



August 17, 2026

Dear Our Lady's Academy Families,

I am looking forward to another wonderful year with our amazing students! We are working diligently to plan a year in which our students grow intellectually, develop strong character, and become better citizens of the world. **Kindness as always will be our focus.**

Below you will find my annual August letter. It is long and filled with important information, so grab a cup of coffee or tea, put on your reading glasses if you need them, and settle in!

SCHOOL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Keeping our students safe and healthy throughout the school year remains our top priority. The school is well positioned to continue the common-sense measures that support this goal. We will continue our partnership with Omnium Protection Services, and Chuck will remain our security guard.

Our school nurse, Ashley Capobianco, will return to provide the same wonderful care for our students. Ashley will be getting married this fall, and while she is away celebrating her honeymoon, one of our former parents, who is also a nurse, will step in to cover her role.

NEW FACULTY

We are delighted to welcome several new faculty members to Our Lady's Academy this year. A full list of our faculty is included below.

FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Over the summer, our entire school — common areas and classrooms alike — received a top-to-bottom cleaning. All floors were washed and waxed, and rugs were professionally cleaned or replaced with a new one where needed. The Pre-K wing was freshly painted, and additional improvements will continue as needs arise. Two cameras were added to cover blind spots on the campus. To date, just about every outside area of the campus and all common areas in the building are within sight of a camera.

FIRST DAY LOGISTICS — TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

On the first day of school, teachers will greet students in the auditorium or schoolyard, depending on the weather, holding signs with their names and grades. Students should line up with their teacher, who will then walk their classes to their classroom.

Beginning on the second day of school, students will proceed directly into the building after drop-off and go straight to their classrooms.

DAILY ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

The Academy's doors open at 7:45 a.m. every school day. Students should proceed to their classrooms as soon as they are dropped off by bus or car. If needed, Kindergarten parents may walk their children to their classrooms during the first week of school. Please follow the arrival procedures detailed below.

Pre-Kindergarten parents may escort their children to their classrooms throughout the year, also following the arrival procedures below.

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 must be in their classrooms by 8:00 a.m. to avoid being marked tardy. Our school day officially begins at 8:05 a.m. with prayers and opening activities, followed by the first class of the day.

The only exceptions to the 8:00 a.m. start are a late bus arrival or inclement weather, as determined by the principal.

Arrival — Grades 1 through 8

- Enter the parking lot only through the west entrance, closest to Lexington Street. If you are first in the drop-off line, pull up to the sign marked **“Drop-Off”** to help prevent backups onto Trapelo Road, and let your child out onto the sidewalk. Children should never exit from the driver's side of the vehicle.
- If cars are ahead of you in the drop-off zone, feel free to let your child out on the sidewalk before reaching the drop-off sign.
- Please have your child ready to hop out as soon as you reach the sidewalk. Delays hold up the line and can cause backups onto Trapelo Road.
- Regardless of where you drop off, stay in line until you reach the drop-off sign to turn left.
- If you are held up by the car ahead of you, please do not pass. Drive slowly in a single line and watch carefully for pedestrians crossing the flow of traffic. Cars are not permitted to drive through the schoolyard portion of the lot.

- Once dropped off, students in Grades 1–4 should walk to the main entrance, while students in Grades 5–8 should walk to the old main entrance. Our Faculty will be greeting children at both doors, so parents do not need to walk their children inside.
- To exit, all cars should turn left at the drop-off sign. Cars turning left onto Trapelo Road should use the first exit; cars turning right should use the ramp in front of the church to exit on the Belmont side. At either exit, please leave enough space rather than pulling up beside the car ahead so that the other driver's view of Trapelo Road remains clear.

Arrival — Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten

- If you also have older children to drop off, follow the Grades 1–8 procedures first. Afterward, take a second left, past the drop-off sign, to park in a space facing the church.
- If you do not have a Grade 1–8 student, stay in the drop-off lane until you can safely turn left into a parking space.
- If you are held up by the car ahead of you, please do not pass. Drive slowly and watch carefully for pedestrians.
- Please avoid parking directly behind another car so that no one has to back out.
- Once parked, walk your Kindergarten or Pre-Kindergarten child across the playground and into the building through the new main entrance. Preschool families with a 9:00 a.m. arrival time should also use the main entrance.

Parents Entering the School During Arrival

- If you have Grade 1–8 students, drop them off first following the procedures above. Then take a second left to park in a space facing the church.
- If you do not have Grade 1–8 students, stay in the drop-off lane, turn left at the drop-off sign, and then take a second left to park.
- If you are held up by the car ahead of you, please do not pass. Drive slowly and watch carefully for pedestrians. Please also avoid parking directly behind another car.
- Once parked, you are welcome to walk into the school. Remember, however, that children in Kindergarten through Grade 8 must still be dropped off on the sidewalk first.

DAILY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

The parking lot closes at **2:25 p.m. sharp**. Please plan to arrive before then, as cars will not be permitted to enter the lot after this time.

Enter the parking lot through the entrance closest to Lexington Street and park as usual. Leave your car and meet your child outside, where classes will be organized by grade level, with 8th Grade closest to

the parking lot entrance and Kindergarten on the turf by the playground. Families with children in multiple grades should meet at their youngest child's location.

Preschool parents should walk to the preschool entrance, where your child's teacher will bring them out to you. Older siblings are welcome to wait by the preschool door and join the family there!

To keep everyone safe and happy, please follow these guidelines:

- Enter only through the parking lot entrance closest to the school building.
- If cones are placed at the parking lot entrance, the lot is closed. Please do not enter through any other point. Instead, park in the parish lot or the Falzone Field lot.
- The cones signal that students are free to move safely around the lot, with the understanding that no cars will be moving.
- Use the crosswalks, which teachers will staff to help you cross safely to and from your child.
- Children will not be permitted to walk into the parking lot without a parent. Please do not wave your child over to meet you at the car.
- Please do not enter the building or linger near the school, especially in a location that would block the car behind you.
- Use common sense and care while moving through the lot, whether on foot or in your car. We are a school family, and we all share responsibility for keeping one another safe.
- If a medical reason prevents you from leaving your car to meet your child, please let your child's homeroom teacher know in advance.

Cars may not exit the parking lot until staff on duty has determined it is safe for cars to begin moving. Cars should stay in their parking spot until the teachers monitoring the lot with stop signs turn their signs from **STOP** to **SLOW**. To exit your row, pull forward rather than backing out. We know this may mean waiting briefly for the car ahead, but reversing while families are walking through the lot is not a risk we are willing to take.

Once in the exit line, cars turning left onto Trapelo Road should use the first exit; cars turning right should use the ramp in front of the church to exit through the Belmont lot. At either exit, please leave enough space rather than pulling up beside the car ahead of you.

Please be sure to share these arrival and dismissal procedures with any caretaker — grandparent, babysitter, or anyone else — who may be dropping off or picking up your child.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The school day ends at 2:30 p.m. for Kindergarten through Grade 8; Preschool dismissal follows each child's individual schedule. Pre-Kindergarten families with a 4:30 p.m. pick-up may collect their child from the classroom, following the standard preschool checkout procedure. Families of any grade whose children stay until 6:00 p.m. may pick up from the After School Program in the cafeteria, also following the checkout procedure established by the After School Director.

The After School Program runs on all early-dismissal days, beginning with the very first day of school on September 8, and on the first Wednesday of each month, with the exception of Wednesday, September 9, which will be a full day. On early-dismissal days, the program runs from 11:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for a fee.

Please be sure to register — you never know when you might need after school care! Program details are available at www.ourladysacademy.org. Questions may be directed to the After School Office at 781-899-0206 or afterschool@ourladysacademy.org.

TRANSPORTATION

Only Our Lady's Academy students are eligible to ride the school buses set aside for Our Lady's students only. Transportation is not available for Pre-Kindergarten students or for students who are not dismissed at the regular 2:30 p.m. time.

Bus services begin on September 9th (the first full day of classes) and will run on all early- and full-dismissal days. Please be aware that there is NO bus service on Jewish holidays (September 21). Families will need to transport their children to and from school.

Bus transportation is organized by the Waltham School Department, which establishes stops using the addresses of our Waltham students. Approximately a week before school begins, bus routes and stops will be posted on the Waltham School website. Please choose the bus stop that is closest to your home.. For ease of dismissal, please make sure your child knows what their school bus number is.

FACULTY FOR THE 2026–2027 SCHOOL YEAR

Administration

Role	Name
Pastor	Fr. James DiPerri
Principal	Chandra Minor
Vice Principal	Sarah Treacy
Title I Manager	Fran Stuart
Executive Assistant	Sheila Reynolds
Business Manager	Tom McGovern
Assistant Business Manager	Terry Pollucci
Facilities	Elizabeth Pettine

Classroom Teachers

Class	Teacher
Pre-K III	Donatella Carazo
Pre-K III Support	Beverly Smallwood, Antonia Berit
Pre-K IV A	Meredith Briggs
Pre-K IV A Support	Abir Marka Zaloom
Pre-K IV B	Danielle Walsh
Pre-K IV B Support	Jeannette Salibian
Transition Kindergarten	Ann O'Connor Mahon
Transition Kindergarten Support	Marina DerTorossian
Kindergarten One	Kristin Carlone
Kindergarten One Support	Elizabeth Avarkian
Kindergarten Two	Michelle Malankarot
Kindergarten Two Support	Kateryna Havrysh
Grade 1A	Michelle Lyman
Grade 1B	Maryrose Bulger
Grade 1 Support	Matilda Daoudian
Grade 2A	Katherine Demers
Grade 2B	Claire Schuermann

Class	Teacher
Grade 2 Support	Valerie Stillman
Grade 3A	Darci Hamann
Grade 3B	Meaghan Noone
Grade 4A	Lori Pasto
Grade 4B	Kristen O'Leary
Grade 5A	Danielle Maidrand
Grade 5B	Olivia Hopkins
Grade 6A Homeroom / Middle School History	Nathaniel McMillan
Grade 6B Homeroom / Reading & Math, Gr. 6	Emma Cavaliere
Grade 7A Homeroom / Middle School Science	Sharmistha Banerjee
Grade 7B Homeroom / Middle School Religion	Evan Cummings
Grade 8A Homeroom / Math, Grades 6–8	Ryan Donahue
Grade 8B Homeroom / English, Writing, Greek & Latin Roots	Patrick O'Brien

Specialists & Support Staff

Subject / Role	Name
Spanish	Christina Brooks, Jeaneth Santana
Italian	Federica Fausto, Vanessa Michelin
STEM (Pre-K–5) / Tower Gardens	Isabella Calcagni, Laura Jones
Art	Andrea Ardito
Music / Theatre	Holly Sullivan
Physical Education	Jill Wilder
STEM (6-8) & Technology	Alejandro Montes de Oca
After School Director	Veronika Matiiko
Learning Specialist	Rachel Weinstein
Reading Specialist	Eileen Catizone
Academically Gifted & Talented	Maureen Taddeo
Guidance	Donna Allen
Librarian	Elizabeth Pedrini
School Nurse	Ashley Capobianco

SCHOOL LUNCH

School lunch continues to be ordered and paid for online through RenWeb on a month-to-month basis. Orders must be placed and paid before the date requested by the school office prior to the beginning of the lunch date.

Sheena Stamatakis (Harvard House of Pizza) who jumped in to help us at the end of year will be providing school lunches this year and has worked with us to update the lunch offerings. Most days will include two choices, one of which will be vegetarian, and a few less-popular items have been replaced with new options.

The cost of lunch will remain the same as last year at **\$6.75 per lunch**, and pizza will also remain **\$5.75 per serving (2 slices)**.

Please note that the cost of milk is not included in the lunch price. Milk may be purchased separately for **\$98.00 for the school year**. Milk orders are placed at the beginning of the school year through **RenWeb**.

Both the lunch program and milk service will begin on **Wednesday, September 9th**, the first full day of school. We encourage you to place your orders early to ensure that your child is able to participate from the start of the school year.

For planning purposes, families will receive an email from the school office during the week of **August 17th** with instructions for selecting and ordering your child's lunch choices.

We also want to let you know about a change to our lunch service this year. After careful consideration, we sadly have to discontinue our long-held practice of heating meals for students. While we loved being able to offer this convenience to families, it has come to pose a safety risk that we are no longer comfortable taking on. The good news is that thermoses have come a long way! Many now keep food warm for hours, so we encourage families to pick up a good one during the back-to-school sales this month. Beginning this year, the homeroom teachers will be assuming lunch duty roles of distributing lunches to their students. With that being said, I would like to thank Michelle Devane on behalf of the entire school for stepping up, this past year, doing an amazing job and rescuing us to keep the lunch program running for our students when our dear Mrs. Frenna passed away so suddenly.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Your child's class assignment, for which you have been anxiously waiting, will be emailed separately during the week of the seventeenth, which is this week. Please know that a great deal of thought goes into building our class lists each year. Our faculty carefully weighs many factors to place every child in the environment where they will learn best.

Remember that your child will have several teachers throughout the day and will work alongside a different mix of classmates in each setting.

HELPFUL INFORMATION

The following Google form must be completed by **Friday, August 28th**.

- Language Preference Form – This form will be sent separately as a Google Form for you to complete electronically.

You will also find the following helpful information and resources that will be sent to you this week separately under separate cover:

- Academic Calendar - (Final Version)
- Monthly Lunch Ordering Schedule and Instructions through FACTS/RenWeb
- After-School Activities Information and Registration
- PTO Back-to-School Social Information

You will also be receiving the first week of school from the Nurses office:

- Student Health and Emergency Form – (Please return this by Friday, September 11, 2026)

This has been a long letter with a great deal of information — thank you for reading it all the way through! Please do not hesitate to reach out to the school with any questions.

I look forward to seeing your wonderful children very soon.

God bless,

Chandra Minor

Principal