

# Victory Autism Academy

## Student & Parent Handbook

### 2024 – 2025



<p><b>VAA Goodyear Elementary Campus</b> 1781 N. Central Avenue Goodyear, AZ 85338</p>	<p><b>VAA Goodyear Middle School/High School Campus</b> 13530 West Van Buren Street Goodyear AZ, 85338 Suite 104 and 105</p>
<p><b>VAA Phoenix Campus</b> 6849 W. Indian School Road Phoenix, AZ 85033</p>	<p><b>VAA GCU Campus</b> 2930 W. Bethany Home Road Phoenix, AZ 85033</p>
<p><b>VAA Queen Creek Campus</b> 20365 W. Ocotillo Road Queen Creek, AZ 85142</p>	

## Mission Statement

Provide students on the autism spectrum, a whole child education that will not only improve their quality of life but also prepare them for future success.

## Vision

To be courageous in everything we do.

## Core Beliefs

- **Enrich-** Our goal is to provide an educational setting with programs and tools to improve and enhance life skills for those on the Autism spectrum as well as their families. We aspire to make life more meaningful and rewarding.
- **Inspire-** We dedicate ourselves to being a positive and uplifting school that encourages, promotes, and celebrates success in all individuals. We believe each person on the autism spectrum has the opportunity to make a positive difference in this world.
- **Empower-** We strive to empower individuals on the autism spectrum to achieve their highest quality of life academically, emotionally, physically, and socially.

### Office School Hours

Monday - Friday	7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Early Release	7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

### School Hours

Monday – Thursday	8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Early Release every Friday	8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

### Half Day Kindergarten

AM Session	8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
PM Session	12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

### Arrival and Dismissal

To ensure the safety and security of all students, we have instituted strict arrival and dismissal procedures. Students may arrive at school between 8:10 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. Please call or email your child’s teacher with any concerns about your child before school so that the drop-off vehicle line can move quickly and smoothly. Staff members have been instructed to ask parents to follow this procedure to help alleviate traffic concerns.

Also, to prevent classroom disruptions, students will not be released for dismissal after 2:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 12:00 p.m. Friday, except on an emergency basis. This ensures staff members have time to complete all academic lessons and proceed to staff posts to ensure students can safely be dismissed to the traffic line. Please help us stay well-staffed and keep all students safe by not routinely picking up your child early from school.

***We ask that parents be on time to pick up their child. As part of our continuing effort to keep students safe and ensure adequate staffing at all times, if you are more than 15 minutes late to pick up your child after dismissal, your child will be sent to wait with the office staff.*** The fee for this emergency service is \$25 for the first 15 minutes and \$50 for each additional 15 minutes after that. Office staff may call the Department of Child Safety if your child is routinely picked up late from school. Please note early release times on the school calendar and ensure you have a pick-up plan for your child on early release days. Thank you in advance for understanding and supporting our efforts to ensure all students’ security and safety.

### Attendance

Arizona law ARS § 15-803 requires students to attend school 90% of the time. Victory Autism Academy believes students need to be at school daily to maximize their learning opportunities. We strongly

request that students and their parents make every effort possible to minimize the number of days they miss school. If a student is habitually absent or tardy, we will first work with the family to improve attendance. However, school policy requires that we notify the proper state authorities if no improvement is made and attendance continues to be an issue.

### **Excused Absences**

The following situations constitute an excused absence from school only if verified by a phone call, email, or signed note by the parent/guardian or a signed letter by a doctor:

- Personal illness
- Death of a family member
- Serious family emergencies
- Court summons
- School-approved activity
- Religious holiday
- Urgent medical appointments (Please note: If a regular doctor, dentist, therapy, or other non-urgent appointments need to be made, the expectation is for every attempt to be made to schedule appointments after school, or on early dismissal or school holiday dates. Students will not be routinely excused for therapy appointments).

### **Unexcused Absences**

Unexcused absences reflect poorly on student achievement, so we strongly encourage students to minimize the number of unexcused absences that occur. The following are some examples of missed school days that will not be considered excused absences:

- Family Trips
- Non-school related activities (e.g., sporting events, celebrations)
- Routine, weekly therapy appointments

Any student absent from school without permission from the parent/guardian and/or without the knowledge and approval from Victory Autism Academy is considered truant and may be subject to disciplinary actions in school and/or by local authorities. If a parent/guardian fails to send their child to school, the child will be considered truant. Under Arizona State Law, Victory Autism Academy is required to report excessive truancy.

### **Tardiness**

Lateness to school and class is disruptive to instruction. School begins each day at 8:30 a.m. and students must be in their assigned classroom by this time. They will be considered tardy to school if he/she arrives after the start time. Upon late arrival, the parent/guardian must sign the student in at the front office.

### **Illness Policy**

If your child appears to be ill in the morning before school, please have them remain home. In general, students will be sent home from school if they have a temperature of 100 degrees or more, experience vomiting, diarrhea, or have symptoms of a suspected contagious illness. If your child is sent home from school, please keep in mind that they may not return to school until they have maintained a 98.6 degree

(normal) temperature for 24 hours without medication for fever reduction (such as Tylenol, Motrin, etc.). The student should have experienced no vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school. If parents, guardians, or emergency contacts are called to pick up a student due to an illness, it is expected that your child is picked up as requested within one (1) hour of notification.

### **Allergies**

Victory Autism Academy requires all students to have an updated Student Allergy List on file each year, listing all diagnosed allergies. Families are encouraged to inform the front office of additional allergies if changes occur throughout the year to take extra precautions in specific classrooms and common areas. Victory Autism Academy reserves the right to request medical documentation to verify listed allergies.

### **Lice / Nit**

If a student is found with active, adult head lice, and nits, the parent/guardian will be contacted, and the student will be sent home for treatment. The parent/guardian may be given information about head lice treatment and encouraged to begin treating the student and checking all family members immediately. The student will be checked upon return to school the next day and allowed to remain in school if no active head lice or nits are detected.

Upon the student's return to school, if it is determined that the student remains infected with head lice or nits, the school shall contact the student's parent/guardian to discuss treatment. When it is determined that one or more students in a class are infested with head lice or nits, the principal or designee will notify parents/guardians of students in that class and provide them with information about the detection and treatment of head lice and nits.

### **Medication at School**

Victory Autism Academy must have parent/guardian permission (a signed Request Giving Medication at School form) to administer medication to students. The medication must be delivered to the school by a parent/guardian in the original prescription bottle. Prescription medication will not be administered unless it is in a current dated prescription bottle. The staff will count the medication and keep a Medication Log to track all doses given. When refills are necessary, a classroom staff member will notify the parents/guardians. Because a change in medication can significantly affect a student's behavior at home and school, parents/guardians are required to notify the school if there is a change in medication, complete a new "Request for Giving Medication at School" form and provide the school with the original prescription bottle clearly labeled.

*\* If your child needs an inhaler or EpiPen during school hours, VAA may require two. One will be kept in the van and the other in the classroom.*

### **Identification for Picking up a Child**

All adults authorized to pick up your child must be listed on the emergency contact list. If someone who does not routinely pick up your child is picking them up after school, they must come into the office and show identification to pick up your child. If you have a new provider working with your child, please ensure that we have written update authorization allowing us to release your child. If someone is coming to pick your child up during the school day, please ask them to bring identification into the office to verify the correct name on the pickup list.

## **Visitor Procedures**

Parents, Guardians, DDD Case Managers, and other professionals working with a family are welcome to visit their students' classroom with prior permission. Due to the nature of the students being served at Victory Autism Academy, interruptions and distractions in the classroom must be kept to a minimum for all students in the room.

All visits must be pre-approved by a member of the administrative team and are limited to a 20-minute visit per appointment for special activities (Birthday celebrations, student presentations, holiday celebrations).

All visitors must report to the front office to sign in and receive a visitor name tag. Visitor identification and Release of Information Form will be requested at that time if a person other than the parent/guardian is observing. Visitors will also be asked to sign a Confidentiality Agreement. A Victory Autism Academy staff member will accompany the visitor to the classroom. All visitors must sign out at the front desk when leaving the school. For the safety of all students, there are no exceptions to this requirement.

Groups of visitors (more than two (2) people) may be asked to visit the classroom at separate times. Victory Autism Academy requests that siblings or small children are not brought along during scheduled visitations.

Teachers and therapists can not take time to discuss class events, procedures, or student matters with visitors. It is recommended that parents schedule a time before or after school to conference with staff if needed.

School administrators are authorized to refuse entry to the school to visitors who do not have a legitimate business or do not have proper signed documentation. Any unauthorized visitor or people engaging in unacceptable conduct will be asked to leave the school grounds.

## **Conflict of Interest**

Victory Autism Academy Staff is not permitted to accept any position (e.g., babysitting, home therapy, habilitation, respite, etc.) outside our organization with a current student. This is considered a conflict of interest to work with a current student outside the school for any other organization or private funding. This is to protect all students' privacy and maintain the professional relationship between school personnel and families. This policy protects the employee from being placed in an uncomfortable situation and a possible ethical dilemma. It is imperative to ensure proper and appropriate boundaries for protecting the student, families, and staff members.

## **Custody**

The most recent custody documents are to be kept on file in the school office. This would be the latest dated court decree. The parent's responsible for providing the latest and most recent court documents to the school. Otherwise, the school uses the most recently dated documents received to validate custody.

## **Order of Protection**

If there is an order of protection due to custody (or any other issues), the student's file is flagged in our student information system. Orders of Protection are typically only good for one year. When they expire, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to give a copy of the renewed Order to the school office.

## **Guardianship**

Legal Guardianship and Temporary Legal Guardianship can only be established by Court Order. If a child does not reside with natural parents, the school will request "letters of guardianship," issued by a court, before enrolling a student.

## **Parent Code of Conduct**

### **Purpose and Scope**

The Parent Code of Conduct aims to provide a mutual understanding to all parents/guardians and visitors to our school about conduct expectations while on school property, at school events and when interacting with District employees and/or students.

### **General Propositions**

We expect parents/guardians and visitors to have a fundamental understanding and commitment to the following general propositions:

- Teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians want all children to learn in a safe environment
- Teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians must work together for the benefit of all students
- All parents/guardians and visitors, as well as all members of the school community, deserve to be treated with respect
- The school should be provided an opportunity to resolve issues of concern before public criticism.

### **Prohibited Behaviors**

To provide a peaceful and safe school environment, VAA prohibits the following behaviors by parents/guardians and visitors:

- Abusive, threatening, profane, or harassing communication, either in person, by e-mail or text/voicemail/phone, or other written or verbal communication
- Disruptive behavior that interferes or threatens to interfere with operations, including the effective operation of a classroom, an employee's office, front office, or school grounds, including sporting events, parking lots, and car-pickup
- Threatening to do bodily harm to a VAA employee, visitor, fellow parent/guardian, or student
- Threatening to damage the property of VAA, visitor, fellow parent/guardian, or student.
- Damaging or destruction of school property
- Excessive unscheduled campus visits, e-mails, text/voicemail/phone messages, or other written or oral
  - School staff and administration may not always be immediately available to speak with you. The only way to *ensure* that you are able to speak with a staff member or

administrator is to schedule an appointment. Staff and administrators have a practice of attempting to return all phone calls/emails within 24 hours with great success. Your calls and visits will be responded to consistent with this practice if someone is not immediately available to speak with.

- Defamatory, offensive, or derogatory comments regarding the school or school staff made publicly to others.
- Any concerns that you may have regarding these matters must be addressed through the appropriate channels so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately, and effectively.
- This includes the use of any social media, including, but not limited to, websites, blogs, and social networking sites such as Google, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Flickr.

### **Consequences**

Depending upon the severity of the incident, parents/guardians or visitors may be ejected from or otherwise banned from campus and participate in school-sponsored events. In situations involving lesser infractions or where remediation is viable, a warning will be provided, either verbal or in writing, prior to the filing of trespass and issuance of a formal ban. Should a parent/guardian or visitor fail to heed the direction issued in the warning, a ban or other restrictions designed to deter the conduct will follow. Students may be unenrolled due to parent/guardian behavior. No restriction, however, will prevent the parent/guardian from working collaboratively with VAA to meet the child's educational needs, nor will a parent/guardian be excluded from a child's IEP meeting.

### **Dress Code and Personal Appearance Policy**

Victory Autism Academy strives to ensure an optimal learning environment and a safe campus for all our students. A student's attire, personal appearance, and conduct can play a significant role in accomplishing this goal.

- No slip-on shoes (flip flops, backless sandals, etc.)
- Clothing cannot be revealing (no sagging, no mid-drift, etc.)
- No spaghetti straps - straps must be 3 inches or wider
- No clothing with violent or inappropriate pictures
- No see-through clothing
- No holes, tears, or rips in clothing

### **Celebrations**

Birthdays are important social activities and a favorite part of childhood. We understand parents may want their child to share this moment with their friends at school. Many students have allergies and restrictive diets that may exclude the participation of some of the students. Please communicate with your child's teacher to receive permission if you wish to celebrate your child's birthday with a class party. Up to 20 minutes of class time can be allotted at the end of the school day. All agreed-upon items should come into the school in their original store packages, indicating ingredients and nutritional information. The teacher will communicate information regarding upcoming parties to other parents in the class.



*\*Party invitations may not be passed out during class time but may be passed out in the parking lot, or at the bus stop, etc.*

### **Behavior and Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI)**

Victory Autism Academy staff strive for excellence in providing the highest quality educational programs for all students. We make every effort to provide a healthy, positive, and safe environment that promotes academics, life skills, social skills, and positive behavior. We use a variety of behavioral and Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) techniques to ensure that care, welfare, safety, and security for all students, and staff are a top priority.

Therapeutic holds will only be used as a last resort where we deem a child to be putting themselves or others in immediate physical danger. Therapeutic holds will not be used unless less restrictive interventions appear insufficient to mitigate the imminent danger of bodily harm to the student or others. A therapeutic hold is defined as a treatment technique where a person in crisis is contained by a group of trained personnel rather than mechanical or chemical restraint.

Therapeutic holds will not impede the student's ability to breathe and will not be out of proportion to the student's age or physical condition. Therapeutic holds will end when the student no longer is a physical danger to themselves or others. There must be at least two CPI- trained staff present in order for any physical intervention to take place. If one staff member is completing the therapeutic hold, another staff member must be present to observe. If a two-person therapeutic hold is being used, a third staff member must be present to observe. All staff members who were involved in the therapeutic hold must attend the debrief meeting.

Victory Autism Academy staff are trained in the use of therapeutic hold as well as de-escalation strategies. Interventions can be as subtle as a physical cue and as restrictive as a therapeutic hold. Victory Autism Academy staff are trained in therapeutic holds and are overseen by a Crisis Prevention Intervention trainer. Staff are fully trained each year and provided no less than two refreshers within the school year.

When a therapeutic hold occurs, the lead team member who responded will document the incident on a therapeutic report form and administration will check the student for any injury that may have occurred during the intervention. Parents will be informed that day via phone call. Parents may request a copy of the incident report at any time. All incidents are tracked so that staff can analyze any patterns related to the behaviors that lead to therapeutic hold. This documentation is used to develop different techniques to prevent negative behavior from occurring in the future, to determine whether a child may need extra support, and or to develop replacement behaviors that will be taught to the student.

***It is, however, essential for parents to understand that if a student becomes physically aggressive or self-injurious and requires a therapeutic hold for his / her protection or the protection of others, there is always a risk of injury to the student or the staff member. Victory Autism Academy is not responsible for injuries due to the student's own behavior.***

Staff will address student behaviors throughout the school day. Victory Autism Academy will intervene as quickly as possible, taking advantage of learning opportunities that promote a positive behavior change. Parents will not be asked to administer a consequence at home for behavior at school. Likewise, Victory Autism Academy will not discipline a student at school for behavior at home. We encourage parents and

teachers to collaborate on ways to promote consistent behavior in all social settings.

### **Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)**

Victory Autism Academy contracts a BCBA to support students with challenging behaviors and support classroom staff with behavior management. At any time, the school appointed BCBA may conduct observations and provide feedback on student behavior to the classroom teacher. If a behavior plan is recommended, parents will be notified and will attend a pre-scheduled meeting. At this meeting, current data will be discussed and a formal plan will be outlined.

### **Outside Service Providers**

We understand that many of our students receive outside services that are vital to your child's continued growth. It is essential that we limit the number of distractions throughout the school day. To help limit distractions, we don't allow outside service providers to come in during the school day and service students.

### **Academics and Grading**

Students are taught academics based on Arizona's College and Career Readiness Standards and IEP (Individual Education Plan)/ISP (Individual Service Plan) goals. They will receive scores on their work completed at their level.

### **Curriculum**

Curriculum is based on grade-level state standards and IEP/ISP goals. Victory Autism Academy utilizes several resources to meet the individual needs of each student. Below is a list of some of the curriculum used throughout our program:

- TeachTown- Encore, Social Skills, Be Safe, and Transitions to Adulthood
- n2Y- Unique and News2You
- EdMark and EdMark Functional Words
- STAR and Links
- TouchMath
- Handwriting Without Tears
- Zones of Regulation
- i-Ready
- Engage NY
- IXL
- Schools PLP

In addition, we utilize technology to reinforce the subject matter taught in the classroom during the day. Providing a structured learning model is critical for student success. Teachers incorporate the principles of TEACCH and Applied Behavior Analysis to construct a classroom framework for successful learning.

### **Technology on Campus**

Students will be exposed to various forms of technology, such as tablets, computers, and smartboards. All policies must be followed for students to continue using technology in the classroom. Personal technology such as cell phones, tablets (communication devices aside), Chromebooks, and laptops are not permitted.

- Students who cause damage to technology equipment may incur restrictions, and parents may be held liable for the replacement of equipment should damage to technology occur, resulting in the purchase of a new device.
- Students must refrain from inappropriate or unauthorized searches on the internet (the school is not held liable for student searches and results)
- Students will use technology for teacher-approved sites and activities only.
- Misconduct with technology can result in disciplinary action.

### **Community Outings**

Each class is required to take four community outings during the school year, which is one outing per quarter. In addition, they will go on a monthly Best Buddy outing and a quarterly trip to UpTown Jungle or Elevate. Students must have permission slips signed by a parent or legal guardian to attend the Community Learning opportunities. Students will be transported in properly insured school vehicles or, when the number of students exceeds the amount deemed safe to utilize school vehicles, a school bus will be rented to ensure the safety of the students on the outing.

Having students attend Community Learning opportunities provides students with an opportunity to practice their social skills in the community. For this reason, due to our large number of staff available to supervise students, parents/guardians are not invited as chaperones for outings. Parents will have access to photos and updates via School Status Connect on days when their child attends the community outing.

Community outings are designed to support the current classroom curriculum. All students are expected to attend community outings. ***If parents choose not to allow their child to attend, the student must remain home for the duration of the outing. Students not attending outings may return to school at the designated time provided.***

### **Therapies Provided**

#### **Speech Therapy**

Speech language therapy addresses challenges with language and communication. It can help children with autism improve their verbal, nonverbal, and social communication. The overall goal is to help the child communicate in more useful and functional ways.

Communication and speech-related challenges vary from child to child. Some individuals on the autism spectrum are not able to speak. Others love to talk but have difficulty holding a conversation or understanding body language and facial expressions when talking with others.

Examples of the skills that speech therapy may work on include:

- Strengthening the muscles in the mouth, jaw, and neck
- Making clearer speech sounds
- Understanding body language
- Responding to questions
- Matching a picture with its meaning
- Using a speech app on an iPad to produce the correct word

- Modulating tone of voice

### **Occupational Therapy**

Occupational therapy (OT) helps children work on cognitive, physical, social, and motor skills. The goal is to improve everyday skills, which allow children to become more independent and participate in a wide range of activities. For children with autism, OT often focuses on play skills, learning strategies, and self-care. OT strategies can also help to manage sensory issues. These are some of the skills occupational therapy may foster:

- Daily living skills, such as toilet training, dressing, brushing teeth, and other grooming skills
- Fine motor skills required for holding objects while handwriting or cutting with scissors
- Gross motor skills used for walking, climbing stairs, or riding a bike
- Sitting, posture, or perceptual skills, such as telling the differences between colors, shapes, and sizes
- Awareness of his or her body and its relation to others
- Visual skills for reading and writing
- Play, coping, self-help, problem-solving, communication, and social skills

By working on these skills during occupational therapy, a child with autism may be able to:

- Develop peer and adult relationships
- Learn how to focus on tasks
- Learn how to delay gratification
- Express feelings in more appropriate ways
- Engage in play with peers
- Learn how to self-regulate

### **Animal Therapy**

There are several reasons that animals may be valuable as an intervention tool for some children with autism spectrum disorders:

- Animals have a unique way to help focus an individual's attention. One study states that children with autism look at the faces of dogs longer than they do at the faces of humans. Therefore, having animals present may keep a child with autism attentive throughout the intervention.
- Children tend to engage socially when animals are present, which is why the animal may act as an 'ice breaker' for children with autism who face social challenges in their daily lives. In addition, several studies indicate that children with autism smile and interact socially more frequently when animals are present.
- Children with autism are at higher risk for becoming the victims of a bully. Furthermore, these children are more likely to experience stress, in general. Both of these issues are of the greatest concern during his or her years in school. However, the nonjudgmental companionship offered through animal-assisted intervention can provide these children with stress relief and eliminate the feeling of loneliness that many of these children experience.

## **Specials**

### **Music**

One of the reasons that music has quickly become a tool used is to stimulate both hemispheres of our brain, rather than just one. This means that a music teacher can use a song or instrument to support cognitive activity to build self-awareness and improve relationships with others. Music encourages communicative behavior and can encourage interaction with others, which is something that children with autism have great difficulty with. If we look closely at how a band works, it is evident that the instruments must all interact with one another, but the player only needs to interact with the instrument at first. For children dealing with autism, interacting with others can be difficult, but through introducing an instrument to their therapy, they may bond first with the object and then open up to others interacting with their instruments as well.

Our interpretation of music, both in lyrics and sound, can significantly help teach us to communicate. For children with autism, this could mean learning a new word from a song, or a better understanding of how to act in a social situation based on the messages that a song is expressing. We know that autism can create barriers for children in social settings, but small groups of children listening to music together may feel confident and comfortable enough to comment or sing along with others.

### **Art**

Victory Autism Academy students participate in art class twice per week. Throughout this time, students learn about specific artists and their art style as well as the variety of art mediums that can be used to create. Art is often project-based and allows students to include preferred topics of interest. Our art program is specially designed with students' ability levels in mind. Materials and projects are adapted to ensure that all students can actively participate regardless of the theme.

Why is art therapeutic to students on the autism spectrum?

- Art promotes freedom of creative expression, which helps students to relax and think differently.
- Art enhances communication through creative expression.
- Anyone can make art, and there are so many different art forms, which helps students with Autism gain independence, confidence, and self-esteem.

### **Adaptive PE**

Victory Autism Academy believes in promoting a healthy and active lifestyle for all of our students. To best support our students' individualized needs, PE is given in a way that is accessible to all students but pushes each individual to reach their highest potential. Adaptive PE at Victory Autism Academy follows both a traditional PE model with our higher functioning classes, and a life skills model with our students who require a higher level of support. However, all PE classes will base their instruction on the CBSE model which includes the following:

1. **Core, Balance, and Flexibility-** Functional Movements and Exercises
2. **Brain and Sensory System-** Neurological, Cognitive, and Emotional Health
3. **Strength and Muscle Development-** Anaerobic Resistance Training
4. **Endurance and Stamina Adaption-** Aerobic Cardiovascular Training

This model may look different from class to class, but is the foundation of our Adaptive PE program at Victory Autism Academy.

### **Special Olympics**

Victory Autism Academy is heavily involved in the Special Olympics of Arizona (SOAZ) and participates in the Palo Verde region. Students ranging from 8 years and up are eligible to take part in the Olympic games, where they may choose the sport they would like to be a part of. Sports that Victory Autism Academy competes in include but are not limited to Soccer, Basketball, Flag Football, Cheer, and more, depending on interest. The beginning of each sport will start with a scheduled team meeting where the coaches will be introduced, schedules are given, and expectations are communicated. If an athlete joins a team, it is expected that the athlete attends all the practices. Athletes are required to have **8 hours** of practice prior to an event, so please make sure that practice is a priority. If your child is not at school on the day of a practice or event, your child may not participate in practice/game on that day.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

At Victory Autism Academy, we will say the Pledge of Allegiance daily. We believe in standing for the pledge, placing our hand over our heart, looking at the American flag, and reciting the pledge in unison. We believe that the American flag is a symbol of freedom and liberty. We also believe in the customs and traditions of the colors of the flag that signify purity and innocence, hardiness and valor, along with vigilance, perseverance, and justice. These are traits we teach in our Character Education curriculum as well.

We also believe that by standing and saying the Pledge of Allegiance every day, our students are learning to honor those who have served and those who continue to serve to preserve our freedoms. These freedoms, which many have sacrificed their life for, allow our students to attend a choice school in Victory Autism Academy.

### **IEP and ISP Meetings**

- IEP/ISP meetings will be scheduled 2 – 3 weeks before the required annual review date.
- Parents will receive a Draft IEP/ISP 5 days in advance for review.
- Parents are asked to email the teacher with any input after reviewing the Draft IEP/ISP, so the teacher can add those comments to the IEP/ISP.
- A draft will be reviewed at the meeting, and any changes discussed will be made during the meeting.
- A final copy will be emailed out within 10 days after the meeting.
- Parents can always request an IEP/ISP meeting at any time.
- Parents will always be offered a copy of their procedural safeguards at the meeting.

### **MET Meetings**

MET meetings need to be completed every three years. The school district your child resides in is responsible for completing the MET. If your child's MET is due, contact the district of residence and request a MET meeting. Victory Autism Academy can assist parents/guardians with this process.

If your child's MET is not updated every three years and does expire, the team will move your child to an ISP for the following school year.

### **Personal Items at School**

Non-essential items such as cell phones, laptops, iPads, tablets, iPods, cameras, or any internet item accessible should not be brought to school. If a student has an extenuating circumstance and obtains prior teacher permission to bring an item to school, they must give the item(s) to their teacher to be locked up during the school day.

Victory Autism Academy is not responsible for money or personal items that are lost, stolen, or damaged. Victory Autism Academy will not assume responsibility for the loss of, or damage to, personal property stored, installed, or used on school premises. Please label all clothing or personal items, such as jackets, coats, backpacks, and lunch boxes, with your child's name.

### **Tracking Devices**

Due to FERPA and students' privacy, students may not wear GPS, tracking, or video/audio devices at any time during the school day.

### **Before and After School Tutoring**

Victory Autism Academy provides quality before and after school tutoring for students. This engaging and secure environment develops independence, self-esteem, creativity, and individuality with outside playtime, snacks, craft activities, art projects, social skills, academics, and games. This program is available to all students attending Victory Autism Academy. The program is only available on days that school is in session. To accurately plan for attendance and have the appropriate number of staff members available, we ask parents/guardians to designate what days of the week and times they will be using the program. Parents/guardians will be billed for the days they indicate their child will be present, whether or not they attend. If your needs change, please notify Victory Autism Academy immediately. If your child will be attending our after school tutoring, please provide them with a snack to eat after school.

### ***Hours of operation***

Before Care- 7:00 am – 8:15 am

After Care- 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

### ***Cost***

Before Care is \$10 per day regardless of drop-off time

After Care is \$12 per day regardless of pick-up time

*\* After tuition is paid, if you have extra ESA funds in your ClassWallet account, funds may be used for before and after care tutoring.*

*\* Before and after school tutoring must be paid on its due date. Any before and after school tutoring payment not received within our 7 day grace period is subject to disenrollment, a late fee of \$50.00 per day past the due date, or discontinued Before and After School Program services.*

### **School Lunch Program**

Victory Autism Academy does not have a school lunch program. Parents must provide lunches, drinks, and snacks for their children. We recommend sending food with an ice pack as we do not have refrigerators that can hold all student lunches. We do have microwaves to heat lunches if you send something that needs to be heated up. All students must have lunch to eat at the assigned lunch time.

### **Transportation**

*Transportation Options:*

**Option 1:** You may transport your child to and from school.

**Option 2:** The transportation fee is waived if the parent/guardian agrees to meet at the designated spot set by Victory Autism Academy.

**Option 3:** A transportation fee of \$100 /one way or \$200 two ways per month/per family for house pick up and drop off. **House pick ups must be within a 5 mile radius of Victory Autism Academy.** If you reside outside of the 5 mile radius you will need to access a pickup location.

If your child requires a booster or car seat, you must provide us with a spare booster or car seat to keep at school. Failure to do this will result in our inability to transport your child.

### **Transportation Disclaimer**

For the safety of all who ride the van, students who exhibit behaviors (aggression towards staff or peers) or who are using profanity may not be allowed to enter the van. At these times parents will be required to transport their student to or from the school without questions. Should these behaviors occur regularly students may be removed from the transportation roster permanently.

*\* After tuition is paid, if you have extra ESA funds in your ClassWallet account, funds may be used for transportation.*

*\*Transportation must be paid on its due date. Any transportation payment not received within our 7 day grace period is subject to disenrollment, a late fee of \$50.00 per day past the due date, or discontinued transportation services.*

### **Tuition**

Tuition does not include: Community Outing costs, before/after school care, clubs, and activity fees, and other school events.

Kindergarten Half Day: \$17,500

Kindergarten Full Day - 12th Grade: \$34,000

*\* A 2% ClassWallet service fee is charged for each quarter payment made.*



*\* Tuition must be paid on its due date. Any student payment not received within our 7 day grace period is subject to disenrollment and/or a late fee of \$50.00 per day past the due date.*

*\* Once a student is enrolled and payment is processed, if you decide to unenroll, you will be charged a \$1000.00 processing fee.*

### **Mid Quarter Enrollment**

If a student enrolls between 1 and 22 days of the school quarter, payment for half of the quarter is required. If a student enrolls with 22 days or more of the school quarter left, payment for the full quarter is required.

*\* No tuition will be reimbursed once payment is made.*

### **Scholarships**

There are a variety of scholarships available in Arizona, and because of this, most of our students are able to attend Victory Autism Academy with little or no out of pocket cost.

### **Empowerment Scholarship Accounts (ESA)**

The Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) program is an account administered by The Arizona Department of Education that is funded by state tax dollars to provide educational options for qualified Arizona students. By opting out of the public school system, parents seek a range of alternative educational services, such as private school or home-based education. The ESA amount depends primarily on the child's disability, as listed in the child's Arizona public school IEP or MET report. Please follow the following link for more information regarding the ESA Scholarship:

<https://www.azed.gov/esa/>

<b>Quarter</b>	<b>Quarter Period</b>	<b>Funding Dates</b>
Q1	July 1st - September 30th	July 1st - September 30th
Q2	October 1st - December 31st	October 1st - December 31st
Q3	January 1st - March 31st	January 1st - March 31st
Q4	April 1st - June 30th	April 1st - June 30th

***Victory Autism Academy will email an invoice out 7-10 days before each quarter payment is due.***

### **Student Tuition Organizations**

Student Tuition Organizations receive a tax credit donation from individuals and corporations for the purpose of granting scholarships to eligible students for private school tuition costs. STOs award scholarships under four different programs: The Original, The Switcher/ Overflow Tax Credit, The Disabled/ Displaced, and The Low Income Corporate. A student may receive a scholarship from more than one STO.

### **Private Placement**

Families pay tuition costs out of pocket.

### **Summer Camp**

During Victory Autism Academy's summer program, students will be involved in theme-based academic lessons, social skill development activities, community learning, and many other exciting experiences to help prepare them for the following school year.

## Student and Parent Handbook Acknowledgement and Agreement

Victory Autism Academy Student and Parent Handbook provides essential information related to student learning, expectations, behavior, and other information related to student and parent rights and responsibilities.

I, the parent of \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Victory Autism Academy Student and Parent Handbook. I have read the content within the handbook. I understand and will accord with these policies and procedures as a condition of my child's enrollment at Victory Autism Academy.

I understand that an electronic copy is also available via the school's website.

I understand that if I have questions or concerns at any time about the handbook, I will consult the principal for clarification.

By signing below, you agree to the policies and procedures put in place within the Victory Autism Academy Student and Parent Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date