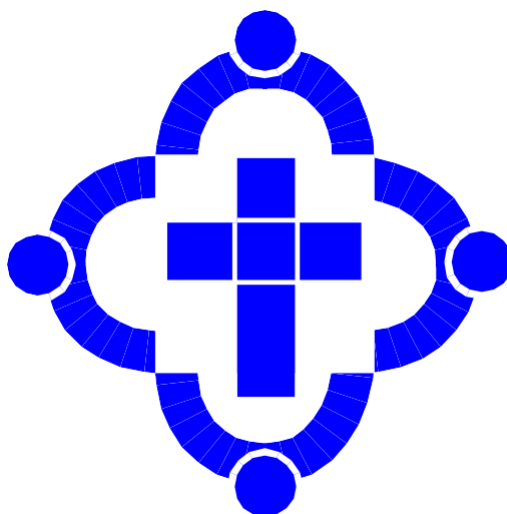


St. Francis de Sales School

Student-Parent Handbook



2023-2024

This handbook is provided to help students and parents become familiar with the procedures, rules, and regulations of St. Francis de Sales Catholic School. Parents are required to carefully read and review with their student(s) all sections of the Student-Parent Handbook so that they are thoroughly familiar with all aspects of St. Francis de Sales School.

The enrollment of a student at St. Francis de Sales School is considered to be an agreement on the part of the student and the parents or guardians that they will comply with all school procedures, rules and regulations set forth in this handbook. Failure to do so may result in separation from the school. Please sign the Handbook Agreement Form stating that you have read and discussed the contents with your student and agree to support its provisions.

The Principal reserves the right to amend this handbook as needed. Prompt notification will be given if changes are made. The handbook must be approved by the pastor and reviewed by the Catholic Schools Office Liaison. (Rev. 8.10.2023)

SECTION I MISSION AND CATHOLIC IDENTITY

PHILOSOPHY

We, at St. Francis de Sales Catholic School, acknowledge that parents are the first and foremost educators of their children and are charged with the challenging task of creating a family atmosphere animated with love and reverence for God and all people. We recognize, too, that the family is the first school of those social virtues which every society needs (Christian Education Vatican II). We are privileged to assist parents in the task of educating their children.

Central to the educational mission of St. Francis de Sales Catholic School are the teachings of Jesus Christ. At St. Francis de Sales Catholic School, we are dedicated to helping students live the Gospel. We recognize the importance and uniqueness of each student and are committed to helping each student recognize the importance and uniqueness of self and each other.

It is the joint responsibility of students, teachers, and parents to make St. Francis de Sales Catholic School a faith-filled community where the primary purpose of education, helping students reach their potential, is enlivened by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity.

The aim and desired result is to graduate students who are well-versed in the Catholic faith, Christian in their attitude and outlook, and academically prepared to continue their education.

Each classroom in our school has a dedicated sacred space/prayer area.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. Francis de Sales School is to educate each student in a spirit of faith and academic excellence according to Roman Catholic principles. As part of a caring, disciplined community, our school, in partnership with parents, nurtures and challenges each student to develop to his or her fullest potential.

Committed to Educate the Whole Child

Catholic school education is rooted in the conviction that human beings have a transcendent destiny, and that education for the whole person must form the spiritual, intellectual, physical, psychological, social, moral, aesthetic, and religious capacities of each child. Catholic schools should develop and implement academic, cocurricular, faith-formation, and service/ministry programs to educate the whole child in all these dimensions (The Catholic School, 29).

Steeped in a Catholic Worldview

Catholic education aims at the integral formation of the human person, which includes “preparation for professional life, formation of ethical and social awareness, developing awareness of the transcendental, and religious education” (The Catholic School, 31). All curriculum and instruction in a Catholic school should foster: the desire to seek wisdom and truth, the preference for social justice, the discipline to become self-learners, the capacity to recognize ethical and moral grounding for behavior, and the responsibility to transform and enrich the world with Gospel values. The Catholic school should avoid the error that its distinctiveness rests solely on its religious education program (Miller, 2006, pp. 43–45, 52).

Profile of a Graduate

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston are dedicated to the educational mission of the Church as we prepare students for Heaven, college, and career. Our schools are distinguished by an educational atmosphere which relates religious belief and practice, constructively and integrally, with the normal development and education of youth. Our graduates possess characteristics that enable them to live faithfully as disciples of Christ who transform the world. Catholic School Graduates reflect the FACE of God as:

Faithful Disciples who receive the love of God, are intentional in forming a relationship with Christ, participate fully in a sacramental life and devote themselves to the service of others, demonstrate Catholic and Gospel values, and model the beliefs to the Catholic faith in everyday life.

Active Learners who possess a continuous thirst for knowledge, demonstrate academic integrity and persistence, and seek collaboration in efforts to build strong communities for the greater good and the glory of God.

Critical Thinkers who, through the lens of the Catholic faith, prayerfully accept challenges, engage intellectually and creatively, exhibit a strong work ethic, and demonstrate capacity for problem-solving and reflection.

Effective Communicators who speak and write with fluency, clarity, and competence, who listen honestly and sensitively, and respond critically in light of the Gospel.

Principle of Christian Charity

As a Catholic school community, Christian charity and respect shall be observed at all times on our campus and in written communications. The following actions, on the part of parents or other family members, will be termed a violation of Christian charity and may result in dismissal from the school:

1. Public criticism of school personnel or procedures.
2. Threats of any nature toward personnel or families.
3. Verbal and nonverbal acts of aggression, including: yelling, screaming, pushing, etc.
4. Public discussion of student and/or family matters based on confidential information obtained because of volunteer duties, etc.
5. Use of social media to discredit the school in any way.

OPERATING PRINCIPLES - GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals of our school are in our logo: Praying, Learning and Living Together. The parish school of the Catholic Community of St. Francis de Sales is a Catholic School for preschool through eighth grade: Where our administration and teachers:

- Are qualified and appropriately compensated professionals who utilize their creative teaching skills;
- Are supported and appreciated as Catholic educators;
- Plan and implement a comprehensive curriculum that provides an education comparable to that of excellent schools of our nation;
- Are encouraged to participate in professional and spiritual development activities;
- Maintain a caring Christian learning environment and serve as models of Christian values and behavior.

Where our students:

- Receive a high quality education;
- Learn and apply Catholic values and strengthen their faith by reaching out to others;

- Receive a balanced education with opportunities to develop intellectually, spiritually, physically, and socially;
- Build self-esteem and enthusiasm for learning;
- Enjoy themselves as they learn;
- Acquire an independent learning ability and develop creative and analytical thinking skills;
- Receive an education that will lead students to excel in academic programs in high school;
- Develop to their fullest potential in the areas of religion, mathematics, science, language arts, social studies, and technology while maintaining a strong base in all other academic areas;
- Develop leadership skills and an understanding of the principles of citizenship in a democratic society;
- Develop self-discipline and a respect for others.

Where our parents:

- Actively collaborate with teachers as co-educators of their children through open communications and shared effort;
- Are appreciated and encouraged as volunteers who generously offer their time, talent, and financial resources to enhance the quality of our school.

Where our parish:

- Recognizes our school as a parish ministry of high priority and dignity;
- Strives to keep the school affordable for parish families while maintaining academic excellence;
- Supports the school as an integral part of a vibrant Catholic community.

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The Archbishop

The Archbishop possesses full and complete authority in the Archdiocese and therefore is the head of all Catholic schools and all parish religious education programs in the Archdiocese. He has the ecclesiastical authority to watch over and inspect educational programs within the Archdiocese, including the right to issue directives concerning the general regulation of such programs. The Archbishop has primary responsibility for the educational ministry of the Church. He has full authority to regulate all that pertains to religious instruction and matters pertaining to faith and morals in the Archdiocese. The Archbishop, as the chief representative of the Church's teaching authority, is the head of the schools in the Archdiocese. The Secretariat Superintendent of Catholic Schools carries out the administration of the schools. Religious education in the Catholic Schools is guided by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools with the assistance of the Director of the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis as a consultant.

Policies and Regulations

All parish and Archdiocesan school programs are governed by the policies and regulations of the Catholic Schools Office as stated in the Administrators' Handbook of Policies and Procedures for Elementary Schools and in interim communications, as well as all policies of the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops' Education Department. These regulations have the same purpose and binding force as all other directives and enactments of the Archbishop. These policies and regulations may be amended and supplemented from time to time.

The Superintendent of Catholic Schools

The Superintendent of Catholic Schools is appointed by and responsible to the Archbishop and represents him in the administration and supervision of Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese. The Superintendent is a member of the Cardinal's Cabinet. The Superintendent of Catholic Schools, under the authority of the Archbishop, shall be responsible for the establishment and implementation of Archdiocesan policies governing Catholic Schools and for the direction of the Catholic Schools Office (CSO) in providing guidance and support services to Catholic schools in the Archdiocese.

The Catholic Schools Office

The Catholic Schools Office is the office charged with the general administration and support of the formal Church-sponsored educational ministry in the Archdiocese.

www.choosecatholicschools.org

Professional Staff

Professional staff shall be hired or appointed as appropriate support the work of education in the Archdiocese.

The Pastor

The school is a religious and spiritual ministry of the parish. The Archbishop, therefore, has ultimate authority for matters of faith at the school. However, the Pastor of the parish, has ultimate responsibility for the operation and administration of the school.

The Pastor is the ex-officio head of the school. As such, he is responsible, for approving the policies of the school according to the needs of the parish, but always in harmony with the policies and regulations of TCCB ED, the Catholic Schools Office and The Archdiocese of Galveston – Houston.

The role of the Pastor in the successful mission of the parish school is of vital importance. In union Catholic Schools Office of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston with the liturgical and sacramental life of the parish, the formation of faith and intellectual development illumined by the Gospel message to children, youth, and adults, is central to the life of the parish.

General Areas of Responsibility of the Principal

The Principal builds a Catholic, Christian community of faith in which the Catholic message and experiences of community, worship, service, and social concern are integrated in all areas of the school and throughout the curriculum. Additionally, a paramount responsibility is to promote and facilitate student learning of the highest quality in accordance with Canon Law #806.2, which states Catholic Schools Office of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston "Directors of Catholic schools are to take care under the watchfulness of the local ordinary that the instruction which is given in them is at least as academically distinguished as that in the other schools of the area."

The Principal has the following major responsibilities:

- a) Administers the total school program, including extracurricular activities and before and after school programs.
- b) Supervises and evaluates the teachers, the students, and the instructional program and hires an appropriate number of faculty and staff which is commensurate with

enrollment and the financial ability of the school.

- c) Oversees the operation of the facility and should be present on campus when school is in session.
- d) Supervises all support staff members.
- e) Interacts with the parent, parish (es), and general public communities.
- f) Works to maintain and grow enrollment.
- g) Collaborates with and seeks counsel from the Catholic Schools Office.
- h) Prepares, follows, adheres to, and gets approval for the budget.
- i) Executes school policy.
- j) Fulfills accreditation criteria articulated by Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops' Education Department and other accrediting agencies.
- k) Ensures that there is a person named as second-in-command when the Principal is off campus; this should be communicated to faculty, staff, parents, and students.
- l) Ensures that both the instruction and the teachers adhere to the principles of Catholic doctrine.
- m) Ensures that employees follow the term of their employment contract or letter of employment.
- n) Utilizes Archdiocesan offices to support their work in specific areas where departments can off expertise
- o) Consult with Legal Department to vet contracts and understand legal documents related to school business.

Assistant Principal

The Assistant Principal is second in the Chain of Command after the Principal and serves first in command in the absence of the Principal. Responsibilities include serving as liaison between teachers, parents, students and the Principal, insuring teachers and students have necessary materials, and overseeing instructional record keeping.

Team Leaders

There are two team leaders: Upper School and Lower School. Responsibilities include chairing division meetings, disseminating information to their team, and serving as second-in-command in the absence of the Principal, Assistant Principal, and Counselor.

Guidance Counselor

The Counselor manages the school's developmental guidance curriculum and addresses the educational, personal, and social needs of students. Parents, teachers, or students may request consultation for students at any time, and groups are organized as needed. Some of the issues addressed in counseling with individuals or in small groups are conflict resolution, emotional adjustment, anger management, school achievement and social skills development. The Counselor uses accepted theories and techniques appropriate to school counseling. When appropriate, the Counselor may refer families to programs and services available in the community.

Teacher

The teacher's primary responsibility is classroom instruction. The teacher is responsible for maintaining good order in both the classroom and common areas of the school. The teacher

should make every effort to know the students, their needs, and their parents.

Advisory School Council

The Principal and Pastor should work together to form an Advisory School Council to support the work of forming, researching, and fulfilling the needs of the strategic plan for the school community. The Advisory School Council studies and advises the Principal and Pastor in parish schools or the Principal and designated Pastor in Archdiocesan regional schools. Boards assist the Principal and Pastor in parish schools or the Principal and designated Pastor in Archdiocesan regional schools to recommend policy, identify and articulate the educational needs and aspirations of the school and school community, achieving enrollment goals, financial stability and engage in long-range strategic planning.

These goals become the basis for program objectives, policies, and action plans for the educational program and the continued vitality of the school. In parish schools, the Principal acts as a member of the executive committee, which includes the Pastor, Principal, and board president of the Advisory School Council. The Advisory School Council supports the work of the Principal and is advisory only. It does not direct the work of the Principal.

The Archdiocesan School Council hosts an Advisory School Council workshop annually that council members should attend.

Administrative Team

The Principal is the lead administrator. When the Principal is not on campus, the Assistant Principal is the lead administrator. When both are off campus the Counselor will be the decision maker.

SECTION II SCHOOL PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS

School website: www.sfdsschool.org

School will be in session in accordance with state law and TCCBED which is a minimum of 75,600 minutes or 180 days; 73,500 minutes or 175 days for graduating 8th Graders. Weather Days will be used if school is cancelled for any reason.

Start Time: 7:55 AM

Dismissal: 3:15 PM

Early Dismissal; PreK– 8th dismiss at 2:15 PM on the first Tuesday of most months

School Office Hours 7:30 AM – 3:30 PM (closed during Mass)

Before and After School Program

Morning Program 7:00-7:30 AM

After School Program 3:15-6:30 PM

The School Calendar is on the school website and is updated regularly.

The school's Strategic Plan is posted on the school's website and is monitored and adjusted as

needed by the Advisory School Council.

Students and staff attend Mass weekly. Sacramental preparation for First Reconciliation and First Communion usually takes place in second grade. Students must have been enrolled in religious education for one full year prior to sacramental preparation.

Admissions Policy

There is no discrimination at St. Francis de Sales School on the basis of race, sex, national origin, age, or handicapping condition (if the school can reasonably accommodate the student). This school does give admission preference to Catholic students who are children of supporting parishioners of St. Francis de Sales Church.

St. Francis de Sales School is a SEVIS approved school and accepts students on student visas.

Admissions Screening/Testing

All student applicants (including home-schooled and non-accredited school student transfer applicants) are required to take an entrance or screening exam for skill and age-appropriate placement and may have a brief interview with the principal, principal's designee, or a teacher. At the time of pre-registration, families will download a registration packet from the school's website. This packet contains a registration form, tuition schedules, payment plans, health record, information sheet, tuition assistance request, etc. These papers should be filled out completely, signed, and returned to the school office by the assigned date. Admission test dates and times for new student enrollment are announced before Catholic Schools' Week, which is held the last week of January.

Home Schools and Non-Accredited Schools

Home schooling has been a legal alternative to public schooling since 1994. Catholic schools may admit students who transfer from non-accredited schools or home schooling, but these students must also be screened through the instrument of assessment used for other applicants.

Toilet Training

All children entering school must be fully toilet-trained before coming to school. This includes participation in the Before and After School Program. Children will not be allowed to wear diapers or pullups while at school as they do not promote independence. If the child is not toilet-trained (having three or more accidents in one week) he/she may be withdrawn from the school until toilet-training is complete.

A toilet-trained child can do the following:

- be able to tell the teacher they need to go to the restroom in sufficient time to avoid accidents,
- be able to pull their underwear and pants down and up without assistance,
- be able to get on and off the toilet by themselves,
- be able to wipe themselves after using the toilet,
- be able to wash and dry hands, and
- be able to postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom or if they are outside, or away from the classroom.

Conditions of Admission

A student is admitted to school with the understanding that he/she is admitted on a conditional basis for a period of nine weeks or one quarter. Students with conditional acceptance are

subject to administrative withdrawal if they fail to meet the expectations of the school or to follow school policies and procedures pursuant to school handbook guidelines.

Financial Policy

It is the parents' financial obligation to support the school by paying tuition on the first or tenth of every month. Payment plans are available through FACTS. After the 10th day of the month, tuition is past due, and a \$30.00 late fee is assessed to all delinquent accounts. It is the parents' responsibility to communicate with the bookkeeper any anomalies in payment. Consequences for non-payment include restricted access to student information systems, school activities, late fees, etc. Non-payment unfairly burdens the school. Students may be dismissed/withdrawn when accounts are two months delinquent.

To be eligible for Catholic tuition rates, families must be registered supporters of a parish in the Archdiocese of Galveston Houston. Verification of such is to be submitted to the Admissions Office.

Please note:

- All fees (application, registration, book, supply, etc.) are non-refundable.
- Fees and tuition must be current before an 8th grader is allowed to attend the Washington, D.C. trip in the event it is allowed to occur.
- Final report cards will be awarded after all financial obligations to the school are met.
- Families whose accounts are not current will not be able to register for the following school year until they have a meeting with the principal.
- All fees and tuition must be paid before an 8th grader is permitted to graduate.

Tuition Assistance

Limited tuition assistance is available through the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston and from St. Francis de Sales School. Parents should fill out the tuition assistance application from "FACTS Grants and Aid" to begin the process. Please note deadlines for assistance. Using the information from the "FACTS Grants and Aid" the school, when possible, may grant limited financial assistance to qualified eligible parishioner families. Financial assistance is not usually awarded during the first year of enrollment.

Attendance

Daily school attendance is the best way to assure academic growth and is required by state law. Students are expected to be in school on time unless they have a valid excuse. Parents are to email the homeroom teacher and clinic manager at clinic@sfdsschool.org or telephone the school office at 713-774-4447 before 9:00 a.m. to report absences.

Students must be present for a minimum of 240 minutes to be counted present for a full day.

The following are accepted excuses for absences: illness, accident, quarantine, or attendance at the funeral services of a member of the student's family, and any emergency situation approved by the Principal. All other absences are considered unexcused. School is a priority, therefore, please make every attempt to schedule medical appointments after school.

Recreational trips or vacations taken during regularly scheduled school days are strongly discouraged particularly in cases where the student's academic performance is marginal. When a student is planning to be absent for three or more consecutive days for a reason that is unexcused, a written request in advance is required. If a student misses school for such events,

the student is responsible for making arrangements with his/her teacher prior to the absence. Make-up work must meet teacher-provided deadlines. Semester exams will not be administered in advance.

Students in grades K-8 must attend class for 90% of the time it is offered to be promoted to the next grade. The 90% rule applies to all absences, excused and unexcused.

If a student is not projected to fulfill the TCCB ED 90% attendance requirement, the Catholic Schools Office must be notified. Additionally, the TCCB ED recommends each school have an attendance committee who can assist in evaluating the academic needs of the student before granting credit or a final grade for students who do not fulfill the TCCB ED 90% attendance requirement.

Arrival

Upon arrival, students should be dropped off using the car line. Drivers, please do not block the curved driveway in the front carline in order to allow BASP students to exit their vehicles. Students should be ready to leave the vehicles with books and backpacks in hand. Do not park cars and walk children to the building.

Parents of elementary school students must obtain written approval from the Principal or designee prior to their child being allowed to walk or bicycle to and/or from school. The plan shall be monitored and adjusted as needed.

Arrival Schedule

Back Lot Gate

Drive-through and drop off ONLY. Do not park cars and walk children to the building.

7:30 AM Gate Opens

7:50 AM Gate is Locked

Roos Road – entrance through the gym

Drive through and drop off ONLY. Drivers, do not block the curved driveway in order to allow BASP students to exit their vehicles.

Neighborhood walkers enter through the gym.

7:30 AM Gym door Opens

7:55 AM Gym door is Locked

The first bell is at 7:50 a.m. All students, PK-8, are expected to be ready to begin lessons when the tardy bell rings at 7:55 a.m. Students arriving in class after the second bell has rung are tardy. We regard tardiness as a breach of courtesy since it disrupts the class and hinders a smooth start to the educational day.

Tardies

Please help your child have a successful start to the school day by being on time or early to school as tardiness hinders student learning. Children who are tardy find it difficult to “catch up” throughout the day. If a student arrives after the tardy bell, parents are to park their vehicle and accompany the student to the front office to sign in. Students in grades PK – 3rd Grade must come to the front office first before entering the Lower School building. All late arrivals are

recorded and become a part of the student's permanent record. Five (5) tardies will count as one absence in FACTS.

Dismissal

PreK through 8th Graders dismiss at 3:15 PM except on designated Early Dismissal Days when the school dismisses at 2:15 PM for Professional Development or on noon dismissal days. Classes for PreK3-3rd Grade dismiss at the back parking lot. 4th - 8th Grades dismiss to the front carline. Early dismissal days are indicated on the school calendar on the website. Students are not permitted to jaywalk across Roos Rd. to enter parked cars even with a parent escort. Younger siblings dismiss with the oldest child in the family at the oldest child's dismissal area. No student may walk to a car in the back parking lot with or without a parent. Parents may be asked to pull forward if the student is not ready for dismissal.

Parking in assigned spots in the church parking lot to pick up your child is not allowed, nor is walking up to the gym for pick up during dismissal. We put the safety of our students first.

Students are never allowed to leave the school grounds without written permission from their parents and the approval of the Principal. Lansdale Park, across Roos Road, is off-limits to all students unless they are supervised by a parent or teacher. To be in the park without a parent is reason for suspension.

Early Dismissal at Parent Request

If a student is going to be taken out of school early for any reason the student should know this prior to arriving at school. A note or email to the homeroom teacher will help the process. In the case of an emergency, please call the office before coming to get a child for an early dismissal. If a child is sick and the school calls for the parent to come get the child, the parent comes to the front office, signs the child out and then proceeds to the clinic to accompany the child to the car while adhering to the school's safety protocols.

NO EARLY DISMISSALS will take place between 2:30-3:15pm. If it is necessary for a parent to take a child out of school this should be done BEFORE 2:30 pm.

Messages from Parents to Children

If it is necessary for a parent to inform a child about an *emergency* change in after school arrangements, PLEASE notify the office BEFORE 2:00 pm so that the office staff will have time to deliver the message.

Car Line

The carline is a "No Cell Phone Zone". Safety first!

For the safety of our students, we ask that you use one of the two car lines in operation before and after school. One car line is in the back parking lot and one is at the Roos Road drive-through. Please explain our car line procedures to family members designated to pick-up at dismissal time. All drivers are expected to comply with school policies regarding driving on our premises.

Faculty members and parent volunteers are on duty to assist you, and we ask that you comply with their directions. Please stay in your car and proceed to the forward most position.

- Students ARE NOT to be picked up in any area other than the designated car lines.
- Students, even with parental escort, will not be allowed to Jaywalk across a street.

- Parents may walk with a student using the designated crosswalks.
- DO NOT GET OUT OF YOUR CAR while in the car line. If a child is late, you will be asked to pull forward.
 - Parents may not park in the Roos Church Office parking lot or the Roos drive-through/Fire Lane.
 - Traffic through the Roos drive-through must be single file.
 - Only *right turns* may be made when leaving the Roos drive-through or back parking lot at arrival and dismissal times.
 - Ensuring the safety of our children and all other pedestrians is the primary responsibility of all drivers in and around the school premises. Designated speed limits, loading and unloading zones and all other traffic regulations must be strictly observed. Road courtesy must be practiced at all times.
 - The Houston streets surrounding the school are school zones with posted 20 mph speed limits during school hours. The campus speed limit is 5 mph.

Car Tags

Cars shall display their car line tag by hanging it in the front windshield. All students must have a car line tag regardless of their dismissal plans. Please help your child know how to recognize your car and memorize your car tag number.

Walkers

Walkers must have a signed parental permission form on file in the office. Faculty will cross walkers leaving the campus. Walkers in the Upper School will go to the gym and wait for a faculty supervisor to escort them safely to the crosswalk *following the carpool dismissal*. Walkers in the Lower School will congregate outside the kindergarten classroom and wait for a faculty supervisor to escort them through the front gate safely through the crosswalk *following the carpool dismissal*.

Supervision of Students

St. Francis de Sales Catholic School provides adult supervision for all students between the hours of 7:30 AM and 3:30 PM on regular school days and between the hours of 7:30 AM and 2:30 PM on early dismissal days. Students should not be on school grounds outside of these hours unless they are under the direct supervision of a parent, guardian, or authorized extracurricular activity sponsor.

Supervision is not provided for students arriving before 7:30 AM and will be sent to the Before and After-School Program (BASP) with fees incurred. Students remaining after 3:30 p.m. on a regular school day or after 2:30 p.m. on an early dismissal day, who are not under the direct supervision as stated above, will be sent to the BASP for adult supervision. Parents will be charged the Before and After School Program rate.

Students may attend sports events as spectators when accompanied by their parents or supervised by another adult at their parent's request. Arrangements must be made prior to the day of the activity. Students may return to campus for extracurricular activities at the scheduled time when accompanied by an adult. Those participating in after-school activities will be assigned to a supervised study hall or area, if necessary, until the activity begins.

Late Pick-Up Policy

Only those children who are supervised by a sponsor as a participant in an approved activity may be on the school grounds after 3:30 PM. Siblings or other carpool members who are

waiting for a student participant must be supervised by an adult (not the activity sponsor) or they will be managed under BASP and charged the BASP rate.

Bicycle Safety

No riding of bicycles on the sidewalks, in the back parking lot, or on school property is permitted. Students must wear helmets and are to walk bikes to and from the bicycle racks. Students may not ride through the car lines.

Telephone Calls

Permission to use the office telephones will be restricted to emergencies or cancelled activities. *Forgotten lunches or assignments are not considered emergencies.* Parents are asked not to call the school for the delivery of messages to students except in case of emergencies. Students and parents are asked to make after-school plans before leaving home in the morning. Students should follow these plans even if changes occur. Parents will know where to find children based on the plans made in the morning. If a parent sees that a phone message is from the school, PLEASE listen to the message before calling the school.

Electronic Items

Students may not bring electronic devices to school. Lost or "misplaced" electronic items are the TOTAL responsibility of the student/family.

St. Francis de Sales Catholic School recognizes that cell phones can assist in the communication between students and parents, however, cell phones can also have a negative impact on the educational environment of a school. Cell phones in schools are associated with the following problems: an interference with the learning environment, cheating on exams, a noise nuisance, a dangerous communication tool for inaccurate information in the case of an emergency, and an inappropriate status symbol among students.

Student cell phones will be confiscated if being used on school property without permission. A \$25 fine for release of confiscated cell phones will be imposed after the first offense. Phones will only be released to that student's parent.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency dismissal or school closure, directions will be given via television or radio broadcasts, FACTS callouts and text messages. Typically, St. Francis de Sales School follows the HISD announcement of closure. When there have been heavy rains, be advised that neighborhood streets around the school often flood. Do not endanger your vehicles or yourselves trying to get to school. The school sits on higher ground, and the children will be supervised until the water recedes and streets are safely passable. Strake Jesuit College Preparatory, 8900 Bellaire Blvd., has agreed to serve as our emergency evacuation site. When, and if, such an emergency arises and the decision is made to vacate our campus, St. Francis de Sales students will walk to Strake Jesuit. Parents will be notified to meet their children at the Strake gymnasium.

The school utilizes the FACTS Alert to deliver important messages by text, phone, and email (simultaneously). Please make sure that all contact information is up to date in the front office. Please contact the front office with any changes to your contact information.

Lost and Found

Please label ALL student clothing and belongings at the beginning of the school year. The school does not have a large lost and found collection area. Students are encouraged to retrace

their steps and find where they left their possessions and then check the lost and found.

Personal Property

Students are encouraged to leave valuable possessions at home. St. Francis de Sales School cannot be responsible for any lost or stolen personal items. Money, valuable collections, electronic equipment, and expensive purses or jewelry should not be brought to school.

Lunch

- Microwaves are available for 8th Grade students only.
- Students may not bring carbonated drinks to school.
- Knives should NOT be included in a lunch box.
- If a child arrives at school without a lunch from home, lunch will be provided, and payment must be made to the lunch provider.
- Sami's Cafeteria is the lunch vendor for the 2023-2024 school year. Instructions on how to order and payment procedures will be available on the school website.

Field Trips

Field trips are privileges afforded to students; no student has an absolute right to a field trip. Field trips serve the instructional program by taking advantage of the educational resources of the surrounding environment that supplement classroom work.

The principal or designee is responsible for providing active and adequate supervision of students during the entire time they are on school premises or engaged in school-sponsored activities; this includes time on school sponsored transportation vehicles.

Dress uniforms will be worn on field trips unless otherwise indicated on the permission slip.

Parents will be required to sign a permission slip to indicate their willingness for the child to participate in class trips. According to state law, children are not allowed to attend a field trip without written permission or fax from the parents or guardian. NO EXCEPTION WILL BE MADE.

School of Environmental Education (S.E.E.)

School of Environmental Education at Camp Kappe bridges the gap between science and faith by providing youth a greater understanding of their role in the stewardship of God's creation and its ties to their spiritual and academic growth. They provide youth with the tools to help instill respect for the nature and dignity of the human person while continuing to evangelize the mission of the church and its importance on their daily lives. This experience is available to fifth grade students accompanied by their lead teacher and chaperones who spend four days living on site at the Camp Kappe Youth Retreat Facility, 130 acres of forest, grass fields, ponds and creeks in Plantersville, Texas. S.E.E. is one of the programs of Camp Kappe Youth Retreat Center which is part of the Office of Adolescent Catechesis and Evangelization for the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. Classes are conducted in the forest, at the edge of the creek, in the ponds, and in the meadow. The most useful tools for learning are readily available: the students' five senses. The subject area most emphasized in this hands-on learning experience is the science of ecology, the relationship between living things and their environment, and how our Catholic Social Teaching helps to shape our response in caring for God's creation. From an understanding of basic ecological concepts, it is hoped that a deeper concern and sense of responsibility for the environment will help our young people become good stewards of the earth and its ecological and cultural diversity. During their S.E.E.

experience, students will also continue to grow in their spiritual formation, not only in their studies of the environment but also through daily prayer experiences and liturgical celebrations. These experiences and activities follow the strands and targets found in the Archdiocesan Catechetical Framework for Lifelong Faith Formation and are designed to assist our youth in their growth as disciples in the faith.

Fees for Camp Kappe: \$195.00 per student and \$55.00 to subsidize transportation, \$250.00 total per student. SFdS will pay fees for approved chaperones.

Chaperones

Parents or guardians are often asked to chaperone school events and trips. We expect that they will abide by school rules as to conduct, attire, and supervisory function. They may not smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of our students. Parent drivers must be pre-approved through www.dps.texas.gov (chose 3 Year History Record). Parents must provide the school with the certificate from this website. All parent chaperones and drivers MUST be Safe Haven trained.

HEALTH POLICY

At St. Francis de Sales Catholic School, we strive to maintain a high level of wellness in our student body through education and prevention. Please do not send unwell children to school just to take a major test. It is the parents’ responsibility to monitor their child’s/children’s health, to check with their family physician, and to keep them at home if they are ill. Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (2011) Guidelines for Excluding Students from School include:

<u>Exclusion Guidelines</u>	<u>Return to School Guidelines</u>
**Oral temperature of 100 or above	Fever free for 24 hours (without medication)
**Vomiting, nausea or severe abdominal pain	Symptom free for 24 hours
Marked drowsiness or malaise	Symptom free
Sore throat, acute cold or persistent cough	Symptom free
Red, inflamed or discharging eyes	Under treatment or healing
Wound, skin and soft tissue infections	Until drainage contained & covered- clean/dry bandage
Swollen glands around jaws, ears or neck	Written physician release
Any skin lesion in the weeping stage	Covered and diagnosed as non-infectious
Earache	Under treatment or healing
Pediculosis	Lice and nit free
Other symptoms suggestive of acute illness	Written physician release if child has missed more than 5 days of school.
Positive COVID-19 Test/COVID-19 Exposure	Adhere to CDC guidelines

A child who experiences vomiting or diarrhea during the school day will be sent home for observation and comfort and must be free of symptoms for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

If called to pick up a sick child from school, please come within one hour.

Medication in the School

Goal: To assure the school attendance for children who must use medication in the treatment of chronic disabilities or illness.

The daily routine of the Clinic includes the management of medications.

1. Parents are encouraged to schedule the administration of student medicine in such a

- manner that medication brought to school will be kept to a minimum. (For example, the physician may be able to prescribe the medication before/after school and at bedtime.)
2. Medications (prescription or over-the-counter) may be administered to students only upon written request by the physician. The form, "Medication Permission Form," must be completed and signed by the physician and also signed by the parent. The form is available from the school clinic and online. It is a required information sheet, kept on file, which details the following information: student's name, name of medication, prescribed dosage of medication, time(s) of administration of medication, EXACT dates medication is to be given, liability release, signature of the parent/guardian and physician. Parents, guardians or designated adults must deliver and pick up all medications to be administered.
 3. All medication, prescription or non-prescription, including aspirin and cough drops, must be in the original container and be properly labeled in English. A properly labeled prescription medication is one with a pharmacy label stating the student's name, the name of the medication, and date the prescription was filled. Non-prescription medication must be in the original container indicating directions for use and labeled with the student's name. All medications must be kept in and distributed through the clinic.
 4. If there is a medication discrepancy that might be injurious to the student, the health coordinator representative/Principal designee has the responsibility to question the discrepancy or refuse to give the medication. The school health coordinator/Principal designee must document a consultation by the nurse consultant, student's physician or parent.
 5. All medication will be locked in a drawer/cabinet in the clinic unless refrigeration is required.
 6. It is the responsibility of the student to report to the designated area to take his/her medication.
 7. At the end of the school year, all medication will be returned to the parent or destroyed.
 8. In the absence of the health coordinator, the Principal designee must administer medication.
 9. A Daily Log for Medication will be maintained on each student taking medication at school.
 10. Children with diagnosed asthma should have an inhaler or nebulizer medication at school for treatment during emergencies or for prescribed management. An asthma action plan completed by the physician should be on file for each student with asthma.
 11. Children with diagnosed life-threatening allergies (such as food or insect bites) should have an epi-pen and/or prescribed antihistamine at school for treatment during life-threatening episodes. An allergy action plan completed by the physician should be on file for each student with a life-threatening allergy.

School Report of Suspected Abuse or Neglect

Under Texas law, any person who has cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by anyone (including other children or adults) must promptly report the possible abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services (CPS). Additionally, all school employees and childcare personnel (including but not limited to teachers, aides, and before and aftercare workers) must make the required report as soon as possible, but within 48 hours of suspecting the abuse or neglect. In addition to notifying Child Protective Services (CPS), and the Catholic Schools Office, reports will also be made to local

law enforcement if there is concern of imminent danger to the child. Suspected abuse or neglect may include but is not limited to:

- physical injury
- sexual molestation,
- neglect occurring from deprivation of necessary food, care, clothing, shelter, or medical attention,
- infliction of physical or mental suffering, and/or
- threat or attempt to harm self.

Mandatory reporters are immune from civil or criminal liability for reporting in good faith known or suspected child abuse. Failure to report suspected abuse or neglect in accordance with this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

Investigation Concerning Abuse or Neglect

Texas Family Code Section 261.302 authorizes the (CPS) officer who is investigating suspected child abuse or neglect to, among other things, interview and examine the alleged victim at school during the school day. The child may request that a school representative be present during the interview, but the investigator has final say as to who is present during the interview. In the event a (CPS) officer requests an on-campus interview with a student related to suspected abuse or neglect, the Principal should be notified as soon as possible. Neither parents nor school personnel may interfere with such an interview.

When a representative of a Child Protective Services (CPS) agency deems it necessary, a suspected victim of child abuse may be interviewed during school hours on school premises, concerning any report of suspected child abuse involving that child.

Law Enforcement Officials

Schools shall immediately cooperate with local and state law enforcement departments keeping in mind the legitimate interests of students and parents. The Principal/school shall not hinder the interview or any taking of a student into custody. Schools are urged to invite the cooperation of the local law enforcement agencies in instructing school administrators, teachers, and students about crime prevention.

Government Programs

Schools may choose, in consultation with the Catholic Schools Office, to participate in programs which are funded by local, state, or federal governments.

Chronic Illness

Parents will inform the Principal and nurse if their child has a serious and possible life threatening chronic illness or condition before entry into school. Parents will meet with the Principal or school health coordinator to develop an "Individualized Health Care Plan" that will include instructions for observation of the illness, age appropriate awareness, care and treatment, medication orders and special instructions such as EMS or parent notification.

If medications or treatments are involved, the "Request for In-School Administration of Medication Form" must be filled out and signed by the physician or medical provider and returned to the school. A statement signed by the physician or health care provider with the same information may be provided instead. Any medication or equipment must be provided to the school by the parents.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in all parish facilities including the school, building and grounds.

Immunizations

Students in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Catholic Schools must be in compliance with the immunization requirements of the Texas Department of Health, Immunization Division in order to enter and remain in school. This requirement fulfills state laws, archdiocesan policies and ethical standards of practice.

We do not have a parental choice immunization exemption. The only exception is for lifelong medical exemptions and letter signed by a physician will be required.

Registration requirements for first time students include a current immunization record on all required immunizations by the first day of school. Failure to comply may result in the student(s) being sent home.

Parents/Guardians will be informed of needed immunization(s) for students already enrolled in school. Parents/Guardians have 30 days to obtain the required immunization(s) and present documentation if the family is from out of town. After 30 days if the student has not received the required immunization(s), the student will not be allowed to return to school until the school receives proof of immunization(s).

Medical testing by school employees is not permitted.

Child Release to an Impaired Parent/Guardian

No child will be released to a parent, guardian, or parent designee if the school personnel believes the person to be impaired (such as inebriated) and, therefore, unable to care for the child. Another person from the student's emergency contact list will be called.

Asbestos

The school has an asbestos plan, and all asbestos has been removed, abated or contained. The school was last inspected in July 2022.

Before and After School Program

St. Francis de Sales School offers a Before and After School Program to help families who need an early drop off or late pick up.

Drop-in daily rate	\$15.00
1 child per month	\$225.00
2 children per month	\$325.00
3 children per month	\$395.00

Common Development and Fundraising Activities

1. Annual Appeal

All schools are highly encouraged to have an Annual Appeal Fund which should be at the cornerstone of the Development program. Events can be cancelled at a moment's notice

and an Annual Appeal is a sustainable giving effort. An Annual Appeal campaign secures gifts on an annual basis, either by mail, phone, or through personal solicitation from all of its school constituents. This effort typically raises funds for the school's operational budget, or a special program as described to the community. The appeal should begin at the beginning of the school year and end on June 30 of the current fiscal year. All contributions must be received by this date to be a part of this fundraising effort.

2. Steps for Students

Steps for Students 5K Run/Walk is an annual Archdiocesan-wide event that supports Catholic education. The purpose of the race is to raise awareness and support of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston and to provide a platform to allow schools to raise funds for their own needs. The funds each school raises may be designated to address the priorities of the school as determined by the Principal. Each year, the goal is to have 100% participation from all Catholic schools in the Archdiocese.

3. Events, Festivals and Auctions

Vehicles such as golf tournaments, galas, auctions, festivals, receptions, dances, and dinners foster greater constituent involvement in terms of time, talent, and financial resources. These events are designed specifically to build community, raise significant money, celebrate the school's mission and vision, and strategically cultivate the major gift prospects. Events are typically second to the Annual Appeal efforts and are outlined on the school's Development Calendar with detailed goals listed in the school's annual Development Plan.

4. One-Day Giving

One-day giving is a single day fundraising campaign to increase awareness, find new donors, and raise money to support the school mission and goals. This day is dedicated to fundraising utilizing online giving and social media to engage the entire community in a focused effort. An online giving platform may be utilized to accept various forms of electronic payments to process the gifts.

Fire Department

Fire and safety drills are conducted monthly to train students to evacuate the building in a quick and orderly manner and to teach students self-control in times of emergencies

Natural Disaster and Emergency Preparedness

St. Francis de Sales School has a crisis manual which is reviewed and updated annually. The plan includes the following:

- a) Procedures for handling students and staff during a natural disaster, active shooter/lock down, blocked exit, and shelter in place
- b) Procedures for informing parents of the plan,
- c) Preparations of site facilities for safety including:
 - handling of emergency supplies of food, water, and medical supplies,
 - communication practices,
 - drill and practice procedures,
 - shutting off utilities.

All actions taken shall bear in mind the safety and well-being of both students and staff members. Students shall be released only according to a predetermined plan and only to persons authorized by parents.

Use of School Facilities

General Regulations

Any use of parish grounds by outside organizations including non-parish-based organizations, non-profit community organizations, and any other organization or individual must be conditioned on review of contract agreements through the Legal Counsel for the Catholic Schools Office.

The legal review of contracts will allow appropriate intervention in the event that any activity is proposed, or in fact occurs, which is in conflict with the safety of the school community, orderly school administration, or teachings of the Roman Catholic Church as determined by the Archbishop of Galveston-Houston, school, or Archdiocesan policies. Ordinarily, a school should not enter into a contract for its use with a current school employee. Requests for use of school facilities by parish and other groups or individuals are subject to the approval and permission of the Pastor.

SECTION III TECHNOLOGY

At our school, technology is widely used for and by all students. We view technology as an excellent tool to help students reach their academic goals. Technology also gives an opportunity to students to explore their creativity and express and share their creations with others as well as develop critical thinking skills. We use the power of technology to help shape the next generation of informed, engaged and caring citizens.

Digital Citizenship

We embrace the concept of digital citizenship as explained by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE): **Digital citizens are learners who use their technology-driven powers conscientiously — and with empathy — to help make the world a better place.**

Every digital learner is also:

Digital Self:

- Proactively manages their digital identity and property
- Respects the digital rights and privacy of others
- Understands the permanence of the digital world

Digital Interactor:

- Communicates with empathy via digital channels
- Collaborates with others to accomplish goals
- Applies critical thinking to all online sources

Digital agent:

- Leverages technology to solve social problems
- Advocates for digital rights of others and access for all
- Actively influences societal norms

School Safety

Our school complies with federal laws and regulations concerning student safety and student privacy: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).

Our school provides several layers of protection to assure the safety of our students. We also monitor students' online activities (when they are using their school accounts) to make sure students follow the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). We communicate with parents whenever there is a safety concern because of the student's online activity.

At St. Francis de Sales School we use G Suite in Education - Google's set of productivity applications formatted specifically for student use. Access to the G Suite for Education enables students to explore the world, learn new skills, and collaborate with others while becoming creators of unique digital content.

G Suite for Education Privacy Notice gives parents detailed information concerning student privacy and G Suite use. It is important to note that in the educational version of G Suite there are no ads in Core Services (which we mostly use), and no customer data from core services is used for advertising purposes (in either core or additional services).

The applications available to students depend on the grade level of students, but SFDS School uses the concept of "The Walled Garden" for all students; students can share documents, files, or send emails (for those grades who have that option) only within our St. Francis domain. The same way, only teachers and other students of St. Francis De Sales School can send files or emails to our students. Students may not communicate with parents or those outside of "The Walled Garden" electronically during the school day. If there is an emergency in which parents must be contacted, the student may use the phone in the front office.

How Our Students Use Technology and What They are Learning

With growing concerns about students' excessive screen time, we are very careful in how we choose to use technology with our students. **We believe that our students should mostly use technology to create, rather than to consume digital content.**

Every classroom from PreK-3 through third grade has several devices - iPads or Chromebooks for student use. Teachers use those devices to enhance their instruction and give student opportunities to express themselves. In fourth and fifth grades students have a class set of Chromebooks in each classroom.

In middle school, each student is issued a Chromebook for use throughout the school year. Students use them to complete and turn in assignments, do research, communicate, keep track of their grades and create unique digital content.

All Chromebooks are managed by the school Google Administrator. Google admin sets up safety parameters and blocks and allows certain services and sites. Whether on Chromebooks or not, any time a student logs in into his or her Google account, the online activity is monitored by GoGuardian, an online student safety service (which is also in compliance with all federal laws and regulation concerning student privacy and safety). Alerts are issued if a student accesses unsafe or inappropriate information.

In addition to classroom technology use, all students attend a technology class, where they learn various digital skills including keyboarding, how to use productivity tools, and create

unique digital products (music, art, digital storytelling, photo and video production). From the youngest age, students are introduced to computer science principles and to developing computational thinking. 1st through 8th Grades are involved in coding and using and programming robots.

We follow the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) standards and well as ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education) Student Standards .

While wired headphones are required as part of the school supply list, wireless ear buds and Bluetooth devices are prohibited.

Internet and E-mail

Access to Internet and e-mail will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, museums, and other repositories of information and to exchange personal communication with other Internet users around the world. **FAMILIES SHOULD BE AWARE THAT SOME MATERIAL ACCESSIBLE VIA THE INTERNET MAY CONTAIN ITEMS THAT ARE ILLEGAL, DEFAMATORY, INACCURATE, OR POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE.** While the purpose of the school is to use Internet resources for constructive educational goals, students may find ways to access other materials. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet outweigh the disadvantages. Ultimately, however, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. Therefore, we support and respect each family's right to decide whether or not to allow access to the Internet.

What is expected?

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network just as they are in a classroom or on a school playground. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will comply with Archdiocesan standards and the specific rules set forth below. The use of technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the school's technology resources. The students are expected never to access, keep, or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see. Under no circumstances are students to access any sites that are sexual in nature.

What are the Rules of Appropriate Use?

Electronic Communication – Whether occurring within or outside of school, when a student's use of electronic communication jeopardizes the safe environment of the school or is contrary to Gospel values the student can be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences including expulsion. This policy applies to communications or depictions through e-mail, text messages, blogs, social media posts, or web site postings, whether they occur through the school's equipment or connectivity resources or through private communication. Electronic communication is considered unacceptable if it contains one or more of these characteristics:

- Being of a sexual and/or violent nature.
- Threatens, libels, slanders, maligns, disparages, bullies, harasses, or embarrasses members of the school community.
- Causes harm to others and/or to the school community.

Personal Safety and Personal Privacy

Students will not post personal contact information about themselves on the internet. Personal contact information includes their address, telephone, school address, etc. This information may not be provided to an individual, organization, or company, including websites that solicit personal information.

Social Networking

Accessing social networking websites, blogs, video sites (e.g., MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, etc., except those used for educational purposes) are off-limits on school property. The use of circumventors to get around school network security is prohibited.

Illegal Copying

Students should never download or install any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto network drives or disks, nor should students copy other people's work or intrude into other people's files. The download/upload of any material in violation of any U.S., State, Board, Archdiocesan, or school policy is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted materials, threatening, violent, or obscene material, or material protected by trade secrets.

Inappropriate Materials or Language

No profane, abusive or impolite language should be used to communicate nor should materials be accessed which are not in line with the rules of school behavior. Use of technology resources for gambling, chain letter communication, unauthorized email, chat or instant message, blogs, and discussion forums, is also prohibited. Should students encounter such material by accident, they should report it to their teacher immediately. A good rule to follow is never view, send, or access materials, which you would not want your teachers and parents to see. Uses of cell phones to transmit unacceptable language and/or photos that are harmful to self, other students, and/or to other people is prohibited.

Succinct Advice

These are guidelines to follow to prevent the loss of technology privileges at school.

1. Do not use technology to harm self, other people or their work.
2. Do not damage the network or any technology resource in any way.
3. Do not interfere with the network or computer operation by installing any form of software or permitting the spread of computer viruses.
4. Do not violate copyright laws.
5. Do not view, send or display offensive messages or images.
6. Do not share your password or in any way obtain another person's password.
7. Do not waste technology resources such as disk space or printing supplies.
8. Do not trespass in another's folders, work or files.
9. Do notify an adult immediately, if by accident, you encounter materials, which violate the Rules of Appropriate Use.

10. BE PREPARED to be held accountable for your actions and for the loss of privileges if the Rules of Appropriate Use are violated.

Social Media

Social Media refers to the means of interactions among people in which they create, share and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks.

The school or parish owns the school or school's name and administrators have the right to restrict its use. Student/parent handbook rules and faculty/staff handbook rules prohibit unauthorized use of images, names and logos.

A Catholic school administrator can impose consequences for conduct occurring outside school. What students/faculty/staff do off-campus can detrimentally affect a school's reputation. The parent/student handbook and faculty/staff handbook, which is a legal contract, states that the administration reserves the right to discipline students/faculty/staff for off-campus conduct. Consequences for violating acceptable use of technology including social media include termination of employees and suspension and expulsion of students.

Social media provides another venue for students/faculty/staff/parents to make threats, bully others, and offers opportunity to post potentially defamatory statements about the school, school personnel and students. Deliberate defamation of others is not consistent with Christian values and all will be held accountable for intentional harm they cause others.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Uses

SFds is committed to using AI technologies in an ethical, transparent, and responsible manner. We acknowledge that AI has the potential to significantly enhance student learning and engagement, but we also recognize the importance of protecting student privacy, the fidelity of personal learning and assignment completion, and ensuring that the use of AI technologies is consistent with ethical considerations.

The use of AI technologies in our school aligns with our mission to provide a high-quality education that prepares students for future endeavors. These technologies have the potential to support personalized learning and to help teachers to identify areas where students may need additional support. They can also support research and writing activities and provide opportunities for students to develop skills related to critical thinking, problem-solving, and digital literacy.

School leadership, administration, and teachers are responsible for providing resources and guidance to students to help educate them about plagiarism and AI technologies. Programs that assist staff in identifying student uses of dangerous/questionable websites/sources and the plagiarism of educational resources are already in place at SFds.

For parents, they are responsible for supporting their children's appropriate and ethical use of AI technologies and resources in compliance with this policy.

Students are responsible for using AI technologies in an ethical and responsible manner and not claiming the work of AI as their own. Students should not rely on the "over-use" of AI for their assignments, as this will be considered plagiarism, an offense of academic dishonesty.

As the year progresses, more studies will be done on campus on the use of AI technologies and its benefits and harm to students on personal work and assignments.

One-to-One Laptop Program

St. Francis de Sales School is proud to have a one-to-one laptop program which provides each 6th, 7th, and 8th grader with a school-managed Chromebook. A usage and management fee is assessed for each student. Each student must sign for and care for the assigned laptop. The laptop must always be carried in an approved carrier. Cost for all repairs to the laptop will be the responsibility of the student.

It is the student's responsibility to bring the laptop to school fully charged.

Following instructions from the Technology Department and classroom teachers is the responsibility of the student.

The laptop must be returned at the end of the year in good condition and in the original box with charger and all other school accessories.

SECTION IV

St. Francis de Sales School Uniforms

Preschool Uniform

Preschoolers wear a yellow polo shirt and navy blue shorts/ long pants. Girls may wear a navy blue skort. Rubber-soled shoes (sneakers) are required. Shoes should not contain lights or sound devices. Velcro closures are recommended.

Dress Uniforms, Spirit Days, and Free Dress Days

Dress uniforms must be worn to Church and on field trips unless otherwise noted. Dress uniforms are described as follows:

Boys, grades K-3, may wear long or short navy twill pants and the blue oxford cloth shirt with embroidered school logo.

Boys, grades 4-8, must wear long navy twill pants and blue oxford cloth shirt with embroidered school logo, and plaid tie.

Girls, grades K-3, must wear the plaid jumper and the white shirt with embroidered school logo. Navy, black, or PE modesty shorts must be worn under the jumper.

Girls, grades 4-8, must wear the plaid skirt and the blue oxford cloth shirt with embroidered school logo, and plaid tie. Navy, black, or PE modesty shorts must be worn under the skirt.

Spirit Shirt Day will be on most Mondays and other designated school days. Students are allowed to wear any SFDS spirit shirt and dark, loose-fitting blue jeans/khaki below-the-knee

pants or uniform shorts. Non-uniform pants must be in good condition and be free of writing, extra colors, holes, and adornment.

Free Dress Days happen on special occasions. Students are expected to appear in neat, modest and appropriate attire. Dresses or skirts should be no shorter than the top of the knee when standing. Shoulders should be covered. Shirts should be free of offensive symbols, language, etc. Shirts must be long enough to be tucked into the lower garment. Students should bring appropriate clothes/shoes for P.E. classes.

Students who are scouts may wear their complete uniform on their meeting days.

Middle school athletes may wear the team jersey with jeans on game days.

Boys' Non-Dress Uniform Grades K-8

Pants:

Navy twill slacks or navy walking shorts with no contrasting stitching, brads or other adornment. (No other type of slacks/shorts are allowed.) Walking shorts must be loose-fitting and knee length.

Shirt:

Blue oxford-cloth button-down collar shirt (with embroidered school logo), either short or long sleeves, must be worn on Dress Uniform days and optional on other days.

Blue long/short-sleeve knit shirt with no pockets or adornments (with embroidered logo) is optional, but NOT to be worn with the dress uniform.

A plain white long/short-sleeve t-shirt may be worn under uniform shirt.

Belt:

Plain black, dark brown, or navy belt must be worn with pants having belt loops.

P.E. Uniform:

Grades 1-8:

Blue shorts with school logo, gray T-shirt with logo and athletic shoes.

Uniform P.E. shorts and shirts are sold through the Spirit Shop.

Girls' Non-Dress Uniforms

Grades K-3

Plaid jumper, navy walking shorts, navy skort, or navy slacks. Navy, black, or PE modesty shorts must be worn under the jumper.

White blouse with blue-piped, round collar (with embroidered school initials)

Blue long/short-sleeve knit shirt with no pockets or adornments (with embroidered logo) may be worn with navy shorts, navy skort, navy slacks, or jumper on non-dress uniform days

Grades 4-8

Navy plaid skirt, navy walking shorts or navy slacks. All walking shorts must be loose-fitting and knee length. Skirts must be no shorter than the top of the knee when standing. Navy, black, or PE modesty shorts must be worn under the skirt.

Blue oxford blouse with button-down collar and embroidered logo.

Blue long/short-sleeve loose-fitting knit shirt with no pockets or adornments (with embroidered logo) is optional but is NOT to be worn with the dress uniform.

*Girls may wear footed tights (solid white or solid black) on cold days. Leggings are NOT permitted.

PE Uniform:

Grades 1-3:

Blue shorts with logo, uniform blouse/shirt, and athletic shoes.

Grades 4-8:

Blue shorts with logo, grey T-shirt with school logo, and athletic shoes

Boys and Girls

Socks: Plain, solid black or white socks crew length or higher.

Shoes:

Casual: Laced or Velcro black athletic shoes: laces and designs must be black, soles may be black or white.

PE: Laced or Velcro athletic shoes.

Dress Uniform Shoes:

K-3 Boys Laced, black leather shoe

K-3 Girls: Plain, black leather girls' Mary Janes (one single strap)

4-8 Boys: Laced, black leather shoe or black leather loafers

4-8 Girls: Black leather shoes or plain black girls' Mary Janes (one single strap)

Notes: Mary Jane shoes (with single strap) should not have any extra stitching or embellishment. No high top tennis shoes.

Outerwear:

Navy blue sweater with embroidered school logo may be worn over the uniform shirt. The outerwear must fit properly (arm length to wrist) and be in good repair.

During cold weather, only the uniform sweater may be worn to Church. A coat or jacket may be worn over (but not in place of) the sweater when arriving or leaving school.

The blue, fleece jacket with embroidered logo may be worn on non-dress uniform days and NOT to church.

Valiant hoodies or sweatshirts may be worn on Spirit Days.

The following dress code, consistent with wearing a uniform, will be observed:

1. Costume jewelry will not be allowed.
2. Girls may wear one pair of small stud-type earrings (no hoops or dangles).
3. Any student may choose to wear a simple watch and/or one simple finger ring. Jewelry must be removed for PE classes.
4. Girls may not wear artificial fingernails to school. Nail polish must be clear only.
5. Dyed, bleached, or multi-colored hair/extensions will not be allowed.
6. Boys' hair will be kept neat (above the eyebrows) and trimmed (above the shirt collar).
7. Boys must be clean-shaven.
8. "Make-up" (allowed in middle school only) is limited to minimal use of mascara and lip gloss.
9. Hair accessories should match a/the color/s in the uniform.
10. ALL uniforms and clothing should be in good repair and maintain a proper length throughout the year.
11. Clothing should be modest and loose fitting, especially jeans and t-shirts.
12. Any style of hair, make-up, clothing, or appearance that may be distracting to members of the faculty or student body will not be allowed.

Uniform Infractions

Parents are expected to support the uniform policy of the school, by ensuring that each child is in proper uniform each morning. Should a child be in violation of the uniform code, the student will receive a uniform infraction notice/demerit through FACTS. The parent/guardian may be asked to come and bring the appropriate uniform to school for the student.

SECTION V Academic Excellence

Responsibilities of Students and Parents

Our school strives to provide an exemplary learning environment using the English language to educate the whole child: body, mind, and spirit. We attempt to provide students with opportunities for success by fostering a positive learning atmosphere, providing a supportive atmosphere from all members of the school community, nurturing a Christ-like community, and celebrating our Catholic traditions through a solid program of religious studies. Curriculum is enhanced with fine arts, foreign language, and other extra-curricular activities, as well as offering multi-dimensional experiences in physical education, self-esteem building activities, and culturally diverse programs. All core and most enrichment classes are conducted in English, which requires learners to speak, write, and understand the English language.

Students have the responsibility to study and apply themselves, to attend classes daily, to be punctual, and to obey school and archdiocesan regulations.

Students should enjoy an environment conducive to learning; therefore, each student has the

responsibility to discipline himself or herself and not to interfere with the total learning environment of other students. When a student fails to discipline himself or herself, or to follow school policies, procedures, rules, or instructions, it becomes the responsibility of the student and his or her family to cooperate with the school's reasonable attempts at discipline, up to and including administrative withdrawal or expulsion of the student from the school.

All student expulsions, administrative withdrawals, and suspensions lasting more than five consecutive days must be approved by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, and the Chancellor and Moderator of the Curia.

Students and their parents shall conduct themselves in accordance with rules established by their school to promote safety and health.

For the purposes of the Student-Parent Handbook, the term "parent(s)" includes guardian(s) appointed by the court. It is the responsibility of the parent, guardian, or conservator to advocate for his or her student in a Christian and cooperative manner that does not interfere with the total learning environment of the other students or the administration/operations of the school. When a parent fails to advocate in this manner, or to agree with the philosophy and beliefs of the school, or to follow school policies, procedures, rules, or instructions, it becomes the responsibility of the school to make a request of the Superintendent of Catholic Schools to administratively withdraw the student from the school.

Students may, subject to the discretion of the school's Principal, participate in student organizations based upon their academic credentials, individual talents, and applicable school and Archdiocese policies; they are encouraged to participate, if able to do so, in such school activities which are designed to enhance their religious, academic, social, and physical development. All students are required to participate fully in religion classes and religious services.

Assessment and Grading

We believe that all students can learn and can demonstrate mastery through use of their God-given gifts. The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston has identified the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as the academic standards that serve as the foundation for our curriculum. We are committed to providing curriculum that is coherent, guaranteed, and viable so that our students are prepared for heaven, college, and career. Archdiocesan Guidebooks specific to content areas and grounded on the premise of research-based best practices serve as a primary resource for schools in planning curriculum, instruction, and assessment that meet the needs and expectations of their unique school communities. Each teacher is responsible for understanding and implementing the TEKS and Curriculum Guidebooks in their daily instruction.

It is important to assess students based on the expectations of the curriculum and clearly defined learning criteria. Research shows that traditional methods of grading tend to measure students' short-term recall of information, rather than long-term understanding. As we shift our focus towards raising academic rigor, it is logical that we shift assessment and grading practices to support the development of long-term understanding and 21st Century skill acquisition. Teachers will collect authentic evidence of student achievement, not just what is easiest to measure. For this reason, a balanced process including assessment for learning (formative), as well as assessment of learning (summative) is utilized.

Formative assessments are designed to gauge student learning and understanding prior to and

during the teaching of the content and to inform instructional decisions such as the need for re-teaching. They are used to identify needs, plan next steps, and provide students with feedback.

The purpose of formative assessment is to monitor student learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning. More specifically, formative assessments:

- a) help students identify their strengths and weaknesses,
- b) target areas that need work,
- c) help teachers recognize where students are struggling, and
- d) address problems immediately.

Summative assessments are designed to measure student learning and understanding at the conclusion of teaching the content. The purpose of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit (by comparing it against some standard or benchmark). Summative assignments are conducted after sufficient instruction, practice, and feedback are delivered, usually requiring students to demonstrate mastery of grade level content standards.

Students who repeatedly fail to complete their work in a timely manner may be sent to detention to complete the work.

Student Evaluations

Student progress is communicated to parents through scheduled parent conferences, telephone calls, emails, signed tests, graded papers, progress reports, and the report card. Parents will be able to view their own children's grades on-line. Parents are encouraged to confer with teachers regularly regarding the growth and development of their children. Appointments for conferences are necessary and should be made directly with the teacher. This can be done by exchanging notes, emails, or by calling the school office and requesting a return call from the teacher.

Grades are given to students for every subject in their daily schedule. Grades are averaged every nine weeks. A student whose grades average below 70 is given an F. Grades 70 or above are passing grades.

Student achievement is determined by the quality of class work, class participation, homework, and assessments. Homework, in order to be given full credit, must be complete and submitted on its due date.

Physical Education (PE) Exemption: Students eligible for exemption from PE must participate in a minimum of 600 minutes of physical activity per week and satisfy the required instructional minutes for other content areas.

Extra credit and retakes are on a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

Reports To Parents

Schools shall report student progress to the parents of each child through regular and established procedures at the end of each academic grading period / quarter. Additionally, progress reports shall be sent to parents midway through a grading period. It is the responsibility of the parents to check grades online at least weekly online and review returned

graded work. Parents should also monitor student progress between the formal evaluations of Progress Reports or Report Cards.

Parents/guardians of a student dropping more than one letter grade are to be informed by means of a progress report, email, or a parent conference. If a student's progress becomes unsatisfactory after progress reports are issued, the parent will be informed.

Parent-teacher conferences shall be held at least once a year for each student in October and may occur more frequently for others, as needed. During the February Conference Day, teachers will meet with parents of struggling students. Conferences may take place in person, on the phone, or virtually and must be documented in writing.

Parent or guardian emails or calls must be returned in a timely manner, generally within 24 hours of initial contact or next business day if on a weekend. Please do not expect responses after hours or on weekends.

Testing

The St. Francis de Sales School testing program includes both diagnostic and achievement tests. NWEA MAP Growth tests are administered three times per year to determine student growth. Please encourage your student to perform to the best of his/her ability on these tests. Archdiocesan schools do not administer the STAAR test.

Middle School Testing:

No more than 2 tests may be scheduled on the same day in Middle School. Teachers must refer to the Middle School Tests Google Calendar before scheduling tests.

6th graders will take semester exams in Religion, Reading/Literature, English, and Mathematics. The test may be weighted more than a regular test.

7th graders will take semester exams in Religion, Reading/Literature, English, and Mathematics, and Science. The test may be weighted more than a regular test.

8th graders will take semester exams in Religion, Reading/Literature, English, and Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Each exam will count one fifth of the semester grade.

An exam schedule will be posted on the Google Calendar. Three "dead days" will precede exams. During these three days no new material may be presented, and no tests may be given.

No "open book" or "open note" semester exams.

SPECIAL NEEDS LEARNERS AND REFERRALS

Introductory Statement

Consistent with the contents of the Church document, *To Teach as Jesus Did*, and the Pastoral Statement of the U.S. Bishops, *Persons with Disabilities*, the Archdiocese seeks to include students with special needs in our schools to the extent that the needs of such students can be met within the scope of the programs and resources offered. The Catholic Schools Office is aware that it is unrealistic to serve all categories of special need students. However, St. Francis de Sales School and the other Catholic Schools are cognizant of the fact that admission of

special needs students must be considered and reviewed on an individual basis. Legal References to Special Services

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that local school districts locate, identify, and evaluate all private school students suspected of having a disability (for St. Francis de Sales School, the local district is Houston ISD). This “Child Find” process must be conducted in consultation with private school representatives to ensure equitable access for private school students. In IDEA, these children are often referred to as “parentally placed private school children with disabilities,” and the benefits available to them differ from the benefits for children with disabilities enrolled in public schools.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 educational section (frequently called “Section 504”), provides that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from participation in any program receiving federal assistance. Catholic educators strive to recognize and address the needs of all those who seek a Catholic education. Within our resources, St. Francis de Sales and other Catholic schools will offer services to eligible students with special needs, when possible. However, private schools are not required to significantly alter their programs, lower or substantially modify their standards to accommodate a child with special needs. Private educational institutions are only required to make minor adjustments to accommodate eligible students.

Records for Special Needs Learners

All psychological and educational evaluations/reports regarding special needs testing of students received from local public schools, persons, or agencies are forwarded to St. Francis de Sales School, upon request. These records are kept on file at the school for a period of seven (7) years after the exit of the student. These records are kept in a secure file and area accessible only to the principal, the Intervention Specialist, the Counselor, and any other appropriate staff member working with the student. Parents may view their child’s record at any time. These records may not be forwarded to any other individual or agency.

Criteria for Acceptance of Students with Special Needs

In determining the admittance of a particular student, the school will review the child’s ability to meet the school’s academic, behavioral, and physical qualifications. Each Catholic school determines its ability to meet the needs of the student applicant. Consideration will be given to the following:

- Student’s demonstrated ability to meet grade level requirements;
- Record of student’s ability to follow school rules and regulations; and
- Student’s ability to meet the physical requirements of attendance.

St. Francis de Sales’ Services for Special Needs Learners

New Students - When the Admissions Office or the principal is notified that an incoming student may have special learning needs, the principal and other appropriate school staff review current academic, social, medical, and psychological evaluations to determine if the applicant is qualified to enroll, with or without his/her disability. If the applicant is qualified for enrollment, the principal and counselor will then determine if reasonable adjustments can be made to the educational program which will accommodate the student’s needs. If an admission is determined the school will begin the procedures with parents to discuss a Catholic Accommodation Plan.

Currently Enrolled Students - If a teacher (or parent) is concerned about a child’s academic, behavioral, or emotional progress and feels that testing may be needed, he/she will discuss concerns with the parent/family and the Principal or Assistant Principal, and then meet the

counselor as soon as possible. We work as a team to do what is best for the child and will discuss:

- The student's current educational status, including attendance records, grades, assessment data, and classroom observations;
- Previous educational efforts and strategies provided for the students and the results;
- Documentation of recent vision and hearing screenings;
- Updated general health history inventory; and
- Other information provided by the parents or teachers.

Parents will be expected to disclose any pertinent information that may assist us in educating the student. The principal and staff are responsible for recommending educational alternatives and/or referral to the local school district and/or private agency of the parent's choice for further evaluation. In some cases, the campus may not have the resources necessary to help the child be successful. The principal or counselor will then assist the family to locate an appropriate educational program for the child.

Documentation for all referrals must be kept on file. This documentation will be included in the student's records. If an evaluation determines the student requires minor accommodations the school will begin the procedures with parents to discuss a Catholic Accommodation Plan. Accommodations for a child will be noted on the report card and in the child's permanent folder. At any time, upon review of the student's academic, behavioral, emotional, and social progress, if it is determined that the student's needs are not being met through minor accommodations, the Catholic School will determine the appropriate procedures to take regarding the educational program of the student which may include termination of enrollment.

Student Success Expectations for Special Needs Learners

All available school resources shall be utilized to promote student success. Lines of communication will be kept open to inform parents of student progress in all areas. Concerns about a student will be addressed initially by the classroom teacher and parent. School success can only be attained through cooperation between parents and educators. Parents are expected to disclose any pertinent information from private resources (diagnoses and recommendations) that would be of specific educational value in programming adequately for their children. If it is determined that the school's resources cannot meet the needs of a student, or if parent(s)/guardian(s) fail to act on the school's recommendations for remediation or diagnostic evaluation, the principal may request withdrawal of the student or deny admission for the following year.

Accommodations for Special Needs Learners

The purpose of an accommodation of any type is to provide the appropriate instruction according to the individual student's special needs. As a result of a diagnostic evaluation, a student meets certain criteria to qualify for accommodations to his/her schoolwork. In many instances, accommodations (changes in methods of instruction) can be made in the classroom for students with special needs or for struggling students. Students who are diagnosed with a learning difference or who are diagnosed with a special need through the public school system, private doctors, or through special agencies may be referred for special assistance with the counselor after the administration has verification of the student's recommended accommodations. (Curricular modifications are not provided because modifications require alterations of curricular objectives.) The number of intervention sessions per week, length of sessions, and goals will be determined by the counselor, tutor, principal, and classroom teacher after all available information has been reviewed.

Standardized Assessment for Students with Special Needs

Standardized assessments are one of several means of evaluating student performance. All students participate in the Archdiocese standardized assessment program. Students with disabilities identified through IDEA may require assessment accommodations. These testing arrangements must be planned for in advance through a meeting with the counselor. Any adjustment made on the standardized assessment must be requested from the Catholic Schools Office via special request on the appropriate form.

Honor Roll

Middle School Students (Grades 6-8)

Honor Roll for Middle School Students is determined each nine weeks.

Principal's Honor Roll - Students must have all A's and no less than an S in Citizenship.

De Sales Honor Roll - Students must have all A's and B's and no less than an S in Citizenship.

Grades PreK - 5

There is no Honor Roll at this level.

Report Card Marking

Grading Scale

A 93-100	E Excellent
B 85-92	S Satisfactory
C 77-84	N Needs Improvement
D 70-76	U Unsatisfactory
F 69 or below	

Homework

Often work that has been explained may need skill refinement. Similar work to that taken in class may be assigned for completion outside of the school day. Intermediate and Middle School students may be assigned research and project work. Studying for tests or exams is additional to regular homework. The following timetable is a general rule for homework assignments:

Grades 1-2:	10-20 minutes
Grades 3-4:	30-40 minutes
Grades 5-6:	50-60 minutes
Grades 7-8:	60-90 minutes

The Before and After School Program (BASP) program will have a set study time after school Monday-Thursday.

Make-Up Work

If a student is absent, he/she must make up the missed work and tests. Students have one day to complete make-up work/tests after their return to school for each day they were absent. For example, if a student is absent three days, he/she has three days after his/her return to complete all make-up work/tests.

Students who are consistently absent on major test dates may be required to have a signed

doctor's excuse before they may take a make-up test. Please refer to Google Classroom for assignments.

Ordinarily, a student may not receive credit for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least ninety per (90%) of the days the class is offered. Promotion or credit may be jeopardized if a student misses more than eighteen (18) days, excused or unexcused (10% of the school year).

Regulations for Grading, Promotion and Retention

Grades are given to each student for every subject area in their daily schedule. Grades are averaged every nine weeks. A student whose grades average below 70 is given an F. Grades 70 or above are passing grades. The letter grade on the Archdiocesan report card is the grading system used. If a student receives a final grade below 70, the student fails the subject. If two major subjects are failed, the student is recommended for retention. A student may be retained no more than twice from grades 1 - 8. A student may not be retained more than once in the same grade. Credit recovery for all students is available through Catholic Virtual. Once credit recovery is completed, the student's grade of "F" shall be changed to "P" to reflect that course credit was earned through credit recovery.

Report cards may be withheld for the following reasons: delinquent fees, unreturned library books, unreturned technology (Chromebooks, chargers, cases).

Textbooks/Supplies

Textbooks are provided on a rental basis and distributed to students at the beginning of the school year. The condition of the book is noted when it is assigned to a student. Students will be fined for damages beyond the normal wear. Lost books must be replaced, and therefore the full replacement cost will be charged. Students may not bring permanent markers (other than a Sharpie) or liquid whiteout to school. Luggage may not be used in place of backpacks.

Records

Parents wishing to view student records must make the request in writing twenty-four hours in advance.

Confidential files, such as Guidance and counseling logs, Catholic Accommodation Plans, and disciplinary records, are only transferred to a new school with written permission from the parents or legal guardian. If applying to another Catholic school, relevant information about the student's experience at the school may be shared, including discipline.

This school abides by the provisions of The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, also known as the Buckley Amendment, with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. The Act provides for the right to inspect and review educational records, the right to seek to amend those records and to limit disclosure of information from the records. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent, not the school, to provide the school with the most recent official copy of the court order and/or a copy of the custody section of the divorce decree.

Visitation

If parents/guardians would like to visit a particular classroom, please call the school office prior to your visit to arrange a mutually convenient time. Visits should not exceed 30 minutes in any

classroom. Siblings and younger children are not permitted in the classrooms during visits. Visitors should refrain from conversation with the teacher or students. Visitors must return to the office to sign out by returning their visitor's badge.

Parents/guardians may have lunch with students once per week as space is limited and to give students the opportunity to socialize with their classmates.

Volunteers must register in the office and pick up a visitor's badge. Volunteer committees are welcome to meet on campus during school hours or in the evenings by contacting the office for reserved meeting space but must have an appointment and may not walk throughout the school.

Former students must check into the office and remain in the courtyard or office area unless escorted by a staff member.

Student Insurance

1. Student Accident Insurance

All students are enrolled in the student accident insurance program with the insurance carrier chosen by The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. This program reimburses limited medical costs due to accidental bodily injury to a student while engaging in the activities outlined in the policy. Information concerning claims, premiums, and supplementary coverage can be obtained from the Office of Risk Management or the Catholic Schools Office.

2. Insurance Premiums

The premiums for this policy are paid by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. Supplemental coverage, if obtained by the parents, is paid by the parents.

Library and Library Materials

The library is central to the school's educational mission. It is fully integrated into the curriculum, serving the school's educational goals and objectives. The purpose of the school library is to provide instructional resources and services to the students, staff, and administration. The library provides access to a wide variety of current instructional resources, both print and non-print. The library is accessible, comfortable, and aesthetically inviting.

Students will have access to the school library and no more than two books may be checked out at one time and must be returned. Unreturned library books will result in a replacement cost added to FACTS.

Animals in the Classroom

The use of animals in the classroom as pets or for study purposes is allowed; however, care must be taken to ensure students and staff with allergies are not adversely affected. The animal must be kept in clean and humane conditions. The Principal must approve the presence of "class pets". The presence of the animal is prohibited if it presents a safety hazard for students or the animal. "Class pets" that are disruptive to the learning environment are not permitted. "Class pets" should not exceed five pounds.

Service animals are permitted as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Therapy animals are not permitted.

Counseling and Guidance Program

Elementary schools are not required to have a certified or licensed guidance counselor; however, it is always preferred. It is recommended that a counselor be available for every 300 students or fraction thereof.

The counselor or employee overseeing the guidance program reports to the principal/designee. If a counselor is not possible, a school must have a process in place to attempt to address the needs of students are being met.

All counseling services provided to students at an Archdiocesan school must be for a limited period of time. In a limited number of circumstances, students may be counseled by a counselor who is not an Archdiocesan employee but whose services have been approved by the Catholic Schools Office. When this circumstance occurs, students and parents should both sign the appropriate release forms required by the school and the approved third-party provider.

On an emergency basis, Archdiocesan school counselors may provide assistance to a school during a crisis to support affected students, faculty, and/or staff. All remaining Archdiocesan policies and all applicable professional standards remain in full force and effect for crisis counseling services provided under this policy. Students needing extended counseling will be provided with referral resources.

St. Francis de Sales School employs a part-time, certified school counselor (available on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays). The counselor's role involves interactions with individuals and groups of students to respond to educational, career, personal and social and emotional needs. If the counselor is unavailable, the principal or clinic staff will assist with personal and social/emotional issues. Sometimes, counseling referrals to outside agencies will be made by the counselor or the principal.

SECTION VI

Standard of Conduct

At St. Francis de Sales School, the expectation is to treat each other with respect and dignity as is befitting of Christian behavior. The ideal of discipline is to enable students to move from externally imposed discipline to self-discipline. While recognizing that students first learn appropriate behavior at home, nevertheless, it is the belief at St. Francis de Sales School that parents, teachers, and students are all responsible for creating and maintaining an environment that encourages growth and learning.

St. Francis de Sales School has high expectations of students. Students are expected to serve others by being:

1. Friendly
2. Helpful
3. Considerate
4. Respectful and Courteous
5. Responsible
6. Honest and Trustworthy

Each St. Francis de Sales student will:

- a) Be on time and prepared for class with books, pens, pencils, and completed assignments.

- b) Be quiet in the halls.
- c) Use inside voices in the cafeteria and Beck Athletic Center
- d) Be reverent in church.
- e) Be in uniform.
- f) Observe all safety rules.
- g) Observe the no gum policy.
- h) Use proper manners in the cafeteria.
- i) Be respectful in words and actions.
- j) Do his/her own work.
- k) Obey authority.

Should a student fail to maintain the expected “standard of conduct”, the school will make every attempt to ensure that the break from the standard is temporary. Should a student require disciplinary action, this action will be administered in a positive manner with appropriate consequences.

Behavior Management Systems/Chart

- PreK3 and PreK4: Frog Street System
- Kindergarten through 3rd Grade: Love and Logic Think/Reflection Sheet
- 4th-8th Grade: Merit/Demerit System - Teachers will electronically submit merits and demerits through FACTS by the end of each day. Teachers will have a conversation with students who will then complete a Love and Logic Think/Reflection Sheet. When the student has accumulated five demerits, parents will be notified by the assistant principal of a detention scheduled. Parents and students can monitor merits/demerits under “Behavior” in their FACTS accounts.

School Communication

Various school documents, including administrative letters, emails, schedules, newsletters, etc., communicate school business with families. A monthly calendar is posted on the school website, www.sfdsschool.org.

Newsletters are emailed to parents on Wednesdays with important school related information. Please share this information with your children. This is the primary source of school news and communication.

Teacher/Staff Communication

Please contact the classroom teacher to arrange appointments directly. All staff are expected to return communication generally within 24 hours.

In keeping with the Church’s principle of subsidiarity, problems should be solved at the lowest level whenever possible. Persons having a problem with another individual should go directly to that person before going to that person’s superior. If parents have a complaint about a teacher, they must discuss the difficulty with the teacher first. Parents may request the Team Leader or Assistant Principal to be present at the conference.

Catholic School Discipline

When a student disturbs the teaching/learning environment of the school and/or is disruptive to others, school personnel will take appropriate action in order to promote the individual student’s

positive development and self-discipline.

The primary consideration in all disciplinary decisions is the obligation of the school to maintain an acceptable learning environment and a safe place for students.

Parents will be notified whenever a child has seriously misbehaved within the classroom or during extracurricular activities. Prior to a telephone call, parents can be assured that the student has consequences. The phone call serves to alert the parents of the situation and request their assistance in disciplining their child at home.

The terms 'punishment' and 'discipline' are not synonymous, nor are they correctly used interchangeably. Whereas punishment attempts to control people by force or reprisal, discipline is an active teaching process which, at its best, helps students figure out how to cope with difficulties and make good choices. With punishment the teacher assumes responsibility for the students and imposes a make-up-for-it consequence. Discipline places the burden of responsibility on the student where it belongs and provides a supportive process. Discipline sets consistent, firm, and reasonable limits to behavior in line with student and group needs and with appropriate expectations of student and group behavior. It is the term used to describe the process of growing up and becoming productive members of society.

It is the role and the responsibility of parents, as the first and best educators of their children, as well as teachers, to facilitate this type of growth and development of children. One of the most important responsibilities of the Catholic School is the task of integrating faith and life in order to educate students to appreciate and practice good citizenship. Respect for the rights of others, honesty, good sportsmanship, cooperativeness, kindness, Catholic virtues and a ready acceptance of other persons as equals are representative characteristics of the Catholic Christian way of life and good citizenship.

Specific breaches of discipline in the classroom are under the authority of the supervising teacher. However, all teachers have jurisdiction over all students, regardless of age or grade. Teachers/aides are to use respect when disciplining a child. At no time should the teacher/aide yell at or publicly berate a student.

The principal reserves the right to put the student on probation or home study or to suspend or expel as deemed appropriate to the circumstances. The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary matters and can waive any disciplinary action for just cause.

School Environment

The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston endeavors that all students enjoy a safe and healthy school environment. As a matter of both Archdiocesan school policy and religious moral teaching, students engaging in bullying, harassment, and other such behavior, seriously or in jest, whether verbal, written, or online, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and/or expulsion.

TCCB ED requires that Catholic schools adopt a policy, approved by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, which includes procedures concerning bullying, cyberbullying and harassment and prohibits the bullying of a student and retaliation against any person, including a victim, a witness, or other person, who in good faith, provides information concerning an incident of bullying. The policy will include a procedure for providing notice of an incident of bullying to a

school administrator or faculty/staff member.

The Principal and/or other designated administrator will explore all complaints of bullying, harassment, or any other types of threatening behavior, whether verbal, written, or online according to the guidelines listed in this policy. All allegations of bullying, harassment, and/or other threatening behavior shall be taken seriously and addressed in a timely manner.

1. Bullying

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in ongoing written, verbal expression, or physical conduct that:

- Will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or damage to the student's property, or
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

Examples: Bullying of a student may include, but is not limited to, hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, ostracism, and cyber bullying.

2. Harassment

Harassment may include, but is not limited to, offensive derogatory language directed at another person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation, threatening or intimidating conduct, offensive jokes, name calling, slurs or rumors, physical aggression, or assault, display of graffiti, printed material, or computer generated online material promoting racial, ethnic or other negative stereotypes, or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

3. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment of a student may include, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment of a student may occur under a variety of conditions:

- Verbal Harassment: Sexually demeaning comments, sexual statements, questions, slurs, jokes, anecdotes, or epithets,
- Written/Electronic Harassment: Suggestive or obscene letters, emails, blogs, posts, text messages, tweets, notes, or invitations. Includes computer-generated posts online,
- Physical Harassment: Unkind, immoral and/or unlawful physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal study or movement, and
- Visual/Electronic Harassment: Leering, gesture, display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, disseminating or posting pictures, cartoons, posters, or any other type of electronic messaging.

4. Reports of Bullying, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, or other Threatening Behavior

When reports of bullying, harassment, abuse, or other threatening behavior are made the principal/designee shall follow best practices in dealing with this type of behavior including:

- communicating the expectation that every individual engaged in the school program should be mindful of the behavior between and among students taking corrective action, when necessary,
- addressing allegations rather than brushing them off as “just teasing,”
- enforcing the school’s discipline policies and procedures justly and consistently,
- reviewing discipline policies and procedures with school employees, and
- complying with policies and procedures related to reports of bullying, harassment, or other threatening behavior in the Student-Parent Handbook to inform parents and students.

Failure to promptly report may impair the principal/designee’s ability to explore and address the prohibited conduct.

In some instances, CPS may need to be notified as bullying, harassment, and behaviors such as this can result or lead to a matter that needs to be reported.

School Discipline

Our ultimate goal in discipline is to help our students become self-disciplined. Students are expected to show courtesy and respect to themselves, to each other, to adults, and to property. At no time will defiance, violence, or insubordination be tolerated.

The school also has expectations of parents. Discipline begins at home. Parents are the primary educators of their children. Both the school and the parents should reinforce and support good conduct as becoming a Christian student.

Students who misbehave and/or infringe on the academic process will be disciplined. Parents will be notified (by a demerit) whenever a child has seriously misbehaved within the classroom or during extracurricular activities. Prior to a telephone call or email, parents can be assured that there has been a conference with the student regarding the misconduct and subsequent consequences. The phone call/email serves to inform you of the situation and requests your assistance in managing your child.

Archdiocesan policy is that conduct cannot impact academic grades, only the conduct grade.

Middle School students earning five demerits will be assigned a Detention Session. Missing these sessions may result in an in-school suspension.

Students who submit blank assignments in Google Classroom will automatically be assigned a Detention Session.

Students in all grades should not bring toys of any kind (spinners, Pokémon Cards, etc.) unless assigned by the teacher. If these items are brought to school, they will be confiscated and stored in the teacher’s desk and given to a parent.

Discipline Council

The Discipline Council consists of the Homeroom Teacher, Counselor, and a faculty representative from each level. The Council will be convened whenever a student has received excessive demerits or In-School Suspensions. The student and parent(s) will be required to attend. The Discipline Council may make recommendations and/or requirements for a student’s continued attendance at St. Francis de Sales School.

Disciplinary Probation

A student's continuous misbehavior may result in the student being placed on disciplinary probation by the Principal. The Principal determines the length of time of the probation and will conference with the student and parents regarding the reasons for the probation. During the probation and at the end of probation, the parents will be informed of the child's progress. After consultation with the student's teachers, the Principal will determine if sufficient improvement has occurred. If insufficient progress is noted, other disciplinary actions may be considered by the Principal.

In the Middle School, if a student's behavior is in serious violation of the Standard of Conduct, a conference is held with the student and parents. If a student poses a continuing threat in disrupting the educational process, the student will be removed from class, and parents will be notified.

Suspension

Suspension is a serious consequence that shall be used when a student is in serious violation of the Discipline Code or commits a major offense. Should it be necessary to invoke suspension, both oral and written notice will be given to the student and parents. The suspension may be either "in-school" or "out-of-school" suspension. This is at the discretion of the Principal. In-school suspension means that the student will not be allowed to attend classes with fellow students and is required to complete all regular class work for homework. A substitute teacher will be hired at the parents' expense, and the student will complete a behavior modification curriculum. A student will be allowed one day to complete make-up work/tests for each day he/she is assigned to ISS. An in-school suspension may last up to three days. Out-of-school suspension requires that the student remain away from school under the parents' supervision. The report card will reflect an N in Citizenship if a student serves a suspension.

A suspension may include any of the below-listed examples; however, this list is not intended to be all-inclusive.

- a) The student may attend class but lose the right to participate in any school activity on or off campus.
- b) The student may be suspended from a particular class or classes and required to report to a specific place on campus during that time.
- c) The student may be sent home for the entire period of suspension provided that the student is assigned academic work to make up the loss of class time.

Procedures for Suspension

Except when the school's Principal determines that immediate suspension is necessary, the steps listed below should be followed and, when practical, to minimize the opportunity for misunderstanding, the school should document each step below in written communication to the student's parents.

- The student may be given oral or written notice of the disciplinary issues against him/her and a fair opportunity to present his/her side of the events, in their own writing or scribed by an adult if the child cannot write, before the suspension is imposed. A picture of the event may also be utilized if her child is unable to describe what happened to an adult. If, however, suspension is imposed before such notice takes place, the student should be given the opportunity to present his/her viewpoint on the situation to the Principal or designee in writing.
- Parents should be advised of a suspension by telephone and by a written notice from the Principal or designee.

- The parents and student should sign a written form of suspension. On this form the exact length of the suspension period should be specified and the reason for the suspension clearly noted, as well as the detailed behavior modification necessary for reinstatement.
- When a student is suspended, the school's Principal or designee should document the grounds for suspension, a summary of the facts leading to the suspension, any conferences with the student and/or his/her parents, and the means by which a final signed copy of the notice of suspension was provided to the student and his/her parents.

Major Offenses

1. Destruction of property, vandalism of any kind
2. Smoking or use of tobacco, alcohol or other harmful substances including vaping, or possession thereof
3. Theft/cheating/forgery/plagiarism
4. Fighting or harassment (including sexual harassment and cyber-bullying)
5. Intimidation or defiance, including bullying or cursing and verbal assault
6. Leaving the classroom, campus, or school grounds without authorization
7. Repeated acts of incorrigible behavior
8. Possession of weapons, including "look alikes," and/or other potentially dangerous items
9. Claiming of gang affiliation, use or expression of gang signs or symbols
10. Disrespect towards a staff member or other adult or campus visitor
11. Other acts of behavior unbecoming a St. Francis de Sales student

Search of Lockers and Search and Confiscation of Student Belongings

Lockers are school property and should be maintained by school authorities to protect the safety of all. A student assigned a locker might have exclusive use, but not proprietary rights versus the school. School officials may search student lockers and personal belongings, including cell phones and digital devices on school property or at school events. Personal belongings, including cell phones and digital devices on school property or at school events can be confiscated if they are deemed illegal, unsafe, material to an investigation, or disruptive to the operation of the school. School officials have the right to protect the health, welfare, and safety of students against alcohol and drugs, weapons, and other contraband materials.

Expulsion or Dismissal

Expulsion is an extremely serious matter and generally every other possible solution will have been explored with the student and his/her parents prior to taking this action.

A student's continued enrollment at the school will be subject to his/her meeting the scholastic and behavioral standards set by the Principal and Catholic School Office. If any student fails to meet these standards and if the Principal believes that continued enrollment of the student is not in the best interest of the student or the school, the Principal shall advise the Pastor. If the Pastor and the Principal decide that the student should be expelled, the Principal shall arrange a conference with the parents or guardians of the student and explain to them the reasons for the expulsion. A written notification of the expulsion stating the circumstances and dates of the matter shall be sent to the Archdiocesan Superintendent of Schools. Parents may appeal the expulsion to the Catholic Schools Office. Grounds for expulsion include:

- actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare to self or other students,
- assault, battery, or any threat of force or violence—whether intended in jest or not—

directed toward any school personnel, students, member of the school community, or other person on school property or during school- related activities,

- habitual or persistent violation of school regulations,
- use, sale, distribution or possession of narcotics, controlled substances, tobacco or nicotine delivery systems, alcoholic beverages,
- on-campus use, sale, distribution, or possession of a substance intended or commonly used to mimic a narcotic, controlled substance, or alcoholic beverage, tobacco, or nicotine delivery systems,
- use or possession of firearms or other potentially harmful objects or weapons,
- gang-related conduct or activity including but not limited to, symbols, graffiti, apparel, colors, hazing/initiations, and hand signals commonly associated with gangs,
- theft, extortion, arson,
- habitual truancy,
- malicious damage or destruction of real or personal property at school,
- hazing,
- bullying and/or harassment, including sexual harassment,
- conduct which may damage the reputation of the school or its employees or parish,
- threats to transmit or the actual transmittal of nude or otherwise inappropriate images of any person,
- use of social media in such a manner as constitutes bullying or online harassment, blackmail, or extortion, or which causes another student or member of the school community to fear for the safety of any member of the school community,
- risk taking or other inappropriate behaviors associated with the use of digital devices, social media, and the internet, and
- incorrigible or disruptive behavior which impedes the progress of the rest of the class.

Guidelines for Expulsion or Administrative Withdrawal

a) The final decision to expel a student rests with the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, in consultation with the Chancellor/Moderator of the Curia after the Principal/designee has submitted documentation to the superintendent. In parish elementary schools, the Pastor should be consulted. If the Principal/designee and Pastor, if applicable, are unable to agree as to the final resolution of a student disciplinary matter, the Superintendent of Catholic Schools should be consulted and may suggest a resolution of the matter. The Superintendent of Catholic Schools should be informed of any proposal to expel before that decision is communicated to a student or his/her parents. An expelled student should be given credit for all work completed prior to expulsion.

b) When practical and appropriate, and in consultation with the Catholic Schools Office Liaison, schools may consider whether an administrative withdrawal rather than an expulsion would be more effective for students. The Superintendent of Catholic Schools must approve administrative withdrawals, in consultation with the Chancellor/Moderator for the Curia.

c) Based on the school's tuition refund policy, tuition is not typically reimbursed if a student is expelled or administratively withdrawn.

Procedures for Expulsion or Administrative Withdrawal

- With the Pastor's approval, the Principal will make the recommendation for expulsion or administrative withdrawal to the Catholic Schools Office Liaison. Pending review of the expulsion/administrative withdrawal, a Principal may suspend the student.

- The Principal provides the Catholic Schools Office Liaison with supporting disciplinary documentation for review as follows:

- a) Summary of the facts leading to the recommendation for expulsion or administrative withdrawal,

- b) Disciplinary records of the student including records pertaining to previous suspensions,
- c) Emails between school and parent pertaining to the student's behavior,
- d) A written statement from the student regarding the incident,
- e) Written statements from teachers or students who have firsthand knowledge of the incident, and
- f) Any other pertinent information that will assist the Superintendent of Catholic Schools in making a decision.
 - The Superintendent of Catholic Schools reviews documentation and communicates with the Chancellor/Moderator of the Curia; a decision is reached.
 - The school and the student's parents will be notified of the Superintendent of Catholic Schools' decision.
 - The student's parents should be invited to a conference with the student and Principal. In parish schools, the Pastor should be advised of the scheduled conference and attend, if possible.
 - The student's cumulative achievement record shall be marked with "Expulsion" or "Administrative Withdrawal."
 - The Catholic Schools Office will keep on file documents related to expulsions approved by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

Procedure for Appeal and Review of Expulsion, Administrative Withdrawal and Extended Suspensions

A parent may appeal directly to the Archdiocesan Superintendent when the issue is concerning an expulsion, administrative withdrawal or a discipline issue involving suspension (in or out of school) of a student from classes lasting five (5) or more consecutive school days. In such cases, the following procedure shall be utilized:

- A written appeal shall be submitted to the Archdiocesan Superintendent within five (5) working days following the parent notification of expulsion, administrative withdrawal or suspension lasting five (5) or more consecutive school days.
- The record for the appeal to the Archdiocesan Superintendent shall consist of a written statement setting forth with specificity the reason(s) for the parent's dissatisfaction with the decision to expel or suspend the student lasting five (5) or more consecutive school days. It will also consist of information provided by the Principal including, but not limited to the student's probationary status, disciplinary record, and/or behavior plan.
- In consultation with the Chancellor/Moderator of the Curia for the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, the Archdiocesan Superintendent has the discretion to accept or deny any appeal based on the evidence presented. If the appeal is denied, the decision rendered by the Principal and Pastor will be final and no further appeals may be made to the school, the Catholic Schools Office, or any other Archdiocesan ministry or entity.
- If the Archdiocesan Superintendent accepts the appeal for review, he/she shall then schedule a conference with the parent within ten (10) working days from the date the written appeal is received. The Superintendent will make a reasonable effort to schedule a conference at a time agreeable to all parties. At this conference, the Superintendent will hear the appeal and review the materials provided as a matter of record.
- The Archdiocesan Superintendent shall make a recommendation for decision to the Chancellor and Moderator of the Curia within five (5) working days after the scheduled conference has been held, and a copy of the recommendation shall be forwarded to the parent.
- The Chancellor/Moderator of the Curia, in consultation with the Archbishop, may accept, reject, or modify the Archdiocesan Superintendent's recommendation, or take any other action he deems appropriate. The Chancellor and Moderator of the Curia's decision will be communicated in writing to the parents within fifteen (15) working days of

receipt of the Archdiocesan Superintendent's recommendation and shall be final for all purposes.

- No provision of this process shall be understood to limit the ecclesial authority of the Chancellor/Moderator of the Curia and/or Archbishop. The Chancellor/Moderator of the Curia and/or Archbishop may, in their sole discretion, choose to intervene in this process at any stage if they deem it necessary.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution should begin with the persons actually involved in the situation. Before allowing differences to become formalized into grievances, every effort should be made to resolve local-level disputes by way of a free and open discussion between the complainant and member of the staff, and then the immediate authority. If the matter is not then settled to the complainant's satisfaction, the complainant shall present the complaint in accordance with the following procedure:

Parent Grievance Process

Purpose

The purpose of this process is to provide parents of students enrolled in a parish or regional school within the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston with an orderly procedure for the equitable and prompt resolution of complaints. This process is intended to resolve disputes through subsidiarity, at the lowest possible level, in a cooperative, conciliatory Christian atmosphere.

Scope

The process is not intended to be adversarial in nature and neither party to the grievance shall be represented by Legal Counsel during any phase of the process. This process replaces all previous processes and statements regarding the institution and processing of complaints at both the local and Archdiocesan levels.

Exclusions

A parent who has withdrawn their student from the school may not avail themselves of this grievance process. A parent whose student(s) are not invited to re-enroll may not avail themselves of the grievance process.

During any investigation by local, state, or federal officials, a student is placed on Student Extended Leave. These absences will be excused, and the student will have an opportunity to complete assignments without reduced credit during the leave. A parent may not avail themselves of the grievance process when a student is placed on Student Extended Leave.

Procedural Issue

While the grievance process is designed to accommodate all parent disputes that may arise within the Archdiocese, it is understood that some situations require flexibility. Any issues regarding the use of Level One or Two of the grievance process as listed below, or the appropriate administrator at those levels, shall be resolved by the Archdiocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

Level One- Informal Resolution/Conciliation (Campus)

It is the intent of this policy to resolve parent complaints at the lowest possible administrative level and in a cooperative Christian atmosphere through subsidiarity. This process is not intended to be adversarial in nature. Prior to using the steps set forth below, the parent or guardian shall meet with the person with whom he/she is having a

dispute.

If the concern is not resolved, he/she should move to the person's direct supervisor in an effort to find resolution.

If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved with the person's direct supervisor, the parent should request a meeting with the Principal within five working (5) days. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved with the Principal, the parent should request a meeting with the Pastor within five working (5) days. If the Pastor agrees with the Principal's decision, Pastor may decline to meet, and parent may then proceed directly to Level Two. If the Pastor agrees to meet, but the matter is not then settled satisfactorily, the parent may appeal the decision within seven (7) working days to the Level Two Grievance Committee.

Level Two – Grievance Committee (Catholic Schools Office)

The Catholic Schools Office for the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston has established a Grievance Committee for the purpose of hearing complaint appeals from Level One of the Parent Grievance Process. The committee reviewing the complaint will consist of an Assistant Superintendent from the Catholic Schools Office and two Archdiocesan Principals selected by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools or their designee. The following procedure shall then be utilized:

- 1) The parent shall contact the Catholic Schools Office at 713-741-8704 to request the Level Two Appeal/Grievance Form within seven (7) working days of the Level One decision.
- 2) The written appeal shall be submitted to the Level Two Grievance Committee within seven (7) working days following the parent's receipt of the Level Two Appeal/Grievance Form. The grievance is submitted in writing (using the form provided) to the Catholic Schools Office via email addressed to csogeneral@archgh.org along with any additional materials or documentation the parent would like reviewed by the committee.
- 3) The Principal and Pastor will receive a copy of the Level Two Appeal/Grievance Form and other attachments filed with the Catholic Schools Office. The Principal and Pastor will forward their response to the Level Two Grievance Committee within seven (7) working days of their receipt of the Level Two Appeal/Grievance form submitted by the parent.
- 4) The record for the Level Two Grievance Committee's consideration shall consist of all materials submitted by the parent and the written response provided by the Pastor and Principal. The committee has the discretion to accept or deny an appeal based on the evidence presented. If the appeal is denied, the decision rendered at Level One of the Parent Grievance Process will be final and no further appeals may be made to the school, the Catholic Schools Office, or any other Archdiocesan ministry or entity.
- 5) If the appeal is accepted for review, the Level Two Grievance Committee shall then schedule a conference with the parent and/or school administration, if necessary, within fifteen (15) working days from the date the written appeal is received. The committee will make a reasonable effort to schedule a conference at a time agreeable to all parties. At this conference, the committee shall hear the appeal and review the materials presented, as well as any other information the committee deems relevant.
- 6) In an Archdiocesan parish school, the Level Two Grievance Committee shall make a recommendation for decision to the Pastor within seven (7) working days after the scheduled conference has been held and a copy of the recommendation will be sent to the Archdiocesan Superintendent. The Pastor may accept, reject, or modify the Level Two Grievance Committee's recommendation. The Pastor's decision will be

communicated to the Principal, parent, and Superintendent of Catholic Schools within seven (7) working days upon receiving the Level Two Grievance Committee's recommendation.

7) If the Pastor does not issue a written decision within the seven (7) working day limit, that will be deemed as an acceptance of the committee's recommendation who will then communicate the decision to the parent, Principal, Pastor, and Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

8) In an Archdiocesan regional school, the Level Two Grievance Committee shall make a recommendation to the Archdiocesan Superintendent. The Archdiocesan Superintendent may accept, reject, or modify the committee's recommendation. The Archdiocesan Superintendent's decision will be communicated to the Principal and parent within seven (7) working days upon receiving the Level Two Grievance Committee's recommendation. If the Archdiocesan Superintendent does not issue a written decision within the seven (7) working days limit, that will be deemed an acceptance of the committee's recommendation. The Level Two Grievance Committee will then communicate the decision to parent and Principal.

9) Decisions at Level Two reached by the Pastor (parish schools) and Superintendent of Catholic Schools (regional schools) are final and no further appeals may be made to the school, the Catholic Schools Office, or any other Archdiocesan ministry or entity.

Administrative Withdrawal of Student for Parent, Other Family Members, or Guest's Behavior Misconduct committed by a member of the school community other than a student (including parents, other family members, and guests) can significantly hinder a school's ability to perform its essential task of educating students. As a result, misconduct committed by a person connected to the school through a student (including parents, other family members, or guests) may result in the expulsion or an administrative withdrawal of the student from the school.

All members of the school community, including parents, family members or guests, are expected to comply with all school rules and policies while on campus and in communications with the school. All community members should be respectful, cooperate with the school with respect to all decisions affecting the student, and avoid behavior which disrupts the orderly administration of the school. A community member's failure to meet these expectations jeopardizes school administration, requires the school to expend resources to address inappropriate and unnecessary behavior, and detracts from the school's core mission and, as a result, may jeopardize a student's continued participation in the school community. The failure of a student's parents, other family members, or guests to comply with these expectations, separate and apart from the student's conduct, may result in restricted access to the campus or administrative withdrawal of the student. Except in cases of severe misconduct which may jeopardize the safety or security of another member of the school community, the Principal should communicate the expectations of parental and guest behavior prior to restricting their access.

Statement of Non-Discrimination:

No person shall be discriminated against, and no reprisals of any kind shall be taken against any person solely because of participation in the conflict resolution process.

SECTION VII EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities. A student must be in school

all day in order to participate in a sport or other activity on that day. While waiting for a sporting activity after school, a student may not leave school grounds without written permission.

Altar Servers: Students in grades five through eight have the privilege of participating in this spiritual service to our community. Training is provided through the parish.

Micah Club: The Micah Club was established at SFdS in 1992 for middle school students to promote awareness of social issues and to develop a commitment to living and serving in a faith community. An on-going component of the club is for each middle school student to serve his or her community. Requirements are:

6th Graders: 15 hours

7th Graders: 20 hours

8th Graders: 25 hours

Chess Club: Students in grades 4-8 are encouraged to learn chess and compete in this club.

National Junior Honor Society: Seventh and eighth graders are nominated by the Middle School faculty committee for membership in the De Sales Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society. Students must have a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 90% in core subjects (88% in Honors Class), which include: Religion, Math, English, Literature, Social Studies, and Science for the first three nine-week grading periods. In addition to scholarship, students must also exhibit qualities of character, service, leadership, and citizenship. Satisfactory conduct must be maintained. Membership dues will be collected. 10 hours of service to the school community is required per school year.

Sports

St. Francis de Sales offers a well-rounded sports program for both boys and girls. Our inter-school sports program for Middle School students offers team play for girls in soccer, basketball, volleyball, softball, and track, and for boys in soccer, basketball, and track. There are individual uniform and equipment fees to help defray the costs of the sports program.

Fees must be paid in full prior to participation.

Athletic Awards are presented at the end of the year at a ceremony. (See Athletic Policy below)

Awards for each team:

Athletic Most Valuable Player (athletic contribution)

Valiant Award (spirit contribution)

End of the Year Awards for each grade:

Athlete of the Year – A boy or girl who has excelled in more than one school-sponsored sport and has demonstrated high level of sportsmanship

8th Grade Scholar Athlete Award

A boy or girl who has excelled in athletics (more than 1) while at the same time excelled in academics (Honor Roll), and who has always demonstrated a superior level of good sportsmanship.

Sports 4 All: PK-5th graders are encouraged to create teams for soccer and basketball. These teams are coached by parent volunteers. The program is played on Saturdays with the West Houston Christian Sports Association. Practices are held once a week.

Spring Musical: Students are encouraged to try out and perform in this event. Music classes

teach the chorus. There are individual fees to help defray the costs of the music program.

VEX-IQ Robotics program for the upper grades.

Additional clubs and activities may be added based on student interest.

Eligibility

In order to participate in extracurricular activities, a student shall maintain at least a 77 (C) average in each subject and satisfactory conduct in each subject, including homeroom. Eligibility will be checked every 4-1/2 weeks beginning with the first progress reporting date. SFDS requires that students be in good standing before participating in any extracurricular activities. Students with grade average(s) below 77 (C) or making an N in conduct will have until the next progress report or report card is issued to raise their grade for their eligibility status to be reinstated.

Games and Events

Parents are responsible for the supervision of students who attend games or events. All students attending games or events must be supervised by a parent-appointed adult (if the parent is not attending). The behavior of any student attending a game or event must comply with the rules and regulations of the school. Students who misbehave at games or events are subject to disciplinary action. Parents should make every effort to pick up students on time.

Student athletes represent and bring honor to our school. Unsportsmanlike or disrespectful conduct to coaches or other players will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action including removal from the team.

Class Parties

Two parties held during the school day are provided for grades PreK – 8. Room coordinators work with the teacher in planning the scheduled parties for the year.

Simple treats, such as a cookie or brownie, may be brought for the entire class in grades PreK - 3 to celebrate a student's birthday. These treats are typically eaten during recess. Parents should not send whole cakes to school and should not bring birthday treats to the cafeteria at lunchtime.

The distribution of party invitations is permitted when an invitation is given to every student in the class.

Graduation Activities and Awards

Eighth grade graduation activities include a Parent/Guardian Celebration, retreat, Last Bell, awards ceremony, May Day Celebration, graduation Mass, Presentation of Certificates of Completion, family reception, and dance or party.

School-owned graduation gowns will be worn to the graduation Mass. Boys will wear slacks and a shirt and tie and dress shoes. Girls are to wear dresses suitable for Church. Graduation dance attire will be discussed and documented prior to the dance date.

The following 8th Grade awards are given annually:

1. Perfect attendance awards.

2. Individual subject and/or club awards are given to the students who consistently exhibit an outstanding performance based upon effort, participation, interest and contribution to the class.
3. Citizenship/Leadership awards are given to the student or students who have been selected by the Middle School faculty for outstanding service to St. Francis de Sales School and the community.
4. Academic awards are given to those students who rank in the top 10% of their class.
5. Principal's Award is given to a student who consistently demonstrates to a high degree those qualities listed in the Standard of Conduct.
6. St. Francis de Sales Gentleman Saint Award is given to an 8th grade boy who has consistently demonstrated good manners and the qualities of a gentleman.
7. St. Frances de Chantal Award is given to an 8th grade girl who has consistently demonstrated good manners, respect and courtesy during the year.
8. Other awards appropriate for the occasion.

SECTION VIII PARENT SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

Volunteers are valued members of our school community. Catholic schools expect and need a high level of volunteerism in building community and setting an example for children. Each school family is REQUIRED to commit 10 opportunities of service in support of school programs and projects—see Volunteer Hours.

All SFdS school parents are asked to be Safe Haven trained. Volunteers who assist with school activities on a regular basis must take the Safe Haven program and successfully complete a background clearance prior to engaging in volunteer services. Parent drivers must be pre-approved through www.dps.texas.gov (choose 3 Year History Record). Parents should provide the school with the certificate from this website. All parent chaperones and drivers MUST be Safe Haven trained.

The purpose of the PTO is to promote and maintain sound educational opportunities for the children and to promote and maintain good public relations in the school and in the community. The PTO operates in accordance with by-laws approved by the Advisory School Council. The PTO also assists the Pastor, Principal, and faculty in developing educational programs by promoting volunteer programs and other services including closer parent-teacher cooperation and financial assistance when needed for the benefit of the students of St. Francis de Sales School. The PTO shall coordinate all volunteer activities and work with the Principal. Volunteers are required to sign in at the school office, receive a visitor's badge to wear, and log in service hours. Volunteers represent both the church and the school and, therefore, through action and word are bound by ethics of confidentiality and loyalty.

Parents are often asked to chaperone school events and trips. We expect that they will abide by school rules as to conduct, attire, and supervisory function. They may not smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of our students. Parent drivers must be pre-approved through the school office. Forms must be filled out accurately and completely; the school will pay for the driver's record request.

The Advisory School Council

Please refer to the beginning of this document.

Volunteer Hours

Each school family is REQUIRED to commit 10 opportunities of service in support of school programs and projects. These opportunities are available in many forms including, but not limited to:

- attendance at PTO, or Advisory School Council meetings
- Room Coordinators
- carline supervision
- field day helper
- class party helper
- lunch relief supervision

Families must log their hours on the Google Form created by the PTO. Room Coordinators will monitor the hours and advise administration of progress. Families will be recognized upon completion of their 10 hours at Mass.

Leadership positions in school service organizations complete the family's service commitment for the year.

Please remember that parents providing service support on campus must be Safe Haven trained.

SECTION IX ATHLETIC POLICY

Introduction

St. Francis de Sales School offers a variety of sports for both boys and girls in Middle School including volleyball, basketball, soccer, softball, baseball and track when there are enough participants to make a team. The Athletic Program may also include Cheerleading for all sports. Additional sports are periodically considered if there is sufficient interest on the part of the students and parents. The athletic program falls under the jurisdiction of the school and is administered by the Principal, the Athletic Coordinator, full- and part-time coaches, and parent volunteers. St. Francis de Sales is a member of the Greater Houston Catholic Athletic Association (GHCAA) and is bound by all rules of the league.

Philosophy and Objectives

St. Francis de Sales School encourages participation in its athletic program so that students will have the opportunity to experience being part of a team and to develop their physical skills and athletic talents. Even though winning and excelling are desirable parts of any athletic program, the primary objectives of our program are the development of sportsmanship and leadership qualities. In order to provide this opportunity to as many students as possible, every effort is made to maximize the number of sports and teams, the roster sizes, and each child's playing time, within the practical limits afforded by the sport. However, because of the competitive nature of athletics and because there are practical limits to team sizes, all students may not have the opportunity to participate in the sports programs to the extent that they may wish. By necessity, the process is selective. The primary goals of the younger teams are to instruct and develop skills. They will be as inclusive as possible, and all participants will be given playing time. Teams at the eighth grade or varsity level will also emphasize these goals but will include a stronger emphasis on competition and excelling and will be more selective in participation and

playing time.

General Rules of Conduct

1. Players, parents, and coaches shall remember that they are ambassadors of St. Francis de Sales School and shall conduct themselves accordingly at all times especially at games. Good sportsmanship, mature conduct, and respect for opposing players, coaches, officials, and parents shall be maintained at all times, in victory or defeat.
2. Discipline problems encountered during athletic activities will be handled with in the same manner and in accordance with the same rules used regarding discipline problems in the school.
3. Players, coaches, and parents shall treat each other with mutual respect at all times.
4. Players and parents should wait until the following day to make an appointment to discuss any specific game.
5. No student shall be allowed to participate in any athletics program unless a signed Parent/Guardian Consent Form, a Medical History Form, and a Physical Examination Form are on file in the office of the Athletic Coordinator.
6. Athletes, parents, students and fans adhere to the precepts of the Positive Coaching Alliance.
7. Fees must be paid in full prior to participation in any sport.

Players' Responsibilities

1. Before joining a team, the player agrees and commits to attend all practices and games unless there is a legitimate reason for absence. If a player must miss a practice or game, the coach must be so informed in advance.
2. Players are to be at practices and games on time, properly equipped and attired, and ready to play.
3. Players are expected to abide by all rules set forth herein and any other rules established by the coach. Players failing to abide by these rules are subject to dismissal from the team.
4. Players, as part of the team, will be always supportive of their teammates.

