

## **ADMISSIONS Policy**

### **Policy Statement on Admissions**

Aquinas Academy, a classical school in the Catholic tradition, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, *national origin, ethnicity, gender, or disability in the administration of any of its policies.*

### **General Registration and Admission Criteria**

Registration for Aquinas Academy begins early in the calendar year. In the admission of students into Aquinas Academy priority consideration is given, during the designated enrollment period, to these criteria in the following order (excluding MPCP & WPCP enrollees):

1. Children in attendance the previous year provided all current financial obligations are fulfilled.
2. Siblings of children in attendance the previous year provided that all the family's financial obligations have been met.
3. Children of parents who attend an Archdiocesan parish.
4. Children of parents who have an interest in a classical education in the Catholic tradition.

Students entering the K3 (if offered) and the K4 program must be able to use the restroom on their own.

Families will be notified of acceptance after records and admission criteria are reviewed. On being admitted to the school, families accept the responsibility to participate actively in their child/ren's education and faith formation, to adhere to the standards of the school, and to turn in all admissions paperwork on time.

***New families have three weeks from the date of the application fee's receipt (for families paying full tuition), acceptance of financial aid notification (for families receiving tuition assistance from Aquinas), or acceptance in the Choice program (for Choice families) to complete the admissions paperwork and to schedule placement screenings and shadow visits. The office will contact parents using the contact information provided. If parents do not to complete the paperwork and/or do not communicate their intention to complete the paperwork with the school, then their seat(s) may be forfeited.***

New students at Aquinas Academy will not be considered enrolled until all transcripts, if applicable, and documentation have been received from their prior school and application fees are collected. At the principal's discretion, new students may be able to attend classes while the school awaits the previous school's records. However, placement may change upon receiving the previous school's records and based on the student's performance in the classroom.

### **Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and First Grade Admissions (Wisconsin Statute 118.14)**

No child may be admitted to 3-year-old kindergarten unless he or she is 3 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> in the year he or she proposes to enter school. \*

No child may be admitted to 4-year-old kindergarten unless he or she is 4 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> in the year he or she proposes to enter school. \*

No child may be admitted to 5-year-old kindergarten unless he or she is 5 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> in the year he or she proposes to enter school. \*

No child may be admitted to 1<sup>st</sup> grade unless he or she is 6 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> in the year he or she proposes to enter school and has completed a Kindergarten five-year-old program. \*

\* On rare occasion, the principal may make an exception to the above guidelines. Parents seeking an

Updated 12.3.19

exception may be asked to complete additional enrollment steps prior to enrollment including but not limited to an interview with the principal, a student interview with the teacher, an assessment, shadowing for the day, etc. Excludes those applying through MPCP/WPCP, who must follow the state's guidelines.

### **Evidence of Date of Birth**

A legal birth certificate or other authentic proof of a student's age must be submitted prior to a student's admission.

### **Placement Screening of New/Transfer Students Entering Grades 1-8**

Due to the academic rigor at Aquinas Academy, prior to the child's first day of school, the administration and/or teachers will administer an age appropriate assessment. The assessment may involve but is not limited to an interview with the student and parents, monitored social interaction in the classroom, as well as an assessment in reading, writing, and math skills. The screening is used for placement. If you have any questions about the placement screening, please contact the principal.

### **Registration Information for New/Transfer Students**

Students who are transferring to Aquinas Academy from a different school or seeking re-admission must complete admissions paperwork and if eligible the Milwaukee or Wisconsin Parental Choice Program applications with the Director of Advancement.

When openings are available, new families interested in enrolling their children at Aquinas Academy need to present the most recent report card, standardized tests, IEPs or service plans, current immunization records. If the student is transferring from another school, when the transfer is not due to change of address, the student may be enrolled temporarily while the principal contacts the former school for the reason of transfer. Upon receiving verification of successful grade completion and that the student left/is leaving the previous school in good standing, the student is then formally enrolled. Aquinas Academy reserves the right to terminate enrollment for a student that has been expelled from a previous school.

All students accepted into Aquinas Academy are expected to comply with the rules and procedures of the classroom and school. If students do not comply with the classroom and school rules, appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken and/or another educational setting may be recommended for the student (see Discipline).

### **Probation:**

All new students admitted to Aquinas Academy are enrolled on a probationary status for one full academic year. Administrative and faculty assessments will be made during this period of time to determine if the school can meet the student's needs. Throughout the probationary period the school administration and staff will review and evaluate the student's behavioral and academic status based on criteria such as but not limited to:

- Academic progress
- Notices of concern received
- Disciplinary referrals received
- School suspensions received

If the academic and/or behavior standards are not met, the probationary period can be extended, or another school setting will be recommended.

### **Enrollment of Students with Special Needs**

Aquinas Academy seeks to include students with special needs to the extent that the needs of such

Updated 12.3.19

students can be met within the scope of the programs and available resources. The admission of students with special needs will be considered and reviewed on an individual basis by the principal and other appropriate school staff. Consideration will be given to student records that demonstrate the student's ability to:

- Meet grade level requirements;
- Follow school rules and regulations; and
- Meet the physical requirements of attendance

If the applicant is qualified for enrollment, the Principal and the teacher(s) will determine if reasonable adjustments can be made to accommodate the student's needs. After a plan is drafted, the parents, teachers, and administration will discuss the draft and finalize the Service Plan.

If it is determined that Aquinas Academy's resources cannot meet the needs of a student or if information pertaining to the child's needs was not disclosed prior to enrollment, the Principal may request withdrawal of the student or deny admission for the following year (See Academic Policies for additional information).

### **Wait List Policy**

If an opening for a particular grade is not available, the administration maintains a wait list for the student(s) seeking enrollment. The above registration and admissions criteria will advise the principal's decision. Priority may be given to families seeking to enroll multiple children, if a space is available and in the best interests of the student, family, and school.

### **Transcripts**

Parents are entitled to have an official transcript of their student's records sent wherever desired. Written requests for transcripts should be sent to the school office.

### **Tuition Payment**

As stated in the Enrollment Agreement for the payment of tuition, Aquinas Academy has various payment plans, fees, and tuition policies. Aquinas Academy receives no funding from a parish and consequently depends upon timely payment of tuition fees for its operating budget. Upon accepted registration of their child, parents agree to make tuition payments on time.

Returning families who are more than 30 days behind in tuition payment may not re-enroll without the permission of the Advancement Director and/or the Director of Operations.

Aquinas Academy reserves the right to refuse admittance to class and/or to withhold report cards and transcripts of any student whose financial account is delinquent by 30 days or more. Specific questions about payment plans, fees, tuition assistance, and tuition policies may be directed to the Advancement Director and/or the Director of Operations.

### **Milwaukee and Wisconsin Parental Choice Program:**

In 2019, Aquinas Academy joined the Milwaukee and Wisconsin Parental Choice Programs. This decision allowed Aquinas Academy to live out our mission to know and live authentic Catholic orthodoxy, to be formed to love what is genuinely true, beautiful, and good, to achieve academic excellence and to discern and embrace our divine vocation to transform society.

Students applying to Milwaukee or Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (MPCP/WPCP) are evaluated solely on the basis of their eligibility for the program.

Updated 12.3.19

Parents must complete the online application at: <https://apps4.dpi.wi.gov/ChoiceParent/>. Upon completion of the online application, the applicant must provide Aquinas Academy with the appropriate documentation regarding proof of residency and income eligibility. The administration of Aquinas Academy will then use the Milwaukee/Wisconsin Parental Choice Program Student Application Checklist to review and verify each application.

If more students are seeking a voucher through the above programs apply during the application period than the school has space, students will be selected randomly. After the parent accepts the awarded seat, the school's admissions process takes effect.

A rejected applicant has five working days from the date of receipt of their notice of rejection to provide written evidence to the school's choice administrator that the applicant was improperly rejected. If the applicant thinks their entry was denied wrongfully by the school's choice administrator, they may appeal in writing to the ISA Board. The ISA Board's Operations Chair shall respond to the applicant's appeal within five working days of receipt of the appeal notifying him or her of the acceptance or rejection of the appeal. The Operations Chair's decision regarding the appeal will be final.

#### **Authority of the Principal/Administrator**

Under the advisement of the staff, the final decision for admission, placement, and retention of any student rests with the principal.