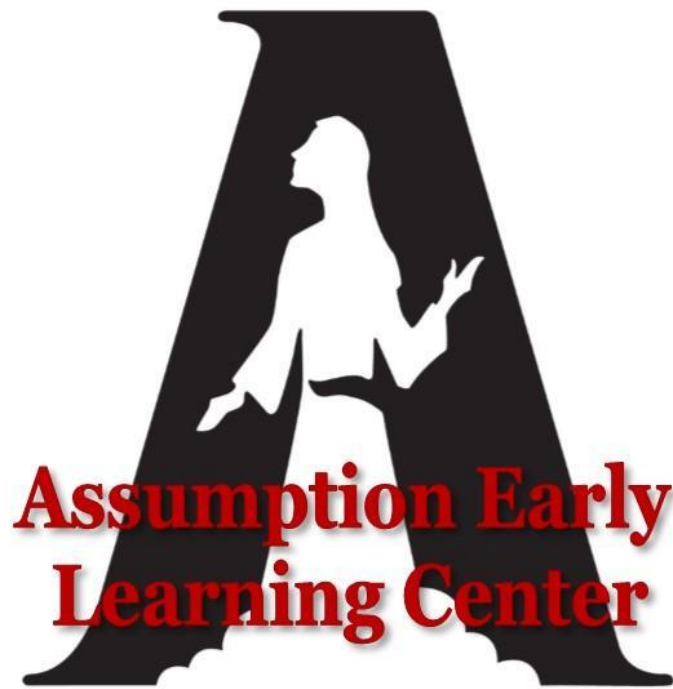




AELC Family Handbook

This Family Handbook contains established policies and procedures for the 2024-25 school year. Since it is not possible for a handbook to address every situation that may arise during a school year, the school administration reserves the right to amend or revoke the policies and procedures in this handbook at any time as circumstances may require. When changes are made to the handbook, parents and students will be informed of the change in writing in a timely manner, and this will include a statement about when the change will take effect.

Revised 8/2024

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ASSUMPTION EARLY LEARNING CENTER PHILOSOPHY

We believe that all children will reach their full potential by focusing on individual learning and creativity through developmental benchmarks and play based curriculum. We support the growth of problem solving, critical thinking, reasoning, and social-emotional development through daily academics, self-guided centers, and large and small group activities. Our dedicated and loving Christian environment provides children with age-appropriate lessons that teach the message of Jesus and fosters their role within our community.

Our goal is to support children and families as lifelong learners in a faith based community. Assumption Early Learning Center looks forward to providing a safe place where your child's mind will grow daily in a developmentally appropriate learning and spiritual environment. Our handbook provides you with important information about our program, policies, and procedures. Please keep this book for your reference and contact us with any questions you may have regarding these policies.

ASSUMPTION SCHOOL MISSION/VISION/GOAL/VALUES/ WITNESS

Mission: To grow in love of God and neighbor while developing each child's potential through a safe and nurturing Catholic, child-centered environment.

Vision: Rooted in faith, growing in grace.

Goal: Children of faith prepared for the world

Core Values

1. Living the Catholic faith
2. Engaging and comprehensive academics
3. Developing the whole child
4. Fostering community spirit

[Christian Witness Statement](#) - Must be completed prior to enrollment.

For Those Whose Children Attend Catholic Education Programs:

One of the supreme gifts of marriage is bringing forth new life. God entrusts children to parents who have a primary right and duty to educate their children in the practice of their faith. Parents carry out this responsibility by creating a home full of love, forgiveness, respect, and fidelity. The family is the community in which, from childhood, one honors God and learns moral values.

In the rite of the sacrament of Baptism, parents receive the call from God to evangelize their children, as here summarized:

“You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training him (her) in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring him (her) up to keep God’s commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor... You will be the first teachers of your child in the ways of the faith. May you be also the best of teachers, bearing witness to the faith by what you say and do, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

No wonder, then, that the Church understands the home to be the domestic Church. It is in the intimate environment of the family that parents are, by word and example, the first heralds of the faith with respect to their children. This environment is enhanced and deepened through the parish Eucharistic community that is the heart of the spiritual life for Christian families. Catholic schools and parish religious education programs are in partnership with the family in proclaiming and witnessing to the person and life of Jesus Christ. They assist parents in fulfilling their responsibility as the primary religious educators of their children.

Aware, then, of the dignity of this holy parental call, and with a reverent awe for that responsibility which is mine, I commit myself to be, in word and deed, the first and best teacher of my children in the faith. Practically, this means I should:

- Regularly participate in the Sunday Eucharist [if not Catholic, regularly participate in worship and prayer] with my family.
- Commit to speak more with my children about God and to include prayer in our daily home life.
- Participate in and cooperate with School programs that enable me as a parent to take an active role in the religious education of my children, including sacramental preparation of Catholic children.
- Support the moral and social teaching of the Catholic Church to ensure consistency between home and school.
- Teach my children by word and example to have a love and concern for the needs of others.
- Meet my financial responsibilities in supporting the Catholic school.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Assumption School & Early Learning Center
4709 Mattis Road
St. Louis, MO 63128
(314) 487-6520

AELC Hours: 7:00 am to 5:30 pm
<https://assumptionstl.org/about-the-aelc>
<http://www.assumptionstl.org/school>

Assumption Early Learning Center is an exempt child care program through the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and is not state licensed. AELC is accredited by the Missouri Nonpublic School Accrediting Association.

CALENDAR

The school calendar can be viewed at <https://assumptionstl.org/elc-calendar> or [AELC Calendar 2024-2025](#)
The calendar indicates when the center is closed and dates of center family events. There will not be any reduction in tuition for days AELC is closed including staff development, parent-teacher conferences, holidays, or cancellation of school such as inclement weather and similar circumstances.

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

Pastor - Father Thomas Keller

The Pastor is the chief administrator and is advised by the Parish Council and the School Board.

Principal - Mrs. Katie Koberlein

The principal is the administrator of the school and reports to the pastor. The principal implements Archdiocesan and School Board policies through procedures, rules, and regulations.

Early Learning Center Director - Ms. Andrea Boeser

The AELC Director is the administrator of the Early Learning Center and summer camp program.

Early Learning Center Coordinator - Mrs. Lynsey Tripp

AELC Coordinator supports the AELC director.

Director of Religious Education - Ms. Valerie Stringer

The DRE supports both schools in religious education and preparation of sacraments.

Office Manager - Mrs. Diane Higgins

The office manager oversees registration and tuition.

School Administrative Assistants - Mrs. Jill Love and Ms. Laura Vandeven

The administrative assistants act as the point of communication for the school office.

School Nurse - Mrs. Michele Emmon

The nurse serves during the school year to all nursing and health policies as directed by the Archdiocese.

ASSUMPTION HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Every parent is a member of the Home and School Association. Officers include President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Volunteer Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator Elect, Communications Officer, and AELC representative. Activities include fundraisers, hospitality social events, coordinating volunteers, and more. Contact an officer or the school office to get more involved.

Sara Geringer	President	Krista Buck	President Elect
Jessica Greaves	Treasurer	Michelle Westerman	Secretary
Amy Eichhorn	Communication Coordinator	Beth Willett	AELC Rep
Suzanne Van de Ven	Volunteer Coordinator	Julie Bachmann	School Rep K-2nd
Christina Schulze	Communication Coordinator Elect	Kyla Henderson	School Rep 3rd-5th
Allison Sandweg	Volunteer Coordinator Elect	Colleen Fernandez	School Rep 6th-8th

ADJUSTMENT TO SCHOOL

Going to school for the first time can be difficult for some children, where others may adjust with ease. Please allow for enough time to help your child make the adjustment from home and to his/her new environment. Never “sneak out” and always say “goodbye” reassuring your child when you will be back to pick him/her up. However, we do ask that parents not linger in the hallway or classroom at drop off because this can cause more anxiety for children. Parents are not allowed in bathrooms when other children are present.

Our drop off procedure is designed to help with this transition by having classroom teachers at the main door at 7:00 am, 7:30 am, and 8:00 am. Parents should walk their child in the building to drop off their child and say goodbye. You can expect to see tears the first few days or weeks which is completely normal. A quick goodbye is less traumatic, even through tears. If drop off is a struggle, feel free to message teachers to check how your child is 15 minutes after drop off. By then most children are happily playing with their friends. Our staff is always available to assist you, and they are aware of techniques which will alleviate anxieties. When parents are relaxed, children will read into these emotions and will react accordingly.

When a child enters our program, it is imperative for us to get to know the parents, as well as the child. We would like to familiarize ourselves with the personal manner in which you interact with your child. Please be sure to read the handbook carefully and ask the school office or teacher if you have any questions. All required paperwork needs to be completed prior to the child’s first day at AELC.

ATTENDANCE

AELC uses Brightwheel for attendance as well as parent communication. Your child will be checked in when he/she arrives in the building and checked out when a parent or approved pick up arrives back at school. Children should be checked for signs of illness before leaving home. If your child will be absent for the day, a Brightwheel message needs to be sent to the teacher.

Each class has their own schedule. Out of respect for the classroom teacher and daily schedule and to ensure children are able to participate in all classroom activities, we ask for Infants and Toddlers to be at school by 8:30 am. Since Preschool and PreK participate in special areas (PE, Music, Atrium, and Library) each week, we ask for those children to arrive by 7:45 am when APS is in session. Children who arrive after a special area class has started will not be able to participate that day and will be supervised in the classroom by a teacher.

Preschool and PreK participate in Mass on Wednesday mornings. In order to ensure all classes are in church on time, these children need to be present at school by 7:40 am. This will give the children enough time to put away belongings and go to the bathroom before heading to church for 8:00 am Mass. **Since all Preschool and PreK staff will be in Mass with their class, children need to arrive on Wednesday either by 7:40 am or after Mass is over at 8:45 am.** In order to respect the sanctity of Mass, children cannot be dropped off at church; however parents can choose to stay with their children at the back of church until Mass is over.

REGISTRATION

Any family interested in the AELC will first be invited to schedule a tour of the school. Out of respect for our current families, we host scheduled tours in the mornings to avoid disruption during naptime. All registration materials are available on the AELC webpage at <https://assumptionstl.org/aclc-registration>.

Every January, both the AELC and Parish School hosts an Open House during Catholic School Week.

VISITING THE SCHOOL

The school building doors are locked at all times. Parents and visitors must ring the bell located by the main doors and identify themselves in order to enter the school building. All parents, volunteers, and visitors must report directly to the school office when entering the school building, sign in, and obtain a Visitor Badge while in the school building. Visitors must sign out when leaving the school. All volunteers must be in compliance with the [Archdiocese of St. Louis Safe Environment Program](#). Volunteers must schedule the days and times they will help with either the director or coordinator. No pets are allowed in the school building.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

The AELC is open daily from 7:00 am to 5:30 pm. Parents will use the parking spaces in front of the school building for drop-off and pick-up. Please keep your children close to you, preferably holding hands, when you cross the parking lot to ensure the safety of all. Children are dropped off to a teacher at the designated drop off times of 7:00 am, 7:30 am, and 8:00 am. Outside of those posted times, it is the parents responsibility to take their child to the classroom or playground. Parents will come inside school to pick up and have the opportunity to speak to the teacher and check your child's cubby and/or get their backpacks. Classrooms are usually outside or in the gym after 4:00 pm.

Never leave children unattended in your car. If you need assistance, contact the office. Leaving your child unattended in a car is considered child abuse and we are obligated by law to contact the local policet.

SAFETY/PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Children will be released from school only to the child's custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) or individuals listed on the child's enrollment form as authorized to pick up the child when a message is sent through Brightwheel confirming the change in pick up. Any changes or additions to the authorization list must be made through our office in writing. At any time, you and/or the people on the authorized list may be asked to provide picture identification upon picking up your child. Each authorized person must have a picture in Brighwheel, including parents. This policy is strictly for the safety of your children.

In the event that a court ordered legal custody situation develops, whereby a parent is not allowed to pick-up the child/children without consent, we require that original court documents be submitted to the office verifying legal custody. The director will review this information and a copy of the information will be placed in the child's file. Once reviewed and approved, pertinent information will be relayed to appropriate personnel at school. All information will be kept confidential.

Staff will not release a child to any person who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs or who appears incapable of transporting that child home safely. Another authorized person will be contacted to pick up your child. If any emergency arises, please notify the school office. Authorization by phone should be done in emergencies only and will be asked to show identification.

SEPARATED OR DIVORCED PARENTS

The center will honor all legal documents regarding child custody and parental visitation. If one parent is to have limited access to the child, we must have a copy of the custody ruling on file in the office. The center will not intercede on behalf of one parent if the custody decision has not been specifically defined. We cannot refuse a parent the right to take a child from the center unless that parent has legally been denied permission to do so. In case of emergency, both parents will be notified. The custodial parent will receive the first call. Responsibility for tuition must be determined between the parents. The center will not become involved with requesting payment from an ex-spouse.

Custody Documents—Parenting Plan

If a custody agreement or parenting plan exists for your children, the AELC director needs current copies of the court documents for the protection of your children and so school personnel can effectively and correctly release the children. The only section needed by the office is the parenting plan.

PARENT TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Ongoing communication is encouraged at all times. Please do not hesitate to contact your classroom teacher or the director whenever you have a question or concern, or need information.

Brightwheel

The main communication tool between AELC and parents is Brightwheel. All families are set up with a Brightwheel account prior to the child's first day. Once registered, parents can edit information, add pictures for authorized pickups, send messages to teachers, and see your child's day up close with pictures, anecdotes, and day to day occurrences. The program works as an app on your phone or on your computer.

Facebook

Our center has its own private [Facebook Page for AELC](#) families only (AELC Community Parent Page). You must request to join and will be approved by our office staff. Each classroom also has a private Facebook page and teachers will send more information for how to join.

Parent Teacher Conferences

AELC will close one day each semester in order for parents to have the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher(s) in the Fall and Spring. Teachers will review student's developmental and academic progress during these conferences. Parents are welcome to reach out at any time to set up a meeting with teachers and/or the director to discuss any questions or concerns.

Change in Information

In the event of an emergency we need to be able to contact you at any time. Any changes in personal data on your child's registration form (i.e. address, phone numbers, marital status, authorized/emergency persons, medications, etc.) must be provided in writing or via email to the office. In order for everyone to have accurate records, we will make changes to the child's permanent file and pass it to the classroom teachers.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Photographs and videos will be taken during the school year assisting with individual and class experiences along with documentation of a child's work. Photographs and videos may also be taken during the year for release to the media, for the school website and parish web site. A [Media Authorization Form](#) form must be completed each year providing permissions.

MANDATED REPORTING

School staff members such as principals/directors, teachers, social workers, counselors, and school nurses are considered mandated reporters and by Missouri law are to report with reasonable cause any suspicious injury, illness or abuse found on or reported by a student. No supervisor shall impede on the reporting of suspected abuse, nor shall any repercussions occur as a result of mandated reporting. (MO law section 210.115)

TEACHERS & STAFF

Our teachers have appropriate degrees, certifications, and training. Every teacher is selected for his or her commitment to early childhood education and working with children and families. Teachers are responsible for writing and implementing developmentally appropriate lesson plans, observing and evaluating each child's progress, and working as a team to provide a quality program to our families.

AELC is committed to professional development for all staff members. Ongoing training is provided to staff through classes, workshops, and seminars in all phases of child development and early childhood education. In order to provide this opportunity for professional growth, AELC will close two full days in August and dismiss early at 12:30 pm six days during the school year.

STAFF-CHILD RATIOS

- 1 to 4 teacher/child ratio for infants/toddlers up to the age of 24 months will be maintained or exceeded.
- 1 to 8 teacher/child ratio for toddlers from 24-26 months old will be maintained or exceeded.
- 1 to 10 teacher/child ratio for children aged 3-5 years old will be maintained or exceeded.
- Volunteers may also be working in the classrooms, but do not count into the ratio.

DAILY SCHEDULE

We believe that children learn through discovering play and a variety of activities to expand imagination & creativity. Each day includes developmentally appropriate time in centers, small and large group activities, meals, indoor and outdoor play, and nap or rest time. Children are encouraged, but never forced, to participate in all activities. Short walks may be added to our weekly activities around the Assumption campus. All teachers will take cell phones and emergency backpacks to ensure the safety of all children when away from school.

Naptime

Accreditation requires our children to have a rest period during the course of their day. All infant and young toddler schedules are defined by parents and teachers. Other classrooms will take their nap from approximately 12:30/1:00 pm until 2:30/3:00 pm. All children are awake by 3:00 pm so that they can fall asleep for bedtime at an appropriate time. During naptime, the environment is quiet, uninterrupted with the lights off and soft music plays. Parents are responsible for providing a blanket or any other items to assist their child to be comfortable during naptime.

Food & Nutrition

Children will receive two snacks and lunch every day. Breakfast is not provided and needs to be consumed prior to entering the building. All snacks and meals are nutritious and will follow the Missouri Department of Health Nutrition Standards. Calories, cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrates, protein, fat, fiber, vitamin A and vitamin C levels are all dictated based upon the age of the child. School menus are analyzed to assure the daily allowance of the guidelines are strictly followed. We will serve a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, grains, and proteins each day. Children will eat lunch between 11:00 am and 12:00 pm depending on their age and classroom schedule. Please be sure your child's teacher is aware of any concerns you have with certain foods relating to your child's likes and dislikes.

Allergies: For the health and safety of all children, we are a peanut free school. No snacks or meals provided will contain peanuts or prepared on a peanut processing plant.

DRESS CODE/SUPPLIES/ITEMS FROM HOME

There is no formal dress code for the Early Learning Center. However, we encourage you to dress your child appropriately for daily indoor and outdoor activities. Remember that children are encouraged to participate in all activities (including daily art projects), so please do not dress them in anything that you do not want to get dirty. In order to be safe, all children MUST wear tennis shoes to school. Please remember to dress your child for cold days with coats, hats and gloves. We will go outside if the weather is between 32-95 degrees. During summer, please bring sunscreen and a hat for your child.

Personal Items Needed

Because accidents do happen, we ask that you provide at least one complete change of clothing, which will be kept in your child's classroom. These items need to be marked with his/her first and last name. Be sure to check these items seasonally for fit and comfort.

Classroom Supplies

Each year you will be asked to bring school supplies. Pending leftovers from the previous school year, items may include paper towels, tissues, markers, wet wipes, etc.

Toys from Home

We discourage children from bringing toys or items from home. It is difficult to keep track of these items and we do not want them to get lost or broken. If a toy does show up at school we will send it home with the parent. We appreciate your cooperation.

TOILET TRAINING POLICY

In order to make toilet training a positive experience for you and your child, we have incorporated a plan to assist in achieving this goal. We have devised an agreement for the parent and the classroom teacher to follow. Parents interested in starting the toilet training process need to speak to their classroom teacher to sign and begin the agreement. A copy of the agreement can be found here: [📄 AELC Toilet Training Agreement](#) .

CURRICULUM

Each classroom offers a developmentally appropriate classroom environment with placing emphasis on: social-emotional, motor, physical, language, and literacy development along with activities to promote religion, math, science and engineering, music, and creative play. Additionally, Preschool and PreK children participate in Mass, PE, Music, Atrium and Library each week. Children receive a chronological student portfolio to show their progress and mastery of the goals and expectations for each age.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Developmental Screening

Each child will be evaluated two times per year with the Brigance screening by the coordinator and/or other AELC faculty. The test takes about 10 minutes and provides information for the classroom teacher and parent about the progress of their child. AELC may also screen children using the ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE. Parents who do not want their child to be screened must notify the center via writing by September 1st of each year.

Observations and Portfolios

Teachers will observe and assess children during the school year by taking anecdotal notes based on curriculum goals and indicators that are developmentally appropriate for each child. Through these observations and assessments, parents will be provided the best possible, up-to-date information about their child. Teachers find it helpful when parents share their observations about a child's activities at home.

A portfolio will be kept of children's work during the school year. This will serve as a record of the child's abilities and accomplishments. Each teacher has developed their own style with their portfolios. Portfolios may include developmentally appropriate checklists and screenings, children's work samples, and teacher observations. This portfolio will be kept for children the whole time they are enrolled in our program and be given to parents when children leave the program.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS/PARTIES/TREAT POLICY

We love to celebrate birthdays at our center and each child is celebrated on their special day. In order to offer an equitable school environment and due to several food allergies, we do not allow treats or food brought to school. If you are planning a party away from school, please keep in mind that invitations may not be given out at school unless everyone in the class is invited. Individual classrooms may celebrate holidays within the context of a normal day however AELC does not have classroom parties like the K-8 grades.

CLEANING

The center is cleaned each evening after school hours. The classroom teacher utilizes a three step procedure for sanitizing the classroom equipment and materials. These procedures are completed daily or weekly depending on the usage and age of the children. The maintenance for the center is completed by the parish maintenance staff. All non-teaching employees complete the same criminal record checks and safe environment as mandated by the [Archdiocese of St. Louis Safe Environment Program](#).

SPECIAL NEEDS

All children exhibiting signs of a possible developmental delay or disabling condition in the areas of speech, language, hearing or vision, cognition, behavior, fine and gross motor will be handled with the utmost sensitivity. Documentation (observation, interview, screenings) of all behaviors will be kept by the classroom teacher to use as a tool in communication with parents and other special education specialists. All documentation and information about any child must have written consent from the parents before sharing with any service provider. All children will be referred to their corresponding school district to obtain information about qualification for classroom or community based services.

Children in the center who have special needs will be serviced on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). The IEP/IFSP will be developed by a special education provider, director, classroom teacher and the child's parents in order to make appropriate decisions regarding the services needed. The IEP/IFSP will be used as a plan of action to meet the needs of the child for placement in the program. Open communication between the special education provider, Assumption center staff and the parents is encouraged. Special services designed in the IEP/IFSP will be delivered within the child's daily routine and administered by the child's classroom teacher. A center-based IEP/IFSP may also be used with a child who has not been diagnosed with a disability and may need some modifications to their school environment.

Due to our private school status, we do not have early childhood special education professional staff to assist with implementation of any special educational plans. If your child has an IEP or IFSP we can help make arrangements to receive services here at AELC.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS REFERRALS

ADA Information Line.....	800-514-0301
Center for Parent Information and Resources.....	800-322-3722
Missouri First Steps.....	866-583-2392
PS Kids, LLC Positive Support for Kids.....	314-845-7751
United 4 Children.....	314-531-1412

School District Contact Numbers:

Affton School District ECE/PAT.....	314-633-5988
Fox School District ECE/PAT.....	636-282-5184
Lindbergh School District ECE/PAT.....	314-729-2434
Mehlville School District ECE/PAT.....	314-467-5300
Rockwood School District ECE/PAT.....	636-891-6200

Please go to the website below for more information

<https://dese.mo.gov/childhood/quality-programs/preschool-programs/early-childhood-special-education>

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Assumption Early Learning Center has made preparations to deal effectively with emergency situations that should occur in or around school while the center is open. We will practice our emergency exit procedures and safety plans each month to ensure that the staff and the children are ready if an emergency should arise. Records of these drills are kept on file in the AELC office.

Please be sure to complete your child's emergency information and inform the office of any changes.

Emergency Contact Information

Parents/ Guardians are required to complete an [Emergency Care Procedure](#) form annually. Should an emergency involving a student occur, the Emergency Care Procedure Form is the school's guide for making contact with a parent/guardian, physician or close relative/friend. The information on the form also instructs the school on the procedures for immediate first aid care for the student as well as information regarding allergies and medical conditions (pre-existing, on-going or newly diagnosed). It is the legal responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure that the school has correct and updated information (address, phone numbers and medical information) for each student. If the school is unable to contact a parent/guardian due to incorrect, inaccurate or out of date emergency information, the incident will be reported.

FAMILY EVENTS

Throughout the year, we will have planned events for our families. These events are paid for with your registration. At these events, all siblings are invited and encouraged to participate. We will give you advance notice of each event, noting them on your yearly school calendar and on our webpage.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We know that our parents are great resources! We hope that you can volunteer in our classrooms in the same capacity. It is appropriate for young children to experience a variety of activities at their center. Throughout the year, teachers will schedule guests and/or parents to come talk with our children about specific topics of interest.

In the past we have had a fireman, a policeman, a dentist and more come in and talk with the children. We encourage you as a parent to volunteer your time and expand on the classroom experience. We encourage you to share your talents with us with such activities as becoming a room parent, reading with a small group of children, doing an art activity with your child, attending walking field trips, sharing a special hobby or skill or anything else you might think of! Please talk with your child's teacher about how you can be an asset to your child's classroom.

All parent volunteers will need to complete the Archdiocese Safe Environment required per the Archdiocese. Please contact the office for more detailed information or go to the website at [Archdiocese of St. Louis Safe Environment Program](#).

FINANCES

Families interested in the center will pay a non-refundable registration fee and deposit per child. This will hold your space in the program. Deposits are refundable by mail when a child exits the program, with proper notification, or graduates and tuition is paid in full. If you choose to remove your child from our program, you must give the director a 2 week written notice to receive your deposit. Once tuition is paid in full, the deposit is sent by check to the address listed on file. Tuition is withdrawn every month on the 1st and 15th of the month.

In order for us to be fiscally responsible to the church, all accounts must be paid in full each month. No balance should be carried over to the next. If you are having financial difficulties, please see the director. If delinquencies continue, children will lose their place in the program without any refunds.

CHILD CARE INCOME TAX CREDIT

Many parents may be able to claim a credit against their federal income tax for a portion of the fees paid to AELC. The income tax credit is generally available to taxpayers if the child care expense is incurred to enable parents to work, or look for work. There are various limitations and restrictions on the amount of the credit, which can be claimed on your federal income tax return. If you have any questions concerning whether or not you might qualify for this tax credit, please consult your tax advisor or the internal revenue service. Please visit the website for more information: <https://www.irs.gov/publications/p503>. Some parents may be eligible for a Dependent Care FSA through their employer. For more information or see if you qualify for this benefit, contact your employer.

STANDARD OF BEHAVIOR

Children of Assumption Early Learning Center are expected to behave in a Christian and courteous manner treating each other and the staff with respect to keep discipline to a minimum. We encourage children to use their words to express their feelings and respect the feelings of others; this in turn will assist in helping children succeed in developing problem solving skills. If a discipline problem occurs, children will first be redirected from the adverse behavior. If the behavior persists, the child will be removed from the area, asked by the classroom teacher to take a break to cool down and they will discuss the problem afterwards.

Other disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to: teacher-child-director conference, parent-teacher-director meeting, or including the pastor in the conference. If necessary and appropriate, children may be dismissed from the program. The director will determine the seriousness of the offense and the corresponding disciplinary action will be taken.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health Room personnel will follow the guidelines set forth by the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

Medical information is collected and maintained on each student. Communications about student health concerns must come directly to the school office. All medical information is maintained in a secure area separate from school educational records in order to maximize confidentiality. Included are:

- a medical history (annually updated) and/or physical form (from Archdiocesan Policy 4401.3)
- a cumulative health record with all mandatory immunization dates
- a completed family information form (annually updated) (from Archdiocesan Policy 4401.2)
- Medication (see below)
- A physician's note is required if it becomes necessary for a student to limit physical activity during the school day, PE, or at recess. A release form indicating that the student may resume normal activity will also be required.

Catholic Schools of the St. Louis Archdiocese will follow the recommended policies and procedures on communicable diseases established by the Missouri Department of Health. (Archdiocesan Policy 4401.1)

The Missouri Department of Health regulations are followed concerning communicable disease/contagious conditions and the child's return to school. Chickenpox, head lice and conjunctivitis (pink eye) are the most commonly reported. If your child contracts these or any contagious conditions, notify the school office.

All children will be required to have their current immunizations on file **before** they can start school. Children will not be allowed to start the program unless the file is complete. If your child becomes ill or contracts a contagious illness while at school, the nurse or teacher will notify you immediately. We will also inform you of any possible exposure to any communicable diseases. We will provide a quiet area for your child to rest until you can arrive. ***Once a parent or guardian has been called, your child must be picked-up within 90 minutes.***

If your child is ill, they must be fever free without the aid of medication (fever being 100.4 degrees or more when taken under the arm) for at least 24 hours before they can return to school. If your child has 3 or more episodes of diarrhea, he or she will be sent home and may not return until the condition has stabilized. We reserve the right to send any child home if we feel they are showing signs of an illness or contagious disease, are not able to participate in class, are not interested in eating or drinking, or have a rash with unknown cause. A doctor's note may be required for the student to return to school. Guidelines recommended by the CDC, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services as well as American Academy of Pediatrics are followed regarding communicable diseases and retention/absences from school. ***There will not be any reduction in tuition due to absences or illnesses.***

The following symptoms could indicate a contagious disease:

Fever, Pain, Extreme Fatigue, Nausea or Vomiting, Diarrhea,
Skin Eruptions or Open Sores, Rash of Unknown Origin, Weeping Rash,
Reddened Draining or Weeping Eyes,
Constant Coughing, Difficulty Breathing, Swelling or Redness of Throat,
Disinterest in Play, Refusing to Eat or Drink, Continuous Crying/ Fussiness

The nurse and staff cannot administer any prescription or non-prescription medication without the provided release form signed by the child's parent and child's pediatrician. All prescribed medications need to be in the original bottle with the child's name and prescription label present. Over the counter medication must be in new, unopened packaging. Any medications administered will be recorded and kept on file.

In the event that a child is injured, an accident report will be filled out by a staff member, parents will be notified and asked to sign the report. Accident reports will be kept on file. First aid care will be provided by the school nurse or trained staff member. If an injury requires further treatment and a child needs to go to the hospital, parents will be notified immediately. If the parent can not be reached, we will attempt to contact the next available person on the emergency list. We will follow the directive of the Emergency Medical Service Professional but if able, we will take your child to the hospital you requested on the enrollment form. A staff member will accompany your child to the hospital.

Medication that is to be kept at school for emergency use only (inhalers for asthma, Epi-pens for food allergies or bee stings, etc.) must include special instructions from the doctor ie. Asthma, Food Allergy, Seizure, or Diabetic Action Plans. All medications listed on the Action Plan need to be provided to the school by the parents and labeled with the student's name. Such medications include prescription Epinephrine Pen and over the counter Benadryl. Instructions listed on Action Plans are directives from the pediatrician or allergist for the school nurse or a staff member to follow.

Students with Significant Medical Conditions

A student enrolled in a Catholic school who has a significant or potentially life threatening medical condition may require special consideration. Such medical conditions include but are not limited to food allergies, seizures, diabetes, etc. Schools should take steps to obtain the information necessary to understand the condition, its manifestations in the school setting, and specific adjustments or plans for an emergency response which may be necessary in order to provide the student with a healthy and safe environment. Doctor's written instructions include Medical Action Plans. These Action Plans are to be followed by the school nurse or trained staff personnel (Archdiocesan Policy 4401.6)

Parents should work with the school staff regarding accommodations. A meeting will be held between the necessary/trained staff members and parents prior to the attendance of the student. During this meeting, items to be discussed include the student's medical history, the physician's Action Plan, medications that will be stored at school, and the guidelines followed in the case of an emergency. School nurses are able to contact the pediatrician or health care provider listed on Emergency Action Plans when questions regarding student care arise. Collaboration between the Health Care Provider and the School Nurse are necessary to maintain the health of the student while at school.

Illness or Injury at School

(Archdiocesan Policy 4401.21) All students with health concerns, illness or injury will be seen by the school nurse or trained office staff as they arrive in the health room. Those requiring the most immediate attention will be assessed first. First aid will be administered in the case of emergency.

The family information form indicating parents'/guardians' wishes regarding physical/medical emergency contact information will be utilized. Parents will be contacted if:

- A student has sustained a head injury that was severe enough to cause a bump, laceration or other distinguishing mark.
- Students require immediate emergency attention (e.g. broken bone, stitches)
- Students make frequent trips to the health room without obvious signs of illnesses (fever, vomiting, etc)
- A student was injured by another student (bitting, hitting)
- A student has an illness that requires being sent home

General Guidelines for Sending/Keeping an Ill Student Home

- Fever (>100.4) or 1 or 2 degrees above student's normal temperature and/or ill appearing
- Difficulty breathing (esp asthmatic not relieved with medication)
- Fatigue or inability to participate in class
- Rash of unclear cause that has not been evaluated by a physician
- Sore throat with fever
- Redness to one or both eyes (unless Doctor's note of seasonal allergies is on file), eye drainage (clear or yellow), itching to eyes, history of crusting on lashes at waking
- Vomiting at school
- Diarrhea of 3 episodes
- Mouth sores with inability to control saliva or excessive drooling
- Communicable disease

Guidelines for Returning to School

Students must be fever-free without the aid of medication and/or not vomited for 24 hours before returning to school. In some cases a doctor's note may be required for their return to school.

Medication and Personal Care Items

Prescribed Medications-the following procedures are in place:

1. The direct order/consent of a licensed physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner must be signed and properly filed with the school. The current prescription label on the medication container may serve as a physician's order. A written physician's note can be faxed or mailed to the school.
2. Written consent by the parent/guardian on the Parental Consent for Medication Administration form.
3. The medication in the original unopened container or packaging.
4. Proper training of personnel on medication administration (from Archdiocesan Policy 4401.4)

Emergency Medications- Food Allergy, Asthma, Seizure, Diabetic, etc Action Plans must be provided with prescribed medications. Any over the counter medications listed on Action Plans must be provided by the parents. Medications will be kept in the nurse office with the exception of the AELC whereas teachers will carry these emergency medications in their emergency backpacks. Inhalers will be kept in the nurse office and are not to be carried around by the student. Emergency Care Procedure forms are to be completed annually by parents for each student or family enrolled.

Over the Counter Medications- Any medications provided by the parents must be in original, unopened packaging. The school nurse or trained staff member are able to administer only the recommended dosage provided on the packaging. If a different dosage is needed, a doctor's note will be required. Items such as cough drops must have Parental Consent for Medication Administration form on file and are not to be carried around by the student. Students are allowed to carry chapstick. They are not to share their Chapstick with other students. Vaseline is available in the health room as an alternative.

Immunizations

Upon acceptance and prior to the start of school, students must have all immunizations on file as required by Missouri State Law. All students at any grade level not in compliance with state regulations for immunizations will be referred to the principal. Admittance to school may be refused.

Physical Exams

A physical examination by the pediatrician or family physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner is required for all new students. Any physical examination completed within the calendar year or past 6 months will be accepted.

Health Screenings including Vision and Hearing will be conducted at school annually for children aged 3 years and older. Parents are notified if problems are observed during any of these tests and referrals will be made.

Student Insurance

Contact the school for information regarding student accident insurance.

SAFETY DRILLS

The Emergency Preparedness Plan is reviewed annually to provide for the safety and security of students and staff in the event of a natural disaster or other extraordinary situation. (APS Policy 3.1)

At various times during the school year the principal will conduct drills that will help evacuate the building and take cover in the classroom or hallway, depending on the danger and the response needed according to our Emergency Preparedness Plan and Procedures. These may include but are not limited to:

- Fire Drill (Evacuation Drill)
- Tornado Drill
- Earthquake Drill
- Intruder/Shelter In Place Drill
- Reverse Evacuation Drill

In the case of emergency, the following procedures are in place for parents:

- Be certain that your Family Information Form is accurate and current in Brightwheel..
- Tell child(ren) the name of the emergency contact person (on the Family Information Form) in case you are unavailable.
- Do not telephone the school; check Brightwheel. It is essential that the telephone system be available for emergency communications.
- **DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.** It may be necessary to keep the streets and parking lot clear for emergency vehicles. If evacuation is required, students may be transported to a location away from the school. You will be notified of any necessary procedures through Brightwheel messages.
- Talk to your children and emphasize how important it is for them to follow directions from their teachers and school administration during any emergency.
- Support and reinforce the emergency procedure information you receive from the school. You may receive updates about our safety procedures from time to time.
- An earthquake would pose the most chaos with possible loss of communication, including cell phones. The staff (wearing green vests) are organized into response teams, are prepared to deal with circumstances until emergency personnel arrive, and are in charge until that time.

Once emergency personnel arrive, they are in charge and everyone will follow their directions.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS CONDUCT /ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Communications Equipment at Assumption School is utilized first and foremost for educational purposes and in accordance with Archdiocesan Acceptable Use policy. (APS Policy 4.1)

A safe environment for all members of the school community should be a hallmark of a Catholic school. This is accomplished, in part, by fostering a climate based on Gospel values that emphasize the dignity of and respect for all persons. Words, actions, or depictions which violate the privacy, safety, or good name of others are inconsistent with that goal. Whether occurring within or outside of school, when students jeopardize the safe environment or act contrary to those Gospel values they can be subject to disciplinary action by the school.

This policy applies to communications or depictions through e-mail, text messages, social media, or website postings, whether they occur through the school's equipment or connectivity resources or through private communications, which: (1) are of a sexual nature; (2) threaten, libel, slander, malign, disparage, harass or embarrass members of the school community or (3) in the principal's discretion, cause harm to the school, or the school community (collectively referred to as "Inappropriate Electronic Conduct"). Inappropriate Electronic Conduct shall be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences, including withdrawal for cause. (Archdiocesan Policy 4303.4)

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Parental permission must be obtained in writing on an annual basis before a student's photograph or school work can be posted on the Assumption School website or social media. Surnames of students will not be used. (APS Policy 4.2)

The benefits of social media are many; however, if misused, the Assumption community can be negatively affected. As Catholics we should strive to uphold the values of the gospel and the principles presented in the Christian Witness Statement. As such, parents/guardians are expected to behave in a respectful manner when using social media and messaging apps. Defamatory or abusive posts about fellow parents/guardians, students, the school, or its staff will not be tolerated. Failure to adhere to this policy could result in disciplinary action

Purpose

- To continue the mission of Jesus Christ through the Catholic Church and Assumption Parish.
- To provide information about Assumption Parish, School, and ELC events for friends and family.
- To establish and maintain a camaraderie between past, present, and future Assumption families.

Pertaining to All Social Media Platforms

- All material is to maintain a positive and Catholic premise.
- Only posts and comments relating to Assumption Parish and its organizations are allowed. No advertising is permitted for other activities, businesses, or events not directly associated with Assumption Parish unless approved in advance by the parish administration.
- Assumption social media is not an open forum for discussing parish policies, issues, or problems nor is it an outlet for personal opinion.

- No vulgarity, profanity, or negativity is permitted and will be removed immediately. The person/s responsible for the post will be blocked from the site and will be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action as determined by the parish administration.

All Social Media Posts

- Status Updates may include, but are not limited to, reminders of upcoming events, expressions of gratitude, accolades, prayer requests, and/or information that may be found in the Assumption Parish bulletin.
- Any mention of an adult (over the age of 18) by individual name does not need prior approval and the adults will be referred to by first name only. If the adult objects to the mentioned, the post or update will be removed upon notification to the administrators of the page.
- Current students or children under 18 years of age will only be mentioned by first name and only if their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) approve(s) according to the media release form.
- All likes and interests must be related to Assumption Parish, Catholicism, or programs in which the parish participates.

Photos

- Photos of parishioners may be posted by page administrators provided a current media release is on file with the Assumption Parish administration.
- Published photos may be reposted, i.e. photos from newspapers or other websites.

Administration

- To be maintained by persons approved by the Assumption Parish Pastor as page administrators.
- The password is not to be shared and is to be known only to the page administrators, school principal, and pastor.
- Any time a page administrator changes, the password will be reset and cannot be a previously used password.
- The principal and/or pastor shall have final say and authority on all matters pertaining to Assumption Parish social media.

WEBPAGE

Parental permission must be obtained in writing on an annual basis before a student's photograph or school work can be posted on the Assumption Parish website. The Assumption School website will not list any surnames of students.

PRIVACY

Maintaining School Privacy (Archdiocesan Policy 4402.4) Assumption School understands that students/parents have access to technology that enables them to record, either visually or audibly, a student or staff member.

In order to ensure the respect and privacy of students and staff, students and parents are not to record school staff members, students, classroom activities or school events without their express permission. Likewise, students and parents shall not publicly post any videos, pictures or audio recordings of staff members or

students without their express permission. This includes, but is not limited to, social media pages, online photo-sharing and posting videos to YouTube or similar applications.

Use of images is expected to meet the above guidelines. Images or recordings should not be used commercially or in ways that harm the reputation of the Assumption School community and its members. If in question, ask the school principal.

FIREARMS AND WEAPONS

The possession of firearms and weapons on school premises is not to be tolerated except by law enforcement officers. (APS Policy 3.2)

In order to provide a safe environment, the carrying or possession of any type of firearm or other dangerous weapons on the premises of Assumption School and Early Learning Center is strictly prohibited. This prohibition expressly includes those persons licensed to carry concealed firearms. (Archdiocesan Policy 6202.1)

Our procedure regarding any student caught in possession of firearms or weapons is as follows:

- The parent of the student will be called.
- The pastor will be informed.
- The St. Louis County police will be contacted.
- The student will be immediately suspended from classes.
- A student found to be involved may be expelled from school.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND TOBACCO

Assumption School is a smoke free environment. Tobacco product use is prohibited at all times. (from Archdiocesan Policy 4303.1)

The policy regarding illegal possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs or chemical substances is as follows:

1. These substances include among others: alcohol, marijuana, unauthorized medications and controlled substances.”
2. Any student caught in possession of any illegal or controlled substance will be subject to disciplinary action. (APS Policy 3.3)

Use or abuse of alcohol and possession or use of illegal drugs (marijuana, narcotics, or other “hard” drugs) or chemical substances (including unauthorized medicines) is not permitted. Any student caught in possession of any illegal or controlled substance is subject to serious disciplinary consequences in accordance with the following procedure:

- The parent of the student will be called.
- The pastor will be informed.
- The St. Louis County Police will be contacted.
- The student will be immediately suspended from classes.
- A student found to be involved may be subject to withdrawal for cause. (from Archdiocesan Policy 4303.2)

VIOLENCE AND THE THREAT OF VIOLENCE

Assumption School implements a Violence Prevention Policy in accordance with Archdiocesan guidelines. (APS Policy 3.4)

Catholic schools shall provide a safe learning environment for all members of the school community. The climate of Catholic schools shall reflect Gospel values including an emphasis on the dignity of all persons which is necessary for respect, the interdependence of all persons that is the basis of community, and the rights and responsibilities of all persons which are the foundation of justice.

Violence is inconsistent with the unity and peace which are essential to living the Catholic faith in community. Violence also inhibits human development and successful learning. Therefore, violence is not tolerated in Catholic schools.

Violence consists of words, gestures, and actions that result in or have the potential to result in hurt, fear, or injury. Violence includes threats of injury, harassment, assault, possession, and/or use of a weapon; and theft or vandalism of property. A weapon is anything used or intended to be used to threaten, intimidate, and/or harm persons. The possession or use of firearms, other weapons, or explosive devices on school/parish premises is not permitted.

All reported or observed instances of threatened or actual violence must be addressed by the school administration. Appropriate actions may include parent/guardian conferences, mandatory counseling, suspension, withdrawal for cause, and legal action depending on the severity of the incident. (Archdiocesan Policy 4303.3)

CHILD PROTECTION

Assumption Parish School follows the policy and procedures on child abuse established by the Archdiocese of St. Louis. (APS Policy 3.7)

Assumption Early Learning Center is committed to the prevention of child abuse and assists those who are affected by incidents of child abuse. Assumption Early Learning Center is also committed to comply with legal requirements for reporting child abuse. Every teacher is a child abuse advocate and must follow all mandated laws by the State of Missouri. Assumption Safe Environment Program performs a criminal record check and child abuse neglect screening on all AELC faculty and volunteers upon hire and every year following.

Students and parents/guardians are expected to report concerns regarding potential acts of violence to the director immediately. Teachers must report pertinent concerns and/or pertinent information regarding specific students to the director immediately. All adults and students are expected to report any suspected bullying or harassment (patterns of unkind words or actions) towards themselves or others.

GRIEVANCES

There will be a stated procedure for addressing school concerns. (APS Policy 4.3)

Concerns pertaining to Assumption School policies should be directed to the School Board.

Contact any member of the School Board to be placed on an upcoming agenda. (APS Policy 4.4)

Addressing Assumption Early Learning Center Policies Concerns pertaining to AELC policies should be directed to Administration.

Problems involving school personnel:

1. First contact the teacher or staff member directly to resolve the problem.
2. If more problem-solving is necessary, involve the director.
3. If the problem is still not resolved, involve the pastor.

Conflict-Resolution

It is in the best interest of the school and the parish community for complaints to be resolved as soon as possible. **Direct communication with the persons involved is the best starting point for conflict resolution.** This complaint procedure model is rooted in Holy Scripture. The levels of responsibility involved in complaint resolutions are: teacher, director, pastor.

The resolution of a conflict ordinarily takes place nearest to the problem; however, a complaint may be registered with any level of responsibility. **It will be referred to the faculty/staff member nearest to the problem.**

The following procedure should be followed:

- The parent should contact the faculty/staff member who is most closely involved with the problem/incident. Any other faculty/staff member contacted should refer the parent to the immediate faculty/staff member involved. The complaint should be discussed in an informal manner and the time of all parties involved must be respected. Most problems should be resolved at this level.

PHYSICAL OPERATIONS

School Equipment

School equipment does not leave the school premises except at the discretion of the school administration. **(APS Policy 6.1)**

Building Permit

A permit is required for the use of school buildings or property. **(APS Policy 6.2)**

School Time Meetings

All meetings may be held before, during, or after school hours. **(APS Policy 6.3)**



ASSUMPTION EARLY LEARNING CENTER FAMILY HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Assumption Early Learning Center Family Handbook dated August 2024. I understand that it contains important information about Assumption Early Learning Center's policies and procedures. I acknowledge that revisions to the AELC Handbook may occur. I further acknowledge that I have read and understand the AELC policies and agree to adhere to these policies.

Furthermore, I give Assumption Early Learning Center permission to administer developmental screenings to my child(ren) while enrolled.

Parent's Signature

Parent's Name (Printed)

Name(s) of Children in AELC

Date