



FAMILY HANDBOOK
2008-2009 ACADEMIC YEAR

Table of Contents

Location and Contact Numbers	5
Calendar	6
Daily Schedule	7
Our Purpose	8
Mission Statement	8
Call to the Laity	8
Catholic Education	9
Our Response.....	10
Classical Education.....	10
St. Anselm.....	10
The Liberal Arts.....	10
St. Thomas Aquinas.....	10
Classical Education in the Classroom.....	11
Spiritual Life of St. Ambrose Academy	12
Biography of St. Ambrose	12
School Prayer	12
Academics.....	13
Course of Study	13
High School Graduation Requirements.....	13
Standard Diploma	13
Classics Diploma	14
Dropping Courses	14
Grading Scale.....	14
Standardized Tests.....	14
Homework	15
Junior High.....	15
Senior High.....	15
Recommendations For Parents	15
Note to Students: Managing Homework.....	15
Assignment Notebook.....	15
Study Periods	16
Taking Breaks	16
Mentoring.....	16
Prayer	16
Strategies for Using Time	17
College Planning	17
Juniors.....	17
Seniors.....	18
Code of Student Conduct.....	19
Formation of Conscience.....	19
Manners	19
Uniform	20
Estimated Cost	24
Attendance.....	25
Excused Absences.....	25
Planned Absences	25
School Day.....	25
Snow Days	26

Lunch.....	26
School Bus.....	27
Field Trips.....	27
Prohibited Behaviors.....	27
Disciplinary Actions.....	28
Parent-Teacher Conferences.....	29
Grievance Process.....	29
School Life.....	29
New Family Transition.....	29
Mentoring Program.....	29
Orientation Night.....	29
Frequently Asked Questions.....	29
Why did St. Ambrose Academy get started?.....	29
Why is a Catholic identity so important?.....	30
What is a classical education?.....	30
Why is the Socratic style of learning emphasized?.....	30
What can be expected from teachers?.....	30
What extracurricular activities does the school offer?.....	30
What is the social atmosphere like?.....	31
What are some of the general recommendations of veteran families?.....	31
Communication.....	31
Directory.....	31
Lost and Found.....	31
Immunizations.....	31
Emergency Treatment.....	32
Prescription Drugs.....	32
Team Name.....	32
Motto.....	32
Parental Commitment.....	32
Safe Environment Training.....	33
Profiles.....	34
Faculty / Staff.....	34
Board.....	36

Printed August, 2008

Location and Contact Numbers

St. Ambrose Academy is located in the religious education wing of St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic Parish, conveniently located just east of the Beltline on Madison's west side. The address is:

602 Everglade Drive
Madison WI 53717

Phone: (608) 827-5863

Website: www.ambroseacademy.org

Email: info@ambroseacademy.org

The St. Ambrose Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

St. Ambrose Academy reserves the right to modify this Handbook.

Calendar

Tuesday, August 26	St. Ambrose School Potluck 5:00
Monday, September 1	Labor Day
Tuesday, September 2	First Day of School; First Quarter Begins
Tuesday, September 9	Academic orientation for new students & parents, 5:30
Friday, September 26	American Players Theatre field trip: <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> , 10:30 a.m.
Saturday, September 27	St. John Bosco Youth Day, Holy Hill (NOT A SCHOOL DAY)]
Friday, October 10	Yearbook photos (Beth Ptak coordinating)
Monday, October 13	Columbus Day
Friday, October 17	1st Quarter Ends: Student Service Project; teacher grades due 5:00 p.m.
Saturday, October 18	PSAT, recommended for 11th-grade students
Friday, October 24	NO SCHOOL: Parent-Teacher Conferences (report cards)
Saturday, October 25	All Saints / Halloween party and March for Life fundraiser
Saturday, November 1	All Saints Day
Tuesday, November 11	Veteran's Day
Thursday, November 13	Meeting of parents, faculty, and board, 7:00 pm (date may be changed to avoid St. Therese of Lisieux lecture, not yet scheduled)

THANKSGIVING BREAK: Saturday, November 22 – Sunday, November 30
(Thanksgiving is Thursday, November 27)

Sunday, December 7	Feast of St. Ambrose: celebrate with fundraising dinner on Friday, December 5 or Saturday, December 6
Monday, December 8	NO SCHOOL: Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Friday, December 19	1st semester ends

CHRISTMAS BREAK: Saturday, December 20 - Sunday, January 4
(Christmas is Thursday, December 25)
(Madison Public Schools are off December 22 - January 2)

Monday, December 29	Teacher grades due 5:00 p.m.
Week of 1/12-1/16	Spelling Bee & Geography Bee, not yet scheduled
Monday, January 19	Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. (federal holiday) Bring a Friend to School Day
Thursday, January 22	March for Life, not yet schedule
Thursday, January 29	Open House for Catholic Schools Week (01/25/09-02/1/09)
Friday, January 30	NO SCHOOL: day off to rest from Open House
Tuesday, February 10	Family Social Night on Feast of St. Scholastica
Monday, February 16	Washington's Birthday/President's Day (federal holiday)
Monday, February 16—	
Thursday, February 19	CAT/5 testing during 1st and 2nd periods on Monday/Tuesday and during 3rd and 4th periods on Wednesday/Thursday
Thursday, February 19	WI Right to Life Legislative Conference: consider if no March For Life
Wednesday, February 25	NO SCHOOL: Ash Wednesday

Friday, March 6 3rd Quarter Ends: Student Service Project; teacher grades due 5:00 p.m.
 Tuesday, March 10 National Latin Exam (2nd full week of March, 3/9-3/13/08)
 Friday, March 13 NO SCHOOL: Parent-Teacher Conferences (report cards)
 Friday, March 20 Retreat

HOLY WEEK / EASTER BREAK: Saturday, April 4 - Sunday, April 19
 (Easter is Sunday, April 12)
 (Madison Public Schools are off April 6 - April 13; UW is off March 14 - March 22)

TBA in April Admissions and Placement Testing
 TBA in April Bishop Morlino, Mass and dinner, 5-9 p.m.
 Thursday, May 21 Ascension of the Lord (moved to Sunday, May 24 by bishops)
 Thursday, May 21 Field Trip
 Friday, May 22 Last Day of School; Graduation, 5:30 pm
 Monday, May 25 Memorial Day
 Tuesday, May 26 Teacher grades due 5:00 p.m.
 Thursday, May 28 Teacher course binders due at 2:00 p.m. meeting

Daily Schedule

Class Time Schedules			
MTWR		FRIDAY	
Homeroom	8:15-8:25	Homeroom	8:15-8:25
Mass	8:30-8:55	Mass	8:30-8:55
Block 1	9:00-10:20	Block 1	9:00-9:45
Block 2	10:25-11:45	Block 2	9:50-10:30
Lunch	11:50-12:20	Block 3	10:35-11:15
Block 3	12:25-1:45	Block 4	11:20-12:00
Block 4	1:50-3:10	Lunch	12:05-12:50
Cleanup	3:10-3:15	Block 5	12:55-1:35
Optional Prayer	3:20-3:30	Block 6	1:40-2:25
		Block 7	2:30-3:10
		Cleanup	3:10-3:15
		Optional Prayer	3:20-3:30

Our Purpose

Mission Statement

St. Ambrose Academy, Inc. is a lay-run organization formed to assist parents in the formation of their junior high and high school aged children by providing a classical education rooted in the Catholic faith. Our students prepare for college and a lifetime of learning by studying Catholic history and doctrine, college preparatory subjects, and the primary works of civilization's greatest thinkers, mentored by teachers who foster a deep love of Jesus Christ and His Church.

Call to the Laity

The “call to the laity” was one of the central themes of Vatican II. This theme has been taken up and proclaimed with great splendor by Pope John Paul II. This call is first and foremost a call to holiness from which stems a new apostolic vigor as each individual draws near to Christ. The action of the Holy Spirit has been made manifest in the myriad of lay organizations that have formed as the result of this new vitality. John Paul II has issued helpful guidelines for evaluating a lay association in the Catholic Church:

- *The primacy given to the call of every Christian to holiness, as it is manifested “in the fruits of grace which the spirit produces in the faithful” and in growth toward the fullness of Christian life and the perfection of charity....*
- *The responsibility of professing the Catholic faith, embracing and proclaiming the truth about Christ, the Church and humanity, in obedience to the Church’s Magisterium, as the Church interprets it. For this reason every association for the lay faithful must be a forum where the faith is proclaimed as well as taught in its total content....*
- *The witness to a strong and authentic communion in filial relationship with the Pope, in total adherence to the belief that he is the perpetual and visible center of unity of the universal Church, and with the local Bishop, “the visible principle and foundation of unity” in the particular Church, and in “mutual esteem for all forms of the Church’s apostolate.” ...*
- *Conformity to and participation in the Church’s apostolic goals, that is, “the evangelization and sanctification of humanity and the Christian formation of people’s conscience, so as to enable them to infuse the spirit of the Gospel into various communities and spheres of life.” ...*
- *A commitment to a presence in human society, which in light of the Church’s social doctrine, places it at the service of the total dignity of the person.*

(Pope John Paul II, “On the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World,” par 30, 1988)

The St. Ambrose Academy staff strives at all times to meet and live out these criteria provided by John Paul II. We embrace them and hope all Catholic parents will hold us and other associations to this standard.

Catholic Education

A recurring theme in Church documents is the need for a clear Catholic perspective in education.

The fragmentation of education, the generic character of the values frequently invoked and which obtain ample and easy consensus at the price of a dangerous obscuring of their content, tend to make the school step back into a supposed neutrality, which enervates its educating potential and reflects negatively on the formation of the pupils. There is a tendency to forget that education always presupposes and involves a definite concept of man and life. To claim neutrality for schools signifies in practice, more times than not, banning all reference to religion from the cultural and educational field, whereas a correct pedagogical approach ought to be open to the more decisive sphere of ultimate objectives, attending not only to “how,” but also to “why,” overcoming any misunderstanding as regards the claim to neutrality in education, restoring to the educational process the unity which saves it from dispersion amid the meandering of knowledge and acquired facts, and focuses on the human person in his or her integral, transcendent, historical identity. With its educational project inspired by the Gospel, the Catholic school is called to take up this challenge and respond to it in the conviction that “it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man truly becomes clear.”

Congregation for Catholic Education, “The Catholic School on the Threshold of the New Millennium,” par. 10, 1977.

This perspective means more than the infusion of Christian values into an otherwise secular curriculum. It is not a call for providing students with pre-cast conclusions to the truths they draw from their own experiences. Rather, what is needed is a solid education illuminated by the Catholic faith where students can work out their own salvation (cf. Philippians 2:12).

The General Purpose of a School

A close examination of the various definitions of school and of new educational trends at every level, leads one to formulate the concept of school as a place of integral formation by means of a systematic and critical assimilation of culture. A school is, therefore, a privileged place in which, through a living encounter with a cultural inheritance, integral formation occurs.

This vital approach takes place in the school in the form of personal contacts and commitments which consider absolute values in a life-context and seek to insert them into a life-framework. Indeed, culture is only educational when young people can relate their study to real-life situations with which they are familiar. The school must stimulate the pupil to exercise his intelligence through the dynamics of understanding to attain clarity and inventiveness. It must help him spell out the meaning of his experiences and their truths. Any school which neglects this duty and which offers merely pre-cast conclusions hinders the personal development of its pupils.

The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, “The Catholic School,” par 26-27, 1977.

Our Response

St. Ambrose Academy is dedicated to the spiritual and intellectual formation of today's youth to produce "truly Christian" leaders of tomorrow's Church and society.

A board of directors was formed and St. Ambrose Academy, Inc. incorporated on February 13, 2003. The board of directors has chosen the National Association of Private Catholic and Independent Schools (NAPCIS) as its accrediting body. NAPCIS has granted Provisional Membership to St. Ambrose Academy; we are working toward full accreditation. Our school structure and philosophy are modeled after the many successful modern Catholic schools in America that have rediscovered the formational wealth classical education has to offer.

Classical Education

St. Ambrose Academy offers a liberal arts education that stresses the formation of the "free" thinker; that is, one who is not bound by the ephemeral fashions of thinking of the time. A study of the liberal arts aims at training the mind to grasp truth, rather than simply imparting knowledge or working for economic gain.

St. Anselm

Classical education in the tradition of the Catholic Church can be traced back as an organized method to St. Anselm's instructions for his monasteries in the 12th century. Anselm's goal was to ensure that students learned the tools of analytical thinking as well as the subjects themselves.

The Liberal Arts

Anselm included the terms we use today, the *Trivium* and the *Quadrivium* stages of learning, that comprise the seven liberal arts. The *Trivium*, which includes the *Grammar*, *Dialectic*, and *Rhetorical* stages of development, was eventually established in non-monastic schools as well.

The *Grammar* stage, the age-appropriate level of the elementary student, is where we get our term, "Grammar School." In the Grammar stage, students learn and memorize language, grammar, arithmetic, and religion.

The *Dialectic*, or *Logic*, stage is the age-appropriate level of the young pre-pubescent and pubescent "junior high" student. This is the age where children naturally develop the skills of contradiction and argument. Speech and debate become more important than in the Grammar stage.

The last stage of the Trivium is the *Rhetorical* stage, wherein the formal, expository forms of writing are mastered, and the young adult learns to express thoughts for the purpose of defending the Faith. In this stage, the vocation of the young person is emerging, and the beginnings of the serious philosophical and theological studies of the last major stage, the *Quadrivium*, are undertaken.

St. Thomas Aquinas

St. Thomas Aquinas built on Anselm's creative thoughts. In the context of the Catholic Faith, the thinking of St. Thomas Aquinas becomes the primary philosophical stance behind all the discussions. The great saint himself used Aristotle to further the studies in the traditional areas of Logic and Disputation, going beyond the Classical philosopher in investigating the truths that Catholics hold dear.

Classical Education in the Classroom

At St. Ambrose Academy, the teachers use Thomistic philosophy and the age-appropriate methods of argument to teach rational discourse. Primary texts are used so that students will encounter and grapple with the greatest books of the centuries.

In the classroom, teachers use the Socratic Method, which involves question, answer, and discussion among the students. Oral presentations, formal papers, and debates allow the students to learn “to think on their feet.” *Apologetics* forms a large part of the class discussion and debate.

Parents are encouraged to speak with teachers regarding the substantial differences in classroom structure and homework between classical education at St. Ambrose and traditional forms of education at other schools. Classical education places greater emphasis on intense class discussion.

One of the most striking differences in a Socratic Method classroom is the absence of desks. Students sit around a table with the teacher. The Socratic Method involves discussion, with the students engaging each other in “argumentation;” that is, proving their points in class.

The teacher guides the conversation, questioning the students and challenging critical thinking “on the spot.” Homework in this setting becomes a crucial preparation for class discussion as well as a means of reinforcing lessons and skills. The student plans before the material is introduced, rather than reading after it is introduced. There is a great emphasis on character and research skills as well.

Spiritual Life of St. Ambrose Academy

Biography of St. Ambrose

St. Ambrose, one of the Doctors of the Church and a beloved Bishop, is most famous for his sermons, as well as for his most illustrious student, St. Augustine of Hippo. Ambrose is remembered for his kindness to converts and his wisdom in interpreting the Scriptures. His feast day is December 7th. In art and iconography, his symbol is the beehive and the bee. This is partly because of the meaning of his name, and partly because of his success as an orator, or “honey-tongued” bishop. He is a particularly good patron for our academy, as he himself was classically trained and versed in the great Roman writers, including Virgil.

School Prayer

Prayer is an integral part of each day’s activity. The school day begins with prayer in the homeroom. After homeroom attendance at Monday through Thursday Mass is required by all students unless parents make prior arrangements with the principal; attendance at Friday Mass is required in all cases. Each class begins with a prayer as students and faculty ask for divine assistance in the work of that period. The Angelus or Regina Caeli is recited at noon, and each day closes with an optional visit to the Blessed Sacrament in the St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel and the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy is prayed. Protestant students are expected to pray during daily prayers and participate during Mass, except for receiving communion. St. Ambrose Academy’s Spiritual Director is available to students almost weekly for spiritual direction and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

*O God, in whose Providence and Protection we share in the pursuit of Truth,
reveal to us your beloved Son, the Incarnate Word of God,
through the discernment and purity of the Holy Spirit,
and enlighten our minds to serve you all the days of our lives.
We ask this through the merits of Ambrose, the spiritual father of Augustine,
that he may lead us to Perfect Knowledge and Perfect Love.
Amen.*

Academics

Course of Study

The Course of Study is on the St. Ambrose website. It lists all academic and elective courses, course descriptions, and reading lists.

St. Ambrose courses cycle through specific historical topics, with one cycle for the junior high and one for the senior high. Students who attend St. Ambrose Academy all seven years cycle through all seven topics. The historical topic for each cycle is integrated in the History, English, and Religion courses, with the other courses reinforcing these topics when possible, resulting in a unified and interdisciplinary approach to each historical period. Courses also emphasize the development of logical thinking and rhetorical expression.

Certain courses may have prerequisites, such as an acceptable grade in the preceding course, which must be fulfilled for the student to progress in the course sequence. Students at St. Ambrose are enrolled in courses based on grade level (grades 6-12), placement testing, and mastery of prerequisites. Junior High students who take Senior High courses may be eligible for Senior High credits, at the discretion of the instructor and principal.

High School Graduation Requirements

St. Ambrose Academy grants two types of diplomas: Standard and Classics. The School Profile included with student transcripts who seek higher education describes the requirements for both diplomas. Receiving a Classics diploma is a worthy achievement that will strengthen a student's college application.

Courses taken at other institutions will be included in the graduation requirement total if approved by the principal. Credits for school work completed at another school or homeschool may be granted by the Principal with board approval.

To graduate, a student must participate in school service projects.

Standard Diploma

22 high school course credits are required to graduate with a Standard diploma, including:

Religion	4 credits
English	4 credits
History	4 credits
Mathematics	3 credits
Science	3 credits
Latin	2 credits
Electives	2 credits

Classics Diploma

24 total credits at St. Ambrose Academy are required to receive a Classics diploma, including:

Religion	4 credits
English	4 credits
History	4 credits
Mathematics	3 credits
Science	3 credits
Latin	4 credits
Electives	2 credits

Dropping Courses

Students will be allowed to drop courses only under extraordinary circumstances with principal approval.

Grading Scale

A	93-100	C	73-77
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	59 or less

Standardized Tests

All students at St. Ambrose Academy participate in standardized testing. Test dates are included on the School Calendar.

Students in grades 6-9 take the CAT/5 annually.

Students in grades 10-11 take the PSAT annually.

Students in grades 11-12 take the SAT or ACT.

Homework

St. Ambrose homework expectations for the six core subjects for a student of average ability are as follows; the amount of time students spend each evening varies depending on number of study halls, study skills, and in-class work time.

Junior High

MTWR: 3 classes per day—30 minutes each for a total of 1.5 hours

F: 6 classes per day—15 minutes each for a total of 1.5 hours

Senior High

MTWR: 3 classes per day—40 minutes each for a total of 2 hours

F: 6 classes per day—20 minutes each for a total of 2 hours

Recommendations For Parents

- Expect your child to have homework to complete on a regular basis.
- Accommodate adequate study time in the family schedule. If possible, make use of after-school time. The day's subject information is still fresh, and it lightens the after-dinner homework load.
- Show an ongoing interest in your child's school work and school day. Pay attention to your child's needs on homework assignments.
- Provide an appropriate place in the home where your child can complete his or her school work.
- Help your child prepare for tests by reviewing with him or her.
- Try various study methods until you find one that fits your child.
- Some St. Ambrose students, like many modern teens, take great interest in online activity. Parents are strongly encouraged not to allow their children to use online Chat or instant messaging or any online activity during study time. Instead, use screen time as a reward *after* homework is finished.

Note to Students: Managing Homework

Here are some suggestions from St. Ambrose teachers for managing your homework load. Recognize that your vocation right now is to be a student. Look for the good things about homework. Homework should stimulate your mind; promise yourself to enjoy it!

Assignment Notebook

At school, record every task you're given in an assignment notebook or on an assignment sheet. (The St. Ambrose website includes an Assignment Sheet for students.) Your assignments shouldn't be scattered through your binders. You need to see at a single glance what needs to be done this evening and this week.

Study Periods

Develop a method of study that works for you. Different students thrive under different study methods. Here are some tips for making good use of study periods:

1. Examine your schedule, both at school and at home. Know what time is available to you.
2. Choose a quiet location with no distractions. If the study hall is too loud, speak to the study hall monitor.
3. Promise yourself that you will study with no interruptions for a solid, focused period of time and that then you will take a well-deserved break.
4. Each day, look at your Assignment Sheet and copy onto an index card all things due tomorrow that you haven't yet finished. Put a check box before each item.
5. Start with the easiest assignment just to check off something immediately and shorten your list. But don't save the hardest work for last when you're tired.
6. For longer homework, break your assignment down into segments. Give yourself the necessary time to complete the first segment. Use a timer or a stopwatch if necessary. Do not allow your mind to wander when you are engaged with a segment. Focus and work non-stop until you complete the first segment. Now relax for a moment; stretch or snack/drink. Did you beat your estimated time? Give yourself another time frame to complete the second segment; again, time yourself, and don't stop until you're done. Relax again. Repeat this pattern until you're done with the assignment. (Note that some students won't respond well to the pressure of a timer; others will find that it keeps them moving. Develop study tricks that work for you!)
7. As you complete assignments, check off the box on your index card.

Taking Breaks

When you've done what you promised yourself you would do, decide on the time you plan to begin studying again, and then take a break (a snack, a game, reading a few pages from your favorite novel—whatever works to motivate you). Make sure that you are back in your chair at the appointed time.

Make it your goal to finish your homework early so that you can enjoy the later part of the evening with your family. Take your reward of leisure *after* you finish, not before you start. You won't enjoy your leisure time as much if you have homework hanging over your head.

Mentoring

If you are finding that your mind is still wandering, involve Mom or Dad or some other mentor. Explain the procedure; ask her to check in on you often to make sure you're on task. Be accountable to your mentor; have him or her time you to keep you moving forward, if it will help.

Prayer

When you start your homework always start with a prayer. You will be amazed at how this will help you stay on task. When you are finished with your homework say a prayer thanking God for all the things that you have learned that day.

Strategies for Using Time

- Develop blocks of study time: for example, an hour. How long does it take for you to become restless? Some learners need more frequent breaks for a variety of reasons. More difficult material may also require more frequent breaks.
- Prioritize assignments: Once you've proven to yourself that you can check things off quickly, you can get in the habit of beginning with the most difficult subject or task, saving the easiest for last when your energy is dropping.
- Got "dead time?" Use time in the bus or car for studying "bits." It's amazing what you can get done in these short spurts of time.
- Review: Review studies and readings just before class and review and summarize lecture material as soon as you can after each class.
- Imagine the consequences: Remind yourself what will happen in the long term if you don't progress.
- Weekends: use Saturdays to get ahead. Don't just do Monday's homework. Do Tuesday's as well. Sunday is the Lord's Day and a day of rest; keep it that way, and you'll always have it to look forward to.
- The more efficient you are, the more time you'll have for the things you really enjoy.

College Planning

Counseling for college admissions is available on request. Information from a broad range of college admissions offices will be available to our junior and senior students.

Juniors

- Take the PSAT/NMSQT, usually in October.
- Start your college search, starting with you.
 - Make lists of your abilities, preferences, and personal qualities.
 - List things you may want to study and do in college.
 - Read about different majors and careers.
 - Use difference college searches to find colleges with the rights characteristics, location, and mission.
- Start thinking about Financial Aid.
 - Speak with your parents regarding financial aid.
 - When you search for a college be sure to note the availability of financial assistance.
 - Search for scholarship opportunities online and within your community.
- Plan your spring testing schedule. You can take the SAT or the ACT (or both).
 - See the SAT schedule of test dates and register online for the SAT at www.collegeboard.com.
 - Register for the ACT at www.actstudent.org.
- Get ready for the SAT and/or ACT.
 - You can visit many online resources for the SAT and ACT.
 - Take a full-length official practice test.
 - Check with the school office to see if they have paper copies of practice exams.
- Prepare for AP Exams.
 - Check with your teachers on the appropriateness of taking AP exams.

- Registration for these tests is usually in early March. You can register online at www.collegeboard.com.
- ❑ Plan ahead for the summer and senior year.
 - Review your senior year class schedule with a teacher or principal. Challenge yourself with more advanced courses if possible.
 - Plan summer activities early. Enrich yourself by volunteering, getting an interesting job, or sign up for summer learning programs. Keep your momentum up this summer.
- ❑ Explore colleges.
 - Keep up your momentum this summer: start visiting local colleges, and get a feel for what works for you.
 - Develop a list of the colleges that interest you. Perhaps includes pros and cons for each.
 - Take campus tours and, at colleges you're serious about, schedule interviews with admissions counselors.
 - Request applications from college to which you'll apply. Check important dates as some universities have early dates or rolling admissions. You must be sure to have a good understanding of the application timeline of each college.

Seniors

- ❑ Pull your application together.
 - Narrow your list of colleges to between 5 and 10 and review it with your parents, teachers or administrators. Get an application and financial aid info packet from each. Visit as many as possible.
 - Make a master calendar and note:
 - Test dates, fees, and deadlines
 - College application due dates
 - Required financial aid applications and their deadlines
 - Recommendations, transcripts, and other necessary materials
 - Ask for recommendations. Give each person your resume, a stamped, addressed envelope and any required forms.
 - Write application essays, and ask teachers, parents and friends to read and edit them.
- ❑ Apply: Early action or Early decision?
 - November 1: For early admissions, colleges may require test scores and applications in early November.
 - Ask if your college offers an early estimate of financial aid eligibility.
- ❑ Application Deadlines
 - Most regular applications are due between January 1 and February 15. Keep copies of everything you send to colleges.
 - Have your high school send your transcript to colleges.
 - Contact colleges to make sure they've received all application materials.
- ❑ Get financial aid info: apply early and apply right.
 - Attend financial aid info events in your area.
 - Gather financial aid information from your list of colleges
 - Submit your FAFSA as soon after January 1 as possible. Men 18 or older must register for the selective service to receive federal financial aid.
 - Make priority financial aid deadlines which fall in February. To get the most attractive award package, apply by the priority date. Keep copies of everything you send.

- ❑ When the letters start rolling in:
 - You should get acceptance letters and financial aid offers by mid-April
 - For questions about financial aid talk to the financial aid officers for the specific college.
 - If there is not enough aid, ask financial officers if other financing plans are available
- ❑ Make your final choice.
 - You must tell every college of your acceptance or rejection of offers of admission or financial aid by May 1. Send a deposit to the college you choose.
 - Wait-listed? If you will enroll if accepted, tell the admissions director your intent and ask how to strengthen your application.
- ❑ Next Steps
 - Ask your high school to send a final transcript to your college.
 - Start preparing for the year ahead!

Code of Student Conduct

St. Ambrose Academy has in place a series of codes that clearly indicate the behavior expected of our students and the consequences for misbehavior. Parents who want to discuss any disciplinary issues are asked to speak first with the teacher in charge of the class, then to the Principal, and only after that, to a board member.

Formation of Conscience

One of the great advantages of the Catholic Classical mode of education lies in the emphasis on the formation of conscience. As a Catholic school, character formation is one of the goals of St. Ambrose Academy. From the Roman Catholic Church and Classical Education, the two great formational influences on Western Civilization, comes the awareness that the “whole person” is educated in body, mind, and spirit. The formation of conscience helps young people discover God’s will for their lives and leads them to discern a vocation. The formation of conscience, primarily the role of the parent, is assisted by the school teachers, who act in the place of the parent while the child is at school.

Formation of conscience occurs in part through the guidelines and rules given by the teachers in the classrooms. If a student knows what the “good” is, then he knows how to respond to all types of situations. Classical education makes students aware of the roots of things, so that they can avoid error. Both the courses, with a basis in Catholic philosophy, and the disciplines help the young person form a Catholic conscience.

Manners

Part of the education provided by St. Ambrose Academy is character development, including manners and the art of conversation. We expect our students to exhibit the habits of Christian gentlemen and gentlewomen on and off campus. We will assist students in understanding and practicing good manners as necessary, and will discipline students who use bad manners.

Uniform

In keeping with the idea of character formation, a simple dress code allows the student to concentrate on studies rather than on fashion. The dress code helps maintain school spirit and student safety, discouraging peer pressure. St. Ambrose Academy fosters reverence and respect through appropriate dress and teaches one of the great Gospel messages, that of simplicity of lifestyle. Teachers will make dress-code disciplinary decisions on the spot.

Our new uniform will coexist with our current dress code for the 2008-09 school year. New purchases should be of uniform clothing only. Students may wear out their current school clothes during the 2008-09 year, except that they must wear the new PE uniform, and they may no longer add extra warm clothes from outside the uniform (it provides for a fleece jacket).

All selections are to be purchased from the Lands' End Uniform Catalog or online (www.Landsend.com/school) unless otherwise noted. Lands' End provides a 3% rebate to the school; use School Code 900089046.

There will be an alternate shopping options list that will be available to all families for certain items (particularly boys pants and polos), that may be able to be purchased for much less than the Lands' End price.

Dress uniform is to be worn as required and if desired every day. Daily uniform may be worn on days when Dress uniform is not required.

Girls & Women

Dress Uniform - *May be worn everyday but must be worn for special occasions.*

<u>Item</u>	<u>Catalog Number</u>	<u>Color</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	
Skirt					
OR	Pleated Skirt	21942-32T9 (girl)	Clear Blue Plaid	\$34.50	1
		21945-52T9 (women)		\$39.50	
	A-line Skirt	05378-62T7 (girl)	Clear Blue Plaid	\$34.50	1
		25021-32T7 (women)		\$39.50	
Blouse					
	Three Quarter Sleeve Oxford	02704-82T7 (girl)	White or Blue	\$19.50	1
		02704-92T1 (women)		\$22.50	
Sweater Vest					
	Sweater Vest	22301-52T3 (girl)	Navy	\$24.50	1
		22301-62T8 (women)		\$29.50	
Socks					
OR	Knee Socks	<i>purchased at any store</i>	Navy or White		few
	Tights	<i>purchased at any store</i>	Navy or White Opaque		
Shoes					
	Oxford or Mary Jane Dress Shoes	<i>purchased at any store</i>	Black, Brown or Navy		1 pair
	<i>*No more than a one inch heel.</i>				

Daily Uniform - *May be worn everyday except special occasions.*

<u>Item</u>	<u>Catalog Number</u>	<u>Color</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	
Pants					
	Stretch Stain-Resistant Flares	23112-32T8 (girl)	Khaki or Navy	\$29.50	1
		23112-52T7 (women)		\$35.00	
Shirt					
<i>Blouse that is worn with the dress uniform</i>					
	Fit-for-Her Mesh Polo Short Sleeve	23094-92T2 (girl)	Chambray Blue or White	\$14.50	2
		23095-02T5 (women)		\$19.50	
	Fit-for-Her Mesh Polo Long Sleeve	23095-22T4 (girl)	Chambray Blue or White	\$16.50	
		23095-32T9 (women)		\$24.50	
	Fit-for-Her Interlock Polo Short Sleeve	23095-52T8 (girl)	Chambray Blue or White	\$14.50	
		23095-92T6 (women)		\$24.50	
	Fit-for-Her Interlock Polo Long Sleeve	23095-82T1 (girl)	Chambray Blue or White	\$16.50	
		23095-92T6 (women)		\$29.50	
Sweater					
<i>Vest that is worn with the dress uniform</i>					
	Zip Front Cardigan	22302-32T8 (girl)	Navy	\$34.50	2
		22302-42T2 (women)		\$39.50	
	Crewneck	22300-42T5 (girl)	Navy	\$29.50	
		22300-52TX (women)		\$34.50	
	Fleece Jacket	18872-62T6 (kid)	Navy	\$29.50	
		18872-42T7 (women)		\$34.50	
<i>*Fleece Jacket may be worn inside over sweater if the student is still cold.</i>					
Socks					
	Knee Socks	<i>purchased at any store</i>	Navy or White		few
	Crew Socks	<i>purchased at any store</i>			
<i>*Only knee socks or tights may be worn with skirt.</i>					

Shoes - Same as dress uniform

Hair decorations

*Hair clips, bobby pins, hair ties, hair bands may be worn but no scarves or bandanas	optional
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Long Underwear

*May be worn with pants but must not show.	White or Gray	optional
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Physical Education - Must be worn during all Physical Education classes.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Catalog Number</u>	<u>Color</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Quantity</u>
Shorts				
Athletic Shorts	31542-75Y4 (girl)	Navy	\$14.50	1
	31542-85Y9 (women)		\$19.50	
Shirt				
Performance Short-Sleeve Super T	06357-72T3 (kid)	Navy or Gray	\$10.50	1
	16886-02T4 (women)		\$12.50	
Sweatshirt				
Hoodie	31623-45Y0 (kid)	Navy or Gray	\$19.50	1
	31623-75Y4 (women)		\$24.50	
Pants				
Sweatpants	31624-74U9 (kid)	Navy or Gray	\$15.00	1
	31624-94U8 (women)		\$19.50	
Athletic Pants	31542-75Y4 (girl)	Navy	\$24.50	
	31542-55Y5 (women)		\$29.50	
Athletic Shoes				
Athletic Shoes	<i>purchased at any store</i>			1 pair
Swimsuit				
Swimsuit	<i>purchased at any store</i>		Any Color	1
	<i>*One piece lifeguard swimsuit (as modest as possible)</i>			

*St. Ambrose Academy apparel is also acceptable for Physical Education.

Boys & Men

Dress Uniform - May be worn everyday but must be worn for special occasions.

	<u>Catalog Number</u>	<u>Color</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	
Pants					
Plain-front Chinos	19112-72T2 (boy)	Navy or Khaki	\$24.50	2	
	19113-02T4 (men)		\$32.50		
	Pleated Chinos	23106-32TX (boy)	Navy or Khaki		\$25.00
		23106-62T3 (men)			\$32.50
	Elastic Waist Plain-Front Chinos	09251-32T4 (boy)	Navy or Khaki		\$24.50
		09251-62T8 (men)			\$29.50
Shirts					
Easy Care Oxford Short Sleeve	21930-42T3 (boy)	Blue or White	\$17.50	1	
	02941-42T2 (men)		\$22.50		
	Easy Care Oxford Long Sleeve	21930-82T1 (boy)	Blue or White		\$19.50
		02941-32T8 (men)			\$22.50
*Chino pants (e.g. Dockers - NO POCKET PANTS) and polos may also be purchased at Walmart, J.C. Penney, or Kohls.					
Blazer					
Blazer	<i>purchased at any store</i>	Navy		optional	
Sweater					
Vest	22301-52T3 (boy)	Navy	\$24.50	optional	
	22301-82T7 (men)		\$29.50		
	Zip Front Cardigan	22302-32T8 (boy)	Navy		\$34.50
		22302-52T7 (men)			\$39.50
Crewneck	22300-42T5 (boy)	Navy	\$29.50		
	22300-62T4 (men)		\$34.50		
Belt					
Blasic Belt	<i>purchased at any store</i>	Black or Brown		1	
Tie					
Navy/Dark Crimson Stripe	08222-02T5 (pre-tied)	Navy/Dark Crimson	\$19.50	1	
	08221-92T2 (to-be-tied)		\$19.50		
Socks					
Crew Socks	<i>purchased at any store</i>	Navy		few	
Shoes					
Oxfords Dress Shoes	<i>purchased at any store</i>	Brown or Black		1 pair	

Daily Uniform - May be worn everyday except special occasions.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Catalog Number</u>	<u>Color</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Quantity</u>
Pants - Same as dress uniform				
Shirts				
Same as dress uniform	Short Sleeve Mesh Polo	05146-92T1 (boy)	Navy or White	\$15.00
		16754-12T1 (men)		\$19.50
	Long Sleeve Mesh Polo	05143-82T6 (boy)	Navy or White	\$17.00
		16753-92T4 (men)		\$24.50
	Short Sleeve Interlock Polo	05140-22T8 (boy)	Navy or White	\$15.00
		31370-15Y4 (men)		\$25.00
	Long Sleeve Interlock Polo	05136-92T9 (boy)	Navy or White	\$17.00
		31370-05YX (men)		\$30.00

Sweater

Same as dress uniform			
Fleece Jacket	18872-62T6 (boy)	Navy	\$29.50
	18872-55Y7 (men)		\$34.50
<i>*Fleece Jacket may be worn inside over sweater if the student is still cold.</i>			

optional

Socks - Same as dress uniform**Shoes** - Same as dress uniform**Belt** - Same as dress uniform**Long Underwear**

<i>*May be worn with pants but must not show.</i>	White or Gray
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optional

Physical Education - *Must be worn during all Physical Education classes.*

<u>Item</u>	<u>Catalog Number</u>	<u>Color</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Quantity</u>
Shorts				
Athletic Shorts	31543-95Y7 (boy)	Navy	\$14.50	1
	31544-05YX (men)		\$19.50	
Shirt				
Performance Short Sleeve Super-T	06357-72T3 (kid)	Navy or Gray	\$10.50	1
	06039-32T1 (men)		\$12.50	
Sweatshirt				
Hoodie	31623-45Y0 (kid)	Navy	\$19.50	1
	31623-65Y8 (men)		\$24.50	
Pants				
Sweatpants	31624-74U9 (kid)	Navy or Gray	\$15.00	1
	31624-85Y2 (men)		\$19.50	
Athletic Pants	32291-95Y9 (boy)	Navy	\$24.50	
	31543-75Y8 (men)		\$29.50	
Athletic Shoes				
Athletic Shoes	<i>purchased at any store</i>			1 pair
Swimsuit				
<i>*Modest</i>	<i>purchased at any store</i>	Any Color		1

*St. Ambrose Academy apparel is also acceptable for Physical Education.

Estimated Cost

The cost estimate includes a fairly minimal uniform that can be added to if the student and parents desire. It doesn't include the costs of shoes, socks, etc. that would have to be purchased even if the student didn't attend St. Ambrose Academy.

For girls this assumes buying one skirt, one pair of pants, one dress shirt, two polo shirts, a vest, one pair of gym shorts, one gym shirt, one hoodie sweatshirt, and one pair of sweatpants.

For boys this assumes buying two pairs of pants, one dress shirt, one tie, two polo shirts, one pair of gym shorts, one gym shirt, one hoodie sweatshirt, and one pair of sweatpants.

For girls wearing girl sizes: \$198.00

For girls wearing women sizes: \$246.50

For boys wearing boy sizes: \$179.50

For boys wearing men sizes: \$227.00

Some parents have made the point that after the first year or two, the cost goes down since there are clothes being traded and recycled as kids grow out of them. Additionally, hopefully the kids wouldn't have to replace their entire wardrobe every year.

All items can be purchased at Lands End over the phone (1-800-469-2222) or online (www.landsend.com/school) unless otherwise specified.

Remember to refer to the St. Ambrose Academy school code (900089046) for a 3% kick-back to the school.

Attendance

One discipline which gains importance in a setting of Classical Education and the use of the Socratic method is attendance.

A student cannot afford to miss many discussions without his grades being affected. Doctor and dentist appointments should be made outside of school time as much as possible. Likewise, vacations during school terms are strongly discouraged.

Excused Absences

Excused absences include illness, emergencies, and approved planned absences. Six excused absences per semester are the limit; the Principal will evaluate special circumstances. Teachers will schedule the make-up of missed work.

Planned Absences

Students who will be absent from school must obtain a Planned Absence Form from a teacher or the Principal. At least one week prior to the planned absence, the student must take this form to each teacher for a signature and an assignment list for the student to complete during the absence. All school work missed during a planned absence is due when the student returns. School meetings with the teachers may be required if missed discussions are part of the grade. Students who are absent beyond the dates specified in the Planned Absence form will address the prolonged absence and its consequences with the Principal.

School Day

School begins at 8:15 a.m. and ends at 3:15 p.m., with an optional prayer time to follow. Students cannot arrive earlier than 7:45 a.m. or depart later than 3:40 p.m. Parents who must bring their children to school before that time or leave them at school after that time must make arrangements with the Principal, perhaps via a supervision fee.

When students arrive, they should proceed directly and quietly to homeroom. Any lingering in the St. Thomas Aquinas foyer or hallways will be considered loitering. Students should arrive early enough to have time to put their coats and materials in the designated storage locations so that they are in their assigned homeroom seats promptly by 8:15 a.m.

Snow Days

The St. Ambrose snow day policy is to follow the Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District (MCPASD) policy. You can check www.channel3000.com/closings or your favorite local newssite, or the following stations will make announcements beginning at 6:00 a.m. if school is delayed or canceled:

FM Radio Stations	AM Radio Stations	Television Stations
92.1	WTSO 1070	WISC-TV 3
WOLX 94.9	WIBA 1310	WMTV 15
WMAD 96.3	WTDY 1480	WKOW-TV 27
WMGN 98.1		
WIBA 101.5		
WNWC 102.5		
WZEE 104.1		
105.1 Charlie		
WMMM 105.5		
WWQM 106.3		

On days for which St. Ambrose Academy has classes scheduled but MCPASD doesn't, snow days will be determined by the principal and communicated by email (and possibly also by telephone).

Lunch

Lunch time at St. Ambrose is supervised by volunteers or teachers.

1. Students must follow the direction of the lunch supervisors.
2. The Angelus or Regina Coeli is to be prayed before lunch.
3. Students are to eat with other students in an orderly and reasonably quiet manner.
4. All food and drink must be consumed in the lunch room. The lunch room must be kept clean; each messy student should clean up food or drink that he spilled.
5. After lunch, three students are chosen randomly to vacuum, ensure that tables and chairs are clean, and take out the trash.
6. After lunch, students who aren't cleaning may stay in the lunch room or, with a supervisor's permission and presence, go outside.
7. If the lunch supervisor permits going outside, then no active sports are permitted inside. If the lunch supervisor prohibits going outside, then active sports with clean foam balls are permitted indoors, provided that students take care not to damage walls and furnishings.
8. When outside, students are not to play in the first aisle of the parking lot or near vehicles. Students must not walk on plants or grass adjacent to the building. Students must not throw snow.
9. Since the lunch room is often chilly, students may wear jackets during lunch.
10. The lunch supervisor should ensure that students have cleaned the lunch room, including messes made by non-St. Ambrose people.

School Bus

On field trips and when students are going to or from gym or other bus-related activities:

1. Refrain from extending any part of the body, books, or other objects from a bus window or door.
2. Respect the bus, the driver, other riders, and their property.
3. Remain quiet at railroad crossings.
4. Use the exit door only in case of emergency.
5. Keep the bus clean and orderly. Consumption of food and/or beverages without driver permission is prohibited.
6. Keep bus aisles clear.

Field Trips

Field trips provide an opportunity for learning that cannot take place in the classroom. Students will not be permitted to go on field trips without permission slips signed by a parent or guardian and turned in by the deadline. Students are responsible to the teacher and approved chaperons; the school's discipline policy remains in effect. Students are responsible for work missed due to a field trip. Students are not allowed to drive without prior approval from the principal. Field trip fees will be collected throughout the year.

Prohibited Behaviors

Students will be disciplined for committing any of the following prohibited behaviors or any other behavior judged to be unacceptable. The Principal will evaluate the circumstances of each offense. Disciplinary actions escalate for repeated offenses.

Late homework: If a student consistently does not turn in homework, and the teacher has met with the parents without any result in a change of work, then the student will be placed on Probation.

Low grades: If two or more "F" grades appear on a Quarter Report, the student may be placed on Probation. This decision will be made by the Principal, in conjunction with the advice of the teacher.

Lying/Cheating: Honesty is the hallmark of a person with a well-formed conscience. Cheating results in a meeting with the teacher and a "zero" grade; parents are informed. If a student cheats a second time, he, his parents, the teacher, and the Principal meet; he may receive an F for the class, and disciplinary action may be taken. If a student cheats a third time, he is on probation.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism (passing off the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source) is unacceptable. Students who plagiarize will suffer the same consequences as for lying and cheating.

For the following offenses, at the first offense the student will meet with a teacher, who will identify the violation. At the second offense, the student will receive detention. Further offenses will result in disciplinary actions up to and including probation.

Uncompleted assignments

Dress Code violations

Leaving the building without permission

Unexcused absences, tardiness, or loitering

Littering or possessing food or beverage outside the Commons

Overt displays of affection

Public conduct unbecoming to a St. Ambrose student

Disrespect of Catholic practices

Cell phones, pagers, music players, earphones/headphones, and other electronic devices are prohibited in the classroom.

Students will receive detention for the following offenses:

Inappropriate language, hateful gestures, or blasphemy

Disruptive, disrespectful, rude, or willful behavior

Students face probation or immediate expulsion for the following offenses:

Fighting, violence, or battery

Use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, firearms, ammunition, or weapons

Theft, vandalism, or destruction of property

Off-school violations of civil law

Possession of pornography, including on the computer

Disciplinary Actions

Students may address the Principal in writing within three days of receiving notice of a punishment. The Principal makes the final decision regarding disciplinary actions.

Meeting with student: The teacher meets formally with the student.

Meeting with parents: The teacher and Principal meet formally with the student and his parents.

Financial restitution: Students may be required to make financial restitution.

Detention: Notes will be sent home for the parents to sign regarding the reason and time for each detention. Repeated offenses may result in probation.

Probation: The student must leave school for three days, while making up all the work he has missed on those days. He cannot return to school until he and his parents have met with the school Principal.

Suspension: Probation is extended indefinitely until the situation has been resolved, with the assistance of civil authorities, if necessary. Depending on the duration of the student's absence, the student may receive no credit for any courses in progress, but is allowed to continue at St. Ambrose Academy.

Expulsion: The student is required to leave St. Ambrose Academy. Students may not be on the St. Ambrose campus and may not attend any St. Ambrose functions. Expelled students get no credit for courses taken during the semester of the expulsion. Students may reapply for admittance after a full semester of absence.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences are held at the end of the first and third quarters. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend. Parents are also encouraged to meet with a teacher or the principal to discuss any matter relevant to a student's experience at St. Ambrose Academy. Such appointments may be arranged by telephoning the school.

Grievance Process

A family who has a grievance should first meet with the teacher. If the issue is unresolved, the family should notify the teacher that it will meet with the principal. If the issue is still unresolved, then the family should write a concise letter to the principal and Board giving notice of the grievance and the attempts made so far to resolve it. This must be done within 30 days of the circumstances from which the grievance arose. The Board will assign a conciliator who will attempt to resolve the grievance informally by meeting with both parties in confidentiality. The conciliator will conclude these efforts and file a written report with the Board, who will be the final arbiter, if necessary.

School Life

New Family Transition

The first semester at St. Ambrose Academy can be a challenging one academically for new students. The teachers, administration, and broader community (many of whom have witnessed amazing transformations in their own children's academic blossoming) are eager to help families through the transition.

Mentoring Program

The Mentoring program pairs veteran families with new families. These veteran families have witnessed the amazing payoff that comes when they, with the help of St. Ambrose, encourage and equip their children to persevere and succeed.

Orientation Night

Orientation Night occurs in the first weeks of school. New parents and students have the opportunity to ask questions and hear testimonials from veteran families about how their children struggled at first but then transitioned to thriving in the St. Ambrose program. Teachers will discuss their courses and expectations of what it takes to succeed.

Frequently Asked Questions

Initial difficulties for parents and students when entering a new school are very normal. To assist with these difficulties we have compiled a list of Frequently Asked Questions written by veteran parents for new parents.

Why did St. Ambrose Academy get started?

In Fall 2003, a group of Catholic families in the Madison area launched a school for our children that placed at the forefront of its vision a profound love of Jesus Christ and his Church. Our desire is to place the education and formation of our children squarely in the context of the Faith we are striving to pass on to them. John Paul II has taught us that our children are best served in an environment that presupposes

humanity's dignity and purpose, where the Faith infuses all academic disciplines. The Holy Father's vision of an integral education is the basis for our vision.

Why is a Catholic identity so important?

We want a school that makes it exciting to have a Catholic identity, where teenagers can feel that living a chaste and virtuous life is not just good in God's eyes but also in the eyes of their peers. Christian heroes abound for them to emulate; we present these heroes to our children as inspirations. Altruism is very natural in the early adult years. It seems essential to place before our children a vision of service and love that speaks to their Catholic identity. We expect our students to be respectful of their parents, teachers, and peers, grounding their emotions in virtue and self-control.

What is a classical education?

The St. Ambrose curriculum is designed to provide an outstanding foundation in the critical academic disciplines of math, science, history, literature, logic, rhetoric, composition, and language, crowned by regular study of and growth in the Faith. Our approach to learning includes in-depth study of the classical works of the western world and the great works of Christendom. Our religion studies focus on the analysis and understanding of the Scriptures and significant Church documents (such as papal encyclicals and the Catechism). Our classes revolve around discussion, debate, presentations, and regular papers.

Why is the Socratic style of learning emphasized?

Our Socratic discussion-based teaching, used in many of our classes, will prepare our students for college and a lifetime of learning. Small group discussions demand participation and understanding of the subjects, resulting in excellent verbal communication skills and self-confidence.

What can be expected from teachers?

Our dedicated faculty members use a variety of methods to give our students the tools they need to master our curriculum with an enthusiasm that comes from true understanding of the profound ideas of the ages. Works are studied in an introductory manner suited to the intellectual capacity of the students; students are not expected to display exceptional ability or college-level understanding.

Teachers are often available and eager to speak with parents about a variety of issues. Attending parent-teacher conferences and the orientation evening is a great way for parents to stay in touch.

What extracurricular activities does the school offer?

We believe in the importance of student life outside the classroom and are committed to growing a program of extra-curricular activities as the school grows. We desire to give our students the opportunity to participate in academic bees and competitions, clubs, and the traditional endeavors of secondary school. Students, teachers, parents, and volunteers have organized a number of activities that contribute to the enhancement of student life outside the classroom. These activities are dependent on student interest, and they will increase as our student body and volunteer pool grows. Here are some examples:

- Student Council
- Yearbook Committee
- High School Forensics
- Junior High Forensics
- Music/Band/Drama
- Basketball
- Junior High Track & Field
- Cross Country

Student participation in extra-curricular activities is dependent on adequate performance in academic subjects.

Students also participate in local community and club sports such as Football, Hockey, Lacrosse, Soccer, Baseball, Swimming and Golf.

What is the social atmosphere like?

Small class sizes, shared classes among grades, and extracurricular participation can all contribute to a student's social life. St. Ambrose Academy teaches and strives to foster a welcoming environment for all students. Students spend a considerable amount of time together as each grade level attends many of the same courses. Students tend to develop very strong relationships within these classes and throughout the school. Also, the school often has visiting students who shadow classes so the current students become accustomed to seeing new faces. Lastly, many of our students are involved in church or community organizations, part-time jobs, and other activities that provide for a well-rounded social experience both in and out of school.

What are some of the general recommendations of veteran families?

- Pray and trust in God as you adjust that you may see amazing qualities come forth in your child and in your family.
- The first year is an overall adjustment to the school and the community.
- The first month can be difficult on everyone, but stick with it.
- Talk to other parents about their experiences – YOU ARE NOT ALONE in the transition.
- Get to know the teachers, and encourage your students to come to teachers for help.
- Come to Parent-Faculty meetings and the Orientation night.
- Volunteer for events in order to meet other parents while assisting the school.
- Allow your children plenty of sleep and good full meals.
- Be cautious of “gmail” chatting while doing homework.
- Limit TV time and game time. Use this as an incentive to finish homework and be doing it well.
- Your attitude is crucial. If you despair, the student will despair. If you give a sense of quitting, your child will too.
- Be encouraging to your students no matter how discouraged you are.

Communication

One of our best communication tools is the Weekly Update, which is e-mailed each week. This e-mail contains general school news, reminders, classroom information, and important dates. Parents are expected to read the Weekly Update and all other emails coming through this channel. We also expect them to be familiar with our school website, www.ambroseacademy.org, and our internal community website, www.service-life.com/wi/stambrose.

Directory

Our community website includes a Member Directory with contact information and an opportunity to share photos and additional information on a customizable webpage for each family member. When you establish your account on our family website, you control how much information, including directory information, you want to share with the community.

Lost and Found

Students who find items should turn them into the office. Retrieval of student items left out of place costs students 25 cents per item. Students who suspect theft should inform the principal.

Immunizations

State law requires all families to file an Immunization form for each child enrolled in the school.

Emergency Treatment

All families must file an Emergency Treatment form for each child enrolled in the school.

Prescription Drugs

Please note that teachers do not administer any medications or prescription drugs. It is up to the student to keep track of any medication which is necessary. The teacher should be informed of such need.

Aspirin or other painkillers are also not administered by teachers. Students bringing over-the-counter drugs or prescription medications must inform their homeroom teacher.

All medications (prescription and over-the-counter) will be kept in the school office where no unauthorized person will have access. No medication is to be kept in the student's possession except in the cases of inhalers for asthma, Epi-pens for severe allergic reactions, and other emergency medications approved by the principal. Both the student and the office should have immediate access to emergency medications, so families should bring extra emergency items for storage in the school office. Additional exceptions will be made with written parent and physician instructions.

Team Name

St. Ambrose chose the name of Guardians because our goal is to guard and pass on the repository of the Catholic Faith to our children.

Motto

Our motto is from the words of St. Ambrose: "Omnia Christus est nobis!" translated "Christ is everything for us!"

A discussion of these words of St. Ambrose is found in Pope Benedict XVI's October 24, 2007, general audience:

Like John the Apostle, Bishop Ambrose, who never tired of repeating "Omnia Christus est nobis!"—"Christ is everything for us!"—remained an authentic witness for the Lord. With these same words, full of love for Jesus, we will conclude our catechesis: "Omnia Christus est nobis! If you want to heal a wound, he is the physician; if you burn with fever, he is the fountain; if you are oppressed by iniquity, he is justice; if you need help, he is strength; if you fear death, he is life; if you desire heaven, he is the way; if you are in darkness, he is the light. ... Taste and see how good the Lord is. Blessed is the man who hopes in him!" (De virginitate, 16, 99). We also hope in Christ. In this way we will be blessed and will live in peace.

Parental Commitment

As a school which has been started and run by parents, the commitment of parents lies behind the success of St. Ambrose Academy. The academic and social life of the school needs on-going parental involvement. Because of this need, parents are required to give seventy-five hours per year, per family (not per student), of parent hours to the running of the school. Each parent must fill out a Parent Commitment form.

If there is a lack of parent involvement, some school activities may be suspended. Off-campus activities rely on parent participation.

Parents, please note that no brochures for sales of any items, or any catalogues for fund-raising may be brought to school or passed out at school without the consent of the Board of Directors. This guideline ensures that no organizations with possible anti-Catholic agendas are promoted. See the “Parental Commitment” handout for volunteer requirements and opportunities.

Safe Environment Training

All employees and volunteers are required to complete the Protecting God’s Children For Adults (Safe Environment) training prior to working or volunteering. In addition, all employees and volunteers are required to have a completed background check.

Profiles

Faculty / Staff

Patrick Carey, Math

Working from his home office in rural Dane county, Patrick has written over 20 college textbooks on topics ranging from statistics to computer programming to Web page design. He has also given workshops and presentations across the country and at national conferences. Patrick graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1988 with a MS in Statistics and Mathematics and spent several years working on the design and analysis of clinical cancer studies before becoming a full-time author. When not writing, Patrick tries to keep up with the activities of his 6 children and follow the fortunes of his beloved Packers.

Bridget Gill, Coordinator of Development

Bridget Gill moved to Madison a year ago after working four years for FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students). She served as an on-campus missionary at the University of Colorado for three years leading college students in Scripture and Catechesis studies. She spent her last year with FOCUS as their Public Relations Program Manager, where she developed marketing materials, recruitment tools, and support systems for the missionaries. She will continue to split her time between St. Ambrose and St. Thomas Aquinas as Coordinator of Stewardship and Evangelization & Young Adult Outreach. Ms. Gill has a B.S. in Psychology from the University of Illinois-Champaign and will be married in the fall of 2008.

Katie Haun, Administrative Assistant, Math

Katie Haun is a recent graduate from UW-Madison with degrees in Rehabilitation Psychology and Psychology. During her senior year she spearheaded a research initiative for the Madison area Head Start program. Here, she grew in her love for education. During her college years, she was very active at the St. Paul's University Catholic Center where she was both a peer mentor and discipleship group leader. St. Paul's was also where she met and married (June '07) her husband, Nick. The Hauns are expecting their first child in the fall of 2008.

Paul Matenaer, Religion, History

Paul graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 2006 with a B.A. in Religious Studies and is currently working on his Masters of Theological Studies from Ave Maria University in their Institute for Pastoral Theology program, which he hopes to complete in May of 2009. Before joining St. Ambrose, Paul was the Director of Religious Education at St. Ann Parish in Stoughton, where he currently resides with his wife Meg and their two children. When not in the classroom, Paul enjoys spending time with family and reading the theology of Joseph Ratzinger, the encyclicals of Pope Pius X, and the writings of the Early Church Fathers.

Lisa Pantano, Music/Drama

Lisa Pantano graduated Salutatorian from the prestigious Eastman School of Music and received the Adelaide Lyndsay Scholarship for Excellence in Voice. She has performed and taught throughout the U.S., Canada, and Italy.

Beth Ptak, Art

Beth received an Associate in Technology Degree with a major in Graphic Design from The American Academy of Art, Chicago, Ill. Her career has taken her through advertising studio design, illustration, portraiture, Madison's "Art Fair Off the Square," custom artwork for commercial/home furniture and interiors, and art education. Beth is currently on the Board for an "Outsider Art" site called Grandview in Hollandale, Wis. Beth assists with St. Ambrose's annual yearbook and the spring musical set designs.

John Ruplinger, English, Latin

John Ruplinger has worked at several Catholic, classical schools over the last ten years, and has studied and been interested in such for longer. He has taught every level of middle and high school in mathematics and Latin, as well as courses on Scripture and history. His background is as a generalist in the liberal arts tradition, having received a B.A. and M.A. from Marquette. His perennial interest is in literature and philosophy, as well as education. He has an overindulgent wife and five young children. Among other activities he enjoys reading alone or with friends or with children, writing, constructing, camping, fishing, canoeing, sailing, as well as drinking and digging ditches in accord with the excellent advice of Hilaire Belloc on these matters: "...hunt, drink, sing, dance, sail, and dig; and those that would not should be compelled by force." (John needs improvement in dancing.)

Scott Schmiesing, Principal, Math

Before joining St. Ambrose Academy this year, Scott was the principal at St. Francis Xavier School in Cross Plains. Previous to that, he spent six years at the Parkview School District as an assistant principal, athletic director, and teacher. Scott also taught business, was the Athletic Director, and coached basketball and volleyball at Juda for eleven years. He has a BS in Business Education from St. Cloud State University and a MS in Education Administration from Edgewood College. In his spare time he likes to play golf and play ball with his children. Scott and his wife Barb have five children and are expecting in August.

Carrie Skinner, History, Latin, Religion

In her tenure at St. Ambrose Academy, Carrie Skinner has taught every major academic discipline. Carrie brings the fruit of this experience into Socratic discussions with students in her classroom, acutely aware that all truth has both its origin and goal in the Lord Himself, and as such, compels an individual to action. Her background is in science and theology, having received an M.A. in Theology from the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology, and a B.S. in Biology with a certificate in Education from UW-Stevens Point. Carrie's primary academic interest is the confluence of faith and science, though she also pursues the study of classical philosophy and Thomistic theology. In addition, Carrie enjoys hiking, cooking, and irony, especially while wearing heels and searching for the perfect cup of coffee.

Megan Sprague, Science, Math

Before coming to Wisconsin, Megan Sprague taught high school chemistry and mathematics at Currey Ingram Academy in Brentwood, Tennessee. Megan has a B.S. in mathematics from the University of Notre Dame. She has an M.S. in chemistry from UW-Madison. Megan has led Bible study at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Madison and is a member of their graduate and young professional group. Megan is a member of Blessed Sacrament parish. Megan will be teaching chemistry, earth science and math.

Board

Rob Marsland, Ph.D., President, received his B.S. in Electrical Engineering from Arizona State University. He then received his Masters and Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Stanford University. He helped found New Focus, Inc. and Focused Research, Inc., two optical technology companies, and is now working on a new start-up company. Rob is also a Lecturer in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at UW-Madison. He and his wife Diane are homeschooling parents of seven children, three of whom are attending St. Ambrose Academy, and one who graduated in 2007 and now attends Princeton.

Grant Emmel, Vice President, is Vice Chancellor for the Diocese of Madison, involved with strategic planning and information technology and is a registered professional engineer in the state of Wisconsin. He is Vice President for Vocations of the Madison chapter of Serra International and a member of the Knights of Columbus. In addition to St. Ambrose Academy he helped found Safe Place for Newborns - Wisconsin to protect infants from abandonment. He and his wife, Nancy, are parents of five children, two of whom are enrolled at St. Ambrose Academy, and one who is a seminarian for the diocese.

David R. J. Stiennon, Secretary, is a patent attorney and partner in the Madison law firm of Stiennon & Stiennon. He is president of the Technical Club of Madison and producer of the Madison Serra Club Audio Lending Library, which makes available recordings of Bishop Robert C. Morlino. He served on the first advisory board for WHFA, Catholic Radio in Madison.

Joe Leone, Treasurer, is a chemist by training and a patent lawyer by profession. He received an A.B. degree in chemistry from Kenyon College, and masters (chemistry) and law degrees from Marquette University. He and his wife Elizabeth are homeschooling parents of five children.

Joan Carey, Director, received her M.A. degree in English from the University of Wisconsin and then completed four years in the Ph.D. medieval literature program, during which she taught multiple literature and composition courses. She left the program to give birth to twins. She and her husband Patrick own Carey Associates, Inc., a technical documentation company, and are parents of six children, two of whom are homeschooled, two of whom attend St. Ambrose, and two of whom graduated in 2008 and now attend the University of Wisconsin.