enrichment periods** 3xs a week for 40 minutes
 - Per week = 120 minutes or 2 hours of tutoring time for each learner
 - For those learners who qualify for both Reading and Math
 - Week 1 = Two Reading tutoring sessions and One Math tutoring session
 - Week 2 = Two Math tutoring sessions and One Reading tutoring session
 - Shared Classroom space where all tutoring is to take place, Rowan 200

How to qualify for In-House Tutoring

- Standardized screening
 - MAP Growth Assessment Scores
 - Below the 30th percentile
- DIBLES; IXL Screener/Proficiency Test in Reading; FUNdations/Heggerty Screener
- IXL Screener/Proficiency Test in Math
- Along with
 - Classroom performance data
 - Teacher observations
- Those students with an SLD in Reading, Writing and/or Math automatically qualify

Goal-Based “Exit Ramps”

- Tie to specific, identifiable benchmarks/goals based on MAP standardized screening, IXL screenings/proficiency tests, DIBELS, FUNdations/Heggerty screenings, and support session formative assessments
- When benchmarks/goals are reached
 - Reduce the number of sessions (frequency) rather than the session minutes (duration).

Support Plans (IHSP and ISP)

The division-specific support teams are overseen by the director of learning support with consultation and collaboration with the heads of lower, middle, and upper school, the learner’s advisor or homeroom teacher, the school psychologist and director of student wellness, and the school counselor. When applicable, the following personnel may be asked to participate in support team meetings: additional teachers, school nurse, speech and language therapist, or academic support teacher. The division-specific support teams meet weekly.

For a support plan to be put into place the following is required:

- a copy of an evaluation that has been completed in the last 3 years
- the diagnosis given by the evaluating medical/psychiatric/or educational professional
- a letter from the evaluating professional and/or treating medical professional confirming diagnosis, confirming the need for a support plan, and recommendations for in-school accommodations based specifically on the diagnosis (to be reviewed by the division-specific support teams to see if those accommodations can be realized given the current resources)

Individual Health and Support Plans (IHSPs) document a child’s health needs at school and are for those learners diagnosed with medical conditions and mental health disability or those neurodiversities that are diagnosed by medical professionals. IHSPs do not make substantial modifications to grade-level programming/curriculum to accommodate a learner’s need(s). IHSPs do provide accommodations to be carried out by general education teachers. These accommodations support how a student learns grade-level curriculum with minor adjustments and supports.

Individual Support Plans (ISPs) are for those learners diagnosed with a Specific Learning Disability (SLD) or other diagnosed neurodiversity that is considered a lifelong neurological and developmental disability. ISPs do not make substantial modifications to grade-level programming/curriculum to accommodate a learner’s need(s). ISPs do provide accommodations to be carried out by general education teachers. These accommodations support how a student learns grade-level curriculum with minor adjustments and supports.

Doane is not required, as a private school, to modify its essential enrollment criteria or programming. Doane, as a private school program, is not required to make substantial modifications to grade-level programming/curriculum to accommodate a learner's need(s). Substantial modification may be significant teacher time or hiring extra staff. As an independent school, Doane Academy is not legally required to allow an emotional support animal (ESA). Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), accommodations for emotional support are treated differently than for trained service animals. A learner placed in a private school, like Doane, by their parents does not have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and is not entitled to a Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE) or its specific entitlements and protections.

Triennial reevaluations: The division-specific support teams will discuss in April if those learners' whose evaluations are 3 or more years older need a full reevaluation. They will determine if the learner's needs have changed or warrant a reevaluation based on a significant or substantially impacting developmental/life change/growth. If a reevaluation need is determined, the team will contact the family regarding the need for a full psychoeducational/neuropsychological evaluation in order to continue having a support plan in place. Doane will provide a list of recommended private providers at various price points as well as an option, if applicable, for a no cost evaluation through Catapult Learning, LLC. Evaluation information is needed to make appropriate educational decisions based on growth and development through the years. A letter from a medical professional or script only will not be accepted as the only form of documentation for a support plan to remain in place if a full psychoeducational/neuropsychological evaluation was recommended by the division-specific support team.

Lost Items

We strongly urge that all clothing regularly worn to school, lunch boxes, and book bags be clearly marked with the student's name. *Spending money, toys, and items of monetary or sentimental value should not be brought to school.* Responsibility for such items being lost, misplaced, or stolen rests with the student who brought them to school. Students looking for lost articles should check in the Lower School Lost and Found, which is located on the 2nd floor of Odenheimer immediately by Ms. Keyes' office.

Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices

We recognize that cell phones and other digital devices often function as important educational tools that allow us to explore questions, seek answers, and connect with the world. However, they can also prevent us from fully engaging in face-to-face interactions and prove distracting while we are trying to concentrate on our work.

Our guidelines for device usage support our students in finding a balance between technological access, in-person engagement, and digital citizenship development. These guidelines are in

line with the American Academy of Pediatrics' report on [Media Use in School-Aged Children and Adolescents](#), which is full of important research and information.

Lower School students are strongly discouraged from bringing cell phones or other personal electronic devices to school. If a student does bring a device to school, it must remain turned off and in their backpack throughout the duration of the school day, unless a teacher gives them permission to use it.

If a student has their cell phone out of their backpack and/or is struggling to monitor their use of any digital device (including a school-issued Chromebook), a teacher will collect the device for the duration of the day. If a student has received multiple warnings about appropriate use of digital devices, teachers and the Head of Lower School may suspend privileges for a period of time.

Lower School students are discouraged from making telephone calls from the school. In the event of an emergency, a school phone will be used.

We appreciate your support in enforcing these age-appropriate limits. If it is necessary for you to communicate information to your children during school hours, please call Doane's front desk at 609-386-3500.

Chromebook Use

Students in Lower School will have access to a Chromebook during school hours as needed. Students will be responsible for the care and use of their devices with the following guidelines:

- All students will need a pair of non-wireless headphones with a microphone for use throughout the day. Students should double-check their Chromebook ports before purchasing a pair of headphones.
- All of a student's documents should be stored on their Doane account's Google Drive, which integrates with the Chromebook. No files should be stored on the Chromebook itself.
- Students are prohibited from using their Chromebook for **non-academic purposes**.
- Students should not alter the configuration or functionality of the Chromebook.
- Students should refrain from sharing log-in information with anyone else.
- Students should inform their teachers of any technical issues that arise as soon as they can.

Here is a link to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#)

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the use of another person's ideas or work, as well as ideas generated by artificial intelligence, without proper acknowledgment. By submitting an assignment, a student pledges that the work is their own. Because plagiarism is such a serious matter, it is important to explain some of the various forms it may take:

1. You are plagiarizing when you pass off as your own someone else's story, article, essay or theme.
2. You are plagiarizing when you paraphrase a story, article, essay or theme without proper acknowledgment as to its original source;
3. You are plagiarizing when you use, without proper footnoting, another person's ideas or interpretations, thus creating the impression that these ideas originated with you;
4. You are plagiarizing when you use any Artificial Intelligence (AI) text or image generator to create any part of an assignment without the expressed permission of the instructor and proper acknowledgement as to its source.

Parties

Class parties may be held for various holidays throughout the year. If needed, the classroom teacher will be in touch to request parent assistance with activities and refreshments.

Birthdays may be celebrated with the class during the school day by sending in a special snack or treat. The teacher should be notified in advance so a convenient date is scheduled. Please let the teacher know what food item your child will be sharing with the class, so we can make arrangements as needed for any students with allergy issues.

We recognize that the costs involved in inviting all students from your class to a party can be substantial, and therefore you might choose to invite a smaller group of students to a party. If you do so, we ask that you talk to your child about how to be sensitive and inclusive when discussing their party plans, so that no classmates feel excluded.

Fire and Security Drills

Doane Academy completes fire and security drills on a regular basis, as required by law, and uses best practices to ensure student safety throughout the drills. Lower School teachers are trained in using developmentally appropriate language when conducting drills to minimize student anxiety and maintain children's sense of safety and security.

Snow Days

When road conditions are hazardous, a decision regarding our school being open, closed, or delayed will be made at or about 5:30 am and will first be announced via a text alert which will be sent to all student and parent cell-phone numbers listed within our database (*please keep us*

updated with any changes in your cell phone numbers). The announcement will then also be shared via email, on Class Dojo, in an alert on the school website homepage, and also on the various local television and radio stations.

Given the variety of road conditions over the attendance area served by the school, attendance is ultimately left to the parent's discretion when school is open, but road conditions are questionable. If parents decide not to transport their child(ren) to school on an inclement weather day, they need to follow procedures listed in the section entitled "Absence."

Visitors to Campus

All visitors must park in designated visitor spots by the chapel. All visitors are required to check in at the main desk, sign in, and secure a visitor's pass. Visitors must abide by the school's rules of conduct.

LOWER SCHOOL 2023-2024 UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

PreK - Second Grade

Tops:

- Light blue or navy polo shirt (short-sleeve or long-sleeve) with school logo
 - Optional: Navy drop waist jumper over polo

Bottoms:

- Students are expected to wear solid-color dress pants/bottoms in gray, navy, or khaki or uniform skorts/shorts in navy or khaki
 - No cargo pants or joggers
- Skorts and shorts, along with the navy jumpers, are to be worn free of denim or leggings
 - Optional: Students wearing a jumper can wear solid unicolor black or navy tights or unpatterned black or navy leggings underneath.
- *Suggested for Pre-K and Kindergarten—pull on/pull off bottoms that encourage bathroom independence*

Outerwear (inside of the school building):

*The following are optional items and **are limited to these items only:***

- Navy sweater, long-sleeve pullover v-neck sweater, sweater vest, or cardigan—all with school logo
- Warm up jacket in navy, with school logo and white piping
- Doane branded hoodie or crew neck sweatshirt
- Headwear may be worn outside but not in academic buildings. Exceptions will be made for the practice of one's religion.

Footwear:

- Sneakers: No Crocs, Uggs, light up or sneakers with sounds.
- Solid-color white, black or navy socks
- In inclement weather, rain boots or snow boots are acceptable. Students should bring along their sneakers to change into once inside the school building.

Third - Fifth Grade

Tops:

On non-PE days:

- Light blue or navy polo shirt (short-sleeve or long-sleeve) with school logo

On PE days:

- PE uniform t-shirt with heat transferred logo with uniform warm up jacket with white piping *or...*
- Light blue or navy polo shirt (short-sleeve or long-sleeve) with school logo

Bottoms:

On non-PE days:

- Solid-color uniform dress pants, shorts, or two-pleat skort/skirt in khaki, navy, or gray.
 - No cargo pants or joggers.
- Unpatterned tights in black or navy are acceptable.

On PE days:

- Uniform warm up pants in navy with white piping

- Note that if it is a hot day, students can wear the mesh gym uniform shorts under their warm up pants and take off the warm up pants for PE class.

Outerwear (inside of the school building):

*The following are optional items and **are limited to these items only:***

- Long-sleeve pullover v-neck sweater, sweater vest, or cardigan with Doane Logo
- Doane branded hoodie or crew neck sweatshirt
- Warm up jacket in navy, with school logo and white piping
- Headwear may be worn outside but not in academic buildings. Exceptions will be made for the practice of one's religion.

Footwear:

- Sneakers: No Crocs, Uggs, light up or sneakers with sounds.
- Solid-color white, black or navy socks or tights.
- In inclement weather, rain boots or snow boots are acceptable. Students should bring along their sneakers to change into once inside the school building.

Vendors for all Lower School Students for pants, shorts & skorts

FlynnO'Hara (All uniform pieces that require a school logo such as polos, sweaters, vests, cardigans, and PE uniforms can be found here.)

Target Uniform Shop (Shorts, skorts, pants)

Walmart Uniform Shop (Shorts, skorts, pants)

Land's End Uniform Shop (Polos, shorts, skorts, pants)

Old Navy Uniform Shop (Shorts, skorts, pants)

Kohls Uniform Shop(Shorts, skorts, pants)

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Parent(s) and/or legal guardian must sign that they have read and understand the 2026-2027 Lower School Student & Family Handbook, its expectations, and consequences:

[Please click on the form and sign digitally](#) or print out, sign and return the form to Ms. Keyes.

Student Name: _____

Student Grade: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian signature and date: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian signature and date: _____

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