



SENECA ACADEMY

Turning Experience Into Knowledge

Parent Handbook 2018-2019

*15601 Germantown Road
Darnestown, MD 20874
(301) 869-3728*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the Head of School	1
Mission Statement	2
Vision	2
Diversity Statement	2
Nondiscrimination Policy.....	2
Administrative Offices	3
General School Information	3
Board of Trustees.....	3
Stewardship, Donations, and Fundraising.....	3
Helping Your Child Succeed at School.....	3
Preparing Your Child for School.....	4
Drop-Off and Pick-Up Policies.....	4
Carpool Line Procedures.....	5
Health and Medical Information.....	5
Food Allergy Policy.....	6
Lunch and Snack.....	7
Outdoor Learning.....	7
Tuition and Fees.....	7
Financial Aid.....	8
Student Records.....	8
Library and Media Center Use.....	8
Visitors and Volunteers.....	8
Parties and Birthdays.....	9
Special Events.....	9
School Communications.....	9
Contacting Faculty and Administrative Staff.....	10
Pictures.....	10
Dismissal from School.....	10
Anti-Bullying Policy.....	10
Emergency Information	11
Full Day School Closing or Delayed Opening.....	11
Weather and Other Emergencies.....	12
Early Closing.....	12
School Evacuation.....	12
Code Blue Procedures.....	12
Preschool Policies	13
Parent's Day Out (PDO) Program.....	13
Preschool Curriculum.....	13
Preschool Registration and Admission.....	14
Lunch Bunch.....	14
Preschool Clubs.....	15
Discipline.....	16
Progress Reports and Parent Conferences.....	16
Preschool Pop-Ins.....	16
Clothing.....	16
Toilet Training.....	16
Field Trips.....	17

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Elementary School Policies.....	17
Elementary Curriculum	17
Elementary Admissions	17
Contracts.....	18
Class Times	18
Elementary Clubs	18
Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices	19
Attendance	19
Parent Visit Days	20
Field Trips	20
Uniform Policy	20
Discipline	21
Assessments, Report Cards, and Conferences	21
Technology	22
Homework Policy	22
Tutoring	23
Seneca Academy Parents Association.....	23

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This handbook is updated annually and contains the current policies and procedures of the school.
Parents will be notified of any revisions to the handbook.

LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Seneca Academy! We look forward to an exciting year filled with engaging learning experiences for everyone in our community.

In the months to come, please do not hesitate to call your child's teacher or me at the school office at 301-869-3728 if you have any questions about your child's program or progress. We know that it "takes a village to raise a child" and look forward to being part of your village.

Teachers will send newsletters home monthly (preschool) or at the beginning of Units of Inquiry (elementary) describing the learning activities of the class. The school will also send a weekly newsletter via email, FoxTales, updating families on school activities and upcoming events. Periodically, you will also receive other notices from teachers and the office. It is important for you to carefully read these communications and to mark important dates on your calendar at home.

We are proud to be an International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IB PYP) World School. Our focus is on engaging students to think deeply about critical and relevant issues; communicate effectively using a variety of verbal, non-verbal, artistic, and technological media; and interact positively with peers and adults to acquire information, solve problems, and promote friendships. Please look for formal and informal opportunities provided during the year for you to learn more about the IB PYP and how we integrate this into our daily educational practices.

Thank you for choosing Seneca Academy for your child's education. We value your family as part of our community of learners and look forward to working with your child as they "turn experience into knowledge."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MP', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michelle Parker, Ph.D.
Head of School

Welcome to 2018-2019

MISSION STATEMENT

Seneca Academy provides an engaging, challenging, inquiry-based education in a nurturing and diverse environment as an International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IB/PYP) World School. Through the IB PYP, students develop the intellectual, physical, emotional and social skills to excel in a rapidly changing world.

VISION

To develop globally aware citizens who are life-long learners and leaders.

We believe in turning experience into knowledge through...

- Engaging students in developmentally appropriate active learning - indoors and outdoors
- Nurturing students in small classes
- Challenging students to meet their personal best
- Encouraging self-confidence and independence
- Fostering responsibility, respect and reflection
- Developing principled communicators and problem-solvers

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Seneca Academy actively and routinely promotes and celebrates our diverse community. Our hiring and admissions practices, as well as curriculum and programs, are designed to advance understanding and inclusion of individuals and families of diverse ability, age, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, politics, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. Furthermore, in order to achieve our vision of “developing globally aware citizens who are life-long learners and leaders,” Seneca Academy is an International Baccalaureate World School. As such, we are guided by the IB mission statement:

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Nondiscrimination Policy

Seneca Academy is non-denominational and does not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, gender, race, religion, politics, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status in the admission of children or the hiring of staff members. Seneca Academy seeks to admit students who will benefit from its philosophy, values, and program.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

Address	15601 Germantown Road Darnestown, MD 20874
Phone	301-869-3728
Fax	301-869-3348
Website	https://www.senecaacademy.org
Email	office@senecaacademy.org

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

Board of Trustees

Seneca Academy is governed by a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees comprised of 5 to 15 individuals who provide oversight and strategic thinking for the school. Board members serve an initial one-year term. If reelected, trustees then serve a three-year term. Trustees can be reelected two more times for a total of ten years. The Head of School is responsible to the Board for the governance of the school. Information about the current members of the Board of Trustees can be found on the school's website.

Stewardship, Donations, and Fundraising

Seneca Academy, like all independent schools, depends upon the generosity of our community to sustain and advance the mission of the school. Our fundraising efforts help bridge the gap between what it actually costs to attend Seneca Academy and what is covered by tuition. On a typical year, approximately 20% of the operating budget of the school is covered through fundraising.

Seneca Academy fundraising consists of three major initiatives:

1. Annual Fund – provides essential revenue for the operating budget to support the school's ability to keep tuition competitive while maintaining the best educational environment for both students and teachers.
2. Annual Gala or Auction – provides additional support to the operating budget as well as funding for specific initiatives like playground and classroom enhancements, professional development and special programming.
3. Third-party fundraisers such as Box Tops, grocery store rewards, and Amazon Smile – provide support for student programs.

All gifts to Seneca Academy are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law. Donors will receive an official gift receipt for tax purposes.

Helping Your Child Succeed at School

Please remember to:

- Bring your child to school on time and pick your child up promptly at dismissal time. Call the school office at 301-869-3728 if an emergency arises that interferes with normal drop-off and pick-up.
- Please notify the school of absences related to illnesses or health-care appointments. The school is required to comply with Maryland truancy laws by reporting excessive absences/tardiness of students to the State Department of Education.
- Label all removable clothing. The school office maintains a Lost and Found; please check it regularly, as all items are donated to charity at the end of each trimester.
- Ensure that your child brings their tote bag (preschool) or backpack (elementary) to school every day as well as their communication folder.
- For students in Grades 2-5, ensure that they have their homework planner every day.
- Check your student's folders/homework planner daily for important information and completed work.

- When sending checks/money to school, use a sealed envelope with the name of your child, the name of the teacher, and purpose of the funds clearly marked.
- Notify the school office immediately of a change of mailing or email address, change of telephone number, or change in emergency numbers.
- Read all school newsletters/notices carefully.
- Participate in Seneca Academy Parents Association (SAPA) events and volunteer to support the school as often as you are able.

Preparing Your Child for School

Teach your child to:

- dress him/herself, including clothes, coat, and shoes
- know his/her full name, address, and phone number
- care for toilet needs
- use and dispose of tissue properly
- wash and dry hands
- put away toys and other possessions
- take turns
- listen when others are talking
- express him/herself verbally
- plan time and organize materials to accomplish homework independently

Help your child by:

- providing a nutritious breakfast
- encouraging independence
- giving reasonable responsibilities at home
- being selective in television viewing choices and screen time
- providing proper tools at home (scissors, pencils, calculators, etc.) and allowing the use of these items
- facilitating adequate sleep each night
- reading regularly to him/her and/or encouraging independent reading
- consistently arriving to school on time

Your child's performance at school may be affected by a lack of sleep or by not following a positive morning routine. We have information available if you would like suggestions in these areas.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Policies

Drop-off:

Drop-off takes place in front of the Seneca Academy building.

For preschool, staff members begin the drop-off procedure shortly before official class time.

Kindergarten through fifth grade students' drop-off is between 8:15 and 8:25 am.

We ask that parents do not walk children to class. This helps with the transition to school for both your child and the rest of the children in the class. If parents need to drop something off for the class, or will be volunteering in class, please drop your child off in the carpool line, park, and come to the office to sign in and receive a visitor's badge before proceeding to the classroom.

For late arrivals, parents must park and come into the office to sign in their child. An office staff member will supervise the student's transition to class.

Pick-up:

Every student in preschool and elementary is issued a number to display in the driver's-side corner of the front windshield during pick-up time. Children are brought to the porch for dismissal and are called by number. Carpools are encouraged, and when a carpool is formed, children are issued an additional number. All students are released only to parents and other adults designated in writing by the parents.

Parent's Day Out (PDO) students are generally dismissed from the playground. Parents will be issued a number to bring with them at pick-up time; students will be released only to parents and other adults designated in writing by the parents. In case of inclement weather, parents are asked to pick their children up from the classroom at dismissal time. Parents are asked to wait until dismissal time before picking their child up to facilitate a smooth transition for all.

For early pick-up, parents must come to the office to sign the child out. An office staff member will bring the child to the office for dismissal.

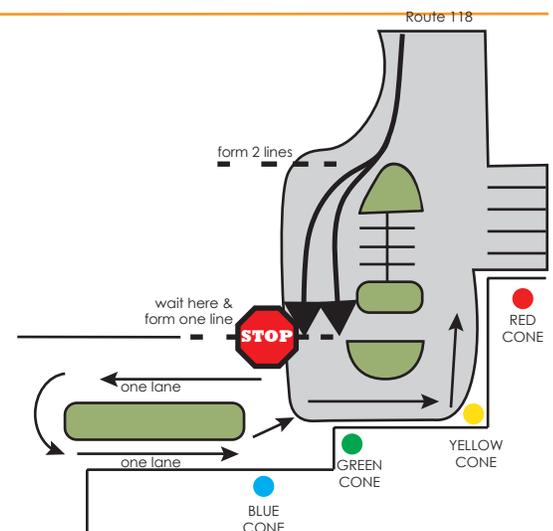
Carpool Line Procedures

Instructions:

1. Form 2 lines until you reach the stop sign.
2. Wait at the stop sign for a staff member to direct you to begin the single lane line.
3. Alternate one car at a time from each lane into the single lane. The car on the right (curb) side goes first.
4. For drop-off and pick-up, pull up to the first available cone. Please do not pass cars stopped at cones in front of you.
5. Parents **MUST NOT** get out of the car at drop-off or pick-up.
6. If you need to help a child put on their seat belt, please pull forward into a parking space and perform that function. Our staff is not allowed to buckle seatbelts for children.

Additional Information

- Once carpool is in progress, we ask that you refrain from using cell phones.
- Coming early for drop-off and pick-up complicates the procedure! Please arrive as close to scheduled pick-up times as possible.
- Children's car seats should be placed on the passenger side of the car if possible to facilitate unloading.
- Your family will be assigned an individual number. It is important that your child knows who the pick-up person is, and that you send a note to the teacher if it is not the regular person. (For last-minute changes, please call the office directly.) Display the number on the driver's side.
- If you are carpooling with another family, both families must send a written request for an additional carpool number.
- If you lose your carpool number or would like an additional one for another caregiver, please contact the office.



Health and Medical Information

Maryland law requires that your child's file contains health and immunization forms completed by a doctor or the Health Department. Children entering kindergarten must have a new, complete health record on file. No student will be allowed to attend school without submitting the appropriate health and immunization forms. In order for a student to be exempted from providing certification of immunization, a religious or medical exemption form must be submitted.

For the protection of all students, children must be kept home if they have a fever of 101° or higher, diarrhea or vomiting, have an undiagnosed rash, or show any other signs of illness. Your child must be free from fever and diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school. If a child has had two or more episodes of vomiting within a 24-hour period, they may not return to school until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours.

If a child is too sick to participate in **all** aspects of our curriculum (including PE and outdoor play), they need to stay home. If a child is absent three or more days due to illness, a doctor's note clearing them to return to school is required.

A parent will be called to pick up any student coming to school with signs of illness or developing symptoms at school.

Parents should notify the school if their child is diagnosed with a communicable disease. The school will notify parents regarding exposure, as appropriate.

Students who have evidence of lice (including nits) will not be allowed to remain in school. Following treatment, students need to be checked in the office before returning to class. Parents of students who have been in affected classrooms will be notified and, in addition, we will take necessary steps to eradicate possible infestation at school. We also require that students keep their personal belongings separate until there is resolution. We will check all of the students' heads in this classroom for lice as soon as possible.

In the event of an accident, minor first aid treatment is administered at school. If a child needs to go home, the parent is called, and the child remains in the office until the parent arrives.

In the event of a medical emergency, we will call 911. We then attempt to call the parents or others designated by the parents. School personnel will accompany and remain with the student until parents or others designated by the parents are present.

If a child requires the administration of any medication at school, including over-the-counter medications, a Medication Administration Form must be completed by a physician and returned to school. Forms are available in the office.

Seneca Academy contracts with Health Link, LLC to provide an on-call delegating nurse. The delegating nurse does not provide direct care to students but provides consultations and supervises the administration of medications by staff personnel specifically trained as Certified Medication Technicians (CMT). The delegating nurse also ensures that best practices are being followed in all aspects of maintaining the health of our students.

Food Allergy Policy

Seneca Academy does not certify any room to be allergen-free but exercises caution to ensure the safety of students with food allergies. Procedures are in place to respond to the needs of students with allergies. Visit the office for more information and a copy of the complete Food Allergy Policy.

Lunch and Snack

Children who have lunch at school should bring a lunch box or bag lunch with a thermos or drink. Lunch should contain foods that the child normally eats and that do not require refrigeration or warming. Pre-school students are provided a small mid-morning snack. Elementary students may bring a mid-morning snack. This should be a small healthy snack ONLY. Although students may get water from their classroom water fountains, we encourage you to send a reusable water bottle with them each day.

Tips for Successful Lunches:

- Send food that your child enjoys at home
- Send food in child-sized quantities
- Use containers your child can independently manage
- Include a napkin and all necessary eating utensils
- Do not send in soda or red drinks
- Limit candy and other sweets

Outdoor Learning

The benefits of outdoor learning are many, including development of fine and gross motor skills, self-regulation, risk assessment, and interpersonal skills. Students can also practice and improve cognitive skills and take them back into the classroom. Our faculty and staff are mindful of the risks associated with a natural environment and aim to balance play and exploration with safety. Students are guided to recognize and deal with risk as they learn about risk management and personal safety.

Risks include but are not limited to:

- Injuries from physical activity (bumps, bruises, scratches, twisted ankles)
- Rashes or scratches from plants (thistles, tree branches)
- Contact with insects (stings/bites, ticks)
- Sun exposure and inclement weather – Students go outside almost every day in all types of weather.
- Seasonal allergens (pollen, grass)

Tuition and Fees

Upon acceptance to a program, a nonrefundable tuition deposit (and \$60 registration fee for preschool) is due. Tuition, along with annual care, may be paid in 1, 2, or 10 payments. A discount is applied if all fees are paid in one payment by May 15th for the upcoming school year (see below for the PDO program). All families choosing the 2 or 10 payment plans must use the school's tuition management service, whereby payments are automatically drawn from a bank account or debit/credit card beginning in May (August for PDO) based on the plan selected.

The school does not refund for days absent due to illness, vacation, or inclement weather. Students may be dismissed from the school for payments more than 10 days late. Parents are encouraged to contact the office if there are unusual circumstances that may preclude prompt payment of fees. The school retains the right to refer delinquent accounts to a third-party collection agency.

Any change in enrollment status for the school year (including withdrawal) will incur a \$60 status change-fee. A fee of \$30 will be assessed for any returned check or electronic payment. Student records are not released until all financial obligations have been cleared with the school.

Elementary

As stated in the contract, parents/guardians are responsible for the remainder of the tuition and materials/activity fees for the year unless the Head of School is notified in writing by May 1st prior to the beginning of the school year.

Preschool

Preschool students may withdraw from school by submitting a written notice 14 days prior to withdrawal. Parents are charged for the entire month in which the withdrawal occurs. Registration fees and deposits are nonrefundable.

Parents Day Out (PDO)

Tuition may be paid in one, two, or six payments. A discount is applied if all fees are paid in one payment by July 15th for the upcoming school year. Families choosing the two or six payment plans must use the school's tuition management service, with payments beginning in August.

Financial Aid

Financial aid may be available for eligible students in preschool 3's through fifth grade. Parents wishing to apply for financial aid must submit a financial aid application to FAST by January 2nd. The financial aid application, which will remain confidential, and information about the financial aid process are found on the school's website: <https://www.senecaacademy.org/financial-aid/>. The Financial Aid Committee will meet in February to allocate funds and will notify families after that meeting. Please contact the business office for guidance with the financial aid process.

Student Records

A parent or guardian has the right to review student records. Seneca Academy policy requires that such review take place in the presence of the Educational Director or the Head of School. Student records are released to third parties only upon written consent by the parents or guardian.

Records are not released until all financial obligations have been cleared with the school.

Library and Media Center Use

Each classroom has a grade-level library available for students' use, as well as reference books. Elementary school students are provided a system to take home books from their class libraries. Children in all classes have free reading periods scheduled in the classroom and are encouraged to read daily at home.

In addition, the Media Center provides a resource library for teachers and students. Books, magazines and other media are available.

Visitors and Volunteers

We encourage and appreciate parent participation at school both during class time and at other times. Teachers often provide opportunities for interested parents to volunteer in the classroom. The Seneca Academy Parent Association (SAPA) encourages the participation of every parent and has a variety of volunteer opportunities.

In accordance with best practices in school safety procedures, Seneca Academy requires a criminal background check for all volunteers who have direct contact with students. Prior to volunteering, a Background Check Authorization Form must be signed and returned to the office. Background checks are conducted on the following websites: <http://casesearch.court.md.us/> and <http://www.nsopw.gov>. Information obtained through these searches is considered confidential and used strictly to determine eligibility for volunteering. Background checks are valid for 3 years. Seneca Academy reserves the right to determine eligibility for volunteering at the school in its sole discretion and to withdraw such eligibility at any time.

Upon arrival, visitors and volunteers must stop at the office to sign in and receive a visitor's badge that must be worn while in the building. This helps to ensure the safety of all our community members. Please be sure to sign out when you leave.

Parents are reminded that observations of children made while volunteering at school are protected by confidentiality laws, and the behavior and academic skills of children should not be discussed. In addition, so that parents may focus on their Seneca Academy child, classroom volunteers may not bring other children with them.

Parties and Birthdays

Parents may be asked to assist with in-class parties either as a classroom helper or by contributing food or supplies. Teachers or Room Parents will communicate directly with parents regarding these events.

Birthdays may be celebrated at school with a special snack by prior arrangement with your child's teacher. Outside birthday or other party invitations may be given out at school only if every child in the class is invited. Invitations should be given to the teacher for distribution.

No goody bags or favors of any kind (pencils, stickers, candy, etc.) are allowed to be distributed at school at any time.

Special Events

Many special events for community building and information sharing are held during the school year. Information about these events is shared weekly in the FoxTales newsletter that is emailed to all parents and on the school calendar on our website. These include Meet & Greets, Back to School Nights, and the What to Expect presentations, among others.

The Seneca Academy Parents Association (SAPA) plans many school-wide activities such as the Fall Homecoming, Spring Picnic, Book Fairs, World Cultures Celebration, and STEAM Fair. SAPA communicates with the community about these events through electronic invitations, our Facebook page, the weekly FoxTales newsletter, and the school calendar on our website. Please visit the SAPA section in the parent portal on the Seneca Academy website or email the Steering Committee at senecaparents@gmail.com.

School Communications

Weekly School Newsletters

The FoxTales newsletter is distributed by email to all parents (typically on Thursday afternoons) and is a combination of school and SAPA news.

SenecaAcademy.org

The school website contains information on school policies, admissions, and registration. The school calendar, photos, and links to other helpful websites are also available.

Class Newsletters

A newsletter is emailed or sent home by each teacher at the beginning of every month in preschool or Unit of Inquiry in elementary. This provides information about activities and learning that have taken place and are coming up in the near future as well as important dates to remember.

Yearbook

The yearbook is published at the end of the school year and contains individual photos of each child in preschool 3's through fifth grade, teachers, and staff members, as well as class photos and candid photos of classroom activities and special events. The school provides a copy of the yearbook to each student in preschool 3's – fifth grade.

School Directory

A password-protected printable directory will be available on the website in the parent portal.

Bulletin Board

The bulletin board in our main hallway has paper copies of electronic announcements, the preschool snack schedule, and other items of interest.

Remind

The school partners with [Remind.com](https://www.remind.com) to provide text notifications of emergency closures, early dismissals, and other pertinent information. Instructions on opting in are provided to parents via email and are available in the parent portal of our website.

Contacting Faculty and Administrative Staff

All teachers and administrative staff have a Seneca Academy email address. The format for school email is *first initial last name @senecaacademy.org*. For example, to reach Dr. Michelle Parker, the email address is mparker@senecaacademy.org. The format to contact the office manager is office@senecaacademy.org.

Teachers will respond to email within one working day. Teachers will share specifics about the times that they access email during Meet and Greet and Back to School nights. Do not assume teachers will receive your communication during the school day. They are often busy with teaching and are not expected to be responding to email. In the case of a time-sensitive message or emergency, please call the school office at (301) 869-3728 or email office@senecaacademy.org.

Pictures

Seneca Academy takes pictures of our students, staff, and school building and grounds regularly to document and celebrate our activities. We post pictures in our classrooms and around the school. The school also creates an annual yearbook with pictures of all students in preschool 3's-fifth grade.

As part of the enrollment or reenrollment process, parents are asked to sign a media release form. This indicates whether or not parents allow the school to use their student's photos in communications and marketing materials such as in the FoxTales newsletter, on our webpage or Facebook page, and in brochures and flyers. Students' full names will not be used in any material other than the yearbook.

Seneca Academy will assume that parents who do not complete a media release form are authorizing the school to use their child's picture in communications and marketing documents. If parents indicate they do not want their child's image to be used, we will do our best to honor that request. Seneca Academy cannot guarantee, however, that your child will not appear in a group photo or in a photograph or video that might be taken or shared by a student, parent, other individual, or the press.

Dismissal from School

A child may be dismissed from school should he or she require an inordinate amount of individual attention from staff members, demonstrates consistently disruptive or dangerous behavior at school, or if tuition is unpaid for that child.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Seneca Academy believes that an atmosphere of safety, courtesy, and respect is critical in order to ensure optimal learning. The school's program, schedules, and curricula are all designed to foster an environment that nurtures caring, principled young people who demonstrate empathy, cooperation, and integrity. Bullying, harassment, and intimidation have no place in the Seneca Academy environment and are prohibited, as they create an atmosphere of fear, mistrust, and suspicion that negatively impacts learning.

Seneca Academy defines bullying, harassment, and intimidation as any repeated intentional written, verbal, or physical act, including an electronic communication, that:

1. Physically harms an individual;
2. Damages an individual's property;
3. Is intended to frighten or intimidate;
4. Creates a sense of inferiority in an individual;
5. Creates an unpleasant or hostile situation by uninvited and/or unwelcome verbal or physical conduct;
6. Substantially interferes with an individual's education or learning environment; or
7. Places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual's person, property, or mental state.

Individuals who witness or become aware of bullying, harassment, or intimidation by Seneca Academy community members are responsible for informing the Seneca Academy administration (Head of School or Educational Director) so that consequences and remedial actions may take place. Individuals who provide such information are protected from reprisal or retaliation. However, individuals who make false claims of bullying, harassment, or intimidation will receive consequences.

The Head of School, Educational Director, or their designee will respond immediately (within 24 hours) of a report of bullying, harassment, or intimidation by investigating the allegations. During the investigation time, close attention will be paid to the alleged victim(s) to ensure that additional acts and/or retaliation do not occur.

If bullying, harassment or intimidation are determined to have taken place, an appropriate consequence that includes education about the effects of bullying, harassment, and intimidation, as well as action to restore a safe environment, will be given. In addition, the parents of the perpetrator(s) and the victim(s) will be contacted and informed of the event(s).

If repeated acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation take place, suspension and/or expulsion of an individual from the school may occur.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Parents are strongly encouraged to promptly inform the school of any changes in current home, work, and cell telephone numbers as well as email addresses. In addition, parents must provide at least one other local emergency contact to the school via the Emergency Form. This ensures that we can contact you or a designee in the event of an emergency.

Full Day School Closing or Delayed Opening

The Head of School or her designee determines the need to close school or delay opening due to snow or other weather emergencies or facilities problems. Information about school closings can be heard on radio stations WTOP and WMAL and on television channels 7 (ABC) and 8 (NewsChannel). These sources are notified about the school's decision to close by 6:30 am. Parents will also be sent closure and delay information via email, as well as texts if they have opted in to receive them via Remind.com. In addition, all efforts are made to have current emergency information on our website www.SenecaAcademy.org and the [Seneca Academy Facebook page](#). Please note that in the event of a delayed opening, all classes end at their regularly scheduled time.

We encourage parents to use their best judgment about school attendance given their local weather and road conditions.

Note: Seneca Academy does NOT necessarily follow decisions of Montgomery County Schools regarding delay or cancellation.

Weather and Other Emergencies

Should a weather or other emergency occur while school is in session, teachers will be instructed in accordance with the school emergency plan as to where to take their children and procedures to follow. In the event of a weather emergency requiring shelter, teachers will be instructed to take their children to the lowest indoor place in the building, our lower hallway. Students will not be moved from this location until the Head of School or her designee determines that conditions are safe and directs students to move. The school has a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) emergency alert radio with batteries, which was provided by the Department of Homeland Security. This radio is programmed to alert for severe weather and major emergencies. The Head of School or her designee monitors this radio daily.

Early Closing

If it becomes necessary for school to close early due to weather or facilities problems, parents will be notified via the Emergency Phone Tree, email, and text (if parents have opted in via Remind.com). Morning preschool classes will typically dismiss as regularly scheduled. Dismissal time for Grades K-5 will be communicated through the above methods of communication. All after-school activities (including Fox and Kit Clubs) will be cancelled. This information will also be placed on the Seneca Academy [Facebook page](#) and our website www.SenecaAcademy.org. We ask that you refrain from calling the school to inquire about school closure status, unless it is an an emergency, in order to keep the phone line open.

School Evacuation

If it becomes necessary to evacuate the building, students will be escorted to one of the following locations:

St. Nicholas Episcopal Church

15575 Germantown Road, Darnestown

(Access the Church parking lot through the Seneca Academy teacher and staff parking lot.)

Butler School

15951 Germantown Road, Darnestown

Code Blue Procedures

If a local MCPS school announces a Code Blue situation, Seneca Academy will immediately check that all outside doors are locked and release children only to authorized adults. Only persons known to the school or who can show acceptable cause and identification may enter the building. All measures will be taken to assure the safety of students and personnel.

Should there be an emergency situation where the children cannot leave the building the following procedure will be used.

1. All windows and doors will immediately be closed and locked.
2. All students will be brought to the Gathering Room.
3. Emergency water and light snacks will be dispensed as needed.
4. Children will not be allowed to leave the building until the Maryland State Department of Education or the United States Government declares it is safe to exit the building.
5. Children will not be released to parents until the appropriate governmental authorities indicate it is safe for students. Parents should not come to the school until informed by public news sources.
6. Teachers must remain with students until all are released to parents or another designated adult.

The school has a NOAA emergency alert radio with batteries, which has been programmed to alert for severe weather and major emergencies. Flashlights and other supplies are available in the building.

PRESCHOOL POLICIES

The Seneca Academy preschool, formerly Circle School, has been in existence since 1983. Our preschool class sizes are some of the smallest in the area and our staff-to-student ratio exceeds state requirements, ensuring that each child gets the attention he or she needs. The school motto – “Turning Experience into Knowledge” – reflects the school’s mission of teaching students experientially. All of our preschool teachers have, at a minimum, college degrees, as well as specific training in early childhood education.

Parent’s Day Out (PDO)

The Parent’s Day Out (PDO) program has two primary goals. First, the program provides parents an opportunity to leave their children for a few hours in a safe and nurturing setting on a consistent schedule every week. Our second goal is to help young children gain independence skills as they practice separating from their parents and interacting in a group setting.

During their time in PDO, children will experience many activities including music and movement, outdoor play, story time, and arts & crafts. The schedule of the day is designed to be responsive to the needs of children as they transition from 2-year-old toddler to 3-year-old preschooler. All children are encouraged to explore at their own pace and comfort level. There is a plan for each day that includes both active and quiet times, and provides the children opportunities to socialize with peers and adults.

For more information on PDO, please visit [the PDO page on the Seneca Academy website](#).

Preschool Curriculum

Seneca Academy has been an authorized International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme since 2012 and provides an inquiry-based, globally-minded curriculum to all students, starting with our 3-year-old programs. Our school’s Program of Inquiry (available on our website) describes the units of study for each class and guides our yearly curriculum planning. Each preschool class explores four transdisciplinary Units of Inquiry, spending six or more weeks on each unit.

Through our Program of Inquiry, children in the preschool program are introduced to language arts, mathematics and scientific thinking, social studies, art, music, and physical development in ways that are appropriate for their age and ability. Daily schedules include activities that are child-chosen and teacher-directed and are balanced with active and quiet times. Children have many opportunities to choose activities that are of interest to them. Teachers encourage children to participate in a variety of activities while at school. All students have an active gross motor period daily. We have daily outside play, weather permitting. Our current Program of Inquiry is available on the Seneca Academy website at <https://www.senecaacademy.org/ib-program>.

In addition to the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme, Seneca Academy’s preschool curriculum is also informed by several other programs including early childhood resources Creative Curriculum and Active Learning for 3’s and 4’s. Further details about our preschool curriculum can be found on our website at <https://www.senecaacademy.org/preschool-curriculum>.

Terrific Threes Classes

Seneca Academy offers a variety of preschool 3’s classes to meet the needs of children and their families. We realize young children need time to practice their socialization skills and to begin the journey toward independence. In each of our 3’s classes, children experience a supportive and nurturing environment that provides ample time for guided exploration. Practicing cooperative behavior with classmates and solving problems prepares them for future success. Children examine and explore objects and materials and are stimulated to learn more about their environment. They also participate in dramatic play to encourage

language, expand life experience, and heighten cognitive functions. Each area in the room provides a variety of explorations necessary to stimulate thinking and intellectual growth.

Pre-Kindergarten Fours Classes

Seneca Academy offers a variety of pre-kindergarten class schedules to meet the needs of children and their families. Every pre-kindergarten class is designed to ensure that children are ready for the next educational step into kindergarten.

Young children of this age need a program that encourages social and emotional growth while nurturing and expanding intellectual interests. To round out their school experience, there must be ample opportunity to practice independence and to exercise large muscles by vigorous outside play and small muscles by activities that include cutting, painting and writing. A balanced schedule of child-chosen explorations and teacher-directed activities are essential to successful development.

Pre-kindergarten classes have Spanish with our Spanish teacher and spend ample time participating in music and movement. Music and Spanish are presented during class time.

Preschool Registration and Admission

Preschool is open to all students who will be at least three years old by September 1 of the year in which they enroll. Registration fees and deposits are nonrefundable. Current students and siblings apply in February for the following fall.

Open Houses and tours for new families are held throughout the fall and winter. Applications for new students are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis beginning February 8. All forms for new students must be completed and a tuition deposit and registration fee paid before the registration process is considered complete.

Children are grouped according to age as of September 1 of the current school year. The Head of School has final authority in enrollment and placement of students.

Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch is a program that gives our preschool students an opportunity to enjoy lunch and social time with their friends after class. It is offered Monday through Friday for both our 3-year-olds and our 4-year-olds. Lunch Bunch for our 3-year-olds starts at the end of class (11:45 am) and runs until 12:45 pm. Lunch Bunch for our 4-year-olds starts at 12 pm and runs until 12:45 pm. Children may attend Lunch Bunch one or more days a week. Registration for Lunch Bunch may be contracted for an annual basis or at the beginning of each of the three club terms (fall, winter, spring). Drop-ins are allowed if space is available. Contact the office to schedule.

Children enrolled in Lunch Bunch should bring a bag lunch or a lunch box with a thermos labeled with their name. Send lunch items that your child eats at home. Please do not send items that require refrigeration or heating, soda, or red drinks. Please include a napkin and eating utensils. Juice pouches and Lunchables or other prepackaged lunches are discouraged as they are difficult for young children to manage. See general lunch guidelines on page 7.

Preschool Clubs

Seneca Academy offers two types of clubs for preschool students: Kit Club, our before and after care program offered throughout the year, and activity clubs that are periodically offered after classes. Examples of activity clubs offered in the past have included soccer, karate, science, art, and cooking. Clubs are offered after Lunch Bunch and begin at 12:45 pm.

General Club Policies

- After-school club offerings vary throughout the year. The club schedule is published prior to each term – fall, winter, and spring – with registration and payment instructions.
- Students will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Seneca Academy reserves the right to cancel any club due to underenrollment. There will be a refund for cancelled clubs.
- Students who have an outstanding balance are not eligible to enroll in clubs until their account is current.
- No make-ups will be given for student absences and no credit issued for withdrawal after the payment deadline.
- Students are expected to follow all class and school rules at all times. The teacher reserves the right to refer a student for expulsion from class based on dangerous, disrespectful, or disruptive behaviors.
- Payment is due at the time of club sign-up. Placement in a club is not guaranteed until payment is received.
- Students may not begin attending a club until payment is received or a written payment plan is in place.
- Make-up days for clubs will be determined if the need arises, as the calendar permits.

Kit Club

Kit Club is our before and after school program. Parents may drop children off as early as 7:30 am and pick them up as late as 5:30 pm. Term contract rates are discounted and drop-in care is available with prior approval from the office.

Kit Club Payment Policies

- Kit Club contracts will be charged on a per-term basis (September, October-December, January-March, April-June) and are due at the time of club sign-up. Parents may also sign up for an annual contract and add Kit Club fees to their monthly tuition payments.
- Drop-in care is allowed on a space-available basis, with prior approval from the office, and is billed at the end of each month. Payment is due two weeks from the billing date. There is a \$10 late fee for late payments.
- Changes in Kit Club enrollment after the term begins are assessed an administrative fee of \$25. Late enrollment will also incur a late fee of \$25.
- Late fees for pick-up of your child after 5:30 pm are due within three business days or before your child returns to after-care, whichever comes first.
- Late fees are assessed as follows: \$5.00 for the first five minutes late, \$2.00 for every additional minute.
- There is a \$30.00 charge for returned checks.

Discipline

A variety of classroom strategies are used to maintain a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning. Engaging curriculum, scheduling, and classroom setup are all designed to enable students to manage their behavior as developmentally appropriate. Seneca Academy approaches behavior management and discipline as a means of helping children learn to control their own behavior and to act in an acceptable manner according to their own emotional, intellectual and physical development.

Children are taught that they may not take any action that would hurt themselves or others while at school. Our staff employs techniques from *1, 2, 3, Magic for Teachers* by Thomas Phelan. If behavior warrants, a child may be removed from class and taken to the office of the Educational Director or Head of School. After two incidents requiring removal, parents may be contacted and the child may be sent home for the day. Parents may be required to seek appropriate professional services for their child as a requirement of the child remaining at the school. Should the child demonstrate consistently disruptive behavior requiring disciplinary action, the child may be asked to leave the school permanently. This decision is made solely at the discretion of the Head of the School.

Progress Reports and Parent Conferences

Three-Year-Olds

In November, parents fill out a pre-conference questionnaire that is returned to the classroom teacher. This is followed by a parent-teacher conference to discuss the child's social-emotional progress, as well as a written progress report.

Four-Year-Olds

Progress reports are sent home in November. Progress reports are also shared at a parent-teacher conference held in January.

Parents may conference with teachers on an informal or formal basis at any time throughout the year. A final progress report is sent home for all preschoolers at the end of the year.

Preschool Pop-Ins

Parents are invited to park and come into the school to visit their child's classroom during Preschool Pop-Ins. These are opportunities for your child to share what they have been doing in class. Specific dates and times for your child's class are published in the class newsletter.

Clothing

Children attending the preschool program should wear the same type of clothing worn at home for play. Shoes should be suitable for active play (no sandals or Crocs). All removable clothing should be labeled. Children are learning to do many things for themselves at school and are encouraged to be independent.

An extra set of clothing should be placed in the student's school bag for possible change as we may do messy or wet play at school. These clothes need to be updated throughout the year for appropriate weather and fit.

Toilet Training

All programs, except for Parent's Day Out (PDO), require that a child has been toilet trained. Toilet training is a good indicator of school readiness. Children should be able to manage using the toilet with adult supervision only. *Toilet Training in Less Than a Day* by Nathan Azrin and Richard Fox is a helpful resource. Please contact the office if you need further support.

Field Trips

The number of field trips outside of school for preschool classes varies based on the age and interest of the students. Information about field trips is shared through class newsletters. Some trips are limited in the number of adults that can attend, while others require one parent to attend with each student. Additional fees may be required. For the safety of our students, adults who wish to chaperone a field trip must complete a Volunteer Waiver Form consenting to a background check.

ELEMENTARY POLICIES

The Seneca Academy elementary program begins at kindergarten and continues through fifth grade. Kindergarten has been part of the program since 1985. Our elementary program expanded after completion of the Seneca Academy building in 1998.

In September 2012, Seneca Academy became a fully authorized International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme providing an inquiry-based, globally-minded curriculum.

The school motto – “Turning Experience into Knowledge” – reflects the school’s mission of teaching students experientially. Small classes, well-trained staff, and carefully chosen curriculum assure students’ involvement in their education and encourage students along the path to life-long learning. All of our elementary teachers have, at a minimum, college degrees, as well as specific training in primary education.

Elementary Curriculum

Seneca Academy’s elementary curriculum is informed by a variety of state and national organizations including the International Baccalaureate’s Primary Years Programme, Montgomery County Public Schools, Maryland State Department of Education, and the Common Core State Standards. Further details about our elementary curriculum can be found on our website at <https://www.senecaacademy.org/private-elementary-curriculum>.

Our school’s *Program of Inquiry* describes the units of study for each class and guides our yearly curriculum planning. Each grade explores six transdisciplinary Units of Inquiry (including the distinct disciplines of reading, writing, social studies, mathematics, science and engineering, technology, listening and speaking, and viewing and presenting), spending four to six weeks on each unit. Each unit addresses one of six distinct transdisciplinary themes: *Who we are*, *Where we are in place and time*, *How we express ourselves*, *How the world works*, *How we organize ourselves*, and *Sharing the planet*. In addition, our math curriculum, guided by *Everyday Math*, is linked when applicable to the Units of Inquiry. Our Specialist teachers work with classroom teachers to further integrate art, physical education, Spanish, and music into students’ daily activities. At the beginning of each Unit of Inquiry, parents receive a class newsletter including a description of the unit, along with the skills and abilities students are learning. Our current Program of Inquiry is available on the Seneca Academy website at <https://www.senecaacademy.org/ib-program>.

Elementary Admissions

Enrollment in kindergarten through fifth grade for the following school year begins with an open house or school tour. New student applications are accepted at any time after November 1. Current students and their siblings receive preferential status through February 15. The Admissions Committee will meet after February 15 to discuss new applicants. Enrollment contracts for admitted new students are mailed in early March.

Families with students in Seneca Academy preschool who wish to enroll their child in kindergarten should submit an application along with the \$30 application fee. The transcript release form and student recommendation form are not required. Students enrolled in Seneca Academy preschool will have priority status until February 15.

For new applicants, an application and \$60 application fee are required. Previous school records, teacher recommendations, and the applicant's visit help us assess the child's ability to succeed within our community. Parents' understanding and support of Seneca Academy's philosophy and curriculum are also necessary, as we consider parents our partners in education. To give parents a chance to ask questions and to help us get to know each family and child better, our admissions process also includes a parent meeting with our Head of School. Parents are responsible for advising Seneca Academy about existing IEPs, educational testing results, or learning disabilities at the time of application. Acceptance of children from outside our school is provisional for the first eight weeks of enrollment and is subject to review at that time.

Contracts

Reenrollment contracts are distributed in January. Priority enrollment for current students is reserved until February 15th, after which the Admissions Committee will begin to accept new applicants.

The enrollment contract obligates parents to pay all tuition and materials fees for the full academic year unless the school receives written notice before May 1st. The application fee and tuition deposit are non-refundable. Parents of students not completing the year may request in writing to be released from an elementary contract. Requests are considered by the Board of Trustees on a case-by-case basis.

Class Times

Kindergarten 8:30 am - 3:00 pm Monday – Friday

Grades 1-5 8:30 am - 3:15 pm Monday – Friday

Morning arpool runs from 8:15 am until 8:25 am. Students are considered tardy after 8:30 am.

Elementary Clubs

Seneca Academy offers two types of clubs for elementary students: Fox Club is our before and after care program offered throughout the year, and other various after-school activity clubs are offered in the afternoons.

General Club Policies

- After-school club offerings vary throughout the year. The club schedule is published prior to each term – fall, winter, and spring – with registration and payment instructions.
- Students will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Seneca Academy reserves the right to cancel any club due to underenrollment. There will be a refund for cancelled clubs.
- Students who have an outstanding balance are not eligible to enroll in clubs until their account is current.
- No make-ups will be given for student absences and no credit issued for withdrawal after the payment deadline.
- Students are expected to follow all class and school rules at all times. The teacher reserves the right to refer a student for expulsion from class based on dangerous, disrespectful, or disruptive behaviors.
- Payment is due at the time of club sign-up. Placement in a club is not guaranteed until payment is received.
- Students may not begin attending a club until payment is received or a written payment plan is in place.
- Make-up days for clubs will be determined if the need arises, as the calendar permits.

Fox Club

Fox Club before and after school care is available for Seneca Academy students. AM Fox Club is available from 7:30 until 8:15 am. PM Fox Club is available from 3:00 until 5:30 pm. Contract rates are discounted and drop-in care is available with prior approval from the office. Please contact the office for more information.

Fox Club Payment Policies

- Fox Club contracts will be charged on a per-term basis (September, October-December, January-March, April-June) and are due at the time of club sign-up.
- Drop-in care is allowed on a space-available basis, with prior approval from the office, and is billed at the end of each month. Payment is due two weeks from the billing date. There is a \$10 late fee for late payment of monthly invoices.
- Changes in Fox Club enrollment after the term begins are assessed an administrative fee of \$25. Late enrollment will also incur a late fee of \$25.
- Late fees for pick-up of your child after 5:30 pm are due within three business days or before your child returns to after care, whichever comes first.
- Late fees are assessed as follows: \$5.00 for the first five minutes late, \$2.00 for every additional minute.
- There is a \$30 charge for returned checks.

After-School Clubs

After-school activity clubs are offered throughout the school year to kindergarten through fifth grade students. Club offerings vary but have included: drawing and painting, horseback riding, sculpture, soccer, sports and fitness, drama, filmmaking, chorus, and band. After-school clubs are offered on a trimester basis from October-December, January-March, and April-June.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Students are discouraged from bringing cell phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices to school. They will not be allowed to access such devices during school hours. The school is not responsible for damage or loss.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled school days. Absences and tardiness are noted on the report card sent to parents three times a year, and the school is required to report absences and excessive tardiness to the Maryland Department of Education. Parents should call the office to notify of absences for any reason.

Students may be excused for the following reasons only:

- Death in the family
- Illness
- Religious holiday
- Doctor's appointment (with doctor's note)

Students absent due to illness for longer than three days must have a doctor's note for the absence to be excused and to return to school.

Family vacations are not an excused absence. Families should plan vacations to coincide with scheduled school holidays. Students may be responsible for work missed during an absence. Arrangements must be made with the teacher to complete assignments in a timely manner.

Parent Visit Days

During each Unit of Inquiry, parents are invited to visit the kindergarten-fifth grade classrooms. This provides an opportunity for students to share evidence of their academic progress as well as the happenings in their class with their parents. Teachers will inform parents of the scheduled times for Parent Visit Days.

Field Trips

Educational field trips are typically a part of the classroom curriculum. Travel is typically by school bus and/or public transportation. A permission slip, signed by the parent, is required before each trip. Parents are invited as needed to chaperone these trips. Parent participation in field trips is designed to support the educational experience of the students. Additional fees may be required. For the safety of our students, adults who wish to chaperone a field trip must complete a Volunteer Waiver Form consenting to a background check.

Uniform Policy

Uniforms are mandatory for all kindergarten – fifth grade students. The school reserves the right to determine what appropriate and/or acceptable uniform clothing is. Outerwear may not be worn in the classroom.

Uniform pieces may be purchased through Lands' End, French Toast, or at any store provided they are part of a uniform line and conform in color and style to those available at Lands' End. NOTE: All tops must have the Seneca Academy logo.

Uniform Providers

Lands' End: www.landsend.com Our preferred school number is 9000-3007-3 and our logo # is 0853315K. You can earn Box Tops points for the school by accessing Lands' End through the Box Tops website.

French Toast: www.frenchtoast.com Our Source Code is: QS4TFQ

If you choose to purchase non-logo uniform items, you also have the option to have it embroidered for \$7 per item at:

Charlie's Embroidery

416 Main Street, Third Floor
Gaithersburg, MD 20878 (Kentlands)
240-477-4363

The following uniform clothing is acceptable for all students in grades K-5:

Girls

- White, red or navy collared tops (polo shirts or button-up blouses) and turtlenecks with logo. Long-sleeved shirts worn layered under short-sleeved uniform shirts are not permitted.
- Navy or khaki skirts, skorts, pants, jumpers, or shorts. Knit fabric is acceptable provided the item is part of a uniform clothing line from Lands' End, French Toast, Target, JCPenney, Kohl's, etc. (Corduroy and cargo pants are not acceptable.)
- Red or navy knit polo dresses from a uniform clothing line with logo.
- White, red, or navy leggings or tights worn under skirts, skorts, dresses and jumpers. Prints are acceptable provided they are the accepted colors. The same policy applies for socks. Leggings may not be worn as pants.
- Red or navy light fleece jackets, sweaters, and vests with logo.
- Shoes/boots must be suitable for active play and be closed-toe with rubber soles (no Crocs, hard-soled shoes such as cowgirl boots, or open-toe sandals).

Boys

- White, red or navy collared tops (polo or button-up shirts) and turtlenecks with logo. Long-sleeved shirts worn layered under short-sleeved uniform shirts are not permitted.
- Navy or khaki pants or shorts. Knit fabric is acceptable provided the item is part of a uniform clothing line from Lands' End, French Toast, Target, JCPenney, Kohl's etc. (Corduroy and cargo pants are not acceptable.)
- Red or navy light fleece jackets, sweaters, and vests with logo.
- White, red, or navy socks.
- Shoes must be suitable for active play and be closed-toe with rubber soles (no Crocs, hard-soled shoes such as cowboy boots, or open-toe sandals).

P.E. Days – Applies to girls and boys

Students may wear regular uniforms for P.E. Options below may be worn on designated P.E. days if desired. Sneakers must be worn on P.E. days.

- T-shirts: Only red, white, navy, or blue t-shirts with "Seneca Academy," (purchased through the school) may be worn on P.E. days.
- Sweatshirts, shorts and pants: Navy sweatshirts with logo, navy shorts (including mesh shorts) and navy sweatpants (Seneca logo optional; no other logo or company marking.)

Discipline

A variety of classroom strategies are used to maintain a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning. Engaging curriculum, scheduling, and classroom setup are all designed to enable students to manage their behavior as developmentally appropriate. Our Responsive Classroom curriculum, which guides the social-emotional learning that takes place in every grade, also helps students to learn appropriate ways to manage feelings and behavior. Nonetheless, there are times when a student needs redirection. Teachers then employ techniques from *1, 2, 3 Magic for Teachers* by Thomas Phelan. If behavior warrants, a child may be removed from class and taken to the office of the Head of School or Educational Director. After two incidents requiring removal, parents may be contacted and the child may be sent home for the day. Parents may be required to seek appropriate professional services for their child as a requirement of the child remaining at the school. Should the child demonstrate consistently disruptive behavior requiring disciplinary action, the child may be asked to leave the school permanently. This decision is made solely at the discretion of the Head of School.

Assessments, Report Cards, and Conferences

Assessment is ongoing at Seneca Academy. We use a variety of different methods to evaluate an individual student's knowledge, skills, and abilities. Teachers assess students daily through class activities, as well as at the end of a learning unit. Assessment enables teachers to tailor instruction to the needs of their students, helps each student succeed as a learner, and provides parents with information about their child's progress.

Report cards are issued in December, March, and June. Progress (growth from the beginning of the year) and performance (how a child compares to the expectations) in academic subjects, work habits, and citizenship are reported.

Parent conferences are held in December and March to discuss a student's progress. Conferences may also be scheduled at the request of the parent or teacher at other times during the school year.

All requests for teacher recommendations or reports/questionnaires from outside professionals must be made through the Head of School or Educational Director.

Technology

Although technology is viewed as an educational tool at Seneca Academy, we also firmly believe that preparing students to be principled, balanced, and responsible digital citizens is a necessary component of a globally-minded education. Students are introduced to a digital citizenship curriculum based on the standards provided by Common Sense Media beginning in second grade. This curriculum was adopted by our faculty in accordance with the following vision statement:

In today's world, information technology is everywhere. As such, Seneca Academy has both the opportunity and the responsibility of helping students understand how to navigate the digital world safely, ethically, effectively, and appropriately. We aspire to help our students become wise and caring digital citizens. Our students will work to develop the skills and sensibilities to explore the electronic world responsibly, whether inside or outside the school. In building digital citizenship skills, our students will have the ability to connect with information and people around the world, demonstrating sound etiquette, solid stewardship, and thoughtful independence.

A computer is available in the second grade classroom for limited and carefully chosen activities. Students in Grades 3-5 have access to a one-to-one laptop/Chromebook device in their classrooms. Students in the third through fifth grades are also provided specific instruction in keyboarding, word processing, presentations, and audio/visual technologies.

When classroom activities require the use of cameras or computers, teachers provide specific parameters for their use as well as careful oversight. Students are not allowed to use computer games or disks from home because of the possibility of introducing viruses or damage to school computers. Students are only allowed to use their laptops/ Chromebooks for educational purposes approved by their teacher. They also may only access their e-mail accounts with permission from their teacher, including to e-mail home. It is important that, if students need to communicate with their parents during the day, they do so through the office. This ensures that we are aware of any concerns and, as the onsite supervisors, can provide any necessary support.

Parents and students in Grades 2-5 are asked to sign an Essential Agreement for Using Digital Technology at the beginning of the year.

Homework Policy

The purpose of homework at Seneca Academy:

- Establish habits of responsibility
- Develop independent work-study skills
- Give parents an insight to the skills and subjects being taught

Homework will usually be one of four types:

- An enrichment activity
- A reinforcement activity of a skill already taught
- A long-term project
- Reading

Homework is typically only assigned Monday through Thursdays, excluding holidays, and should take 15-60 minutes to complete depending on the grade level of the student. Older students may expect to spend more time completing homework. If your child is spending more time than this, please contact your child's teacher. **Students in grades three through five will receive additional information about homework as a student at Seneca Academy.**

Homework is for the student to do independently unless otherwise noted. Parents should provide appropriate time and space, but allow their child to complete work alone. Parents are encouraged to look at the homework planner as well as the completed assignments regularly. If a student is unable to complete the assignment with minimal parental direction, the student should bring the uncompleted assignment to school for additional teacher instruction.

If a child is absent, that student should complete all homework missed in a timely manner. Questions about homework should be directed to the classroom teacher.

Tutoring

The school makes an effort to provide space for private tutoring of students before and after school. Arrangements must be made through the Educational Director. In addition, with the consent of parents and upon the recommendation of the classroom teacher, an on-staff, certified Phono-Graphix tutor is available during school hours to address specific, language-based learning needs.

SENECA ACADEMY PARENTS ASSOCIATION

The mission of the Seneca Academy Parents Association (SAPA) is to support Seneca Academy by facilitating events, social gatherings, discussion groups, and fundraising activities that foster an informed, connected, and engaged parent community focused on promoting the goals and mission of the school for the enrichment of our children. SAPA's primary goal is to facilitate community building. All events and activities are focused on relationship-building, with opportunities to continue the conversation outside the school environment.

The SAPA Steering Committee consists of the Head of School, SAPA president, vice-president, and treasurer. The purpose of the Steering Committee is to provide the structural framework, leadership, and organization for the Seneca Academy Parents Association. The volunteers who serve on the Steering Committee are designated and appointed to their positions in the spring of the previous school year.

All parents are members of the Parents Association and SAPA welcomes and encourages the active participation of all parents. Information and opportunities to volunteer can be found in the parent portal of the Seneca Academy website, in the SAPA section: <https://www.senecaacademy.org/sapa>. Please contact any Steering Committee member to discuss ways to get involved. SAPA can be reached through the Parents Association email account: senecaparents@gmail.com.

Room parents serve as the liaisons between the classroom teacher, parents, and SAPA. Room parents may support the teacher by sending emails, requesting volunteers, or coordinating class parties. They may also connect the parents by planning class playdates or other community-building activities. Room parents may be asked to support SAPA events.

Typical events sponsored and supported by SAPA throughout the school year include: summer socials, back to school nights, homecoming, book fairs, the STEAM Fair, a spring picnic, the World Cultures Celebration, and the annual auction/gala. SAPA also coordinates many activities at Seneca Academy, including Box Tops for Education, retail reward programs, no-uniform days, teacher appreciation lunches, restaurant nights, used uniform sales, and special lunch programs.

The calendar on the school website and event list on the SAPA Events page are regularly updated; please check there for the most recent event/activity dates and volunteer needs.