



Altus Academy
Family and Student Handbook
Revised 06/15/2023.

Welcome

The faculty and staff would like to welcome you to Altus Academy!

About the Handbook

This handbook is an overview of Altus Academy, its philosophy, and its policies and procedures. The information contained in this handbook applies to all parents and students of Altus Academy. Altus Academy will modify this handbook from time to time; the official version can be found on the school's website. Further information about the school can be found on our website, www.altusacademy.org.

About Altus Academy

Mission and Vision

The mission of Altus Academy is to develop students with the strength of character and academic preparation to succeed in college preparatory high schools, college, and beyond.

Altus is a private, independent, nonprofit, elementary school that provides a high-quality college preparatory education for families. We aim to serve students from historical minority groups, low-income households, first-generation college graduate households, and challenging neighborhoods and communities.

The vision of Altus Academy is to create a culture of character based on the development of virtue and fundamental moral values, that will transform the student, the family, and the community.

This is accomplished by promoting the integral human development of each individual member of our learning community, fostering academic, moral, intellectual, physical, and spiritual excellence. Graduates of Altus Academy will respect and bear witness to objective truth, transcend life's challenges, and grow to serve God and others.

Altus Academy and the Catholic Faith

Altus Academy is guided by Catholic social doctrine and Christian Morality.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Altus Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin, and religious background with all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to every student at the school.

Governance of the School

Altus Academy Elementary School is a private, independent, nonprofit corporation whose Board of Directors is responsible for establishing policies, ensuring fiscal prudence, and working with

the school to develop its strategic plan.

The Leadership Team directs the day-to-day running of the school and all academic matters. This leadership of the school fosters the ongoing intellectual, human, doctrinal, and spiritual formation of the students, teachers, staff, and parents of Altus Academy.

School Information

Address: 751 S Sacramento Blvd, Chicago IL 60612

Phone Number: (312) 374-3148

School Hours Building Opens: 6:30 am, Attendance: 8:15 am

Dismissal: Monday through Friday 2:55 pm

Building Closes: 4:30 pm

School Hours and Supervision

The building opens each day at approximately 6:30 a.m. and closes at 4:30 p.m. During this time Altus Academy can provide a supervised environment for students between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. After 3:15 p.m. all students will be assigned to Homework Club until 4:15 p.m.

Contact Information Faculty and Staff email addresses are listed on the school's website, under About >> Faculty Profiles

Academics

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is critical to the school's mission. With a lack of academic integrity, a student commits an injustice against others, damages morale, and harms themselves by replacing honest effort with fraud.

An offense against academic integrity may be committed by

1. cheating on a quiz or test.
2. plagiarism or the unacknowledged borrowing of the work of an author.
3. using unauthorized aids; and/
4. copying another student's homework.

An offense against academic honesty may lead to a failing grade and parental notification. A second offense may result in lack of credit, immediate parental conference, failure for the marking period in which the offense is committed, and suspension.

Disclosure of Academic History

In order to provide the best possible education for all its students, it is imperative that the school has a complete understanding of each student's academic background. To this end, at the time formal application for admission is made, it is incumbent upon the student's family to disclose any history of receipt of special education services such as an individualized education plan (IEP), a 504 plan, or a psychological diagnosis.

Grade Appeals

If a student feels that a grade they have received in a course is inaccurate or arrived at unfairly, they should speak directly with their teacher as soon as possible. If concerns remain after speaking directly with the faculty member, the student or parent should contact the principal.

Grading Scale

A+	A+	97	4.5	Exceeds Mastery of Standards
A	A	91	4	Mastery of Standards
B+	B+	87	3.5	Mastery of Most Standards
B	B	81	3	Mastery of Certain Standards
C	C	73	2	Minimal Mastery of Standards
NP	X	0	0	Not Proficient

Homework

Students are expected to receive consistent homework assignments in each course. These assignments should complement the work done in class. Neatness, thoroughness, and originality are the characteristics that should be inherent in the student's assignments. Teachers will not accept homework that does not meet their or the school's standards of excellence.

Honor Roll Recognition

At the end of the academic year, students who have maintained a 4.0 GPA or above will be awarded a certificate recognizing their achievement.

Incomplete Grades

Coursework, which is incomplete at the end of a quarter must be made up according to the deadline set by the teacher. The maximum deadline for completion is the mid-point of the following quarter. At that time the teacher must submit a grade for the student, and any incomplete work will be counted as a zero.

Make-Up Work

Students are required to make up all work, missed quizzes and tests, as a result of any absence. A student is responsible for contacting his teacher to obtain missed assignments and arrange deadlines for submitting the work. The teacher will set these deadlines at their discretion.

Academic Promotion

Decisions to promote a student will be based on academic performance as well as recommendations from the student's teachers and leadership team as well as parental input. Parents will be notified if a student will be retained.

Academic Reports

Parents will receive a notification from the teacher if their student is in danger of failing that class. In this event, both parents and the student are encouraged to follow up with the teacher(s) to provide the student with the necessary support and guidance to improve their grade(s).

Quarter Grades

Quarter grades are a summary of the student's mastery of the material presented throughout the quarter. This summary includes evaluations of daily work, class participation, quizzes, tests, and research assignments relative to the course objectives.

Report Cards

No formal reports will be sent out. Parents and students are encouraged to continually check TeacherEase for grades.

Records Requests

Altus Academy maintains records of all students past and present. Whenever a request for previous student records is posted, Altus Academy will do the following:

- Check the missing person database for the student for whom the record is being requested.

All student records requests must go through the school president in order to be processed.

Standardized Testing

In order to objectively evaluate students' progress in core academic areas and preparedness for high school, students at Altus Academy participate in standardized testing.

Guidelines for Managing Behavior at Altus Academy

The purpose of our behavior management system is to help the students develop strong character and successful interpersonal and life skills based on the learning and practice of basic human virtues.

In practice, this means ensuring that:

- students understand our expectations and the reasons these expectations are important and are just (student buy-in);
- misbehavior is addressed immediately and appropriately.
- the natural consequences of misbehavior are experienced by the student.
- the student makes restitution as appropriate.
- the student creates a sincere resolution and a realistic plan to improve.

Each teacher and classroom should establish clear behavior expectations (consistent with overall school goals) for each situation (during class, group work, transitions, etc.).

We act how we want the students to act.

- Never raise our voices or interact while angry / speak lower and slower.
- Never move toward a student threateningly (unless to prevent injury)
- Calm, clear (private if appropriate) correction and warning for more serious behaviors, followed by Think Sheet if repeated.
- Think Sheet for serious items that disrupt the classroom are disrespectful to others, physical issues, etc.

Think Sheet procedure: student is informed of the detailed reason for Think Sheet; is given the sheet at the next appropriate time that does not disrupt class, supervised to complete; the sheet is reviewed by the principal for accuracy, completeness, and sincerity. The student and principal then review and discuss. Following review, a student should make a sincere private or public apology, as appropriate, and should be given the consequence, as appropriate. Parents should be informed that day and given a copy of the Think Sheet for review, signature, and return. Signed sheets should be given to Dr. Heybach for review and filing.

For more serious issues or repeat Think Sheets, parents should be contacted and informed. If warranted, the parent will need to come and remove the student from school or remain with the student in school. For serious ongoing behaviors, we will create a written “behavior plan” with expectations, timelines, and consequences that will be reviewed and signed by students in presence of the parent.

Any behavior requiring repeated Think Sheets or a more serious behavior intervention will be recorded in the TeacherEase Behavior Log.

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action proceeds as follows:

1. Warning or Policy Reminder
2. Appropriate consequence decided by leadership team and parents
3. In-School Suspension and Behavior Plan
4. Expulsion

Altus Academy's goal is to work closely with students and parents to uphold standards of courtesy, respect, and responsible use of freedom. Consequences decided by Altus leadership team may be issued for the following:

1. Failure to follow directions
2. Being disrespectful to an adult or student
3. Teasing or fighting
4. Failure to follow Altus Academy's uniform guidelines
5. Lying or cheating
6. Displaying conduct deemed by the teacher or administrator to be unbecoming of an Altus Academy student

Any student who fails to comply with the Altus Academy uniform policy for the week will be required to meet with the principal and will lose the privilege of dressing down on Friday. A meeting with the principal will be used for the student to reflect and develop a clear plan to improve behavioral concerns. Parents will be notified about the student's behavior and action plan.

A student who is subject to a third meeting with the principal, before the end of a quarter, will serve an in-school suspension. Altus Academy will notify parents when a suspension occurs. The student will be required to submit all missed academic work due to the suspension at the beginning of the next school day. In addition, appropriate consequences will be placed to address specific behavioral concerns. A meeting will be held with the student, parents, and the Altus Academy leadership team to discuss a behavior plan. The leadership team may suspend any student when, in their judgment, circumstances necessitate it.

Any student who demonstrates a general unwillingness or inability to abide by classroom or Altus Academy expectations is subject to expulsion. After meeting with parents, the student, and involved faculty, the leadership team will decide if expulsion is warranted. Serious, one-time, offenses may also lead to expulsion at any point if deemed necessary by the leadership team.

Bullying/Harassment Policy and Procedures

As Christian educators in the tradition of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church, we respect the dignity of each person created in the image of God. From this respect for the individual person, we are committed to shaping a school community of faith and kindness, a community in which all students are welcomed and in which bullying, or harassment is not tolerated. Bullying or harassment of another student substantially interferes with a positive educational experience. Any such behaviors should be reported immediately to an Altus Administrator. Any bullying or harassment is a serious matter and will be dealt with promptly and appropriately. Bullying is either repeated or isolated incidents of deliberate, hurtful behavior by which one student intimidates or harasses another student. "Bullying" includes "cyber-bullying" and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- (1) Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
- (2) Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
- (3) Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
- (4) Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Cyber-Bullying

"Cyber-bullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photoelectronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. "Cyber-bullying" includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section. "Cyber-bullying" also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section.

It is beyond the school's jurisdiction to regulate off-campus bullying. However, Altus Academy reserves the right to investigate these incidents and take appropriate action when such activities threaten violence against another Altus student or otherwise disrupt

the learning environment or orderly conduct of the school. Any off-campus incidents of this nature that come to the attention of Altus Academy will be reported to the parents of the involved student(s) by the principal.

Nothing in this Section is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or under Section 3 of Article 1 of the Illinois Constitution.

Application of the Policy

This policy is in force:

- While in the school building before, during, or after school hours.
- While on any bus or other vehicle as part of school activity.
- During any school function, extracurricular activity, or other school activity.

Procedures for Reporting an Act of Bullying

All members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors, are strongly encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy. Any student who believes he has been the target of bullying, or witnesses any acts of bullying, should immediately report the alleged acts to a staff member. Teachers or staff members who witness or receive individual reports of bullying are required to promptly report these to the principal. Any individual who reports an act of bullying should do so without fear of reprisal or retaliation. Please use the following contact information to promptly report bullying.

School Office: (312) 374-3148

Principal's Email: alfredo.villegas@altusacademy.org

School Response to a Report of Bullying

Each reported incident of bullying is taken seriously and will be investigated by the principal. When the alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy, the principal will consult the School Leadership Committee to determine the consequence and interventions taken to address the bullying, which may include but are not limited to, restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, and community-based services. In addition, the principal will contact the parents of the aggressor and the victim.

Parents should understand that when they bring an incident to the attention of the school, in many cases, the anonymity of their child cannot be guaranteed. Also, once an issue is brought to the attention of the principal, it is at his discretion, as to the manner in which the incident is investigated.

Consequences

Any student who violates this policy will be subject to suspension or expulsion. The length of the suspension will depend on the frequency and severity of the conduct. The student's cumulative discipline record will be a factor in determining the length of the suspension or if expulsion is warranted.

Students making false claims of bullying will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Retaliation or reprisal against any person who reports a bullying incident(s) will not be tolerated. Such actions will result in severe disciplinary procedures.

Any student who violates this policy for a second time during the school year will no longer be considered a student in good standing and will be subject to expulsion pending a review by the School Leadership Committee.

This provision will apply whether the subject of the bullying is the same student or another student.

Follow-Up Procedures

Any student suspended for violating this policy will be allowed to return to Altus after serving the suspension and having a meeting with the principal. The meeting will also include the parents of the suspended student and serve to inform all parties of the severe disciplinary consequences should such behavior be repeated.

The principal and the faculty advisors of the involved students will continue to monitor the situation.

Policy Evaluation Process

Altus Academy's school leadership will evaluate its Bullying Policy at the end of each school year to assess the outcomes and effectiveness of the policy and will update any changes in the Family and Student Handbook, which can be found on the school website.

Cumulative Discipline

In an effort to monitor student behavior throughout the school year, the administration will take into account repeated or frequent discipline problems of a minor nature. Such repeated minor disciplinary infractions that occur over the course of the school year will be considered a major infraction and subject to additional consequences, including suspension.

Off-Campus Behavior

Students' comportment in non-school-related activities can directly impact the public's image and impression of Altus Academy, both positively and negatively. Accordingly, any improper behavior by an Altus Academy student (e.g., smoking, drinking, foul language, lewd conduct,

theft, etc.) that either becomes a matter of official public record (e.g. police report, news story, etc.) or is witnessed by an Altus Academy staff member will result in disciplinary action by the school.

Prohibited Items

Any introduction of a weapon, an illegal drug, tobacco, vaping device, alcohol, or sexually explicit material will be treated as grounds for appropriate disciplinary actions. All matters regarding prohibited items will be subject to review by the Disciplinary Committee.

Parental Code of Conduct

Both the student and the student's family agree to comply with and be subject to the regulations, rules, and standards of academic and social behavior established by the school. A positive and constructive relationship between Altus Academy and its parents is essential to the fulfillment of the school's mission. Therefore, Altus Academy reserves the right to suspend, dismiss, or not re-enroll a student if the administration concludes that the actions of a parent or guardian make such a relationship difficult or impossible. The decision of the administration in this regard shall be final.

School-Sponsored Activities

Students attending school-sponsored events that are held off-campus are expected to adhere to the same standards of behavior as they would while on school grounds. Any behavior infraction at these activities (e.g., athletic competition, class overnight, field trip etc.) will be treated according to the Altus Academy discipline policy.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend school daily with ample time to go to their assigned classrooms promptly at the beginning of the school day. When a student arrives at school in the morning, they are expected to remain on the premises. Students are not to leave the building once they have been dropped off, even if they return prior to the beginning of school.

Absence In case of absence from school for illness or some other serious reason, a parent or guardian should call or email before 9:30 am and inform the principal of the student's absence. Students who are absent from school are expected to make up the work they missed as soon as they reasonably can.

(Principal Villegas: Email: alfredo.villegas@altusacademy.org Phone: 630.340.9026)

Early Dismissal No student is ever to leave school early without the permission of their parents or guardian.

If it becomes necessary for a student to be dismissed early from school, the parents should

inform the school within a reasonable time period explaining the reason for the early dismissal and the time they will be picking them up.

If a student requires early dismissal due to an illness or injury at school, the student should not text or call their parents directly. Rather, they should come to the main office to have one of the staff members place this call on their behalf.

Vacations Parents must notify the main office at least two weeks in advance if their student will be absent from school due to an extended vacation. It is important to note that teachers are not required to prepare advance assignments for absences due to vacation. It is the responsibility of the student to have a conversation with each of their teachers to discuss what they can do to remain up to date with class content and assignments.

If a student is absent from school and the school has not received proper notification of the absence, the school will contact their parents.

Tardiness

Punctuality is an essential virtue that students must learn at an early age. If a student arrives after 9 am., he should report to the main office to receive an admit slip. Likewise, punctuality throughout the day is important, which the faculty may enforce through appropriate disciplinary action.

Excused Tardiness and Absence

Parents are asked to support the school's efforts to promote the importance of punctual and regular attendance. Parents can excuse their student's tardiness, for reasons beyond his control, with a call or note to the school, and they should excuse their student's absence using the process described above. The school may conclude that not all reasons are justifiable for tardiness or absences and will work with parents to devise the appropriate response.

Frequent Tardiness and Absences

Frequent absence and habitual tardiness are detrimental to a student and their studies. If there is a problem with punctuality or attendance, a parental call or conference will be requested and after a warning, more serious consequences may result.

Unexcused Absence

If a student misses school without parental excuse, parents will be notified and appropriate actions will take place.

Communication Vehicles

Emergency Closing Notification The following are ways in which families can get up-to-date information in the event of an emergency school closing. Every effort will be made by the administration to announce a decision as soon as possible. Altus is a part of the Emergency Closing Center list online.

- A phone call, text message and/or email will be sent out.

Tardies and/or absences during severe weather will be handled in an appropriate manner.

Should the school need to close unexpectedly for any emergency (e.g., power outage, inclement weather, etc), families will be notified through TeacherEase.

Email and Voicemail

All faculty members have an email address and a voicemail extension. Every effort is made to return all calls and messages within 24 hours. It is important to recognize that these vehicles of communication are not failsafe. If a teacher does not respond to initial contact, parents are encouraged to give the faculty member the benefit of the doubt and call or write again. If no response is received after a second outreach, parents should contact the next staff member in the chain of command.

Parent Meetings

These meetings are scheduled periodically throughout the year and attendance is mandatory for all parents.

School Website

Our website, www.AltusAcademy.org, serves as the gateway through which our community can access information about our school as well as updates on institutional life.

Dress Code

Philosophy

Dress and appearance not only reflect the attitude of an individual but also influence the attitudes of others and contribute to the overall tone. Different situations warrant different appearances. The objective at Altus Academy is one of serious study and character formation and Altus Academy students dress in a manner that promotes a tone of professional neatness.

It is a requirement that all students at Altus Academy must wear a uniform. The uniform must be always worn throughout the day unless specified by the administrator or homeroom teacher.

The uniform is defined as follows:

- Blazer
- Blue collared shirt
- Altus Academy tie
- Khaki pants or shorts for boys (no skinny leg)
- Khaki pants, shorts, or skirts for girls (no skinny leg)
- Belt
- Black or brown shoes (no open-toed shoes or sandals)
- Optional navy or gray cardigan

*All items must be free of logos unless it's the Altus logo

Physical Education Uniform

Upper School students (grades 6-8) are also required to wear uniforms for Athletics.

The athletics uniform is defined as follows:

- Solid color t-shirt and shorts (no logo or prints)
- Sweatpants or joggers during the colder season
- Altus or solid navy or grey hoodie (weather permitting)
- Athletic shoes (no open-toed shoes or sandals)

*All items must be free of logos unless it's the Altus logo

Any student who does not have the athletics uniform for the day will not be allowed to participate in athletics that day.

Every morning students will be checked for uniform compliance before they are dismissed to their homerooms. The principal will be responsible for checking uniforms and borrowing of any uniform items. Homeroom teachers are not responsible for checking uniforms. Any student that is not in compliance will not be allowed to go to homeroom until they have corrected the uniform violation. A student who is not in compliance will sign out the part of the uniform they are missing for the day. At the end of the day the student will return the borrowed item. If a student is grossly out of uniform, parents will be required to bring missing uniform objects articles.

Any assistance needed with uniforms should be brought to the attention of Altus Academy.

Guidelines

Students should be aware of the following guidelines as they relate to compliance with the Altus Academy dress code:

- Students are expected to be in compliance with the dress code when on school grounds. Blazers and ties may remain in students' classrooms before school and after school but must be worn during the regular school day. All apparel must be clean and free of damage.

- Shirts will remain tucked in, collars will remain buttoned, ties will remain tied and always pulled up, and shoes will be worn properly.
- Students should place their initials or name on *all* items of clothing so that they are easily recognizable should they be misplaced or claimed by another.
- Anytime while inside the school building, the wearing of hats or the hoods of sweatshirts is strictly prohibited. “Anytime” includes before, during, or after school.

Consequences for Non-Compliance

Failure to properly comply with the dress code will result in appropriate consequences. Repeated violations may result in more serious consequences.

A limited number of dress code items are available for rent from the principal.

A note will be sent to parents if a student is in non-compliance with the uniform.

Dress Down Fridays

On Fridays, students who were in compliance with the uniform policy may choose to wear casual clothes. Casual clothes should be school appropriate. “Appropriateness” will be determined by the principal. Any student who is not dressed appropriately may be asked to change into something appropriate which may result in a phone call to a parent to bring appropriate clothing. Any Student who was not in compliance with the uniform policy during the week must wear the full assigned uniform on Friday. If a student dresses down who did not meet the requirement will be subject to a phone call for parents to bring the student their full uniform. If a parent is unavailable, the student will borrow appropriate uniform clothing from the principal and must return borrowed items at the end of the school day.

Extracurriculars

Philosophy

Extracurricular activities should obviously be fun, but Altus Academy believes they should also have an educational and formative dimension. All clubs have advisors who help the students strive to meet high expectations while learning to work well within a team environment. These activities develop the student’s skills and self-confidence while giving them the opportunity to express themselves and enjoy what they are doing.

Activities and Clubs

Altus Academy offers time during the school day to allow students to participate in clubs. All clubs are Student organized and directed. Students who wish to create a club must complete a formal process with the President of Altus. Some clubs and extracurriculars may also meet on their own after school, or only exclusively after school with permission from the President of Altus. All clubs need faculty or parent observation in order to meet.

Attendance - Field Trips and Co-Curricular Excursions

Throughout the course of the year, opportunities arise for students to take advantage of special exhibits or programs in the Chicagoland area. Other excursions are for the purpose of providing the students an opportunity to develop camaraderie among their peers.

Student conduct on any field trip is expected to be consistent with school regulations. The general school dress code applies to all school activities including field trips. The specific dress for the excursion will be determined by the teacher coordinating the event.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Cell phones and electronic devices (including, but not limited to, iPods and other music-playing devices, PDAs, laser pointers, and other signaling and communication devices) do not form part of the educational curriculum at Altus Academy. In addition, not only are cell phones and other electronic devices potentially disruptive to the learning process, they can also be used for invasion of personal rights, cyber-bullying/cyber-threats, cheating on tests and exams, and other forms of inappropriate behavior.

For the aforementioned reasons, Altus Academy suggests students do not bring these devices to school at all. Altus Academy does recognize that some parents prefer for students to bring them to school with them. If a student does bring one of these devices they are not to be used *at any time* in the school building during the school day. The “school day” is defined as the time first period starts until the time school is officially dismissed for the day. “*Any time*” includes passing periods, study halls, and on-campus lunch. In addition, the use of these devices during field trips will be determined by the activity coordinator.

A student’s cell phone or electronic device must be powered off (*not* set on vibrate or silent) and stored in the principal’s office during the school day. Students are not to carry these devices on their person, even if it is powered off.

Parents are encouraged to help their children adhere to this policy by calling the school office for any emergency situation. Altus Academy office personnel will contact the student and relay to them the message. In addition, if a student needs to make an emergency call to their parents, they should ask for permission to use the phone in the main office.

Parents are also extremely encouraged to add monitoring software to a student’s smartphone or device.

Consequences If a cell phone or electronic device is seen by faculty or staff *at any time* during the school day, it will be confiscated and delivered to the principal. Appropriate disciplinary action will be administered for cell phone violations.

The principal will contact the student’s parents via email to inform them that the phone or device has been confiscated. The phone or device will be returned only to the parents. A second offense will result in the student no longer being able to bring the device to school and additional disciplinary action for the student.

It should be noted that any serious violation of the school's code of conduct involving cell phones or electronic devices could result in additional disciplinary action beyond the ones outlined above, even for a first or second offense.

Guest Telephone Usage

Altus Academy provides a guest telephone for students to use in the case of an emergency.

Computer and Network Usage

Altus Academy network access will be used to improve student learning in a manner consistent with the educational mission of Altus Academy. Altus Academy expects legal, ethical, and efficient use of the network by all users.

Students will be provided with a Chromebook to use at school. Students are not allowed to bring in personal computers or devices. All student online activity is monitored through online tools. Students should be aware that they are responsible for all activity that is linked to their account. Prohibited uses of the Altus Academy network and computing facilities include, but are not limited to:

- Harassment of others
- Commercial, income-generating, or "for-profit" activities or product advertisement
- Vandalism of the physical equipment
- Sharing of network account and/or password
- Sending junk or chain e-mails

Students who violate these protocols will lose their privilege to access the school's network and will be referred to the principal for further disciplinary action. Any consequences to their academic work will be the responsibility of the student.

Network Security If a student notices a security problem on the network, they are expected to notify a faculty member immediately. Any user who is identified as a security risk may be denied access to the Altus Academy network. Altus Academy will make reasonable attempts to safeguard both the network and the users of the network through the use of firewalls and virus protection measures. Any attempts to circumvent these safeguards, including accessing sites blocked by the firewall, will result in denied access to the network and a referral to the principal.

Emergency Drills

As part of the school's overall emergency preparedness plan, Altus Academy holds several kinds of safety drills throughout the year – fire, tornado, lockdown, and evacuation.

During a drill, students are expected to follow the directions posted in each classroom. Students should walk quickly to the assigned area until an "all clear" signal is given. Silence is a requirement for all drills. In order to ensure that all students are accounted for, attendance is taken for each class during a drill.

Health Records

Altus Academy follows all ISBE requirements for health records.

All students must have a completed and current *Certificate of Child Health Examination Form* on file with the school prior to October 1 of each school year as required by the State of Illinois. In addition, 6th grade students are required to present proof of a recent dental exam.

All students attending school for the first time in Illinois must also present proof of a recent vision examination. This applies to students who have previously been home-schooled.

Health records of new students must be sent to Altus Academy from their previous school. Students who do not have their health records on file will not be able to attend classes after October 15.

Medication

Parental permission must be obtained if a student needs to take prescription or non-prescription medication during the day. Students are not allowed to take *any* medicine without first checking with the main office.

If a student has prescription or non-prescription medicine that needs to be taken on a regular basis, they must bring a note from his parents along with the medicine in its original container labeled with their name to the main office.

Exceptions to this rule may be granted for students who have asthma, severe allergies, or other serious medical conditions.

Students are never permitted to give medicine of any type to other students.

Altus Academy allows the self-administration and self-carry of asthma medication.

The following are needed to self-administer and self-carry:

- Signed Parent permission notification
- Copy of the Prescription

All items will be maintained in the school files and individual student files.

Altus Academy allows the self-administration and self-carry of epinephrine auto-injectors.

The following are needed to self-administer and self-carry:

- Signed Parent permission notification
- Signed Physician authorization

All items will be maintained in the school files and individual student files.

Altus Academy allows the self-administration and self-carry of diabetes medication.

The following are needed to self-administer and self-carry:

- Signed Parent permission notification

- Signed Physician diabetes care plan that also carries parent signature

All items will be maintained in the school files and individual student files.

Lunch

Students are required to bring their own lunches from home. Altus Academy does not provide any lunch items for students.

Security and Visitors

All visitors to Altus Academy must sign in at the main office. Visitors should be escorted while on school premises and should not be left unattended. Members of the public visiting the school to attend public events may proceed directly to the event venue without visiting the main office.

All exterior doors are to remain locked during the hours when classes are in session. Accordingly, entrances and exits should not be propped open during this time.

Shadow Days

Part of the recruitment cycle at Altus Academy includes inviting prospective students to spend a regular school day with students and teachers. These visits are coordinated by the Leadership Team.

Any questions, comments, or concerns about a visiting student should be discussed with the Leadership Team.

Quarterly Awards

Top Academic- Given out to the student with the highest academic in each class.

Most Improved- Given to the student who has shown the most growth (academic or character) in each class.

Highest Character- Given to the student who has shown the highest character in each class.

There will also be awards given for students who surpass 90% in Class Dojo.

Student Formation

Advisory Program

The advisory program is an essential means for accomplishing the Altus Academy mission of

building individuals of character. The personal relationships that are cultivated between faculty members and students play a key role in the academic, personal, social, and spiritual development of the students. The overarching purpose of this program is to encourage and to coach each student to strive for academic and moral excellence. As such, each advisor strives to:

- Provide a strong link between the parents and the school.
- Be a helpful guide for the formation of each student's character development.
- Help students to maximize their opportunities within the school.
- Make sure that no student "falls through the cracks" personally or academically.

At the beginning of the school year each student is assigned an advisor who is an Altus Academy faculty member. Advisors engage their advisees in group conversations every Friday. However, students should feel comfortable initiating a conversation with his advisor at any time, as their advisor is to be seen as an ally in their efforts to navigate, not only academic life at Altus Academy, but also their own personal growth and development.

Conclusion

While this handbook is intended to serve as the central source for the common practices and procedures of Altus Academy, its purpose is not to make the students themselves less accountable for the information that they should be sharing with their parents on a regular basis. Rather, fathers and mothers alike are encouraged to help their students be aware of deadlines, communicate with their family important information given to them by the school, and personally resolve conflicts that will inevitably arise from time to time with their teachers and peers. Ultimately, these kinds of behaviors reflect both a spirit of ownership on the part of the student with respect to their education.