

ROME
CATHOLIC
SCHOOL

Student Parent Handbook
2021-2022

Mission Statement of Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Syracuse

The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Syracuse carry out the mission of Jesus Christ,
bearing witness while proclaiming the Gospel message.

Together with families and parishes, our schools provide an education
rooted in the Gospel that is “living, conscious, and active”

including values and ideals

that are in accordance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

We empower our students to live their faith with compassion, integrity
and respect for all life and the diversity of our world.

Our schools are faith-centered communities

focused on promoting academic excellence

while developing a strong moral conscience

and embracing Catholic principles

to enable students to meet lifelong challenges and demands

in our rapidly changing world.

August 21, 2013

The Mission Statement of Rome Catholic School

Rome Catholic School is dedicated to education, empowerment,
and acceptance through a lifelong commitment to Jesus and community.

Sept. 2020



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Rome, New York 13440

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Principal - Mrs. Nancy E. Wilson

Website: www.romecatholic.org

September 2021

Dear Rome Catholic Families,

On behalf of the faculty and staff I welcome you to the 2021-2022 school year at Rome Catholic, home of the Rome Catholic Redwings! We all look forward to a positive, productive, and successful third school year at 800 Cypress Street. We are committed to providing a faith-filled Catholic environment that is safe and nurturing, and where students of all faiths can reach their fullest potential. We know that Catholic Education is provided through sacrifice, and we appreciate that you have chosen to make that sacrifice and entrust us with your child's education.

Education is a partnership. Our relationship with your family is key to the success of your child. We have the same goals. As faculty, staff, and parents, we want all our children to learn successfully, to enjoy learning and to be spiritual, responsible citizens.

Please read through this handbook and discuss it with your child. It contains the policies and procedures for a successful school year, such as homework completion and behavior expectations. Each year there are changes, and the continuing pandemic is no exception. This is your first source of information to best help your child succeed at Rome Catholic. Please be aware that many of the policies we had in place last year have either changed or been eliminated.

I encourage you to read the document carefully and review all sections.

K-6 Grade students acknowledged the handbook upon completing the online application/re-application. UPK students acknowledge the handbook by completing the 21-22 application form questionnaire. Please be aware that your child attending school at Rome Catholic School declares your understanding in support of the policies in the handbook.

It is both a blessing and a privilege to begin another year at Rome Catholic School, working with your children. I look forward to facilitating a fun and faith-filled learning experience. Whether you are new to Rome Catholic or if you are returning for another great year, I am equally excited to have you as part of the Rome Catholic Family.

Blessings,

Mrs. Nancy E. Wilson
Principal



If you have
the power to
make someone
happy, do it.
The world
needs more
of that.

Terms of Enrollment For All Schools in the Diocese of Syracuse, NY

The following sets forth the nature, dynamics and character of the relationship between the School and its students and their parents. This summary will allow both students and parents to clearly understand their rights and obligations while attending the School and it will minimize any potential misunderstanding in this regard. It is understood that by seeking enrollment in and attending the School, the applicants, students and their parents understand and agree to this statement of rights and obligations. It is part of your agreement with the School.

The School warmly welcomes all of the students accepted for the coming school year and will work hard to provide them with a Catholic and academic education in a supportive learning environment. It is understood and agreed by the School's students, and their parents, that students shall obey the School's *Code of Conduct*, observe the rules and regulations of the School and perform the academic work required so as to result in sufficient academic success while attending the School. It is also understood and agreed that the School's students attend the School at the School's invitation, and not pursuant to any right that a student or parent may possess. The admission to, and continued attendance at the School require students to behave consistent with the *Code of Conduct*, all other rules and regulations of the School and in a manner befitting a student of a Catholic institution. These responsibilities exist both inside and outside of the classroom and during all school functions, whether on campus or located elsewhere.

In order to protect its standards of academics, discipline and character, the School reserves the right to require the withdrawal of any student at any time, for any reason deemed sufficient in the sole discretion of the School and its administrators. Through their application enrollment into the School, all students and their parents and/or legal guardians, concede and acknowledge that the School has this right. By a student's attendance at the School, he or she, and his or her parents or guardians, acknowledge the further important obligations and restrictions contained in the *Student Handbook*, and agree to be bound by its terms.

Students attending the School understand that they do not possess the same rights they might possess if attending a public school. For example, a student's freedom of speech is limited in many important respects at the School. Any speech, written or oral, that is contrary to the Roman Catholic faith, the teachings of the Church, the directives of the Bishop or Ordinary of the Diocese of Syracuse or contrary to the School's *Code of Conduct* are prohibited. Likewise, speech that is contrary or disruptive to the philosophy and purpose of the School is prohibited. Participating in prohibited speech at the School may be the basis for disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Likewise, while students may have a constitutional right to be free from unreasonable searches or seizures while attending a public school, they understand and agree that the School has the right to search their person or property, if the School's instructors or staff reasonably believe that the search will produce evidence of a violation of a School rule, the School's Code of Conduct or the law. The School's students and their parents understand and agree that it is within the sole discretion of the School's administrators to determine whether such a reasonable belief exists. They further understand and agree that the School has the unfettered right to examine, search or inventory a student's desk, locker, or other space provided to the student for use at School. It is further understood and agreed that these areas may be searched by the School at any time and for any reason. Moreover, if the School permits on-campus parking, students and their parents understand and agree that the School has the unfettered right to search any automobile parked upon its premises. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy relative to any of these areas (e.g., desks, hallway lockers, locker room lockers, automobiles parked on School grounds, etc.)

Additionally, it is understood and agreed by students, and/or their parents or guardians, that they waive and relinquish any right they may have to sue the School, any parish, the Diocese of Syracuse, and/or any individual acting on the half of the School, a parish or the Diocese, such as administrators, teachers, staff, volunteers or any of their agents relative to any matter directly or indirectly concerning academic or disciplinary decisions or matters covered within the *Student Handbook*.

Each student and his or her parents or guardian, by their acceptance of enrollment at the School, agree they may not bring any civil action in any local state or federal court or in any administrative agency or body to challenge any school decision relative to academics or disciplinary matters, including any decision relating to the rules, regulations, procedures or programs covered within this handbook. Students and their parents or guardians agree that any challenge to any school academic or disciplinary action, any enrollment decision, any suspension or expulsion, or any decision relating to the rules, regulations, procedures or programs covered in the *Student Handbook* may only be challenged or appealed within the hierarchy of the School and/or Diocese, subject to the limitations and processes contained within the *Student Handbook*.

While any students or parent or guardian of a student may consult with legal counsel relative to any decision made by the School or Diocese concerning the student, the School emphasizes and reiterates that students and parents or guardians are not permitted to have legal counsel present during any meetings or hearing or to otherwise participate in any disciplinary process or any other proceeding or process administered by the School or Diocese. It is understood and agreed that school administrators are not obligated to meet with attorneys or advocates of any sort, at any time.

The *Student Handbook* contains the School's *Code of Conduct* and the parameters of student discipline. However, it should be noted that any listing of prohibited conduct in the Handbook is only by way of illustration and example, and it is not intended or expected to be an exhaustive or exclusive list of prohibited conduct or conduct that may result in disciplinary action.

The School is pleased to welcome you to the School community and looks forward to your participation in its academics and activities.

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ATTENDANCE POLICIES*

***Due to COVID-19 and the Department of Health regulations, attendance policies will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Students needing to be out for things such as quarantine or testing for COVID-19 will not be marked unexcused. Students well enough to continue learning at home virtually during that time will be marked present but learning remotely (virtual). Students too ill to complete work will be marked excused absence due to illness.**

These attendance policies apply to tuition paying students only. Since the UPK Program is grant-based, the attendance policies outlined in Rome City School District's Early Childhood Program Parent Handbook must be followed by all UPK students to remain in the program.

Parents/guardians must report absences daily by calling the Main Office at 336-6190 before 8:00 A.M. on the day of the absence. Excessive absences will require a physician's excuse and/or a conference with the principal and teacher to determine if these absences have cause for concern for the student's academic status.

ABSENTEE EXCUSE NOTES

New York State Law **requires** a note signed by a parent/guardian explaining the reason for a child's absence. The student should present this note to the teacher on the day of his/her return. **Without a note, the absence is marked in the Attendance Register as unexcused.** Following is an example of the information that should be included:

(Name) _____ has been absent from school on
(Date) _____ due to (Reason) _____
Parent/Guardian signature _____

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Requests for permission to miss part or all of a school day must be submitted to the principal. At the discretion of the teachers, assignments and tests may be made up. The school calendar will aid parents in planning trips and appointments. The school strongly discourages vacations which extend into the academic calendar. Excused absences may exist under these conditions:

- Student illness/medical/dental appointment
- Severe illness or death in the family
- Lack of school district transportation
- Impassable roads as determined by the local DPW
- Required court appearances
- Religious observances
- Out of school suspension

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

An unexcused absence from school, class, homeroom periods, or other activities are considered a serious breach of conduct. Accordingly, the principal will issue sanctions for such conduct ranging from detention to suspension to expulsion for repeated violations. Credit may be withheld from class work or tests missed.

Typically, absences due to family vacation plans during regular class times are considered unexcused. When children are absent outside of regular scheduled vacation time, students will ordinarily not be given work to be done while they are away. Work and/or textbooks may get lost and attempting assignments without instruction may cause misconceptions in learning.

When students return, the missing work, assignments, work pages, etc. will be made up as homework assignments after appropriate instruction is given. This policy has the student's best interest and academic preparedness in mind.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Students are covered by an Accident Insurance Policy provided by the Diocese of Syracuse. However, all bills must be submitted through your primary insurance carrier first before the diocesan policy can consider payment. Please call the school office if you have any questions regarding this insurance.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

New York State Law requires minors in proper mental and physical condition from six (6) to sixteen (16) years of age to attend full-time instruction. A child entering Kindergarten must be five (5) years of age on or before December 1st of that year. For Pre-Kindergarten 3, a child must be three (3) years of age on or before December 1st, and for Pre-Kindergarten 4, a child must be four (4) years of age on or before December 1st.

When registering, parents/guardians are required to present:

- a copy of the birth certificate
- a copy of the baptismal certificate
- a copy of any pertinent legal documents (e.g., separation, divorce, guardian, custodial)
- a copy of immunizations
- an annual student activity fee per student

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM*

***At this time, due to COVID-19 cohort regulations, we are unable to provide before and after school care but will review quarterly and reassess if the program can be reopened.**

These programs are open to Pre-K 3 year olds through Grade 6 students, and are offered for the convenience of parents of Rome Catholic School to provide a secure, supervised environment for their children before and after regular school hours.

Before School Care Program:

Parents must drop off their child in the rear parking lot and walk the student to the cafeteria door (there is a call button next to the door).

Time: 7:00am – 7:30am

When: Every day when there is a full day session or a two hour delay day of school.

Fee: \$7.00/day

***NOT offered on Snow Days or any day that school is not in session.**

After School Care Program:

Time: 2:30pm – 5:30pm sharp

When: Every day when there is a full day session of school.

Times: 2:25 – 3:30 pickup 3:31 – 4:30 pickup 4:31 – 5:30 pickup

Fees: \$7/hr. for the 1st child, \$6/hr. for the 2nd child, and \$5/hr. for the 3rd child

***NOT offered on Half Days, Snow Days, No After School Activity Days (weather related), or any day that school is not in session.**

Activities:

Includes a snack, arts and crafts, play/learning centers, time to complete homework, and outdoor play/gym time (sneakers are required).

All policies, rules and regulations contained in the Rome Catholic School Handbook apply to the After Care Program. Rome Catholic School reserves the right to modify these policies, rules and regulations when the school deems it necessary.

BIRTHDAY (AND OTHER CLASS PARTY) TREATS

The purpose of the in school birthday celebration is for the class to celebrate. We ask that parents deliver birthday treats in the morning at drop off time with their child. A faculty member will be available to help if necessary. It is not the intention for parents to be in attendance at these parties as the teachers will use their discretion to hold the party at an appropriate time depending on the daily schedule. All food items must be store bought and have an ingredient label on the packaging due to food allergies. Home made items will not be served. Please keep the celebration as simple as possible. Deliveries of flowers and balloons is not permitted due to potential allergies and disruption of learning time.

Invitations for private at home parties may be distributed through school only if there is an invitation for each child in the classroom. Please send those to the attention of your child's teacher.

Individual invitations or summer birthday invitations can be brought to the main office, stamped and with student names. The school secretary will address the envelopes and place the invitations in the outgoing mail. Please be sure to give the secretary two days processing time. It is against school policy for the school to give out names and addresses.

BUS REGULATIONS

Students are expected to act in a respectful and proper manner at all times during school related transportation. Buses provided for student transportation are extensions of the school and students are to comply with the student discipline code at such times. Because transportation to and from a child's home is provided by the public school district in which the child resides, students are required to abide by the rules and regulations for bus conduct established by the public school district as well as by RCS. Penalties for violations of said rules and regulations may result in restricted privileges and the loss of service. Penalties for said rules and regulations are included in the code of conduct on page 16.

Students must observe the following rules:

- **mask must be worn at all times**
- be ready when the bus arrives
- do not enter or leave bus while it is in motion
- pass 10 feet in front NEVER behind the bus
- occupy seat assigned by the bus driver and remain seated when the bus is in motion
- follow the directions of the bus driver
- use of electronics is at the discretion of the bus driver
- keep your area neat
- no food or drink may be consumed on the bus

Infractions while riding the bus will be reported to the school administration. Students may be suspended from their busing privileges for violations of Code of Conduct. If a student has their bus privileges suspended, the parent or guardian is responsible for transporting their child to and from school.

BUS TRANSPORTATION CONTACT INFORMATION

Bus transportation is available to students from the districts of Rome, Adirondack, Camden, Holland Patent, Clinton, Whitesboro, Oriskany, VVS and Westmoreland. All students must reside within the boundaries established by the state guidelines. Listed are the telephone numbers for the various districts:

Rome	336-3950	Adirondack	942-9241	Camden	245-0878
Whitesboro	768-9740	Oriskany	768-2060	Holland Patent	865-4103
VVS	829-2520	Westmoreland	557-2651	Clinton	404-2763

CAFETERIA*

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

Mr. Whitmore from Rome City School District worked very hard and secured funding in the Community Eligibility Program to offer free breakfast and lunch for all students. This also includes milk for students that may choose to bring their lunch. If you are interested in your child participating in the grab and go breakfast, the student may take a bagged breakfast at dismissal. This grab and go breakfast is intended to be eaten at home. Please make sure you refrigerate the breakfast as it includes milk. Breakfast will not be offered at school this year and students should arrive having already eaten their breakfast at home.

Children are expected to practice good manners while eating. All supervisory adults are to be respected and obeyed. Lunchroom rules are to be followed by everyone at all times. Students should:

- sit in assigned seats or areas
- remain seated until dismissed
- speak quietly
- listen for announcements
- keep tables and floors clean

***Due to COVID-19 health and safety regulations, K-6 students are seated in the cafeteria six feet apart for social distancing. While students are eating they may remove their mask, which is worn on a lanyard around their neck for safe keeping. Students may not leave their seat at any time. Lunch monitors will distribute lunches to students while they are seated and pick up garbage when students are finished so as to maintain social distancing. Cohort guidelines are maintained at all times while at lunch. Please note UPK students will eat in the classroom.**

Food from outside vendors may not be delivered or brought into the school during the school day without the permission of the principal; this includes dropping off a lunch that is purchased from a restaurant.

CELLULAR PHONES

Note: Each classroom is equipped with a phone for emergency purposes and students can be contacted through the main office if families need to reach them during the school day.

Possession of a cell phone is a privilege on the RCS Campus. Students are not permitted to have cell phones in class at any time for use, unless approved by the principal. Any cell phones brought to school must be turned off and put away until the close of the day. (RCS is not responsible for any lost or stolen cell phones or any other item.)

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

In addition to our website, www.romecatholic.org, we also have a Facebook page and the Parent Portal. At the beginning of every month, the lunch menu will be posted on the website and in the Parent Portals as well. Please be sure to check these sites frequently for these and other communications. We will continue to be communicating mostly via e-mail.

Please make sure an updated email address is provided to the office at the beginning of the school year and reflected on the Emergency Contact Form. Updates must be provided to the school if changes occur.

Teachers may establish other direct communication to parents for their own classes such as notes in the communication folder, through See Saw, or the Parent Portal in Rediker. Teachers will notify parents of the application process for their individual See Saw accounts when the school year begins. Invitations to join the Parent Portal will be emailed to parents from the office. If you have questions or concerns about See Saw, please contact your child's teacher. Parents/guardians need to check backpacks for notes, notices, forms and various permission slips on a daily basis.

Rome Catholic utilizes a telephone messaging system referred to as AdminPlus Notify. This is a great resource to disseminate information quickly to our families regarding emergency issues, school information, etc. AdminPlus Notify is an automated phone call that will leave a voice message. Please make sure we have the most current telephone information on record so that you can receive this information.

CUSTODY

The school assumes that both parents have full custody unless the school receives a copy of that portion of the Separation Agreement or Divorce Decree that outlines any other custody arrangements. This information may also be provided to the school on official stationery signed by an attorney. Non-custodial parents retain their parental rights and have a right to information about the student's academic progress unless the school receives a court order that directs it not to release this information to a non-custodial parent. If non-custodial parents reside at a different address than the primary address of the student and wish to receive academic updates, they should contact the office to be put on the email list.

CYBER BULLYING

Students may not use the computer or any other form of communication to intimidate, harass and or bully another person. This includes but is not limited to instant messaging, other internet postings, email, phone calls, cell phone calls or text messaging. Use of communication devices whether on or off campus must be consistent with the Mission Statement of RCS. The Administration reserves the right to review materials it feels are not in compliance with this policy and to proceed as necessary with the Diocesan Code of Conduct which follows in this handbook.

DETENTION

Recess or Lunch Detention: Students may be assigned detention during lunch and/or recess.

Classroom Assigned Detention: A student may be assigned detention with his/her teacher for violations of expectations. Under such circumstances the student and their parent's full cooperation is expected. These detentions are held after school. The teacher will advise parents of detention dates.

Administrative Detention: The principal or designee may assign detention for infractions of school policy. Students must report at the designated time to the designated room. The school will advise parents of detention dates. Parents will be responsible for the transportation of their child. Detention is held on Monday through Thursday from 2:30pm until 3:30pm. Please be aware that any student who is assigned an administrative detention cannot participate in any after school club activities on the day the detention is served.

DISMISSAL AT THE END OF THE DAY

Please send in a note at the beginning of the school year with information about how your child will be getting home each day. **Please send a separate note for each child.** If there is a change in the normal routine, please send in a note each time that there is a change. If there is a need to make changes during the school day, please call the office **as soon as possible. Please note that no child will be released to anyone who is not listed on the Emergency Contact Area of the student's Emergency Contact Card, unless we receive a written note.**

DRESS CODE FOR KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 6

- The principal may adjust the dress code at any point during the course of the school year.
- Spirit wear will be permitted at the administration's discretion or upon special requests from clubs.
- Final decisions concerning appropriateness of student's appearance are at the principal's discretion.
- Gently used uniforms are available in our Uniform Closet at no cost, by appointment.
- New vests/sweaters must be purchased through [FlynnO'Hara Uniforms](#).
- Polo shirts must have the Rome Catholic School logo and are purchased through a local vendor, Winning Promotions. The online store for ordering PE clothes and polo shirts will be open quarterly. Please call the school for more information.

Boys Dress Code for Students in Grades K-6

(can be worn all year, must be worn to mass)

Shirts:	Plain white dress shirts, short or long sleeves: not a polo shirt, no logos, emblems, patterns, or designs. Available online at various retailers (Jcpenney.com, Amazon.com, Walmart.com or through FlynnO'Hara Uniforms)
Pants:	Navy blue dress pants (no cargo, corduroy, knit pants, or jeans)
Shoes:	Dress shoes, black or brown
Socks:	White, black or navy blue. Ankle socks or higher may be worn.
Sweaters:	Red sweater vest or long sleeve V-neck with logo from FlynnO'Hara Uniforms

Girls Dress Code for Students in Grades K-4

(can be worn all year, must be worn to mass)

Jumpers:	Knee length, from FlynnO'Hara Uniforms
Blouses:	Plain white button front round "Peter Pan" collar dress shirt, short or long sleeves: not a polo shirt, no logos, emblems, patterns, designs, lace. Available online at various retailers (Jcpenney.com, Amazon.com, Walmart.com or through FlynnO'Hara Uniforms)
Slacks:	Navy blue dress slacks (no cargo, corduroy, knit pants, leggings, or jeans)
Shoes:	Dress shoes, black or brown with low heel. (no higher than 1 inch)
Socks:	White, black, red, or navy ankle, knee high or tights
Sweaters:	Red cardigan sweater with logo from FlynnO'Hara Uniforms may be worn if needed. Please note vests are never worn with a jumper.

Girls Dress Code for Students in Grades 5-6

(can be worn all year, must be worn to mass)

Skirts:	Knee length, from FlynnO'Hara Uniforms
Blouses:	Plain white button-down collared dress shirt, short or long sleeves not a polo shirt, no logos, emblems, patterns, designs, lace. Available online at various retailers (Jcpenney.com, Amazon.com, Walmart.com or through FlynnO'Hara Uniforms)
Slacks:	Navy blue dress slacks (no cargo, corduroy, knit pants, leggings, or jeans)
Shoes:	Dress shoes, black or brown with low heel. (no higher than 1 inch)
Socks:	White, black, red, or navy ankle, knee high or tights
Sweaters:	Red V-neck vest or long sleeve sweater with logo from FlynnO'Hara Uniforms required. A vest or V-neck sweater must be worn at all times.

DRESS CODE FOR KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 6

Fall and Spring Options – Girls and Boys

Beginning of school through October 14th and in the spring beginning April 1st through end of the year:

- White or red polo shirt with Rome Catholic logo purchased through Winning Promotions.
- While wearing a polo, the red vest sweaters with logo are optional over these shirts.
- Navy blue knee-length walking shorts may be worn.

Winter Options – Girls and Boys

Beginning October 15th until April 1st:

- Plain white turtlenecks may be worn. No logos, patterns, emblems, or designs may be on them.
 - K-4 Girls – under the jumper
 - 5-6 Girls – worn with skirt and vest or sweater
- Red cardigan (K-4 Girls) or long sleeve V-neck pull over sweater with logo (K-6 Boys, 5-6 Girls) purchased from FlynnO'Hara Uniforms must be worn over turtlenecks.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION UNIFORM

Gym uniforms and polo shirts must be purchased through [Winning Promotions](#). In addition to the RCS gym t-shirt and sweatshirt, RCS spirit wear shirts are acceptable as part of our gym uniform. Gym uniform orders are open quarterly via a website link to Winning Promotions. The school will have the online store accessible in August with a bulk back-to-school discount available. Please call the school for dates the on-line store will be accessible. All gym uniforms must have the Rome Catholic School logo.

- Non-marking SNEAKERS and white SOCKS are required year-round
- RCS t-shirt and/or sweatshirt
- RCS shorts September until October 14th and after April 1st
- RCS sweatpants October 15th through April 1st

MISCELLANEOUS DRESS CODE ITEMS

Hairstyles: Hair must be a natural color
Neat, clean and acceptably styled, no fad hairstyles
Hair ornaments that are a distraction are not permitted (this includes animal headbands, tiaras, etc.)

Miscellaneous: Hats and sunglasses are not permitted inside
Excessive earrings/jewelry that are a distraction are not permitted
Makeup is not permitted

SPIRIT DAY DRESS CODE

Periodically, Spirit Days will be granted to the students at RCS. Appropriate attire consistent with our school mission is expected; any questions may be directed to your child's teacher first, then to school administration. Clothing guidelines for Spirit Days are as follows (Please note that the guidelines below are subject to change depending on the type of Spirit Day):

Shirts: Polo shirts or loose-fitting t-shirts are permitted
NO tube tops, tight stretch material, short shirts or bare midriffs
NO visible underclothing
NO words, pictures or fad styles that is inconsistent with the mission of RCS

Pants/Slacks: Jeans, pants, capris, or long shorts (to the knee) are permitted

Shoes: Sneakers are permitted
Opened toe shoes, sandals, or flip flops are not permitted at any time.

DRESS CODE COMPLIANCE

It is required that parents/guardians and students ensure compliance with the school dress code, every day. All faculty and staff are required to enforce the dress code out of fairness to each student. **Final decisions concerning appropriateness of students' appearances are at the principal's discretion.**

Dress code notices will be sent home should a child not meet the proper requirements.

DROP OFF/PICK UP*

There is no required daily screening at this time, including temperature checks. We respectfully ask parents to keep students home who are symptomatic of illness and notify the school of the nature of your child's absence.

At this time, K-6 grade students and UPK students will be dropped off at the side parking lot St. Paul's door.

Drop off time begins at 7:30am and ends promptly at 7:50am. For the safety of all children, the doors are locked and any student(s) arriving after 7:50 is tardy and **must** be signed in by a parent in the foyer by an office staff member.

- **Morning Drop Off Procedures:**

At this time K-6 car rider students will be dropped off at the side lot door, known as the St. Paul's parking lot door. It is the responsibility of all adults participating in drop off to maintain social distancing while waiting outside for drop off.

7:30-7:50 Drop Off Time for K-6 and UPK Option 2 students (7:30 – 2:25):

- **Car Drop off:** You are welcome to drop your child at the side lot door beginning at 7:30am. Due to the COVID-19 guidelines, no parents will be permitted into the building at morning drop off. Again, faculty and staff will be present to transition your child into the building. Please help your child to prepare to say goodbye at the door and be ready to enter the building on their own. This is the same policy that we had in place last year. Together we can make the morning a smooth transition. **Now more than ever with the COVID regulations in place, it is imperative that children arrive at school on time for best practice in maintaining a safe and healthy environment.** Arrival time ends promptly at 7:50am and the school day begins with prayers. This year prayers will be over the PA system to maintain social distancing cohorts. Tardy students must ring the bell at the front door; again parents will not be permitted into the building. Students will be signed in at the front door and escorted to class.
- **Bus Drop off:** Is always located in the front circle. We ask that no car riders use the front door or park in the circle as it is reserved until 8:00am for buses only. All students that are bus riders will remain seated on the bus until they are told to exit the bus. Masks must be worn at all times while on the bus. When exiting the bus, please remind your child to maintain the six-foot social distancing rule. Your child will be greeted by a staff member upon entering the building and directed down the hallway, following the red arrows that mark six-foot social distancing throughout the hallways.

8:00 PK Option 1 Drop off:

- If your child is not attending morning prayers (from 7:50am to 8:00am) your drop-off time is 8:00am at the St. Paul's door (front parking lot on the right-hand side of the building). A staff member will greet you from 8:00 to 8:10. Doors close promptly at 8:10, students arriving after 8:10 are considered tardy and must be walked to the front door and signed in. Please do not arrive before 8:00am as 7:50 to 8:00 is a religious experience time when we have prayers.

- **Afternoon Pick Up Procedures:**
Students will be dismissed from the St. Paul's door by the side parking lot beginning at 2:25. We will begin UPK dismissal of classes, two classrooms at a time as quickly as possible, but likely with five minute intervals. The students will exit the building using the far right and far left doors, the middle door will not be used so as to maintain distancing. Parents will greet their child at the door, masks do not need to be worn outside however we recommend maintaining social distancing from others as much as possible. We will evaluate how smoothly the process goes and make adjustments as needed. Please drive carefully in the parking lot and please have patience as we work through the system of dismissal the first few weeks. Expect wait time as classes are only dismissed two at a time. To help facilitate the pick up process, please step forward when you see your child's teacher at the door.

EARLY DISMISSAL REQUESTS BY PARENTS

All early dismissal requests must be received in writing the morning of the dismissal. E-mail notification is acceptable. Teachers will send the note to the office. All students who leave early MUST be signed out by a parent or guardian at the front entrance.

If an unexpected early dismissal arises, please call the school as soon as possible. This will help us facilitate the student being dismissed with the least amount of disruption to the learning environment. If the child returns to school after the appointment, then the parent or guardian must sign the child back in upon his/her return. Parents picking up a student for early dismissal must wait at the main entrance.

Pre-K parents have chosen either Option 1 (1:00 dismissal) or Option 2 (2:25 dismissal). Please adhere to your choice for the benefit of the learning environment. If at any time you wish to change your choice consistently to the other option, you are welcome to do so by notifying the main office. Choice 1 and Choice 2 dismissal times are not intended to be daily choices. This helps us maintain the integrity of the academic environment. Please note that students that are Option 2 (2:25 dismissal) will be charged the extended day fee, which is \$500/school year.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Personal electronic devices (including, but not limited to, cell phones, MP3 players, iPods, cameras, portable gaming devices, etc.) are not permitted to be used, displayed or turned on without permission from the principal. Students must turn off cell phones and electronic devices before they enter the school. Use of electronic devices on buses is at the discretion of the driver. Students that do not adhere to these rules are subject to disciplinary actions.

EMERGENCY CLOSING/DELAYED OPENING OF SCHOOL

In the event of a building emergency causing a closing or delayed opening, RCS will notify parents via AdminPlus Notify, our notification system.

FIELD TRIPS*

***Due to COVID-19 regulations field trips are suspended until further notice.**

Field trips are a privilege, not an entitlement or a right. Students who consistently choose to behave in a manner that does not comply with our Code of Conduct may be refused the privilege of attending a Field trip.

Field trips are planned by individual teachers after consultation with the principal. Field trips are designed to enhance our curriculum. Permission slips are required. A note will be sent home stating the purpose of the trip, the destination, date, time of departure and return, and any other pertinent information. Due to insurance regulations and policies, transportation for trips will be provided by bus. Students are to ride the bus to and from the field trip. With all this in mind, we state the following:

“In order to participate in any field trip sponsored by Rome Catholic School, the student must present a consent form, completed and signed by his/her parent/guardian on or before the date established by the teacher or principal. Consent of one parent/guardian is sufficient to authorize the student’s participation. If a child becomes ill while on a field trip, parents will be contacted. Each time their child attends a trip, parents must be prepared to pick up their child from the field trip location, should they become ill. If deemed appropriate, the school may authorize emergency medical care for the student in the event the parent/guardian cannot be contacted.”

Parents may be asked to act as chaperones for field trips. Parents will be responsible for other children in addition to their own. **Parents may not bring younger siblings with them on the trip due to insurance purposes.** Also, all parents choosing to chaperone must be **Virtus** trained in accordance with the policies set forth by the Diocese of Syracuse. **There are no exceptions to this policy.**

FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid is available only to registered students in Grades K-6. No awards will be made until the school has accepted all paperwork and all appropriate application fees have been paid. In addition, a financial aid application must be filed through FACTS to be considered for **any** aid. Some organizations providing financial aid require additional forms to be completed. Diocesan aid is applied for by completing the FACTS financial aid form each school year. (Forms are available at RCS during Open Registration the last week in January of each year.)

FIRE/LOCK DOWN DRILLS

By New York State Law, we must conduct eight fire drills and four lock down drills each year. Teachers will review the procedures and rules for fire drills. The first few drills will receive advance warning.

FUNDRAISING

The funds raised by the PTG (Parent Teacher Group) will be used to support school programs and supplement the school budget. All group fundraising is done on a family basis. All parents/guardians are asked to support the RCS fundraising efforts. Fundraising efforts within the school should be done only in consultation of the principal.

GUM CHEWING

Students are not permitted to chew gum in the school building. A lunch detention will be issued for gum chewing. The expense of removing gum as well as the health issues associated with the improper disposal of gum requires strict enforcement of this rule.

HOMEWORK

In order to maintain acceptable grades, good study habits are necessary, both in school and at home. Research shows that completing homework assignments helps to improve student learning and achievement.

Parents/guardians and teachers work together to support one another regarding homework assignments that are necessary for the continuity of our academic programs. Homework reinforces academic skills and develops in children a sense of responsibility. Students may receive homework each day, Monday through Thursday, with occasional weekend assignments.

If a child does not complete a homework assignment, the parent/guardian should send a written reason to the teacher. If a child appears to be spending an unreasonable amount of time on schoolwork at home, please contact the teacher as soon as possible. Together the teacher and parent/guardian may work out adjustments to the assignments.

If your student is out due to illness and you would like to pick up their missed assignments, please contact the office in order to give the teacher time to put the assignments together.

ILLNESS WHILE IN SCHOOL*

***Due to COVID 19 regulations by the Department of Health, the handling of illness while in school will be markedly different in order to maintain the safe and healthy environment of the school building. While we know this is an inconvenience, it is a necessary one so that we may maintain in-person learning as much as possible.**

If your child becomes ill or injured at school, the nurse will notify the parent/guardian or emergency contact person. A child may be released from school only to the parents/guardian or person authorized by the parents/guardians on the Emergency Card. Photo identification is required for adults not known by school personnel. NO child will be allowed to leave school without parental permission. Students who are sent home from school with symptoms of illness will be instructed by the school nurse as per the Department of Health guideline flow chart on a case-by-case basis when it will be appropriate for them to return to school and under what circumstances they can return.

LEAVING SCHOOL PROPERTY

RCS is a closed campus. Under no circumstances may any student leave school property during the school day without parental/guardian, teacher and principal permission and they must be in the care of an authorized adult.

LIBRARY BOOKS

Proper care of the books and materials in the library is the responsibility of all who use the library. Damaged or lost books must be replaced by the student/parent/guardian at the current book price. Classroom libraries and periodic book fairs held at school are another source of reading material for students.

Library classes will resume as normal this year.

MEDIA COVERAGE

At times during the school year, the media such as the Catholic Sun, The Rome Sentinel or The Observer Dispatch, YNN, WKTV, etc. come to the school to report on activities at the school. If parents do not wish to have their child/ren participate in the coverage, they should make this known to the principal in writing. Videotaping or taking pictures of RCS students is **NOT** permitted unless approved and directed by the principal. Photographs and/or videos of minors are taken periodically for use in parish/parochial publications and to celebrate your child's and his/her fellow students' participation and accomplishments. Publicity release forms are to be filled out for each student each year. These forms are kept on file for (10) years.

MEDICATION

Should it be necessary for your child to take medication during the school day, the following procedure must be followed:

- A written, signed notice from the doctor **MUST** be submitted stating the student's name, the name of the medication, dosage, times and dates to be given. Medication will be kept secure in the nurse's office and administered at the proper time.
- A written, signed request to administer medication from the parent/guardian to the school **MUST** be submitted.
- All medications must be in the original container bearing the original pharmacy or manufacturer's label, and given to the nurse. Students may NOT keep medications.

No medicines (including aspirin, Tylenol, cough drops, etc.) will be dispensed unless the above three conditions have been met.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES*

Teachers endeavor to keep parents/guardians informed as much as possible as to their child/ren's progress. To this end, one formal parent/teacher conference is scheduled.

At various times throughout the year, parent/guardian conferences concerning individual students may be arranged. The teacher, the parent/guardian, or the principal may initiate these conferences.

***Due to COVID 19 guidelines, parent/teacher conferences may take place virtually this year. This decision will be made based on information regarding COVID-19 in late November. More information to follow.**

PARENT/TEACHER GROUP

All parents, guardians, teachers, and school staff are members of the Parent/Teacher Group (PTG). This organization exists:

- to develop a closer relationship between home and school
- to foster cooperation between parents/guardians, teachers and administration
- to assist faculty members with school related activities
- to aid the school financially

Parents/guardians are notified via the school calendar, Plus Portals, the Principal newsletter and individual event communications of the various activities of the PTG. Your support of this organization by your involvement is expected to help in the continual improvement of our great school!

PARKING FOR EVENTS*

Parent and visitor parking is located in the lot at the front right side of the school (St. Paul's lot) and in the lot at the back of the school. Overflow parking for large events may never be in the front circle due to fire codes. Careful parking on Cypress Street is allowed. Regardless of parking, please use the front door for entrance to school events. Please note that the handicap parking entrance is in the back lot. Please do not park in the Hannaford parking lot.

*** Due to COVID-19 regulations, events at the school have been put on hold until further notice, including monthly mass.**

PRAYER

Rome Catholic School is a spiritually enriched environment that has a faith dimension that permeates the entire day. Religious doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church is taught as a subject as well as lived out in the lives of our faith community.

Concepts of morality and various types of prayer are an integral part of our school. Our students have opportunities to plan and participate in school wide liturgies and other liturgical expressions of our faith. All students actively participate in our religion program and the faith dimension of the school. We require that all of our students be in attendance for liturgy and other religious activities. We require that everyone show reverence and respect, follow procedures and act in an appropriate manner.

Morning prayers are said within the classrooms over the PA and begin at 7:50am. All students (including UPK students who arrive before 8:00am) will attend morning prayers. Afternoon prayers are said within the classrooms over the PA system immediately before dismissal announcements.

RETENTION POLICY

Students who encounter academic difficulty are monitored carefully throughout the year. Parents are notified by personal contact and conferences with the classroom teacher by April 1. The final decision to retain a student is made collaboratively with the parents/guardians, teacher, and principal.

SCHOOL HOURS

While students are in a school's custody, the school must exercise the same degree of care and supervision that a reasonable, prudent adult would employ in any given circumstance. Schools are not responsible for their children until they accept custody of them. Such responsibility ends when the school relinquishes custody. The school day begins at 7:50am and ends at 2:25pm. Our policy for supervision is as follows:

- Rome Catholic School will not accept custody of school students before 7:30am each day.
- Students who are not in their classrooms at 7:50am are marked TARDY.
- Dismissal time for students being picked up begins at 2:25pm.
- Bus students leave the school between 2:25pm and 2:38pm.

SMOKING

New York State law prohibits smoking in schools or on school grounds. As such, smoking or possession of tobacco products is not permitted by anyone on school property or adjacent property. The use of chewing tobacco is forbidden at any school event.

TARDINESS

Students who are not in school by 7:50am (with the exception of the Pre-K students who have chosen not to participate in religious experiences and arrive at 8:00) are tardy. Parents must sign their child/ren in at the front door when arriving late to school. Occasional tardiness is understood; habitual tardiness is disruptive to the school day for both your child and the classroom. Habitual tardiness will be addressed on a case by case basis by the principal.

TESTING

During the course of the year several tests are administered to the students at various grade levels:

- NEW YORK STATE TESTS and ASSESSMENTS: These are mandated by the New York State Education Department and given annually to students in grades 3 - 6.
- Various school tests will be administered in each grade as part of progress monitoring of academic skills.

TEXTBOOKS

Students receive textbooks through the New York Textbook Loan Act. At the end of the school year, when books are collected, the student/parent/guardian is responsible to RCS for any damages or lost textbooks.

DIOCESAN TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

When tuition payments are delinquent, the school reserves the right to decline to enroll a student for subsequent semesters until such payments are made or an alternate agreement is reached with respect to such payment. In addition, one or all of the following sanctions will occur for failure to pay tuition according to the tuition schedule. Rome Catholic School adheres to the following tuition payment policy:

- A student may not begin school in September if there is past due tuition owed.
- A tuition payment plan must be in place in order for a student to start the new school year.
- In the event that tuition is left unpaid, the school will refer the tuition account to a collection attorney or collection agency and all related collection fees will be the responsibility of the client.

Administrators need to be informed about any unusual circumstances that may delay tuition payment. Also, limited tuition assistance is available through the diocesan programs to aid families in financial need. Applications must be made in the spring prior to the next school year.

Payments are to be mailed, e-mailed or telephoned to Smart Tuition (888-868-8828) or automatically withdrawn from your account.

VIRTUS TRAINING (SAFE ENVIRONMENT)

The Office of Safe Environment educates clergy, religious, employees and volunteers of the Diocese of Syracuse on how to prevent sexual abuse and create safe environments for children, young people and vulnerable adults. All staff and volunteers of Rome Catholic School, and all Catholic Schools and Churches in the United States, must be trained. **In order for a parent to go on a field trip they must be trained.** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the diocese has made online training available. To find out more information on dates and times, please visit <https://www.syracusediocese.org/safe-environment/initial-training-for-adults/>. Please allow 2-3 weeks processing time after taking the class to receive your clearance. Taking the class is only the first step. You will receive a card in the mail when you have successfully completed the training and background clearance check. This includes coaches who enter into gym rental agreements with the school that will be working with children.

Periodically the school will send an email informing parents of upcoming training sessions, both initial and recertification. Please note these sessions are for adults only, no children are allowed to attend.

VISITORS* (including parents and guardians)

***Due to COVID-19, the school will restrict having visitors and volunteers in the building until further notice. We appreciate your cooperation with this policy as we strive to keep our students safe.**

All visitors (parents/grandparents/graduates, etc.) must report to the main office upon arrival at school. Visitors must sign in and wear a visitors I.D. badge. Before leaving, visitors are asked to return to the main office to sign out and return the badge. Visitation to any classroom for any reason requires permission, in advance, from the principal. This includes alumni, friends, etc. that would like to visit a previous teacher or staff member during school hours. Without permission from the principal, all visitations must be done after school hours. Please do not go to the classrooms until approved by the office.

When classrooms have special activities scheduled and visitors are invited, please plan to arrive within 5 to 10 minutes before the start of the event to sign in and take an I.D. label. Teachers set specific times so they can plan and organize their event prior to their guests arriving.

At Rome Catholic we strive to maintain the integrity of academic learning time in the classroom. Therefore, visitors are reminded that school events are not appropriate times to discuss student progress or concerns. Please request an appointment with the teacher to discuss any issues you would like to address by sending a note, email or calling the school.

VOLUNTEERS

At the request of teachers and/or administrators parents may be invited to come in to provide classroom or other assistance, or to help with an event. The Parent/Teacher Group is a great place to start volunteering. As we say at Rome Catholic, many hands make light work. **All volunteers must be Safe Environment trained. There are no exceptions to this policy.**

ROME CATHOLIC SCHOOL'S CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

Rome Catholic School has established certain expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based upon:

- Enforcing of school rules in a fair, firm and consistent school wide manner.
- Utilizing positive reinforcement for acceptable behavior.
- Keeping open communication with parents and the community.
- Demonstrating by work and personal example, respect for the law, order, self-discipline, and strive to uphold principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character tolerance, honesty and integrity as outlined below in the code of conduct for all schools in the Diocese of Syracuse, NY.

CODE OF CONDUCT

For All Schools in the Diocese of Syracuse, NY

I. PURPOSE OF THIS CODE

This Code of Conduct defines expectations for conduct on property associated with the school and at school functions. It also defines a range of penalties for unacceptable conduct.

Unless otherwise indicated, this Code applies to the conduct of students, employees, parents and visitors while on property associated with the school, at school functions, or that otherwise affect the school's spiritual or educational mission.

II. PHILOSOPHY

Rome Catholic School exists to create a Catholic educational community where the pursuit of academic excellence is enlightened and enlivened by faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The religious and academic goals of the school challenge the students, employees, parents, and visitors to develop: the spiritual dimension of their life, high moral character, self-worth, self-discipline, respect for the dignity and rights of others, service to others, concern for the community and concern for the common good.

III. BILL OF STUDENT'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. *Student Rights.*

Regardless of race, sex, color, national origin, all students have the right to:

1. A Catholic spiritual atmosphere that supports the faith journey and academic growth of students
2. The guidance of understanding teachers, counselors, and other school staff
3. An education that offers students the opportunity for inquiry and development to the fullest potential
4. Constructive discipline for the development of good character, conduct and habits
5. Personal security while on property associated with the school and at school functions
6. An educational climate where the well-being of students is of primary concern
7. An educational staff that provides a positive role model for student development
8. A safe and orderly classroom environment that will provide the opportunity for optimum learning
9. Wholesome extracurricular activities
10. Referral to health and psychological services to assist in physical, mental and social development
11. Appropriate education and/or remediation to serve special needs within the limits of the school's program
12. Consideration as an individual within the educational environment
13. The opportunity to approach teachers and administrators with reasonable requests and questions concerning education.

B. Student Responsibilities.

All students are accountable for their own behavior on parish or school property and at school functions, and have the responsibility to:

1. Take full advantage of the opportunities for spiritual and academic growth provided by the school
2. Treat others with the dignity and respect they deserve as children of God
3. Comply with the provisions of this Code while on school property and at school functions
4. Grow in character and knowledge as they grow in ability
5. Be honest with themselves and others
6. Show respect for fellow students, teachers and all other school staff
7. Set a positive example so that others may enjoy and profit from their company
8. Perform all assignments to the best of their ability
9. Consider their education as preparation for the future
10. Obey all school rules and regulations
11. Respect public, private and school property
12. Attend school regularly and punctually
13. Develop high moral standards and the courage to live by them
14. Strive for mutually respectful relationships with teachers and comply with reasonable requests of teachers and administrators
15. Develop opinions and values that will make them an asset to the school community.

IV. DEFINITIONS

A. Definitions of Key Words and Terms.

For the purposes of this Code, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings set forth below:

1. **Assault:** The physical abuse, or infliction of personal injury, or unlawful detention of any person and the intentional use of physical force, or the threat thereof, that places, or attempts to place, another person in well-founded fear of personal injury physically or verbally.
2. **Bias Harassment:** The act of threatening bodily harm or repeatedly tormenting another person based on the victim's race ethnic origin, religion, cultural difference, or disability. Bias harassment may take the form of comments, jokes, name-calling, innuendoes, offensive conversations, perpetuating rumors or gossip, offensive gestures, noises, blocking a victim's path, assault, or any other behavior that is designed to show disrespect to an individual based on cultural, racial, or religious differences or based on a disability.
3. **Sexual Harassment:** The act of threatening bodily harm or repeatedly tormenting another person based on gender. Sexual harassment may take the form of comments, jokes, name calling, innuendoes, offensive conversations, perpetuating unwelcome touching of another's clothes, pinching, whistling or other noises, blocking a victim's path, assault, or any other behavior that is intended to or has the reasonable effect of being offensive based on a person's gender.
4. **Controlled Substance:** A drug or other substance identified in certain provisions of the Federal Controlled Substances Act specified in both federal and state law and regulations that apply to this code
5. **School Function:** Any school-sponsored extra-curricular event or activity
6. **School Property:** Any place in or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot or land contained within the real property boundary lines of the parish or school complex, or other church owned or controlled property, or in or on a school bus operated by a public school district
7. **Explosive:** An explosive device of a nature or in a quantity that is sufficient to cause injury to the person of the holder thereof or to the person or property of others, including the school.
8. **Bomb Threat:** The intentional false claim that an explosive device is located on school property or at a school function.
9. **False Alarm:** The intentional or grossly negligent activation of a fire alarm when no threat of fire exists, or the initiation, instigation or communication to the school, or any of its employees of any other claim of fire or threat thereof when none exists.
10. **Arson:** The intentional destruction or damage by fire, explosion or smoke to real property or personal property of the school, to personal property of school students or staff, or to personal property of the third parties.
11. **Illegal Drugs/Illegal Substances:** A controlled substance except for those legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health-care professional, or those legally possessed or used under any other authority under the Controlled Substances Act or any other Federal or New York State law such as alcohol, illegal drugs and inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alike drugs, and any substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs"
12. **Cheating:** The act of giving or receiving (or conspiring to give or receive) answers to class assignment (including copying computer material) or test answers from another source.
13. **Plagiarism:** The unauthorized use of another's material that is represented as one's own work.
14. **Disruptive Conduct:** Conduct by a student under the age of 21 that is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority in the classroom or other educational setting. Disruptive conduct includes, but is not limited to, the failure to comply with the lawful directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees, and speech or gesture, which, by virtue of its content and/or circumstances, is likely to disrupt the conduct or classes of other school activities or to undermine the maintenance of discipline within the school setting. Disruptive conduct also includes being late for school or class; being unprepared for class; and committing other conduct that detracts from the delivery of the school's educational program.
15. **Extortion:** Any intentional action which reasonably instills fear in another individual that the actor or another person will cause injury to the persons or property of that individual or another person for the purpose of obtaining money or property from that individual.
16. **Littering:** The general distribution or dissemination of printed, written, recorded or other materials without the prior approval of the building principal. The granting of approval or the refusal to grant the same shall be determined pursuant to administrative guidelines for the distribution and dissemination of materials on school property.
17. **Loitering:** Remaining in an area after the bell when assigned to a particular classroom at that time. Loitering also includes congregating in the halls to impede traffic, or standing next to the building.
18. **Insubordination:** The refusal or failure to comply with any school rule, regulation or policy (including those relating to attendance), or the failure to comply with a reasonable request from school personnel or representatives authorized to make such a request. Insubordination, as it relates to students, includes, but is not limited to, the failure to comply with the lawful directives of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in charge of students or otherwise demonstrating disrespect toward such individual; lateness for, missing or leaving school without permission. Insubordination, as it relates to non-students, includes, but is not limited to, the violation of regulations governing the use of school property, and the failure to comply with the lawful directions of school employees or law enforcement officers acting in performance of their duties.
19. **In-School Suspension:** The temporary removal of a student from the classroom and the placement of that student in another designated area of the school building where the student will be supervised and will receive substantially equivalent, alternative education. The student may not attend any type of extracurricular activities during the period of the suspension. All conditions for re-entry must be satisfied for the student to be re-admitted to classes.
20. **Suspension/ Out-of-School Suspension:** The disciplinary removal of a student from his or her regular educational program and activities or the temporary removal of a student from the classroom and out of the school building. During this time, the student will receive substantially equivalent, alternative education. The student may not attend any type of extracurricular activities during the period of suspension. All conditions for re-entry must be satisfied for the student to be re-admitted to classes.

21. **Parent:** The biological, adoptive or foster parent, guardian or person in parental relation to a student
22. **Traffic Violation:** The operation of a motor vehicle on school property at a speed in excess of fifteen (15) miles per hour, or the operation of snowmobiles, motorbikes, go-carts, motor scooters, and other similar vehicles propelled by gasoline, diesel oil, fossil fuel or electric powered engines on school property. The only motor vehicles allowed to be operated on school property are those automobiles, buses and trucks that are (a) licensed by the Department of Motor Vehicles, (b) insured in compliance with the mandatory provisions of the Vehicle & Traffic Law, and (c) lawfully operated on the school's driveways, parking fields or other portions of school property for the purpose of attending school activities or conducting business or performing services for the school
23. **Expulsion:** The permanent removal of a student from the school program
24. **Violent Student:** A student under the age of 21 who (a) commits an act of violence upon a school employee; or (b) commits, while on school property or at a school function, an act of violence upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or at a school function; or (c) possesses a weapon while on school property or at a school function; or (d) displays, while on school property or at a school function, what appears to be a weapon; or (e) threatens, while on school property or at a school function, to use a weapon; or (f) knowingly and intentionally damages or destroys the personal property of any school employee or any person lawfully on property or at a school function; or (g) knowingly and intentionally damages or destroys school property.
25. **Visitor:** Anyone on school property or at a school function who is not a school employee or a student of the school building in which the individual is physically present.
26. **Trespassing:** The entry upon or use of school property without proper authorization in situations where said property is restricted in entry or use.
27. **Parking Violation:** The act of parking a vehicle on school property without permission, or parking in unauthorized areas. The school assumes no liability for vandalism/theft of the vehicle while on school property.
28. **Violation of the Technology Policy:** The act of using computer technology in a manner that is not consistent with the Technology Policy that is included in this handbook
29. **Weapon:** A firearm as defined in 18 USC 921 for purposes of the Gun Free Schools Act, as any device, instrument, material or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of causing, death or serious bodily injury, and any other gun, pistol, revolver, shotgun, rifle, machine gun, disguised gun, BB gun, starter gun, pellet gun, dagger, dirk, razor, stiletto, switchblade knife, gravity knife, pocket knife with a blade of at least 2 ½ inches, brass knuckles, sling shot, metal knuckle knife, box cutters, cane sword, electronic dart gun, Kung Fu star, electronic stun gun, pepper spray or other noxious spray, explosive or incendiary bomb, or other device, instrument, material or substance that can cause serious physical injury or death when used as a weapon.

V. THE ROLES OF OTHERS IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

A. *Teachers and Other Professional Staff.*

The role of the teacher and other professional staff employed by the school is to:

1. Demonstrate, by word and action, respect for the Catholic Identity of the school
2. Direct all of our efforts towards improving student learning and achievement
3. Keep students and parents informed regarding student progress
4. Express concern and enthusiasm for teaching and learning
5. Treat students as individuals, with concern and respect
6. Provide direction and guidance so students can learn to think, reason, and be responsible for their actions
7. Become knowledgeable of school rules and regulations regarding student conduct, and require that there be observance of the same
8. Be consistent, fair and firm in dealing with students both in and out of the classroom
9. Reinforce positive student behavior
10. Seek appropriate resources to effect positive change in student behavior
11. Before seeking assistance from the administration for discipline problems, use available resources to bring about positive behavioral changes in the classroom.

B. *The Administrative Staff.*

The role of a School Administrator is to:

1. Maintain an environment that is reflective of the religious and academic goals of the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Syracuse
2. Develop effective schedules and teaching assignments for students and staff
3. Be consistent, fair, and firm in decisions affecting students, staff and parents
4. Demonstrate, by word and example, respect for the Catholic Identity of the school, law and order, self-discipline, and sincere concern for all persons under their authority
5. Participate in the development of rules and regulations and make them known and understood by students, staff and parents
6. Initiate and maintain open lines of communication with students, staff, parents, parish officials and diocesan representatives
7. Become involved with students by attending school activities and visiting classrooms
8. Work with students, teachers, counselors, and parents to establish cooperative techniques for bringing about an effective educational program.

C. *Parents of Students.*

The role of the parent of a student is to:

1. Encourage their child to take advantage of the spiritual, academic, and social opportunities provided by the school
2. Ensure their child attends school punctually and regularly as required by law
3. Know and understand the rules and regulations their child is required to observe at school
4. Strive to keep their child in good health
5. Require their child to be clean and dressed consistent with acceptable standards, the school's dress code, and the requirements of the Code
6. Encourage their child to learn and respect the rights of others
7. Teach their child, by word and example, respect for the Catholic Identity of the school and for law and authority
8. Provide guidance for their child to develop socially and morally acceptable standards of conduct and behavior
9. Become involved in their child's school, with its teachers, programs and activities, and attend conferences and school functions
10. Encourage and support their child in completing homework assignments
11. Recognize that primary responsibility for their child's welfare and development rests with the parent
12. Satisfy financial obligations to the school.

VI. VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

A. *Acts of Misconduct Defined.*

The school expects the members of the school community to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of students, employees and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment.

The commission of any of the following acts is prohibited on school property and at a school function. Such conduct is punishable by the penalties set forth in Section VII of this Code after compliance with the procedures set forth in Section VIII hereof.

VII. PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

A. Range of Potential Responses.

1. Scope

The penalties described in this section are the range of penalties that may be imposed upon any student who is determined to have committed any act of misconduct specified in Section VI of this Code.

2. Corrective Actions

School authorities may use a range of possible responses to misconduct committed by a student. In some circumstances, a primary response will be to discuss the student's conduct with the parents in an attempt to correct such inappropriate behaviors. In addition, the school may attempt any or all of the following corrective actions:

- (a) **Parent Conference:** The student's parent or guardian will be contacted for a conference. The conference will include the student, his/her parent/guardian, school personnel and others whose participation is deemed appropriate by the school.
- (b) **Disciplinary Probation:** School authorities will place student on probation in addition to imposing penalty for the misconduct. If the student complies with the specific terms of the probation no additional disciplinary action will be imposed. The probation agreement will further provide that, if the terms of the probation are violated, additional disciplinary action will be taken.
- (c) **Counseling:** Students may be referred for counseling in appropriate cases.
- (d) **Court Intervention:** Court assistance in the form of a PINS (Person In Need of Supervision) petition.
- (e) **Chronic Violation of School Rules:** The accumulation of any combination of detentions and suspensions that equal ten (10) or more in a semester.

3. Range of Penalties:

Students who violate this student discipline code will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action including, but not limited to, one or more of the following:

- (a) Teacher Verbal Warning
- (b) Parent/Guardian Notification
- (c) Written Warning Signed by Parent/Guardian
- (d) Parent/Guardian/Teacher Conference
- (e) Parent/Guardian/Teacher/Administrator Conference
- (f) Counseling
- (g) Special Probation
- (h) Detention

In addition, the principal may invoke the following when in his or her discretion they are warranted:

- (a) **Principal's Disciplinary Conference:** A disciplinary conference may be scheduled before the principal, or his or her designee at the discretion of the principal. At this time the student and his or her parent/guardian will have an opportunity to discuss the infractions and respond. In addition, at the Disciplinary Conference the student and his or her parent/guardian will have the opportunity to provide the Principal with any other information they feel will help the Principal understand the student's behavior. At the conclusion of such hearing, the Principal may take whatever action is deemed appropriate, including but not limited to, indefinite suspension from school or expulsion. Attorneys are not present at this conference.
- (b) **Delegation of Responsibility to Conduct the Disciplinary Conference:** The Superintendents, principals or delegate may further delegate the responsibility to conduct the Disciplinary Conference to a school official or to a group such as a School Disciplinary Board. In these cases, the delegate or the School Disciplinary Board will follow all of the procedure outlined above for the Disciplinary Conference and submit a written recommendation to school officials. The school official will then review the recommendation and render a written decision. The student and parent/guardian will be provided copies of this decision and the recommendation on which it was based.
- (c) **Personal Liability:** The school may pursue, on behalf of itself or an employee, all available rights and remedies to recover from the student and/or parents/guardians of the student for damages to personal property.
- (d) **Public Notification:** In cases involving criminal conduct, school authorities may refer the matter to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

4. Academic Sanctions

In addition to other penalties provided herein, the principal may deny credit for work done and may also deny the right to make-up an assignment or test for cheating, leaving a final examination without permission, plagiarism and other misconduct that is related to academic performance.

5. Progressive Discipline.

Depending upon the nature of the violation, student discipline is progressive, i.e., except in cases of very serious violation, a student's first violation will result in a lighter penalty than subsequent violation. The individual determining the penalty should take into account all other relevant factors in arriving at an appropriate penalty. In the event of a serious infraction, the penalties listed below will be imposed by the administration upon a finding that the student has committed the conduct specified herein. However, the school expressly reserves the right to impose any penalty within the range set forth for the violation of any school rule when, under the particular circumstances involved, a different penalty is justified in the judgment of the school administration.

Depending upon the nature of the violation, the possible penalties listed in Section VII below may be imposed either alone or in combination.

B. 51 Penalties for Specific Violations.

School authorities upon a finding that a student has committed the specific conduct specified herein may impose the following range of penalties:

Conduct	Penalty Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrence
Act of Violence	Minimum	Verbal Reprimand	Suspension
	Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion
Arson	Minimum	Suspension	Suspension
	Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion
Assault	Minimum	Parent/Guardian Notification	Suspension
	Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion
Bias Harassment	Minimum	Parent/Guardian Notification	Parent/Guardian Conference
	Maximum	Suspension	Expulsion
Bomb Threat	Minimum	Suspension	Suspension
	Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion
Cheating	Minimum	Detention	Suspension with parent/guardian conference
	Maximum	Suspension with parent/guardian conference	Expulsion
Chronic Violation of School Rules	Minimum	Parent/Guardian/Administrator conference	Suspension
	Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion
Destruction Of Property	Minimum	Detention and liability for damages	Suspension/ liability for damages
	Maximum	Suspension and liability for damages	Expulsion/liability for damages
Disorderly Conduct	Minimum	Verbal warning	Detention
	Maximum	Suspension	Expulsion
Disruptive	Minimum	Verbal warning	Detention

Conduct	Maximum	Suspension	Expulsion
Dress Code	Minimum	Verbal warning	Parent/guardian notification
Violations	Maximum	Detention	Suspension
Drug or Alcohol	Minimum	Suspension	Expulsion
Violation	Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion
Extortion	Minimum	Suspension	Expulsion
	Maximum	Expulsion	
False Alarm	Minimum	Suspension	Expulsion
	Maximum	Expulsion	
Fighting	Minimum	Detention	Expulsion
	Maximum	Expulsion	
Forgery	Minimum	Detention – Parent/Guardian notified	Suspension
	Maximum	Suspension	Expulsion
Harassment	Minimum	Verbal warning	Written warning signed by Parent/Guardian
	Maximum	Suspension	Expulsion
Insubordination	Minimum	Verbal warning	Detention
	Maximum	Suspension	Expulsion
Littering	Minimum	Verbal warning	Detention
	Maximum	Detention	Suspension
Loitering	Minimum	Verbal warning	Detention
	Maximum	Suspension	Expulsion
Other Misconduct	Minimum	Verbal warning	Detention
	Maximum	Suspension	Expulsion
Plagiarism	Minimum	Parent/Guardian notification	Parent/Guardian conference
	Maximum	Suspension	Expulsion
Possession of an Explosive	Minimum	Suspension	Expulsion
	Maximum	Expulsion	
Possession of a weapon	Minimum	Suspension	Expulsion
	Maximum	Expulsion	
Reckless	Minimum	Suspension	Expulsion
Endangerment	Maximum	Expulsion	
Repeatedly	Minimum	Verbal warning	Parent/Guardian notification
Disruptive Conduct	Maximum	Suspension	Expulsion
Sexual Harassment	Minimum	Verbal warning	Suspension
	Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion
Tardy	Minimum	Verbal warning	Parent/Guardian notification
	Maximum	Detention	Suspension
Threat to Well Being	Minimum	Suspension with evaluation	Suspension with evaluation
	Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion
Theft	Minimum	Parent/Guardian conference	Suspension
	Maximum	Suspension	Expulsion
Tobacco Violation	Minimum	Detention	Suspension
	Maximum	Suspension	Expulsion
Trespassing	Minimum	Parent/guardian notification	Parent/Guardian notification
	Maximum	Suspension	Expulsion
Truancy	Minimum	Suspension	Suspension
	Maximum	Suspension	Expulsion
Vandalism	Minimum	Detention – liability for loss	Suspension – liability for loss
	Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion
Violation of Technology Policy	Minimum	Verbal Reprimand	Suspension
	Minimum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Notations:

1. The school will notify police if it reasonably believes a crime was committed.
2. Stipulations of the Diocesan Drug and Alcohol Policy will be followed in addition to Discipline procedure.
3. The student will be suspended until a psychological evaluation to determine that the student is not a threat to himself or herself or to anyone else. The parents will be required to sign a release of information permitting school officials to speak to the evaluator before he/she has evaluated the student. The evaluator must be a mental health professional.

C. Minimum Penalties for Students.

1. Students Who Bring a Weapon to School

The minimum period of suspension from school for any student found guilty of bringing a weapon onto school property will be at least five (5) days. A discipline conference with the Diocesan Superintendent or a delegate will be required to determine if additional punishment is indicated.

2. Students Who Commit Other Violent Acts

The minimum period of suspension from school for any student who engages in conduct that results in the student being sent out of the classroom on (1) occasion during the semester will be one (1) day of suspension.

3. Students Who Are Repeatedly Disruptive

The minimum period of suspension from school for any student who engages in conduct that results in the student being sent out of the classroom on repeated occasions during a semester shall be one (1) day.

4. Reports by Teachers

All staff members must immediately report and refer a violent or disruptive student to the principal for a violation of this Code. All recommendations and referrals shall be made in writing, unless the conditions underlying the recommendation or referral warrant immediate attention. In such cases, a written report is to be prepared as soon as possible by the staff member making the referral.

D. For Misconduct at a School.

The Principal shall be responsible for enforcing the conduct required by this Code at school functions, and may designate other school employees or agents to take action consistent with this Code.

When an individual is committing prohibited conduct that, in the judgment of the Principal or his or her designee, does not pose any immediate threat of injury to persons or property, the individual shall be informed that the conduct is prohibited and asked to stop such conduct. The school official shall also warn the individual of the consequences for failing to stop. If the person refuses to stop engaging in the prohibited conduct, or if the person's conduct poses an immediate threat of injury to persons or property, the individual shall be immediately removed from school property or the school function. Students and staff who violate this Code while at a school function shall be subject to immediate ejection from the school function. If necessary, local law enforcement authorities will be contacted to assist in removing the person. The school may initiate disciplinary action against any student or staff member, as appropriate. The school may also pursue civil and/or criminal sanctions against any person violating this Code.

VIII. DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

A. For Students.

Due process is to be afforded to students before a penalty may be imposed depends on the severity of the penalty. In all cases, the school employee authorized to impose the penalty must inform the student of the misconduct that he or she is alleged to have committed, and must conduct an informal investigation of the facts surrounding the alleged misconduct. All students must be given an opportunity to present their version of the facts to the school personnel imposing the penalty. Additional process shall be afforded as follows:

1. For Detentions.

Teachers and Principal may use after school detention as a penalty for student misconduct.

2. For Suspensions from Athletics or Extra-curricular Activities.

A student subjected to a suspension from athletic participation, extra-curricular activities or other privileges is not entitled to a full hearing. However, the student and the student parent/guardian will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the school official imposing the suspension to discuss the conduct and the penalty involved.

3. For Short-Term In-School Suspensions and Out-of-School Suspensions.

School authorities must balance the need of individual students to attend school and the need to maintain order in the classroom to establish an environment for all students that is conducive to learning. As such, the principal has the authority to place students who would otherwise be suspended from school as the result of a Code violation in "in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension".

A student subjected to a short-term in-school or out-of-school suspension is not entitled to a full Disciplinary Conference. However, the student and the student's parent/guardian will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the school official imposing the suspension to discuss the conduct and the penalty. Any conditions for re-entry to school stipulated in the suspension must be satisfied before the student is readmitted to the school.

4. Long-Term Suspensions.

When the building principal determines that a suspension for more than five (5) days may be warranted, he or she shall give reasonable notice to the student and the student's parent/guardian of their rights to Discipline Conference at which the student and parent/guardian will be informed of the charge against the student, as well as a report of the evidence given by those persons and circumstances investigated. The student and his/her parent/guardian will have an opportunity to respond to the charges, and the evidence, request that additional witnesses or circumstances be investigated, and provide the school official with any other information the student or parent/guardian believes will help him or her understand the behavior to render a decision. Attorneys are not present at this conference.

5. For Expulsions.

Permanent suspension is reserved for extraordinary circumstances. When the building principal, or delegate determines that an expulsion might be warranted, he or she shall give reasonable notice to the student and the student's parent/guardian of the Discipline Conference at which the students and parent/guardian will be informed of the charge against the student, as well as a report of the evidence given by those persons and circumstances investigated. At that time, the student and his or her parent/guardian will have an opportunity to respond to the charges and the evidence, request that additional witnesses or circumstances be investigated and provide the school official with any other information the student or parent/guardian believes will help him or her understand the behavior render a decision. Attorneys are not present at this conference.

B. Waivers of Disciplinary Conference.

A student and parent/guardian may voluntarily and knowingly waive his or her right to a Disciplinary Conference. In this regard, the parent/guardian of the student will be required to sign a form documenting a request for a waiver.

IX. APPEALS FROM IMPOSITION OF DISCIPLINE FOR STUDENTS

A. Appeals to the Assistant Superintendent for the Region of the Diocese.

Appeals from all decisions of the Principal relative to this Code shall be taken to the Assistant Superintendent/ or Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese. All appeals shall be made in writing and shall set forth the decision appealed and the grounds for the appeal. The written appeal shall arrive made no later than ten (10) business days from the date of the decision that is the subject of said appeal, unless extraordinary circumstances can be shown precluding this. The Assistant Superintendent/ or Superintendent or a delegate will review the case and render a written decision.

B. Appeals to the Superintendent of Schools.

Final decisions of the Assistant Superintendent of the diocese may be appealed by parent/guardian to the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools with ten (10) days of the decision, unless extraordinary circumstances can be shown precluding this. The Diocesan Superintendent will review the case and render a written decision. This decision is binding.

X. REFERRAL TO AUTHORITIES

A. To Law Enforcement.

The building principal must immediately notify the Diocesan Superintendent of those Code violations that constitute a crime and substantially affect the order or security of a school. The Superintendent or delegate is to inform the appropriate local law enforcement agency as soon as practical, but in no event later than the close of business on the day the Diocesan Superintendent or delegate learns of the violation. The notification may be made by telephone, followed by a letter mailed on the same day. The notification must identify the student/s and explain the conduct that violated the Code and constituted a crime.

The school will immediately confiscate any weapons, alcohol or illegal substances possessed by a student and will notify the parent/guardian of the student involved in the incident. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including expulsion and referral for criminal prosecution.

B. To Juvenile Justice Agencies.

The Diocesan Superintendent shall refer any student who is determined to have brought a weapon to school who is under the age of sixteen (16), or who is fourteen (14) or fifteen (15) years old and does not qualify for juvenile offender status under the Criminal Procedure Law to the County Attorney for a juvenile delinquency proceeding before the Family Court.

The Diocesan Superintendent shall refer a student over the age of sixteen (16) and any student fourteen (14) or fifteen (15) years old who qualifies for juvenile offender status to the appropriate law enforcement authorities for prosecution. Students fourteen (14) or fifteen (15) years old who qualify for juvenile offender status under 1.20 of the Criminal Procedure Law include those who possess a concealed firearm, machine-gun or loaded firearm on school grounds. The Superintendent may consult the diocesan counsel if he or she has any questions as to whether the student in question does qualify for juvenile offender status.

C. The Human Services Agencies.

The Superintendent, Principal, or Teacher shall make a referral of a student discipline case to an appropriate human service agency whenever, in his or her judgment, the same is warranted. The Superintendent or delegate may receive and consider the recommendations of the student's principal, teachers, counselor, school psychologist and other pupil services personnel familiar with the student in deciding whether to make such a referral and, if so, to which agency.

XI. ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The following educational programs shall be utilized as appropriate to meet the individual needs of students:

A. *For Suspended Students.*

When a student of any age is suspended for a violation of the Code of Conduct, the school will take immediate steps to provide the student with adequate alternative instruction.

XII. IN-SERVICE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

A. *Suggested Programs.*

The school will provide in-service education programs for all school staff members to ensure the effective implementation of this Code. The Principal may solicit the recommendations of the school staff, particularly teachers and administrators, regarding in-service programs pertaining to the management and discipline of students.

The following are suggested programs that may be utilized for in-service education for all staff members to ensure effective implementation of this Code:

1. School oriented programs developed at the building level
2. Superintendent's Workshop days
3. Building faculty meetings
4. Assertive discipline programs and films presented in the building.

A. *Calculating Time Limits.*

When any period of time for an act to be done under this Code ends on a Saturday, Sunday or a public holiday, such act may be done on the next succeeding business day and, if the period ends at a specified hour, such act may be done at or before the same hour of such next succeeding business day.

B. *"Time Out" Techniques.*

Nothing in this Code abridges the customary right and responsibility of a teacher to manage student behavior in the classroom. Short-term, time-honored classroom management techniques such as "time-out" in elementary classrooms are not considered removals from class. This, however, should not become a substitute for good classroom management.

C. *Authority to Suspend.*

Nothing in this Code abridges the customary right or responsibility of a principal to suspend a student when, in the judgment of the principal, the student's conduct warrants the same.

D. *Inconsistent Provisions.*

To the extent that any provision of this Code regarding student behavior conflicts with any school rule, regulation or policy, the provisions of this Code shall be controlling.

To the extent that any provision of this Code regarding professional staff behavior conflicts with any school rule, regulation or policy, the provisions of this Code shall be controlling.

To the extent that any provision of this Code regarding professional staff behavior conflicts with any school rule, regulation or policy, the provisions of this Code shall be controlling.

E. *Not Exclusive.*

These rules and regulations and the penalties imposed hereunder shall not be deemed exclusive, nor as a limitation, waiver, or extinguishment of the school's right to utilize other available legal remedies against persons who violate this Code. The school may take additional or other legal action, as it deems appropriate or necessary to maintain public order.

ATTENDANCE POLICY Diocese of Syracuse, New York

Purpose

The Catholic Schools of the Diocese Syracuse establish this attendance policy to: ensure the maintenance of an adequate record verifying the attendance of all children at instruction in accordance with Education Law 3205; establish a mechanism for schools to provide accountability for all students throughout each school day; and ensure sufficient pupil attendance at all scheduled periods of actual instruction or supervised student activities.

Strategies

The strategies to achieve these ends are: the use of daily register of attendance that may be computerized or written. The following information will be recorded: the dates of student entry and withdrawal, attendance at each scheduled day of instruction, incidences of tardiness or early departures, excused and unexcused absences.

Attendance Taken

Attendance will be recorded at the following times: daily for self-contained elementary classrooms, period by period at the elementary level that is departmentalized or attend class in special area classrooms, and period by period at the secondary level.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

During the 2019 - 2020 school year, schools will use the New York State approved Register of Attendance. During the 2019 - 2020 school year classifications of absences, tardiness and early departure will be made.

Credit

Regular attendance is a critical factor in school success for pupils. Therefore, both pupils and their parents must view regular attendance as the most effective way of meeting course requirements. Course credit is awarded based on satisfactory completion of course requirements.

Incentives and Sanctions

Schools will recognize perfect attendance in an age-appropriate manner. In addition to parental notification by letter, excessive absence may warrant a parent conference and possible referral to civil authorities.

Parent Notification

Parents will be required to notify the school when a student is absent or tardy. If the parent has failed to call by a designated time, the school will initiate a call to the parents. A written request must be submitted when a student is to be excused early. A parent, or person in parental relation or person designate by the parent must come to school to sign the student out.

All students who are absent or tardy must present a written excuse for the absence or tardiness. The absence or tardiness will be recorded in the school register according to the designation determined by the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Syracuse.

After a total of three (3) excused and unexcused absences, parents will be notified of the student's status. After a total of ten (10) excused and unexcused absences, a parent conference may be required. The principal may initiate an intervention to insure attendance at any time if in his/her judgment it is indicated.

After each incidence of unexcused absence or tardiness from any part of the school day or a student leaving school without the approval of the administration, parents will receive written notification from the school. This notification will include: pupil's name and grade, date of occurrence, portion of day and/or classes missed, date of previous notices, if any, name and address of person to whom notification is sent, and date of notification.

Intervention

School officials will analyze any persistent attendance problems to determine strategies to resolve them. The principal will remediate administrative problems. Student attendance problems will be shared with parents. Additional intervention strategies such as referral to a child study team or guidance department may be indicated. If necessary, civil authorities such as the county Child Protective Agency will be involved.

Responsible Person

Pupil attendance records will be reviewed by the principal for the purpose of initiating appropriate action to address attendance problems. The principal may designate another school administrator or teacher to assist with the implementation of the school attendance policy. Such designee will be identified by the beginning of the school year.

CHILD ABUSE POLICY Diocese of Syracuse, New York

Rationale

Because of their sustained contact with school-age children, school employees are in an excellent position to identify abused or neglected children and to refer them for treatment and protection.

Legal Implications for Mandated Reporters

Anyone making a report or participating in a resulting judicial procedure is presumed to be acting in good faith and, in doing so, is immune from any civil or criminal liability that might otherwise be imposed.

Penalty for Failure to Report

Any person required to make a report who knowingly and willingly fails to do so is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor, and is civilly liable for the damages proximately caused by such a failure.

Definitions

Section 412 of Title of the Social Services Law and Section 1012 of the Family Court Act define:

- **AN ABUSED CHILD**
A child less than eighteen (18) years of age whose parent or other person is legally responsible for his/her care and who:
 - inflicts or allows to be inflicted upon the child serious injury
 - creates or allows to be created a substantial risk or physical injury
 - commits, or allows to be committed, against the child an act of sexual abuse as defined in the penal law.
- **MALTREATED CHILD**
A child under the eighteen (18) years of age defined as neglected child by the Family Court Act, or one who has had serious physical injury inflicted by other than accidental means.
- **NEGLECTED CHILD**
A child less than eighteen (18) years of age whose physical, mental, or emotional condition has been impaired or is in imminent danger of becoming impaired as a result of the failure of his/her parent or other person legally responsible for his care to exercise a minimum degree of care:
 - in supplying the child with adequate food, clothing, shelter, education, medical or surgical care, when able to do so or when offered financial or other reasonable means to do so
 - in providing the child with the proper supervision or guardianship
 - by unreasonably inflicting, or allowing to be inflicted, harm or a substantial risk thereof, including the infliction of excessive corporal punishment
 - by using a drug or drugs
 - by using alcoholic beverages to the extent that he/she loses self-control of his/her action
 - by any other acts of a similarly serious nature requiring the aid of the
 - Family Court or a child who has been abandoned in accordance with the definition and criteria of the Social Services law, by his parents or other adult legally responsible for his care.

DRUG and ALCOHOL POLICY Diocese of Syracuse, New York

The philosophy of the Catholic School of the Diocese of Syracuse seeks to develop the individual student spiritually, intellectually, physically and psychologically. The fulfillment of this philosophy and mission entails the provision of an environment within which the individuals grow in their responsibility to themselves and all other person. This atmosphere must be preserved from all unnecessary obstacles to achieving this goal.

In as much as alcohol and drugs have been demonstrated to be serious obstacles to the physical well-being of persons, and serious impediments to their growth spiritually, intellectually, physically and emotionally, the following policy is prescribed for the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Syracuse:

The policy of the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Syracuse is that the use of or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs and drugs used for non-medical purpose on school property or at any school related activities is strictly prohibited at all times. This prohibition extends to the use of substances mentioned above in so far as one is under the influence, is in possession of, or is passing or selling drugs or alcohol or attempting to pass or sell alcohol or drugs. The term "drug" as used in this policy means a controlled substance or other substance which acts on the central nervous system to cause unusual drowsiness, dullness, perception distortion, sleep, insensibility, stimulation, pain reduction and/or euphoria. This definition also extends to substances defined as imitation controlled substances or substances referred to as "counterfeit" and /or "pseudo-drugs", which are commonly represented as bona fide controlled substances, illegal drugs, narcotic, stimulants and depressants.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Use, possession, being under the influence of alcohol/drugs:

- Any student suspected of using, being in possession of, or under the influence of, alcohol or drugs is to be reported to a school administrator.
- Appropriate action based on the administrator's evaluation is then taken. If the administrator determines that the student is using, in possession of, under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the student is to be immediately suspended by the administrator and parents/guardians will be contacted by phone as soon as it is practically possible. A written notification to the parent/guardian will also be mailed. Suspension is not to exceed five (5) days. If it recommended that the student be placed on in-school suspension.
- Prior to the conclusion of the suspension period, the student, the parents/guardians and the administrator or the administrator's delegate will meet to discuss the situation and make appropriate plans for a chemical abuse assessment and intervention. As a condition for returning to school, it is required that the student have an appointment scheduled for a chemical abuse assessment with a professional. The administrator will provide some possible referral resources. Also as a condition for returning to school, parents/guardians will sign an authorization for the release of information to permit the results of the chemical abuse assessment to be shared with school officials.
- The student is to be placed on disciplinary probation at least until the completion of the intervention program recommended as the result of the required assessment. Since the goal of this policy is to assist in the rehabilitation of students involved with alcohol or drugs, those students who fail to keep the chemical abuse assessment, fail to complete the recommendations of the assessment are in violation of disciplinary probation. The violation of disciplinary probation is punished by suspension and/or expulsion. Any student, who during the course of the year, is found to use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol a second time will be suspended by the administrator with the possibility of expulsion.
- If, after the parent/guardian conference, the administrator determines that the student may return to school, a chemical abuse assessment and intervention program is required as before. Since this is the second infraction, the administrator will take additional appropriate disciplinary measures. If after two prior suspensions, assessment and attempt at intervention, the student is suspended for an alcohol or drug related violation, the student is subject to expulsion following a parent/guardian conference.
- If there are reasonable grounds to suspect a student of attempting to sell or to pass alcohol, or drugs he/she is to be suspended by the administrator with the possibility of expulsions. All of the procedures for suspension will be followed by the administrator. If after a conference with the student and parents/guardians, the school administrator determines that the student intended to sell or to pass alcohol or drugs, the student is to be expelled after consultation with the Superintendent.
 - Any case deemed serious enough to warrant police intervention is to be discussed with the Superintendent prior to such action.
 - In the event of addictive behavior requiring residential treatment, the school will work with the parents/guardians and the staff of the treatment facility to insure continuity in the student's educational program. At the time it is appropriate for the student to return to a regular school setting, a conference will be scheduled. At this conference, parents/guardians, residential treatment staff person and the administrator will meet to discuss the student's status. Re-admission to school is based on the conference.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS **Diocese of Syracuse, New York**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provides that student records, and personally identifiable information contained therein, may not be released without the consent of the student's parent/guardian (or the student, if the student is eighteen (18) years of age).

- **STUDENT RECORDS** –Consistent with the FERPP of 1974, student records may be released when:
 - the disclosure is to go to school officials, including teachers, who have a legitimate educational interest in the records
 - the disclosure is to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, or the disclosure is in connection with health or safety emergency.

Prior to any disclosure in the case of a judicial order lawfully issued subpoena, health, or safety emergency, the school will make a reasonable effort to notify the parent/guardian or eligible student in advance of its disclosure. When a student transfers to another school, upon receipt of official written request, a copy of the student's records will be forwarded to the public school district where the student attends, unless otherwise directed.

- **PARENTAL INSPECTION OF RECORDS** – Consistent with FERPA of 1974, the following policy has been established on the procedures for parents/guardians to inspect and review official files and data incorporated into each of their children's cumulative record folders:
 - parents/guardians request access in writing and direct this communication to the principal
 - upon receipt of the request, the school principal, within a reasonable time, will schedule the inspection and review of the student's records during school hours on any day which school is open. No student records shall be removed from school premises. The school will arrange for copies of student records to be made at the prepaid cost necessary to cover the cost of making copies.
 - if a parent/guardian or eligible student believes the record contains inaccurate or misleading information, he/she may ask the principal in writing to amend the record. The principal shall within a reasonable time either:
 1. amend the record as requested, or
 2. inform the person of his/her decision not to amend the record, and advise the requesting party how to appeal such a determination.
- **NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT'S ACCESS TO RECORDS** – Consistent with The FERPA of 1974, that allows inspection of educational records by either parent, without regard to custody, or a legally binding instrument, the following policy has been established:
 - Rome Catholic will presume that the custodial parent/guardian has the authority to request information concerning his/her child and shall release such information upon request

- additionally, we will provide the non-custodial parent with access to his/her child's educational records
 - if the custodial parent wishes to limit the non-custodial parent's access to records, it is his/her responsibility to obtain and present to the school court order or other legally binding instrument that limits or denies access.
- ACCESS TO STUDENTS – New York State Law #3210 (1) states that either parent of the student has authority to obtain the release of said minor unless the school has been provided with a certified copy of the legally binding instrument such as a court order or a decree of divorce, separation or custody which provides evidence to the closure, or other such events.
 - RELEASE OF STUDENTS – for emergency situations and for the safety of the child, the following policy has been established for the release of a child:
 - If a parent is aware that a student must leave the building during the school day, a written request must be submitted by the parent/guardian to the principal stating the date, reason, time and anticipated return time. The student's parent/guardian **MUST ALSO COME INTO THE SCHOOL OFFICE TO SIGN THE STUDENT OUT.**
 - Upon the student's return, **THE STUDENT MUST BE SIGNED IN BY THE PARENT/GUARDIAN.**
 - The school will presume that either parent may obtain the release of a child unless the school has been provided with a certified copy of a legally binding instrument, such as a court order or a decree of divorce, separation or custody, which specifies otherwise.
 - Each parent/guardian shall provide the school with telephone numbers where they may be contacted in the event of unforeseen circumstances or emergencies. The parent/guardian must also provide the name/s, address/es and telephone number/s of individuals who could act in the parent/guardian's absence, should an unexpected event occur and the parents/guardians cannot be contacted and the name/s of those to whom a student may be released.
 - A student may not be released from school to anyone other than the parent/guardian or emergency contact designated by a parent/guardian without explicit written permission. The permission must be directed to the principal, state the name of the person to whom the student is to be released, the date and time this person will report to the school office, and it must be signed by the parent/guardian. This said person must provide identification.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY OF SYRACUSE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE STATEMENT OF POLICY AND OVERVIEW

The Catholic School Office of the Diocese of Syracuse ("CSO"), and each of its component schools (individually, "School" or collectively, "Schools"), are committed to safeguarding the right of all staff and students within the school community to work and learn in an environment that is free from all forms of illegal sexual discrimination¹, including sexual harassment. Therefore, the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Syracuse prohibits all behavior of a sexual nature that imposes a requirement of sexual cooperation and/or tolerance of a sexually hostile work environment as a condition of employment, pay or benefits, working conditions, academic advancement or participation in any Educational or extracurricular program, or which has the purpose or effect of creating a hostile or offensive working learning environment.²

The CSO and its Schools, through implementation of this policy, are committed to investigating all reports of sexual harassment or other illegal gender discrimination and taking prompt and appropriate action to deter, punish, and remedy any such type of conduct. Further, they expressly prohibit any form of retaliation against any student, employee, parent, volunteer, or community member because any such person has made a report of illegal sexual discrimination or harassment, as hereinafter provided, or otherwise participated in the investigation of any such report.

The Superintendent hereby charges the component school administrators with the implementation of this policy, as well as its publication to students, staff, parents and volunteers of the Schools.

DEFINITIONS

Sexual harassment can take many different forms and occur in several different settings. Accordingly, the definitions used here are intended to be illustrative, and not exclusive. Sexual harassment is generally defined as unwelcome or unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is, either explicitly or implicitly, made a condition for evaluating a student's academic progress or a student's successful completion of any course of study, educational or extra-curricular activity;

¹ Except as concerns any matter for which there is a statutory or judicially recognized exception for religious institutions.

² The CSO and its component schools specifically prohibit all student-employee relationships of a sexual, quasi-sexual or romantic nature, regardless of whether they are consensual.

2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for academic or extracurricular decisions affecting such student, including the acceptance into or rejection from a course or activity;

3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's academic performance, evaluation of a student's academic performance or progress, participation in an educational or extra-curricular activity, or creating a sexually intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment;

4. Submission to such conduct is, either explicitly or implicitly, made a condition for continued employment, the evaluation of an employee's performance or the pay, benefits and/or working conditions of any employee;

5. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an employee is used as a basis for decisions affecting an employee's pay, benefits, work assignments, and/or working conditions;

6. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's ability to perform his or her work or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

7. Conditions exist within the school environment that allow or foster harassing activities of a sexual nature, including but not limited to, obscene pictures, lewd jokes, sexual comments and innuendo, or, among other things, sexual advances.

8. Out of school conduct, including use of the Internet, which creates or contributes to a sexually hostile environment in school, unreasonably interfering with a student's participation in an educational program, extra-curricular activity, and/or academic performance, or an employee's work performance, pay, benefits, and/or which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning or working environment.

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, including the creation of a hostile learning or work environment, the following are some examples of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment, depending upon the totality of circumstances, the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

1. Unwelcome sexual advances, regardless of whether they involve physical contact;
2. Sexual epithets, jokes, written or verbal references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding an individual's sex life; comments about an individual's body, and/or comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
3. Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures and/or cartoons;
4. Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, and suggestive or insulting comments;
5. Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and
6. Discussion of one's sexual activities.

The CSO acknowledges that in determining whether sexual harassment has occurred, the perspective of the complaint and/or victim should be considered. While the accuser's conduct and/or intention may be considered, sexual harassment may be found even where the accused has/had no intention to sexually harass another individual.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES AND PROHIBITION OF RETALIATION

1. Appointment of Sexual Harassment Officers

The CSO's Superintendent of Schools ("Superintendent") shall appoint a Catholic School Sexual Harassment Prevention Officer (CSSHPO) for the diocesan Catholic schools. Each School shall create the position of School Sexual Harassment Prevention Officer ("SSHPO"). At the end of each academic year, each School will submit to the CSO a list of candidates for the position of SSHPO. The CSO will thereafter designate the SSHPO for each school. In Diocesan secondary schools, at least one male and one female SSHPO will be appointed. The SSHPO(s) will serve from September through August of the next school year.

The CSSHPO and the various SSHPO's shall receive training in the area of sexual harassment prevention and proper investigation into reports of sexual harassment. Each School shall notify the CSSHPO if its SSHPO's employment should end or its SSHPO should be unable to complete his or her duties during the academic year.

2. Reports of Sexual Harassment

The CSO and its Schools strongly encourage any student or employee who has been subjected to ("subject") or otherwise witnessed ("reporter") conduct that may comprise sexual harassment to report that conduct. Any student or employee who believes that he or she has been the victim of or witness to an incident(s) of sexual harassment may report such incident(s) to the Superintendent, CSSHPO, the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator, any administrator working in the CSO, any SSHPO, School Principal, or to a School Counselor.

The staff member to whom the complainant is made shall promptly report the complaint to the SSHPO and the Principal of the School where the harassment is reported to have occurred. If the complaint concerns the SSHPO, the staff member need only advise the Principal. Any staff member who fails to report a sexual harassment complaint may be subjected to disciplinary action.

The Principal shall notify the CSSHPO and Superintendent.³ In the event the report involves the Principal, the staff member receiving the report shall promptly notify the CSSHPO or the Superintendent of the report. In the event the complaint concerns the Superintendent, the CSSHPO shall notify the Chancellor of the Diocese and take such measures as are appropriate, in consultation with the Chancellor. If the CSSHPO should be the subject of the report, the Superintendent shall assume that officer's duties and take any other appropriate action. In all events, the CSSHPO will immediately consult with the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator to ensure compliance with the Diocesan Safe Environment Policy ("VIRTUS").

The CSO, in coordination with the Superintendent and Diocesan Assistance Coordinator, shall make a determination as to who will investigate the complaint (e.g., the Superintendent, CSSHPO, Diocesan Assistance Coordinator, a diocesan Catholic school administrator, Principal, counsel or an outside investigator or a team of these individuals). All complaints of sexual harassment will be held in confidence to the extent practicable and as permitted by law, so as to enable a thorough investigation. While the CSO and its Schools respect the privacy and anonymity of all parties and witnesses to complaints brought under this policy, they cannot guarantee confidentiality. Whenever a School or the CSO has knowledge or reason to believe that an instance of sexual harassment has occurred, the School and/or CSO shall, even in the absence of a complaint, cause a prompt and thorough investigation of any such incident.

3. Investigation of Reports of Sexual Harassment

Upon receipt of any complaint of sexual harassment, the CSSHPO will facilitate a thorough, prompt and impartial investigation of the report or complaint to be conducted. Barring extenuating circumstances, all such investigations shall be completed within 30 calendar days of receipt of a complaint or report. Such investigations shall be conducted according to this policy. It is the policy of the CSO that all complaints of sexual harassment shall be taken seriously and that an investigation shall be conducted to the fullest extent possible.

Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator shall prepare a written report that details the substance of the investigation, statements obtained, documents reviewed, the investigator's findings of fact and recommendations as to any appropriate remedial action. The investigator shall the report with the CSSHPO, who will review it for completeness. If the CSSHPO determines that additional work is required, the CSSHPO shall document what additional work is required and return the report to the

³ In all events, unless the subject of the report, a staff member receiving such a report shall notify the Principal of the school where the alleged harassment took place and that Principal shall notify the CSSHPO and/or Superintendent of the matter. If the Principal is the subject of the report, the procedure stated *infra* shall apply.

Upon its completion, the report shall be filed with the Superintendent's office, via the CSSHPO. The Superintendent's office shall share the report and/or the necessary content of the report, as is appropriate in each case.

As set forth below, the outcome of an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint shall be related to the accused, the reporter and/or subject and, in the case of a student, the parent/guardian of an accused or subject (individually, "Interested Party"). Such information shall be given to these individuals within 30 days of the report's completion, in summary fashion, taking care to preserve any confidential material, to the extent practicable, and consistent with the law, any relevant contract, and CSO personnel policies.

4. Corrective Action Based on Investigation

If the result of the investigation indicates that sexual harassment or other inappropriate behavior has occurred, immediate and appropriate corrective action will be taken. It is the policy of the CSO to appropriately discipline an offending individual consistent with the law, CSO policy and any applicable

contract or agreement. As appropriate, the School or CSO may direct remedial training. If the alleged behavior constitutes or may constitute a crime, the Superintendent shall advise the Chancellor of the Diocese, and those Diocesan officers shall facilitate the immediate notification of the appropriate law enforcement agency.

In the event any Interested Party should disagree with the conclusions of the investigation and/or the remedial action selected, such individual may file a written appeal of the findings to the Superintendent within 14 calendar days from the date on which the Interested Party is advised of the investigation's conclusions and the remedial action to be taken. The Superintendent shall promptly review and consider the appeal, the investigation report and any other relevant information and decide the appeal, to the extent possible, within 14 calendar days of its receipt. Thereafter, the Superintendent may amend the investigation report or alter the disposition of the matter, as appropriate, and supported by the evidence, within the Superintendent's sole discretion.

5. Prohibition of Retaliation and Follow-up to Investigation and/or Corrective Action

The CSO and the Schools prohibit any conduct that is intended, may be construed as constituting or which constitutes retaliation against a complainant or reporter for the good faith reporting of an incident pursuant to this policy, as well as against any person who testifies or otherwise provides information or otherwise assists in a sexual harassment investigation. Follow-up inquiries by the appointed investigator CSSHPO, SSHPO and/or School Principal shall be made to ensure that the reporter, subject and/or witnesses have not suffered any retaliation.

In addition, the SSHPO and/or the investigator shall follow-up with such individuals at regular intervals during the school year to determine if any enacted remedies have been effective and to insure the absence of any retaliation by any student, staff, parent or other person.

If the CSO reported the matter to a law enforcement agency, as detailed above, the Superintendent's Office shall follow-up with the appropriate law enforcement agency to determine the status and outcome of any criminal investigation or prosecution, and shall act as a liaison with such law enforcement agency to assist it in obtaining necessary information to the extent appropriate and lawful.

TRAINING AND DISTRIBUTION OF POLICY

The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Syracuse shall provide appropriate training to staff and students regarding awareness of and sensitivity to issues involving sexual harassment, including condemnation of such conduct, the sanctions for harassment and preventive measures to help reduce incidents of sexual harassment.

A copy of this policy shall be distributed to all personnel, students and parents/guardians posted in appropriate places and included in all school handbooks.

**The Diocese of Syracuse Catholic School Office
Sexual Harassment Formal Report Form**

Date: _____

Name of Reporter: _____

Check one: Student Teacher Staff Other

Date of incident: _____

Place of incident: _____

Description of incident: (Description in full detail; attach additional sheets if necessary)

Name of witness(es), if any: _____

Has the incident been reported before? If so, how? _____

If yes, when? To whom? _____

What was the outcome? _____

Additional comments:

Signature of Reporter: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Person Receiving Complaint: _____

Date: _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please read the following, sign below and return to the school office.

I (We) have read the Pre-K through Grade 6 Rome Catholic School Handbook. I (We) have discussed the rules and regulations with our child/ren and we agree to abide by these rules and regulations as they affect us.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ **Date** _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ **Date** _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Family Last Name/Names Printed _____ Date _____

.....Please tear along this line and return to the Main Office.....