

# School Handbook 2016-17

DaVinci Academy of Arts and Science will awaken a passion for learning through an enriched and individualized approach to education. Students, parents and teachers will work together to ensure positive character development and build a strong foundation for higher education.

# District #4185

13001 Central Avenue NE / Blaine, MN 55434 / Phone (763) 754-6577 / Fax (763) 754 – 657 www. Davincichartershcool.org

**TO REPORT AN ABSENCE: (763) 754 - 6648** 

# **Table of Contents**

DaVinci Academy prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation and political beliefs.

# **Table of Contents**

GENERAL OVERVIEW	2
Mission	2
Vision	2
Pillars	2
Contact Information	2
School Demographics	3
Achievements	3
School and Office Hours	3
School Closings	
Students Served	4
Visitors	4
ACADEMIC INFORMATION	5
Academic Accountability	_
Assessments	
NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association Assessments)	
MCAs	
Communication and reporting	
Concerns	6
Conferences	6
Emergency Messages	6
Infinite Campus	6
Newsletters	7
Report Cards/Progress Reports	7
Telephone Contact	7
Curriculum	7
Early Entrance to Kindergarten	
Equal Educational opportunity	8
Extra-Curricular Activities	_
Absences from School	
Conduct	
Field Trips	
Homework	
Special Education	10
Title 1	10

Volunteering in the Classroom	10
ATTENDANCE	
Absences/Reporting	
Change of Pick-up or Bus/ Silent Dismissal	11
Closings/ Weather or Emergency	
Early Dismissal	
Excused/Unexcused Absences	
Missed Assignments	
Release of Student	
Tardiness	
Truancy	
Vacations	
CALENDAR	15
Modified Year-Round Schedule	
2016-17 School Calendar	
	_
HEALTH SERVICES	17
Accidents and Injuries	17
allergies	17
Emergency Contacts	17
Emergency Drills and Training	17
Health Concerns	
Immunization Requirements	
Illness/Sick Child	
Latex	
Medication	
Pets	
Recess	
Suspected Child Abuse	
LUNCH PROGAM	
TRANSPORTATION	
Transportation Registration	22
Bus Stop Guidelines	22
Morning Bus	23
Bus Dismissal	23
Bus Safety	25
Rules at the Bus Stop	
VOLUNTEERING	27
OTHER INFORMATION	28
Classroom Placements	
Electronic Devices	
Internet Use	
Items from Home	
Lockers	
Lost and Found	
Parent contact during school day	
Parent teacher organization (PTO)	
1 41 CH CCACHCI VI 54HIZAHVII [I IV]	

30
30
30
31
31
31
33
33

# **Welcome Letter**

Dear Parents and Students:

Welcome to DaVinci Academy of Arts and Science! We are very glad to have you as a part of our school community. We are excited to begin our 9th year of operations - the last year in our current building as we prepare to expand into our brand new building in 2017. We encourage you to get involved as we design, raise funds, and build our new community in Ham Lake. Watch newsletters, volunteer, attend board meetings, and help us as we grow into a larger campus that will serve more students with award winning programs.

As a team of professional educators, we operate under the value of doing what is best for students individually and within the community. The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that will make your interaction with DaVinci Academy of Arts and Science productive and supportive of your child's school experience.

We look forward to working with you and celebrating many successes throughout this upcoming year!

Sincerely,

Debra Lach

**Executive Director** 

# GENERAL OVERVIEW

DaVinci Academy of Arts and Science is a K-8 charter school that does not charge registration or tuition fees. The school is open to any interested students entering kindergarten through eighth grade according to the board approved enrollment policy.

DaVinci Academy prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation and political beliefs.

#### MISSION

DaVinci Academy of Arts and Science will awaken a passion for learning through an enriched and individualized approach to education. Students, parents and teachers will work together to ensure positive character development and build a strong foundation for higher education.

#### VISION

DaVinci Academy of Arts and Science will be known and respected for providing a dynamic educational experience in which students become lifelong learners with a sense of responsibility to society.

#### **PILLARS**

We operate under the following four pillars. More information regarding these pillars can be found on our website.



**Arts and Science Focus** 

**Enriched Learning Experiences** 

**Differentiated Instruction** 

**Character Development** 

# **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Address: 13001 Central Avenue NE

Blaine, MN 55434

Phone: 763-754-6577

Fax: 763-754-6578

#### SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS

Type of School: K-8 Charter School

Location: Blaine, MN

• **Enrollment:** Serving approximately 430 students from Andover, Anoka, Blaine, Coon Rapids, East Bethel, Ham Lake and Lino Lakes and other communities

Opened: September of 2008

Authorizer: Friends of Education

Academic Schedule: Modified Year-round

• Curriculum: Core Knowledge - Arts and Science Focused

• Teacher to Student Ratio: 14:1 (2015)

#### **ACHIEVEMENTS**

- Reward School 5 years in a row (2011-2015)
- 2015 National Blue Ribbon School Nominee
- Achieved 20% higher results than state averages on standardized tests (2015)
- Over 80% of students meet or exceed state accountability test standards
- Over 90% Multiple Measurements Rating (MMR)

# SCHOOL AND OFFICE HOURS

School Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

# SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Emergency school closings due to severe weather, or any other reason, are posted on the school's website, major news station websites and emergency postings, and announced via School Messenger texts and/or phone calls. To receive messages via School Messenger, you must opt-in to the system. You can do so by contacting <a href="mailto:lswearingen@davincicharterschool.org">lswearingen@davincicharterschool.org</a>.

On news channels and websites, we are listed as DaVinci Academy.

PLEASE NOTE THAT our schedule is SEPARATE from Anoka-Hennepin ISD or any other school district.

The decision to close school will usually be made by 6:00 am on the day in question. **Families** will not be contacted individually. The school cannot be responsible for students who arrive at school or at bus stops in spite of these announcements. If you have any question as to whether the school is in session that day, check the school's website or contact the school office

# STUDENTS SERVED

Davinci Academy of Arts and Science serves children from kindergarten through eighth grade.

# Maximum Class Sizes

Grade	Max Class Size
K	18
1-5	26
6-8	25

## **VISITORS**

Parents and visiting guests are welcome. For everyone's safety, ALL visitors must sign in at the school office. You will receive a visitor badge or sticker that must be worn while you are at the school. Upon leaving, visitors and parents must sign out at the office.

# **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

All students shall be afforded the right and opportunity to an equal education. No student shall be excluded, segregated or discriminated against in the school's educational environment for reasons of race, color, national origin, gender, economic status, disability, religion or religious affiliation or sexual orientation.

#### ACADEMIC ACCOUNTABILITY

We are committed to an environment that values academics and character. Academic accountability requires students to complete and present their own work. Academic dishonesty occurs when students take credit for work that is not their own through acts of cheating or plagiarism, or helps another student do so.

Study or homework collaboration is not considered academic dishonesty unless prohibited or limited by expectations established by the teacher. Parents or tutors may dialogue with a student about an assignment, but may not do the assignment for the student.

#### **ASSESSMENTS**

# **NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association Assessments)**

Students in grades 2-8 will be taking the NWEA test in the fall. These assessments provide teachers and families with data that help determine achievement and instructional levels in math and reading.

#### **MCAs**

Students in grades 3-8 take the MCAs in the spring.

Reading Grades 3-8
Math Grades 3-8
Science Grades 5 and 8

#### **COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING**

It is our desire at DaVinci Academy to facilitate ongoing communication. Parents/legal guardians are encouraged to contact the school whenever they would like to discuss something about their experience at DaVinci Academy or have a suggestion to make. Members of the teaching staff and the administration will always make themselves available to discuss your child's education.

# Concerns

Please contact your child's teacher when you have questions or concerns. The sooner a question is answered or a concern is resolved, the better the opportunity for continued successful learning to occur. If there are family changes or significant events occurring in your child's life, which might affect emotional, behavioral or educational performance, it would be helpful to inform the classroom teacher of necessary information. By working together we can achieve a nurturing environment.

The communication procedure for *issues* with teachers is as follows:

- Direct communication with the teacher. This shows respect for the teacher and also for the parent communicating the information.
- If the concern remains unresolved, the Executive Director will coordinate a meeting between the parents, teacher, and Executive Director.
- Direct communication with the School Board of Directors.

## Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences are held in the fall and late winter/early spring. These conferences give parents/legal guardians and teachers an opportunity to share information regarding each child's academic and social achievement.

# **Emergency Messages**

Emergency messages, such as school closings, late buses, or other messages are announced via **School Messenger** texts and/or phone calls. <u>To receive messages via School Messenger, you must opt-in to the system.</u> You can do so by contacting <a href="mailto:lswearingen@davincicharterschool.org">lswearingen@davincicharterschool.org</a>.

# **Infinite Campus**

Our online student information system is called Infinite Campus. This system helps us share information about our students' attendance, grades, homework completion, etc., and we use the data to improve the educational programming by streamlining some of our procedures.

The parent/guardian component is called Infinite Campus Parent Portal. The Parent Portal currently provides parents/guardians with online access to their child's contact information, schedule, progress reports and report cards. Upon enrollment, you will be provided with an activation code specific to your child/ren.

# Newsletters

Newsletters are distributed regularly by e-mail. School newsletters will also be posted on our website. It is each family's responsibility to ensure that we have your correct e-mail address on file

# **Report Cards/Progress Reports**

Progress Reports are sent home 3 times each year. These reports have a two-fold purpose: to indicate each child's progress in the academic areas of study, and to assess each pupil's progress in work habits.

# **Telephone Contact**

In order to contact a teacher, you may e-mail, contact the front desk at 763-754-6577 and ask to leave a message on voice mail for any teacher at any time, or send notes with your child. <u>E-mail is preferred</u>. Please note that teachers are not expected to answer phone messages, texts, e-mail or other messages during the teaching day.

Student use of the school telephone is limited. The telephone is for school business and emergency use only. We ask your cooperation in our efforts to limit student use. Students DO need teacher permission to use the phone during school hours. Also note that students are not allowed to use cell phones at any time during the school day.

# **CURRICULUM**

Our academic goal for each child is to promote higher-level thinking, while meeting each child at his/her ability level in order to help them reach their full potential.

**Reading/Language Arts:** The curriculum for reading is the *Core Knowledge* Language Arts Curriculum, which is supplemented by literature circles.

**Math:** The math program at DaVinci Academy is *Singapore Math* for grades K - 4. In grades 5 – 8, DaVinci Academy uses the Holt math curriculum

**Science/Social Studies:** Science and social studies are tied very closely to the Core Knowledge Sequence. The Science program is supplemented with Foss Science Kits as well as additional reading material in each class. For Social Studies, students use a Core Knowledge textbook as well as supplemental reading materials.

**Physical Education/Health:** The Physical Education curriculum stresses the importance of general good health and the development of the skills, abilities, and attitudes necessary to participate in group and individual sports which can be enjoyed throughout a lifetime.

**Art:** The art curriculum provides students with instruction in the various elements and techniques of art production and appreciation. Art is also seen as an extension of the other curriculum areas.

**Music:** Instrumental and choral music as well as music appreciation are considered important parts of the curriculum for all students. Students may choose a musical instrument for band or orchestra starting in 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Computer:** During computer lab time students are instructed in keyboarding techniques, word processing, basic desktop publishing skills, (Microsoft Office and Power Point) and Internet access. The use of computers is integrated into our overall curriculum, with the objective that students learn to use computers as a tool. Students are expected to sign and abide by an "appropriate use" contract which governs Internet and computer use.

#### EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN

Students entering kindergarten must be five years old prior to September 1 of the enrollment year. See policy 536 for information regarding early admission.

# **EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

All students shall be afforded the right and opportunity to an equal education. No student shall be excluded, segregated or discriminated against in the school's educational environment for reasons of race, color, national origin, gender, economic status, disability, religion or religious affiliation or sexual orientation.

# **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

A growing number of extra-curricular activities are offered before and after school to enrich the experiences of our students. DaVinci's own teachers lead most extra-curricular activities. You can discover these programs through the newsletters and distributions of program information.

The purpose of extracurricular activities is to develop character, promote self-confidence, foster school spirit, and develop the gifts and talents of students.

Students involved in after school activities need to take all of their belongings with them to that event. Students must be supervised at all times. Most activities run from 3:15-4:15. It is critical that students who are involved in extracurricular activities are picked up on time. There is no supervision after the pick-up time that is scheduled. Siblings of students who are in a

<u>supervised activity are NOT allowed to wait in the school unsupervised</u>. Only students enrolled in a supervised extracurricular activity should be in the school after 3:15 p.m.

# **Absences from School**

A student who is absent from school is not allowed to participate in extracurricular activities the day of the absence. A student needs to be present in school for four hours to participate in after school activities (unless the absence is excused and the academic director is notified).

## Conduct

Participants are expected to represent Davinci Academy and display good conduct at all times. Students will adhere to the Behavior Expectations Policy for both on- and off-campus events.

## FIELD TRIPS

Cultural and educational field experiences scheduled during each school year are planned to enhance your child's educational process.

Permission slips from parents/legal guardians must be signed and returned to the classroom teacher before a student may participate in a field experience.

<u>Chaperones</u> – The ratio of chaperone to student is, on average, 1 parent/guardian for every 5 students.

<u>Dress / Uniforms</u> – Students attending a field experience are required to wear their uniform, unless otherwise noted in the field experience/permission slip sent home to parents/legal guardians prior to the field experience.

Refunds – Students unable to attend a field experience due to illness or injury will receive a refund if the school receives a full refund. Students not attending a field experience due to disciplinary action may not receive a refund, depending on circumstances.

# **HOMEWORK**

Homework is an integral part of the child's educational process. The Core Knowledge Curriculum requires student preparation outside of school and is enhanced by parent support and involvement with homework completion.

Homework allows for practice in a particular subject, study for quizzes and tests, and leads to responsibility. It is carefully assigned as a meaningful part of the learning experience. The amount of the homework depends on the grade of the child. Homework may be the completion of class work that was not finished in school, work on a project, study for an exam, or an extended lesson for student enrichment.

Homework assignments are part of each student's grade. Therefore, missing assignments must be turned in as soon as possible. Students are also responsible for homework assignments missed during an absence from school.

Parents/legal guardians are expected to have significant involvement in homework assignments through second grade because most homework is designed to practice skills and an adult's guidance is necessary for that practice to be of high quality.

Parents/legal guardians can be most helpful in third grade and above by providing guidance for organizing time at home. Many projects are completed in class but those which have "at home" components are to be entirely done by students. If practice of skills is needed, parents/legal guardians should support and or/participate that practice.

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Special Education Department at DaVinci Academy is a team of specialized professionals dedicated to assuring a "free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment."

Parents/legal guardians may request an assessment for their child to determine eligibility, to be administered by DaVinci Academy Special Education professionals. Teachers may also recommend assessment. A Child Study Team will review the needs of each identified student before testing begins.

# TITLE 1

Title I is a federally funded program that gives qualified students an extra boost in the areas of reading and math. These programs are carried out through our interventionists (RTI). Students that need additional instruction to grasp concepts will be recommended to RTI. It is our desire to remediate specific skills in a timely matter rather than wait for a larger learning gap to occur.

## **VOLUNTEERING IN THE CLASSROOM**

Parents are encouraged to be involved in day-to-day activities at DaVinci Academy and are welcome in the school and in classrooms, whether visiting or volunteering. If you wish to volunteer in a classroom, please contact the classroom teacher directly. For other volunteer opportunities, please contact the volunteer coordinator.

# **ATTENDANCE**

# Student Absences – to report an absence call 763-754-6648 by 9:00 a.m.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure a student is attending school every day on time, to inform the school in the event of a student absence/tardiness, and to collaborate with teachers regarding any missing schoolwork.

It is the student's responsibility to be on time for morning routines and prepared with materials needed for learning, and to follow class procedures for any make-up work. Homeroom teachers take daily attendance after the 8:00 AM bell. Teachers work cooperatively with students and parents to provide assignments and assistance when a student has been absent.

Research supports that regular school attendance and punctuality are directly related to success in academic work, benefits students socially, provides opportunities for important communications, and establishes regular habits of dependability important to the future of the student.

## ABSENCES/REPORTING

Parents are expected to call or email the school **daily** by 9:00 AM to report an absence at **763-754-6648**, giving the reason for the absence. The attendance line is available 24 hours a day by calling **763-754-6648**.

If the child is absent and the parent/guardian has not called the school, a staff member of the school will make a reasonable attempt to contact the parent/guardian by phone.

# CHANGE OF PICK-UP OR BUS/ SILENT DISMISSAL

Because of the complexity of managing transportation schedules for over 400 students, we use the Silent Dismissal program which allows parents to change transportation plans as it is necessary and insures that the information gets to the school and the teachers in time for dismissal. Changes to a child's dismissal plans can be made up until 2:45 each day. It is critical that parents keep their Silent Dismissal settings current. Students will be dismissed using the instructions given by Silent Dismissal, so if the setting is inaccurate the student will not get to where they are supposed to be going.

Neither the front office nor the teachers will be making adjustments to dismissal plans over the phone or email, as it is the parent's responsibility to keep Silent Dismissal settings current. You can call the office for help in how to manage that program at 763-754-6577.

# CLOSINGS/ WEATHER OR EMERGENCY

Emergency school closings due to severe weather, or any other reason, are posted on the school's website, major news station websites and emergency postings, and announced via School Messenger texts and/or phone calls. To receive messages via School Messenger, you

must opt-in to the system. You can do so by contacting lswearingen@davincicharterschool.org.

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PLEASE NOTE THAT our schedule is SEPARATE from Anoka-Hennepin ISD or any other school district.

The decision to close school will usually be made by 6:00 am on the day in question. **Families** will not be contacted individually. The school cannot be responsible for students who arrive at school or at bus stops in spite of these announcements. If you have any question as to whether the school is in session that day, check the school's website or contact the school office

## EARLY DISMISSAL

All-day attendance is important for every student, every school day. Early dismissals are discouraged. Early dismissals should occur only in rare circumstances and requests must be made through the office.

No child is allowed to leave the building or playground during school time unless he/she is accompanied by and checked out of the school by a parent/legal guardian or an adult from the school with prior authorization. If it is known in advance that an early dismissal is absolutely necessary, parents/legal guardians must send a note to the classroom teacher.

# **EXCUSED/UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

Regular student attendance is imperative. Students who miss school are at a disadvantage academically. Because our instructional approach is primarily interactive and participatory, the learning experience cannot necessarily be duplicated by completing homework. Be advised that 10 unexcused absences may result in retention. The administration will make all final determinations regarding student retention.

DaVinci Academy follows the State requirements for school attendance.

**Excused** The following reasons for school absences are considered **excused**:

- 1. Illness. A parent/guardian must call the attendance line each day their child is ill. If school personnel determine the illness absences are excessive (more than 10 days per year), the school may require the family to provide medical verification.
- 2. Serious family emergency.
- 3. Medical or dental treatment (usually a partial day).
- 4. Court required appearances.
- 5. Removal of a student pursuant to a suspension. Suspensions are to be handled as excused absences and students are required to complete make-up work.
- 6. Prior approval (not to exceed 10 days) by the school office is required for absences due to travel.

**Unexcused Absences** The following are considered **unexcused** absences:

- 1. Truancy (An absence by a student which is not excused by the school, see above).
- 2. Missing the bus.
- 3. Work or babysitting at home.
- 4. Over sleeping.
- 5. Travel not pre-approved by the school office.
- 6. Excessive absences in the judgment of the school administration without medical verification.

#### MISSED ASSIGNMENTS

Students who are absent are required to make up assignments missed or complete alternative assignments as deemed appropriate by the teacher.

Parents/guardians may request the student's homework by calling the attendance office before 8:30 AM.

## RELEASE OF STUDENT

Procedures are followed to ensure the safety of children who are released during the day:

- Written permission must be sent to the office stating the requested time for release.
- The parent/legal guardian or authorized person must come to the office and sign out the child. Children will remain with the teacher until notified by the office staff.
- In no case should a student ever leave during the school day without signing out in the office.

Please note: If any person other than the custodial parent/legal guardian is to pick up the child, the school must have a statement from the custodial parent/legal guardian specifying the necessary information.

## **TARDINESS**

After 8:00 am, parents must sign students in at the office before going into class.

Tardiness is disruptive to the educational process and is inconsiderate to both teachers and other students; therefore it is imperative that students are punctual.

Please make sure that your child(ren) arrive into their classroom on time.

Students are expected to attend school for the entire school day, 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM. Students arriving late, leaving for any part of the day, or leaving before 3:00 PM need to report to the school office and **must have a parent/guardian sign them in or out**.

Three or more "tardies" in any calendar month will result in a conference with an administrator.

A student is tardy if he/she arrives after 8:00. A student is considered absent for a half day if he/she misses more than three hours of the day. A student is considered absent for a full day if he/she misses four or more hours of the school day.

# **TRUANCY**

If a student is absent three days without an excuse within a single school year that student is considered a "continuing truant," according to state law (statute 260A.02). Habitual tardiness may also be reported as truancy. The school is required by law to notify a parent when a child

is a continuing truant and that if the child continues to be truant there may be juvenile court proceedings. When a student is absent seven or more days from school within a single school year without excuse, that student is considered a "habitual truant," according to state law (statute 260C.007). DaVinci Academy reports habitually truant students to the county.

## **VACATIONS**

Vacations when school is in session are discouraged. DaVinci Academy recognizes the value of the educational experience family vacations can provide for children, but encourages families to plan their vacations or trips when school is not in session. However, if family trips are unavoidable, the school should be notified at least a week in advance. Please fill out an extended absence request form.

http://davincicharterschool.org/CMSUploads//PDFs/Prior%20Approval%20Request%20Form.pdf

In the event of an extended absence:

- 1. Any missing work is expected to be made up.
- Necessary vacations may not exceed ten days.
- 3. Teachers are not responsible to provide work in advance for students on family vacations.

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# **CALENDAR**

# **MODIFIED YEAR-ROUND SCHEDULE**

DaVinci Academy follows a modified "year-round" school calendar: students start school the second week of August and continue through the third week of June each year, with approximately 6 weeks for a summer break.

The rationale for this calendar is that students retain more over the shorter summer break, and it reduces the time spent gearing up and re-teaching each fall.

We take more frequent breaks during the school year and find that the breaks are good for both students and teachers as they help keep both from burning out during the year. Breaks also provide teachers and administrators time to review data, refresh lesson plans based on that data, and prepare for the next unit of instruction.

# 2016-17 SCHOOL CALENDAR

#### 2016 - 2017 **IMPORTANT DATES AUGUST** JULY July 27-29 New Staff Work Days August 1-5 Teachers Return for Workshops August 9 -First Day for Grades 1-8 13 12 13 14 20 August 11 - First Day for Kindergarten 19 20 21 22 23 September 1 - No School, Teacher Workshop Day September 2-6 - No School Students or Staff SEPTEMBER OCTOBER October 17-18 - Parent/Teacher Conferences 12:00-8:00 т М т October 19-21 No School Students or Staff November 3 Last Day of Trimester 1 17 18 15 16 November 4 - No School Students, Grading Day 24 25 22 November 21-25 Thanksgiving Break 16 December 22-January 2 No School Students or Staff NOVEMBER DECEMBER January 3-6 Optional Intersession January 16, MLK day - No School, Teacher Workshop Day February 10 No School, Teacher Workshop Day February 13-17 - No School Students or Staff 24 March 1 - Last Day of Trimester 2 16 54 Days Tri 1 15 JANUARY FEBRUARY March 2 - No School Students, Grading Day March 3 - No School Students or Staff March 20-24 - No School Students or Staff 14 15 18 April 13 - No School, Teacher Workshop Day 21 22 April 14 - 17 No School Students or Staff 26 27 28 29 May 25-29 - No School Students or Staff 16 MARCH APRIL June 2 & 9 - No School Students or Staff June 15 - Last Day of School June 16 - Teacher Workshop Day 18 19 15 174 Days Total Grades 1-8 172 Days Total Kindergarten Students 25 26 22 13 Staff Development Days 59 Days Tri 2 1st Trimester 54 Days 2nd Trimester 59 Days JUNE MAY 3rd Trimester 61 Days 19 20 21 22 23 Dalinci Academ 29 Optional Intersession Teacher Workshop Day No School Students or Staff School Days

# **HEALTH SERVICES**

The classroom teacher refers students to the office whenever symptoms indicate the possibility of illness and/or pain. Minor injuries are treated at school. Major injuries will be handled by calling emergency services and parents/legal guardians. Each child is required to have an Emergency Health and Accident form on file. This form requires names and phone numbers of two responsible persons 18 years or older who can be contacted in case the parent/legal guardian cannot be reached.

# **ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES**

A first aid certified staff person will attend to the injured child taking all possible measures to comfort and assist. An accident report will be completed at the time of any incident and filed in the school office. Parents/legal guardians are notified of all incidents for which an accident report has been completed. We also have contracted a school nurse who is at the school on a regular basis.

## **ALLERGIES**

We are an "allergy aware" building, not allergy free. Please ensure that allergies are listed on student information cards. Every effort is made to make your student with allergies safe at school.

# **EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

It is very important that each student has at least two emergency contacts in addition to their parents/legal guardians on the student enrollment record. These forms are kept on file at DaVinci Academy's administrative office and in the student's classroom. In case of your child's illness or injury, the Student Information Sheet is used to notify and advise you or the person(s) designated by you. You are required to keep the information current with the correct contact person(s) and telephone numbers.

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS AND TRAINING**

Fire drill information and other safety instruction information will be presented to the teachers and staff regularly. The physical safety of the students is our absolute, first responsibility. Whether in the parking lot, classroom, gym, playground, restrooms, hallways, on field trips, etc. the physical safety of our students should always be every adult's first priority.

The DaVinci Academy Crisis Plan addresses numerous potential crisis situations which allow staff, students, and parents/legal guardians to deal with an emergency in a safe and orderly manner. Throughout the school year students and staff will conduct practice drills, including, but not limited to, lockdowns, fire, tornado and evacuation drills.

# **HEALTH CONCERNS**

Parents/legal guardians <u>must keep their child home</u> if the child has any of the following illnesses:

- Head lice
- Fever of 100.0 degrees or higher
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Pink eve

#### **IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

Students entering DaVinci Academy for the first time must have up-to-date immunizations as required by the State of Minnesota before their first day of school.

There are additional immunizations that are required at different ages. Please work with your family physician to insure that your child's immunization records are kept up-to-date at the school.

# ILLNESS/SICK CHILD

<u>Children who become ill during the school day will be required to go home – as soon as possible.</u> It is the parent's/legal guardian's responsibility to either pick up their child or arrange for another adult to do so.

#### LATEX

Please do NOT bring in latex balloons.

# **MEDICATION**

No medication will be given at school except for those that have been prescribed by a physician. This includes over the counter medications. <u>Any</u> medication that is taken at school must be brought to the nurse's office in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy. This label must include the child's name, the prescribing physician's name, the name of the medication with directions (dose and frequency), and the pharmacy phone number.

If the student needs to take medication at school, the parent/guardian should bring the medication to school and not send it with their child. The parent/guardian is also responsible for picking up their child's medication if it has been discontinued or at the end of the school year. If

the medication is not picked up in a timely manner, the medication will be disposed of appropriately.

Before medication can be given at school, parents/guardians and the child's physician must complete the required forms. These forms can be obtained from the school office. All medication forms must be updated at the beginning of each school year.

Students may **not** carry any type of medicines and pills unless they are required to do so under the direction of a physician. If they are required to do so, we will need a note from the physician indicating that the student be allowed to carry these item(s) during the school day. The prescription for the medicine(s) must be on file with the office and must state that the child needs to keep the medicine with them during the school day.

## **PETS**

Pets are not allowed in the building.

## **RECESS**

Students in grades K-5 have a scheduled recess. Playground rules must be followed or the child will lose this privilege.

- Students will stay indoors for recess when the outside and/or wind chill is at/or below 0 degrees.
- During winter months, students are expected to have coats, boots, hats or hoods, and mittens or gloves.
- Notes should be sent with the student to the classroom teacher if there is a valid reason your child should not participate in outdoor recess.
- It is expected that students do go outside unless there is a valid reason.

## SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Each faculty and staff member of DaVinci Academy who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect must, by law, immediately report or cause a report to be made of such fact to the county department of social services or local law enforcement agency.

# **LUNCH PROGAM**

DaVinci Academy participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers nutritional meals daily. Meals meet federal and state guidelines for meal preparation.

Our hot lunch program offers healthy choices that meet federal nutrition standards, including strict limits on saturated fats, age-appropriate calorie limits, and portion size. Students are offered fruits and vegetables, proteins and grains, and milk. They are required to take at least one serving of fruits or vegetables. The monthly menu is sent home at the beginning of each month and is posted on the school website.

If your child has dietary restrictions (i.e., lactose intolerance, allergies, intolerances), please contact the Lunch Director. A written copy of the restriction from a medical professional needs to be on file with the health office.

We use computerized software to track lunches. Each student is given a Personal Identification Number at the beginning of the school year to track payment and use of the account. PINs are kept confidential and are not to be shared with others.

Davinci Academy uses a pre-payment system for lunches. Students will be notified when their account balance falls below zero.

Each fall every family receives a letter, along with an Application for Educational Benefits, explaining the availability of free and reduced-price meals to families who meet eligibility requirements.

The Hot Lunch assistant processes all applications using the guidelines. Applications and accounts are confidential. We strongly encourage families to apply because the school receives Title 1 funding based on the number of families receiving free or reduced priced meals. Your willingness to participate helps the entire school community. Students receiving free or reduced meal plans may not charge milk if they bring their own lunch.

Davinci Academy's Hot Lunch Program is operated in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, which does not permit discrimination because of race, color, sex, age, handicap or national origin.

# **TRANSPORTATION**

Bus routes are not a door to door service. Because DaVinci Academy serves students from a wide geographical area, we commit to rides of 60 minutes or less. We contract with Kottke's bus service and work with them each year to set up bus stops and routes to best serve the majority of DaVinci Academy students.

Please be extra patient the first 2-3 weeks of school as buses generally run late as students/drivers become familiar with each other and the routes. You will receive bus routes approximately one week before school begins. Please see bus info at davincicharterschool.org.

The safety of our students at pick up and drop off times, as well as on our buses, is first and foremost as we develop practices that meet the needs of the DaVinci Academy families. We will strive to fine tune those procedures in order to safely and efficiently transport an increased number of students beginning in 2017.

Our current Blaine location offers many challenges at drop off and pick up time and some families find it easier to take advantage of the four bus routes we offer instead of driving to the school. We encourage this practice and hope that these guidelines will help you choose your method of transportation to and from the school.

These guidelines are meant to clarify how the busing service at DaVinci Academy works for the 2016-2017 school year. In anticipation of increased student numbers in the coming years it is critical that families understand the procedures used for busing in order to address concerns or clarifications.

Our current Blaine location offers many challenges at drop off and pick up time and some families find it easier to take advantage of the 4 bus routes we offer instead of driving in to the school. We encourage this practice and hope that these guidelines will help you choose your method of transportation to and from the school.

# Items of Clarification for 2016-17

- 1. DaVinci Academy offers free busing to students within, roughly, an 8 mile radius of the school. The communities which are included in this bus service, at this time, are:
  - Andover
  - Anoka
  - Blaine
  - Coon Rapids
  - East Bethel
  - Ham Lake
  - Lino Lakes
- 2. The bus routes and stops are determined by the bus company, Kottke's Bus Company, inc., in coordination with the school. Stops are created by taking into consideration the number of students in certain areas, route length, and safety. Much time is given to the creation of these satellite stops in order to accommodate as many families as possible while keeping the bus routes to a maximum of an hour in length. Families may choose to use whichever stop is most convenient for them, but are asked to let the school know which stop they intend to use for the school year. This is done at registration time through the Silent Dismissal program.

- 3. Satellite stops are ideally located in places where parking is available for parents who are waiting for the bus, for example, churches, parks or stores. They are meant to be used by multiple families. Parents may not move or create stops, nor pressure drivers or the bus company to move stops. Stops for the 2016-17 school year will be published by the beginning of August. Families with concerns about a stop should contact the school directly. However, once the school year begins routes and stops will only be adjusted at the discretion of the administration for the following reasons:
- Safety and traffic concerns regarding the location of a stop
- Stops that are not being utilized by families
- Elimination of a stop by the parties who own the property on which the stop is located.
- Other qualifying circumstances as determined by the school and Kottke's.
- 4. DaVinci Academy does not schedule bus stops at individual home addresses.

# TRANSPORTATION REGISTRATION

DaVinci Academy families MUST complete the registration process on Silent Dismissal before students will be permitted to ride the school bus.

Families will be given information regarding the sign up process at Open House night and will be required to complete the process before school begins on Tuesday, August 9<sup>th</sup>.

The website for Silent Dismissal is <a href="http://davinci.sdcs28.com/">http://davinci.sdcs28.com/</a> and can be accessed as soon as parents have received their family number. This is also the site that is used if families need to make explicit changes in their transportation plans for the day.

# **BUS STOP GUIDELINES**

# When to Arrive at Your Stop

Parents/students should arrive 10 minutes early to their stop.

## **Late Buses**

Please factor an additional 10-20 minutes into bus times during the first 3 weeks of school. It is normal and expected for buses to be running late for the first few weeks as drivers learn their routes and students, families, and the school settles into a routine. Families are advised to arrive at their stops at the normally scheduled time and asked to wait the additional 15-20 minutes if needed. Arriving late may cause you to miss the bus if it is on schedule.

If a bus is running late, DaVinci Academy will alert parents via email, text, or phone call through our automated system as soon as possible. Parents should make sure their contact information and preferences are current using the Infinite Campus Parent Portal in order to receive these important messages. Thank link can be found on our website at www.davincicharterschool.org.

DaVinci Academy's main office opens at 7:15 AM and some bus routes begin earlier. If parents are concerned that their bus is running late, or that they missed their bus before the main office is open, they may call Kottke's dispatch office directly at 763-755-3100 Option 1.

## **MORNING BUS**

# Missing the Morning Bus

The bus will only wait 2-3 minutes maximum after the scheduled time before moving on. Buses cannot wait longer or it will make them late for the rest of the route. If students miss their morning bus, their parents are responsible for transporting them to school. The bus will not loop back to pick up students who missed the bus. Students arriving late to school because they missed the bus will be recorded as having an unexcused tardy.

## If the Bus is Late to School

If students are late to school in the morning because the bus was late, their lateness will be recorded as excused. This includes when their parents have to drive them to school because the bus was running abnormally behind schedule.

## **BUS DISMISSAL**

# **Afternoon Instructions**

Because of the complexity of managing transportation schedules for over 400 students, we use the Silent Dismissal program which allows parents to change transportation plans as it is necessary and insures that the information gets to the school and the teachers in time for dismissal. Changes to a child's dismissal plans can be made up until 2:45 each day and it is critical that parents keep their Silent Dismissal settings current. Students will be dismissed using the instructions given by Silent Dismissal, so if the setting is inaccurate the student will not get to where they are supposed to be going.

Neither the front office nor the teachers will be making adjustments to dismissal plans over the phone or email, as it is the parent's responsibility to keep Silent Dismissal settings current. You can always call the office for help in how to manage that program at 763-754-6577.

# **Afternoon Bus Departure**

Students will be dismissed from classes at 3:00 p.m. and will have 10 minutes to board the buses before they leave at 3:10. It is critical that buses leave on time in order to insure that the route schedules will be maintained.

# **Missing the Afternoon Bus**

Tracking down missing students is the most common reason for delays in bus departure. In order to keep the buses on schedule we are not able to wait for missing students. This makes the bus late and negatively affects every other family on the route. The following policies shall be in effect regarding missing/late students.

**Kindergarten** – Older students will escort kindergarten bus riders to their buses according to the daily Silent Dismissal settings chosen by their parents. For safety, kindergarten students will not be allowed on the bus if they are not on the electronic Silent Dismissal bus roster.

**Lower School (1-4)** – The school will attempt to track down missing lower school busers until 3:10 p.m. if they are on the electronic Silent Dismissal bus roster as set by parents. For safety, lower school students will not be allowed to get on the bus if they are not on the electronic Silent Dismissal bus roster.

**Middle School (5-8)** – The school will attempt to track down missing middle school busers until 3:10 p.m. Middle school students who attempt to board the bus, but are not on the electronic Silent Dismissal bus roster will be allowed to get on the bus if they are a registered bus rider. Students of this age should know their own schedules and should follow parent instructions.

# Meeting the Bus at Drop-Off

For the safety of our students, DaVinci Academy's policy is that no child is left at a bus stop if a parent/caregiver is not there; nor is a child allowed to walk home from the stop unsupervised without permission. If you would like to give your child special permission to wait for pick-up or walk home from their stop alone, please check the appropriate box on Silent Dismissal.

# Missing Your Child's Bus

If parents miss their child's afternoon bus, the student will continue riding the bus through the end of the route while the bus company or the school contacts the parents.

Parents then have the option of either catching the bus at a later stop along the route, or picking up their child at the school. Any student remaining on the bus at the end of the route will be brought back to the school to wait for pick-up. All students must be picked up immediately upon school drop off as there currently is no after-care program. Parents may contact theKottke's dispatch office directly if they missed their child's stop 763-450-3100 opt. 1. Calling The School's Main Office is also appropriate (763-754-6577); however, the office closes daily at 4:30 PM.

\*\*Parents who routinely miss their child's afternoon drop-off may lose busing privileges for the remainder of the school year.

# **BUS SAFETY**

Students who have the opportunity to ride DaVinci Academy school buses must display behavior that is responsible and safe. The bus driver is responsible for the safety and discipline of the students on the bus and must be obeyed and treated with respect in order to guarantee the safety of everyone on the bus.

DaVinci students will receive school bus safety training twice during the school year. The school bus safety training will include at least the following:

- Transportation by school bus is a privilege and not a right;
- School policies for student conduct while on the school bus;
- Appropriate conduct while on the school bus;
- The danger zones surrounding a school bus;
- Procedures for safely boarding and leaving a school bus;
- Procedures for safe road crossing;
- School bus evacuation.
- Conduct on School Buses

Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. The school's general student behavior rules are in effect for all students on school buses.

Consequences for school bus/bus stop misconduct will be imposed by the school under adopted administrative discipline procedures. In addition, all school bus/bus stop misconduct will be reported to the school's Student Development Coordinator. Serious misconduct may be reported to local law enforcement.

The school bus safety rules are to be posted on every bus. If these rules are broken, the school's discipline procedures are to be followed. In most circumstances, consequences are progressive and may include suspension of bus privileges.

# **RULES AT THE BUS STOP**

- Get to your bus stop 10 minutes before your scheduled pick up time. The school bus driver will not wait for late students.
- Respect the property of others while waiting at your bus stop.
- Keep your arms, legs and belongings to yourself.
- Use appropriate language.
- Stay away from the street, road or highway when waiting for the bus.
- Wait until the bus stops before approaching the bus.
- · After getting off the bus, move away from the bus.
- If you must cross the street, always cross in front of the bus where the driver can see you. Wait for the driver to signal to you before crossing the street.
- No fighting, harassment, intimidation or horseplay.
- No use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs.

# **VOLUNTEERING**

DaVinci Academy recognizes and appreciates that families want to be actively involved in the education of their children. In addition, research shows that students whose parents are involved in their school perform better academically and socially. As a result, parents are expected to be involved and volunteer at least 20 hours per school year for 2 parent homes, and single parent families are expected to volunteer 10 hours per school year at DaVinci Academy.

Here are some of the many possible ways in which parents can get involved:

- Participate on committees that provide a variety of services and direction
- Be a Teacher Assistant (TA) in the classroom
- · Assist teachers with afterhours classroom projects
- Help with remodeling, painting, beautifying jobs
- · Work in the office
- Coordinate and/or coach extracurricular programs
- Help with fund-raising projects
- Help with serving lunch
- Chaperone
- Bring in your special knowledge or come in as a speaker
- Prepare food for special school events
- Lead a club/sport team
- Participate in the parent organization
- Serve on the school board

# OTHER INFORMATION

#### CLASSROOM PLACEMENTS

It is school policy that we do not accept parent requests for particular teachers or classmates. Teachers work very diligently to place all students in a classroom, which will be beneficial to their needs and learning styles.

The staff regards the annual assignment of students to classrooms to be a very important process and task. Many hours are spent weighing and considering a number of factors to create a classroom where each student can learn and thrive. Factors considered in recommending a classroom include:

- · a balance of boys and girls
- a range of academic abilities
- special needs
- social and emotional development
- learning styles

Final approval of class lists rests with the Academic Director. Parents/students are informed who their child (ren)'s new teacher(s) will be at the annual Open House in the fall.

# **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Electronic devices are not to be seen, heard or used at school UNLESS A STUDENT IS IN A CLASSROOM AND UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION AND PERMISSION OF A TEACHER. If students are seen using cell phones or other electronic devices during the school day, the device will be confiscated and it will be necessary for a parent/legal guardian to come to school to retrieve the item at the end of the school day.

Music devices (w/ headphones) and appropriate video games (w/ mute) may be used on the bus traveling to and from school. They are NOT allowed on field trips.

\*\*Cell phones with picture taking capability are not to be used during the school day and are prohibited in the bathroom areas at all times.

These are the exceptions to this rule:

- 1. Calculators and electronic hand held planners that are being used appropriately and with teacher permission.
- 2. IPods or personal music players with headphones used as an educational accommodation, which has been approved by the administration, special education

department, and classroom teacher.

The school may keep devices that are confiscated until a parent/legal guardian comes to pick it up and meets with a school official or teacher.

DaVinci Academy is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen electronic devices.

# **INTERNET USE**

Students may access only files or programs that they have permission to enter. Violations of any guidelines in this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of internet use. In addition, the school may advise appropriate legal officials of any illegal violations.

## ITEMS FROM HOME

DaVinci Academy will not assume responsibility for loss or damage to any personal possessions students bring to school. Students should not bring expensive personal items or large sums of money to school. No weapons, real or toy, are allowed at school. Additionally, no electronic devices, (i.e., Game Boys, CD players, iPods) are allowed to be used at school.

# **LOCKERS**

Lockers are available for student use. Student lockers are the property of Davinci Academy of Arts and Science and as such are subject to inspection at any time.

# LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found area for clothing, books, etc., is located in the back entrance area. The students will assume responsibility for any item brought to school. If your child leaves something on the school bus please call Kottke's Bus Company at 763-755-3100.

## PARENT CONTACT DURING SCHOOL DAY

# **Contacting a Student**

Should it become necessary for a parent to contact a child during school hours, this must be done through the school office instead of interrupting the classroom. Please do not go directly to the classroom.

DaVinci Academy realizes the importance of providing a learning environment for all students that is free of distractions and disruptions. Whenever possible, parents/legal guardians should arrange to meet with and/or talk with their children outside the school day.

# PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

The PTO is an independent organization that meets monthly and the schedule is posted on DaVinci Academy's website. PTO exists to help foster the link between school, parents/legal guardians, and the community. By sponsoring different school events, these three elements are brought together to help students see school as a vital part of their lives in and out of the classroom. PTO also coordinates the raising of needed dollars for additional academic activities. As a school parent/legal guardian, your involvement in the PTO will be for the good of the whole school community. Parents/legal guardians are always welcome to join and become active participants.

# PHOTOS: PERMISSION FOR USE/ OPT OUT

Parents/guardians give permission for us to use photos of their child (ren) in our school publications and on our website. Our website and written communications will not combine an image of a minor (student) with his/her last name name. We are committed to our families, the privacy of their child (ren), and the right of privacy throughout our publications and communications.

If you would not like your student (s) photo published in any of our publications, please fill out the form provided at the beginning of the school year. Election to opt out must be completed each year you choose not to include your student(s) photo in school publications.

#### **SECURITY**

All doors will be locked between 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. except the front entrance of the school. Access at the front door requires visitors to ring the bell to be allowed entrance. All visitors must check in at the office. To ensure all our students' safety, a visitor or volunteer tag is necessary beyond the office area.

## SCHOOL PICTURES

School pictures are taken at the beginning of the school year. All students have their picture taken whether or not a package is purchased. Package choices and payment are made before the pictures are taken. Payment or returned pictures are due after parents/legal guardians view the packages. We may also schedule spring pictures in which parents may choose to have their children participate.

# **TELEPHONE USE BY STUDENTS**

Students may only use the office phone for urgent or emergency calls. Making social plans is not considered an emergency. Teachers and students are not able to take calls during instruction. If there are emergency messages that need to be given during the school day, please leave the message in the office.

# TEXTBOOKS, LIBRARY BOOKS, TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER SCHOOL MATERIALS

It is the responsibility of DaVinci Academy students to return textbooks, computers, classroom library books and any other school materials at the end of the school year in good condition. Parents/legal guardians must assume responsibility for damage to or loss of any textbooks, classroom library books, audio/visual equipment or other school materials used by their child/children. Replacement costs and/or damage fines will be assessed for any lost or damaged materials. These fines must be paid in full before a final report card will be issued. The teachers, in conjunction with the Executive Director, will determine these fees.

## UNIFORM / DRESS CODE

(Except from Policy 504)

The purpose of this policy is to minimize distraction and focus students' attention on their work at school rather than their attire, and to project a unified school image, which is proper and neat in appearance, reflecting the important work of the school. The dress code is a means to support and promote the mission and vision of the school.

As with all school operations, dress code requirements shall be nonsectarian and ensure student safety. The school may restrict the wearing of any attire otherwise complying with the dress code where the wearing of such attire would compromise the student's physical safety in a particular situation (e.g. the wearing of any jewelry may be prohibited during physical education for safety reasons).

School Administrators may approve modified uniform days or non-uniform days for events, field trips, student moral and other uses at their discretion.

# **RESPONSIBILITY**

The implementation of the DaVinci Academy dress code is a shared responsibility.

- A. Parents/legal guardians are expected to ensure their children are in compliance.
- B. Students are expected to comply with the dress code on a daily basis and encourage their classmates to do the same.
- C. Staff will enforce the dress code in a positive and reassuring manner with oversight from the Student Development Coordinator.

# **POLICY ENFORCEMENT**

When a student appears at school out of uniform, they will be required to correct the violation. Parents may be contacted to bring alternative clothing immediately to school. Refusal to comply with this policy may result in a discipline referral.

# **DRESS CODE GUIDELINES**

# Polo Shirts (girls and boys)

Color	Solid red
Style	Polo (short or long sleeve); long sleeve undershirts are <u>not allowed</u> under a short sleeve polo shirt. See <i>Accessories</i> for information on undershirts.
Other Info	Polo shirts required under all sweaters and sweatshirts (see below); polo shirts must be tucked in and fit appropriately.

# Sweaters, Sweatshirts & Fleece (girls and boys)

Color	Solid red, solid white or solid black
Style	Cardigan, V-neck or crew neck. No hooded sweatshirt allowed
Other Info	Polo shirts required under all options with collar visible

# Pants/Shorts (girls and boys)

Color	Black or khaki
Style	Fitted or elastic waist; chino, Dockers or cargo style
	Not allowed, for example: Denim jeans, black jeans, sweatpants or
	athletic style, oversized pants, bicycle/spandex shorts, cut-offs,
	leggings/jeggings/yoga pants, short-shorts or boxer shorts
Fabric	Twill, cotton or cotton blend or polyester blend (i.e. Dockers style)
Other info	Pants and shorts must be hemmed. Shorts must be knee length. Must
	fit appropriately and be free of holes.

# **Skirts/Skorts/Jumpers/Capris (girls)**

Color	Black or khaki
Style	Fitted or elastic waist
	Not allowed, for example: Netting, lace, multi-layers, denim
Fabric	Twill, cotton or cotton blend or polyester blend.
Other info	Must be longer than finger-tip length and fit appropriately. If the skirt,
	skort or jumper is shorter than one-inch above the knee, students must
	wear black or white leggings/tights underneath.

# **WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS**

Once a student is enrolled in the school, you do not need to reapply for your student to return the following year(s). If you are withdrawing your child(ren) from school, please call or come by the school at least one week prior to the withdrawal date. Please note the last day your child(ren) will attend. This will give ample time to complete the paperwork and make your child(ren)'s leaving an easier transition.

## WELLNESS

DaVinci Academy is committed to providing a healthy school environment that encourages, promotes, and protects student's health, well being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. The policy can be read in its entirety on our website.

# > 533 Wellness

Please do not bring sweets as birthday treats. Consider alternatives such as donating a book to your classroom, bringing in bookmarks for classmates, coming to read to the class, or other ways to celebrate your child's birthday.