

Holy Family Catholic School

Notice of Implied Agreement

The registration of students at Holy Family Catholic School is deemed to be an agreement on their part, and on the part of their parents/guardians, to fully comply with all policies and procedures of the school as outlined in the Handbook. Holy Family reserves the right to change or delete, supplement or otherwise amend at any time the information, requirements and policies contain herein and related hereto. The President is the final interpreter of the content of this handbook. Parents will be notified when changes are made.

SECTION I. OUR SCHOOL

Our history

Holy Family Catholic School is the result of years of praying and hard work on behalf of families in seven Catholic parishes with no parish school. Those parishes are St. Albert the Great, St. John Vianney, St. Margaret Mary, St. Mary, Our Lady of the Lake, St. Thomas More, St. Vincent de Paul, and St. William. Individuals from these parishes formed a non-profit corporation which sponsored and governed the school. Holy Family became a Diocesan school for the Catholic Diocese of Austin in 2008.

Our mission statement

Holy Family Catholic School is a diocesan school that works with parents to nurture the growth of the whole child- spiritually, intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically. Our school is Catholic- promoting the teaching of the Church and inclusive of diverse cultures and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Our philosophy and goals

It is our philosophy that the Catholic faith and Gospel values are fully integrated in the learning and culture of our school.

Our goals provide clear statements of commitment in five key areas that are used to guide the development of our students, including:

- Spiritual- Fostering a commitment to know, love, and serve God and one another
- Intellectual- Encouraging each child to attain his or her fullest potential
- Social- Guiding students to become conscientious, successful members of a global community
- Emotional- Respecting and celebrating each child's individuality
- Physical- Promoting a positive attitude towards a healthy lifestyle

Our core values

Holy Family Catholic School holds firm to core values which define our identity and culture and are the fundamental beliefs that guide the daily life of the school.

- Catholic Identity- The atmosphere at Holy Family provides a sound spirituality for the students. The school provides experiences and opportunities for students to know that God is a real presence in life. Our Catholic expression is embodied in Christian living, faith symbols and sacramental participation. Worship and spirituality are the essence and moral fiber of Holy Family. The Catholic identity of Holy Family is not taken for granted- it is worked at, it is nourished, and it is engaged by the students, the faculty, the families, and the community.
- Faith Formation- The Holy Family Catholic School community strives to foster spiritual growth by modeling the Gospel values of faith, hope, love, community, reconciliation, service, justice and courage. Daily prayer and the Good News of Jesus Christ are integrated into the total school community through education and witness.
- Academic Excellence- Holy Family Catholic School is dedicated to the highest academic standards. Excellence is the norm. Teachers are expected to teach; students are expected to learn. Holy Family offers students the means to receive a comprehensive, well-rounded education built on traditional foundational knowledge and skills. This education also includes training in technical and scientific skill,

complex communication, collaborative processes, and the Christian ethical formation to use these tools to make a positive contribution to society.

- **Stewardship**- The Holy Family Catholic School community promotes stewardship in our daily lives. As Jesus teaches us, Holy Family promotes living Gospel values with a call to action for all students, faculty and families through the offering of time, talent and treasure to the Church and to the community. Holy Family will act as responsible stewards of the gifts it has been given and will require fiscal responsibility in all its activities. Holy Family must provide students, our most precious responsibility, an environment where they are protected and safe.

Our vision: Challenging the Mind, Inspiring the Heart

Living our Name- Holy Family

Holy Family Catholic School intends to live up to its name. All students, staff, parents and community members are called upon to show unity of purpose, as well as other characteristics of holy families such as respect for all things sacred, respect for all life, inclusiveness, responsibility, collaboration, and having each other's best interest at heart. We seek to establish a school climate that mirrors family life through trust, spirituality, closeness, collaboration and responsibility, where faith, culture, and life are brought into harmony (Congregation for Catholic Education, Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, n. 33).

School Mascot: Angels

School Colors: Navy and Silver

Accreditation

Holy Family Catholic School is fully accredited through the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department (TCCB ED). This process is approved and authorized by the Texas Private School Accreditation Commission (TEPSAC), which monitors organizations that accredit private schools in the state of Texas. As part of this state Catholic system, we meet or exceed all applicable standards and guidelines from the [TCCB ED](#).

School governance

In 2013, the Diocese of Austin created a shared governance model between Holy Family Catholic School and St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School. This model ensures that we have two strong schools that work collaboratively to provide a positive Catholic school presence in the north Austin area. While the two schools share a common governance model that primarily involves the administrative and board structure, the two schools have not "merged" as one school. Each school still enjoys its unique traditions and particular mission, while maintaining their individual relationships with area parishes and feeder schools. For example, Holy Family remains a diocesan regional school serving primarily the seven supporting parishes of St. Albert the Great, St. John Vianney, St. Margaret Mary, St. Mary, Our Lady of the Lake, St. Thomas More, St. Vincent de Paul and St. William. St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School is a Diocesan high school serving the Catholic elementary schools of the Diocese of Austin and area families that are seeking a Catholic secondary education.

The President serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the schools and has primary responsibility for advancement, finance, facilities management and strategic planning for the schools. Each school has an appointed Principal, who shares the responsibility of Catholic identity and mission for their school with the President. The Principals are charged with hiring and evaluating the faculty and designated staff, implementing a comprehensive curriculum, supervising instruction, program evaluation, staff development, and implementing programs that meet accreditation requirements.

Holy Family has a Board of Directors that includes Diocesan personnel, the President of the school, and several appointed Directors. In addition, the Board includes several advisory members who provide specific expertise related to strategic planning and operational needs.

How the school is financed

As a Diocesan, incorporated school serving grades pre-kindergarten through eighth within the Catholic Diocese of Austin, Holy Family is a self-funding entity. Unlike a parish school, our school is solely responsible for generating the necessary annual income to fund operations, enhancements, maintenance, emergency reserves, and debt service. While this income is derived mainly from tuition & fees plus the Choir of Angels appeal and annual fundraising events, the school also relies upon the voluntary contribution of our supporting parishes.

The planning and management of the school's finances are guided both by our core values and by our fiscal principles of integrity, affordability, justice, and practicality. The responsibility for the financial security and future of the school is shared by the whole school community for the benefit of the children.

SECTION II. HOME & SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

The family relationship with the faculty and staff

The Catholic Church teaches that parents are the primary educators, and the faculty and staff at Holy Family are honored when a family entrusts a child to the program that has been designed for our school. You know your child better than anyone. At the same time, the individual and collective experience of people who work their ministry at Holy Family can offer valuable perspective on not only your child's educational development but on a wide range of other developmental issues.

Sometimes parents wonder what to call the teacher. At school and in front of children, parents and all school staff should address each other by their title and last name, such as "Mrs. Perez" or "Mr. Jones."

Communication from and to the school

Holy Family places a high value on keeping you informed about upcoming school events and other developments. The school will regularly communicate through school email, the school website or the Thursday e-newsletter. Occasionally, printed material will be sent home. The primary source for communication from the school is the weekly e-newsletter. Parents are responsible for reading information and staying informed about upcoming events and deadlines.

Parent conferences will be held at the time of the first progress report and again, in late spring. Parents and guardians may request a conference at any other time, if needed. Telephone calls between teacher and parent are often the timeliest way to share information, and voice mail is available. E-mail is a good tool for routine communications but should not be used for expressing concerns or complaints. We ask your understanding that supervision is our priority; therefore, arrival or dismissal time or lunch periods are generally not a good time to have such a conversation because the teacher needs to ensure the safety of the students under his/her supervision.

We take pride in our intent to minister to families as well as individuals. Our hope is that you will keep your child's teacher informed of important events at home and their effect on your child.

Concerns & resolution of conflict

During a school year, there may be a time when a parent hears or observes something related to your child's experience at school that causes concern. We encourage you to follow up on the concern by approaching the staff member in the best position to work with you on the situation. In most cases, this first contact will involve a note or a phone call to the classroom teacher or the special area teacher so that you may learn that person's professional perspective on the situation. The tone of both parties should be one of mutual respect and Christian conciliation.

Disputes or conflicts can arise in the educational setting. It is generally the goal of the school to resolve such matters as quickly as possible. If the dispute/conflict is with a teacher, the first step for the parent/guardian is to discuss the problem with that teacher. If the problem is not resolved, the parent/legal guardian may request a meeting with the Principal.

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If the problem is not resolved, the parent/legal guardian may use the appeal procedure by requesting a meeting with the President of the School.

Non-custodial parents

A parent who has other than primary custody may contact the school to receive a copy of the student's academic and health record. Holy Family will accommodate the request and asks the parent to provide contact information in the Family Portal so that report cards and school e-newsletters can be sent to the parent electronically. Visiting the office in person to get the copies is also an option.

In all custody arrangements when parents are not living together, parents are expected to designate one parent as the primary school contact who will share information with the other parent.

Family service to the community

We encourage each family to support the school community by offering a minimum of **15 service hours** per school year. These can be completed through participation in the Parent Association service committees, as well as fundraisers and other opportunities offered by the school. To log service hours, parents must log into Family Portal and click on Family on the navigation menu (located on the left side of the screen) and then Family Home. Once you select which parent will be recording hours, you will see the label “Service Hours” in the middle of the screen. You may record service hours by selecting the + sign and clicking on “Add Service Hours.” The identification of total service hours is required in many grant applications for the school, so please be sure to record your hours.

Parent Association/Grandparents

The Parent Association exists for the purposes of service to the school and fundraising. The Executive Committee meets monthly during the academic year, and their minutes are published on the Holy Family school website. Committee chairs carry out a variety of school community activities throughout the year for service and fundraising. Parent volunteers actively participate in school life through the many services and activities that are offered by the Parent Association. The Parent Association general assembly meets as the Executive Committee deems necessary in order to update parents about PA business, upcoming events or fundraisers, or to provide parent education speaker opportunities. The Parent Association is not part of the governance structure of the school. The President of the Grandparents Association serves as a permanent member of the Parent Association Executive Committee and distributes information for grandparent events to those registered in the Family Portal as grandparents.

Holy Family Catholic School Branding/Use of school logo

The use of a branding guide assists with unifying the school brand among the community. These standards have helped refine our brand across various admission, communication and development purposes. The guide reflects key elements of our unique brand to the internal and external community of Holy Family Catholic School. Our school colors are distinct, and branding standards help provide information and tools to help advance this vision in a clear, consistent and compelling way.

The Holy Family logo may only be used with written permission from the Director of Communications. Please contact the Director of Communications for more information.

Photo Release

The school may authorize photographs to be taken of students and/or their work in a variety of school-related activities. Holy Family may display or publish these photographs in various public forums such as bulletin boards, newsletters, newspapers, the website, social media, etc. Parents are responsible for notifying the Director of Communications, and completing the appropriate form, if you do not wish for your child to be photographed or videoed. Otherwise, acknowledgement of this handbook implies permission.

SECTION III. SAFETY AND HEALTH

School hours and supervision

Holy Family office hours are 7:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Holy Family Catholic School class hours are as follows to allow for staggered dismissals of groups of students:

PK-4th grades- 8:00 a.m.-3:15 p.m.

5th-8th grades- 8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

On school days when an early dismissal is scheduled, the following schedule is used:

PK-4th grades 8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

5th-8th grades- 8:00 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

Supervision of early arrivals begins at 7:30 a.m. Students arriving to campus before 7:30 should coordinate with the third party before school provider to arrange for supervision. After 7:30 a.m., students will go to their academic building. Beginning at 7:30 a.m., parents are welcome to walk their child to the door of the building.

All students who will be picked up at dismissal are escorted to the gym and supervised by staff. When the last car in line has driven away, the remaining children will be escorted to the office. Families are encouraged to place their names on the carpool list through the admission office.

Drivers should use extra caution when entering and exiting the Holy Family property.

Police officer Before School

Parents must obey traffic laws, posted guidelines and the direction of police officers in the morning. Traffic tickets may be given by police officers for violations. To assist police officers with traffic control on Neenah Avenue, please activate **your turn signal** before entering Holy Family's campus.

Security guard

Holy Family Catholic School employs a security guard who patrols the campus and buildings in order to maintain a safe environment. Students and visitors are required to follow the guard's instructions to comply with campus safety and security policies.

All faculty, staff, parents, and students are responsible for the safety and security of the Holy Family Catholic School campus. Do not open doors or "prop open" doors to any individual for any reason unless given specific permission by a school administrator or security guard.

Walkers and cyclists

Parents who wish for their children to walk off the campus unsupervised or with an older sibling must file a Walker/Biker Permission form. The school does not accept responsibility for Walkers/Bikers following dismissal from their designated check-out location. Please note that St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School does not allow children who are not students at the high school, including younger siblings, to wait on their property without an adult supervising them. St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church does not allow students to be picked up on their property.

If biking is necessary, parents should plan to bike with their students. If it is necessary for a student to bike alone, the Walker/Biker Permission form must be filed to release the school from liability. Bikers should dismount as soon as they reach the property. Walkers and bikers both should use the Neenah Avenue sidewalk across the front of the property and the main crosswalk.

The safest dismissal plan is for students to be picked up in the carpool line at dismissal. We **strongly discourage** parents from directing their children to walk to another location off campus to be picked up.

Parking and pick-up plan

In general, cars will enter at the first entrance and will loop around the back of the campus to drop off/pick up at the Faith building. To provide for the safety of our students and staff, drivers are not permitted to use cell phones in the car line. Signs are posted along our drive to remind parents of dismissal times and lanes, speed limits and restricted cell phone use.

To assist the teachers during dismissal, we will distribute signs (with the family name, grade level of students, and PikMyKid ID number) prior to the start of school for families to display on the passenger side dashboard of their vehicle. Please continue this practice *throughout* the year. In addition, the school uses the PikMyKid App for dismissal. When you enter the Holy Family drive, please announce your child. A staff member will be using the app to correctly order each vehicle using the information on your sign as they move through the line.

Parents should not arrive more than 5-10 minutes before their child's dismissal time. Parents should pick up all children in the oldest sibling's line. If you arrive more than ten minutes before your child's dismissal time, please park in the St. Vincent de Paul lot. If you have a problem with the PikMyKid app, please call their helpline or reach out to the assistant principal for assistance.

If you have a problem while you are going through the dismissal line, please pull into the circle area between Holy Family Catholic School and St. Dominic Savio High School, and a staff member will help you.

The front parking lot is available in the morning for any family that wishes to park and walk their children to the building door. In the afternoon, children will be escorted to the front if they are walking off the property or being picked up by an after-school care bus.

Do not allow students to walk through this or any parking lot unaccompanied.

Please note:

- 1.The circle between Holy Family and St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School is designated for emergency vehicles only. Please do not use this area at any time for parking.
- 2.The back parking area behind the Charity is **not** available for morning parking and walking students to class in the morning because of the amount of vehicle traffic using the drop off lanes. If you would like to walk your child up to the building, please use the front or Hope parking lot.

Crossing guards- Afternoon

Parents must obey traffic laws, posted guidelines and the direction of security guards acting as crossing guards in the afternoon. All school community members must use the main crosswalk when crossing the street in the afternoon. The city of Austin has installed additional vertical poles and flashing signs at the main crosswalk in front of Holy Family.

After-school care options

The Hive offers afterschool care on the Holy Family Campus. To arrange for space in the afterschool program, please coordinate with the director of the Hive.

Several local licensed day care facilities provide transportation and after school care for our students. For information about their after-school programs, please contact the facilities directly. Holy Family does not endorse any of these programs. Parents are strongly encouraged to research each program thoroughly to find the program that best meets the needs of your child. If you would like a licensed day care facility to pick up your child from our campus, please have the facility contact the office at 512-246-4455.

Ethics and Integrity in Ministry

At Holy Family Catholic School, all employees, and all persons who volunteer at school in any capacity must first complete the on-line application. It is Diocesan policy that anyone who serves in ministry to minors

or vulnerable adults must have completed a criminal background check and attended an Ethics and Integrity in Ministry workshop. **The workshop must be retaken every three years**, but the application process is completed only one time. **For more information regarding Ethics and Integrity in Ministry including the dates and locations for training, please visit:**

[Ethics and Integrity in Ministry](#)

The directive from the policies of the Diocese mentions many categories of volunteers affected by the policy, including youth ministry volunteers, classroom volunteers, leaders and volunteers of Catholic boy and girl scout troops, anyone serving in a program for minors hosted on school property, anyone transporting minors in vehicles, and anyone who fills a one-time need in ministry to minors or vulnerable adults.

All volunteers wear badges to indicate they are a volunteer with Holy Family Catholic School which must be worn **at all times** when helping on campus or on school related trips. Once you have completed the EIM workshop, please contact Dr. Danna Kelemen for a new badge or replacement badge, or if you have any questions regarding EIM compliance at dkelemen@saviochs.org.

We encourage all adults in the school community to complete this process as promptly as possible in order to participate fully in the life of the school and to be prepared to help with the needs we have for volunteers. (Diocesan Policy 326)

Empowering God's Children

This interactive program for students helps young people understand their sacredness and how to prevent others from violating their emotional, physical and behavioral boundaries. Empowering God's Children is an education program for youth; it does not fulfill the EIM requirement for serving in ministry to minors. For more information about the program: [Empowering God's Children](#)

How to report abuse

Texas State law requires that abuse and/or neglect of a minor must be reported to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services through their website or at 1-800-252-5400, and/or through local police. To report abuse or any violation of the diocesan EIM policies, please follow the steps through the Diocese of Austin website: [Report Abuse - Diocese of Austin - Austin, TX \(austindiocese.org\)](#) You may also contact the EIM office or the Vicar General at 512-949-2400.

If you, or someone you know, have experienced abuse by someone representing the Catholic Church, please contact the Coordinator of Pastoral Care for the Diocese of Austin at (512) 949-2400. (Diocesan Policy 326)

Sexual harassment and child abuse

The Diocese of Austin Catholic schools are committed to providing a safe, positive learning and working environment for staff and students. Sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and child abuse will not be tolerated. (Diocesan Policy 326)

Visitors

To keep our students and staff safe and to prevent interruptions to the instructional program, no visitor on campus is permitted to proceed directly to a classroom, office or library for any reason, including scheduled appointments. All visitors must come to the school office to sign in and receive a visitor's badge. If the visit involves a message or a delivery to a student (such as a forgotten lunch), the office staff will take care of the delivery at a suitable time.

Safety precautions

All persons driving on school outings or providing any transportation for Holy Family students must provide proof of insurance and a valid driver's license. Transportation of students as part of official school activities must comply with seatbelt laws and Ethics and Integrity in Ministry policies. (Diocesan Policy 326)

Because we take seriously the safety and health of all persons on our campus, the following prohibitions are enforced:

- (1) Holy Family is a non-smoking campus, both indoors and outdoors.
- (2) Adults and students may not share restrooms. Adult restrooms are labeled in each building.
- (3) Children not enrolled in the school may not accompany a chaperone at a school event.
- (4) Parents on campus for a meeting or for volunteering in areas such as sports or liturgy set-up must keep their children under their direct supervision.
- (5) **According to Texas safety laws-** A child under the age of 7 may not be left unattended in a motor vehicle for longer than five minutes. A child is considered supervised if accompanied in the vehicle by someone age 14 or older. Holy Family staff strongly discourages parents from leaving their children unattended in the parking lot for any period of time.

For the health and safety of all our families, we ask that you not bring family pets onto the school campus without prior approval from a faculty member.

Safety- procedures & drills

The foundation for our security plans is rooted in a relationship with the Texas School Safety Center, the Central Texas School Safety Consortium, and TX2 Security Group which all support our safety procedure development and annual training for staff. This training focuses on how a campus responds to various unforeseen events such as fires, evacuations, lockdowns, and campus emergencies by conducting a variety of drills throughout the year. Holy Family Catholic School employs a security guard who patrols the campus and buildings in order to maintain a safe environment. Students and visitors are required to follow the guard's instructions to comply with campus safety and security policies.

The school maintains and routinely updates a comprehensive emergency operations plan to respond to any emergency which brings normal operations to a halt. (Diocesan Policy 121)

State law requires that schools conduct quarterly **fire drills**. Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom and office area. When the fire alarm sounds, all students line up at the classroom door and proceed outside under the direction of their teacher. Students walk quietly to a designated spot and remain there until cleared by an administrator that the buildings are safe to return.

Severe weather drills are conducted several times a year. Severe weather locations are posted in each classroom and office area. Staff and students will be notified over the PA system when severe weather is imminent. Students and staff will return to classrooms when cleared by an administrator.

Students and staff will be notified over the PA system when an emergency requires a **lockdown, secure, or shelter**. Faculty are trained in procedures in each of these emergencies. An administrator will notify all staff and students when the emergency is over.

Suspension of classes

The principal may elect to suspend classes due to reasons of inclement weather, student health, safety and emergencies. (Diocesan Policy 120)

Parent Alert

The Parent Alert system allows the school administration to notify parents via text message, voice message, and email in case of an emergency. Parent Alert is part of the Family Portal school management software. It is crucial that parents keep all emergency contact information updated on Family Portal.

Evacuation

In some circumstances, it may be necessary to evacuate all or part of the school. The level of the emergency and emergency personnel involved will determine the evacuation process. If emergency

services (police, fire, EMS, etc.) are called to the scene, they will decide the level of evacuation needed. Their main concern will be to contain the emergency; if necessary, they will evacuate students and personnel to the closest safe area available. School officials' responsibility will be to cooperate with these authorities.

Once the situation is under control, it may be necessary to have secondary locations to regroup. Parents will be notified of the locations to be used, which will depend on the type of emergency and the level of evacuation. We ask that parents not call the school office until the school has sent out communications regarding the emergency and procedures for release of students.

In the case of evacuation, a student will be released to his/her parent, or the individual named as the alternate emergency contact on the Emergency Care Card on file in the office, but to no one else. Please be prepared to show identification in this situation. If unplanned early release for reasons other than weather occurs, you will be notified. For additional information, see the Bad Weather Closings section below and the appendix section of this handbook for the Parents' Guide to Emergency School Evacuation.

Bad weather closings

In accordance with Diocesan guidance, our school will follow the bad weather school closing or bad weather early-release decisions of the public school district in which our school is located, Round Rock ISD. To learn the latest school closing information, tune to a local television station, radio station, or the Round Rock ISD website- www.roundrockisd.org. It is not necessary to call the school to confirm this information; we request that our telephone lines not be tied up this way when it is important for us to attend to unusual conditions.

If unfavorable weather develops during the school day but not so bad as to cause the school to close, parents are discouraged from picking up their child early. The staff at Holy Family is committed to the students' safety, and we would prefer to be able to direct our attention to that end, as well as continuing instruction.

If severe weather prevents students from waiting outside or in the gym at dismissal safely, then students will be held in their classrooms until the weather improves. In this event, parents are welcome to park in a designated parking space and pick-up their children from the classroom.

Health care at school

Holy Family Catholic School employs a School Nurse. The School Nurse will provide basic required school health services and will be trained and certified in First Aid and CPR.

Emergency contact and medical information is kept on file for every child enrolled in the school. It is essential that parents keep this information updated on Family Portal so that we may reach you right away in the event of an emergency. When an ambulance is needed, EMS officials will transport the child to the hospital. (Diocesan Policy 309)

Medication at school

A student may take medication at school ONLY if:

1. a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant or dentist has prescribed the medication, or a parent requests the administration of non-prescription medication (over-the-counter);
2. the parent/guardian delivers the medication to the school office;
3. the medication is delivered in its prescription container with a current pharmacy prescription label or, if the medication is over-the-counter medication, in the original labeled and sealed container (unopened);
4. the school office personnel administer the medication to the student; and
5. the parent/guardian completes and returns the medication form to the school office.

*Item 4 above does not apply if a parent authorizes a student to self-carry and self-administer medication through an epi-pen, inhaler, insulin pump, or glucose meter and completes and delivers the form to the school. (Diocesan Policy 310)

When to stay home for illness

Coming to school every day and being on time are very important routines that support a successful experience at Holy Family. However, when illness occurs, students should be kept home to avoid contagion and to rest. A student should be free of symptoms including fever, vomiting, and diarrhea (without fever-reducing medication) for 24 hours before returning to school. Additional reasons to stay home include contagious or spreadable illnesses such as conjunctivitis (pink-eye), strep throat, pediculosis (head lice), chicken pox, and ringworm. (See *"When a student is absent" in Section IV.*)

Communicable diseases

In order to avoid contamination, children are taught to handle their own biohazards, e.g. blow their own noses and handle their own tissue, to the best of the child's ability. Teachers also instruct and support best practices in hygiene, including handwashing. To meet health standards called "universal precautions", staff will wear disposable gloves when there is a possibility of coming into contact with a child's body fluids.

If your child gets a serious disease or condition that could have already spread to other children, it is important to notify the School Nurse right away. (See *"When a student is absent" in Section IV.*)

Food allergies

Holy Family recognizes that life threatening food allergies are an important condition affecting many school children and welcomes all students with food allergies. In order to minimize the incidence of life-threatening allergic reactions, Holy Family will maintain a system-wide procedure for addressing life threatening allergic reactions and maintain an Emergency Action Plan for any student(s) whose parent/guardian and physicians have informed the school in writing that the student(s) has a potentially life-threatening allergy.

Immunizations and health screenings

Students must be up to date on required immunizations and must provide written proof to the school. If someone from school contacts you about a needed immunization, it is important to follow up right away. Please note that although conscientious objections and waivers may be accepted in some schools, they are not acceptable for use within schools of the Diocese of Austin. (Diocesan Policy 311)

The School Nurse will screen students in certain grades to find problems with vision, hearing, the formation of the spine, and signs of Type 2 diabetes. You will be contacted about required follow-up if a concern is found.

The school may also choose to screen for pediculosis (head lice). Here again, it is very important that you follow recommended procedures all the way through and provide follow-up information to the school.

Use of school grounds

Only persons and activities with permission from the school administration may be on the school grounds at any time. Persons waiting on the campus for certain activities must follow all safety rules. (See *"Safety Precautions" in Section III.*)

Lunch procedures

Students at Holy Family in grades K-8 eat lunch in the pavilion when weather permits. In the event of inclement weather, the students eat in their classroom. Preschool students usually eat lunch in their classrooms. Students need to bring their own lunch (unless participating in a purchase program at school) as well as all utensils needed.

We are unable to warm, cook or refrigerate lunch items for the students. A lunch purchase program is available Monday through Friday. Please visit [Crave-it Nutrition | Login \(boonli.com\)](#) for more information about ordering lunches and to view available menus.

Students pray and wash their hands before lunch. Each teacher will establish standards for table manners, cleanliness of the environment and appropriate lunchtime behavior.

We suggest lunches be simple and nutritious in nature so that your child can enjoy and manage them as independently as possible. In order that your child's mealtime, be as safe and pleasant as possible, the following are not allowed:

- Glass containers of any type
- Soft drinks
- Sharing or selling lunch items of any type
- Delivery of a forgotten lunch to the classroom by a parent. (Bring the lunch to the office.)

Parents may eat lunch with their child in celebration of their child's birthday. If a parent desires to eat lunch with their child, the parent must contact the teacher a minimum of 24 hours in advance. The teacher will assign a specific space for the child and parent to eat.

We **strongly discourage** delivering your child's lunch just before their lunch time on a regular basis as it puts a strain on office resources.

Snacks and treats

Students need to bring their own nutritious snack each day.

Parents who wish to send a snack to the homeroom to share in honor of a student's birthday are welcome to do so, by notifying the teacher ahead of time and choosing a non-allergy. Please be especially careful of food items that contain peanuts since they are a common food allergy in our community. Parents of students with summer birthdays are invited to coordinate with the teacher in order to select a school day for this observance.

Recommended treats include:

1. Decorated cookies (single large or several small)
2. Muffins or cupcakes
3. Rice Krispie treats

Parents are asked not to send any type of snack or birthday treat that requires utensils, such as cakes or any other item that takes preparation on the part of the teacher. Only snacks are permitted (do not send or order lunches for the class). Please do not send balloons or flowers as they create a distraction to the instructional day.

SECTION IV. ATTENDANCE AND ADMISSIONS

Calendar

All schools in the Diocese of Austin are required to have a minimum of 180 days or 75,600 minutes of instruction in the school year. School is in session for grades PK-8 at least seven hours every day, “bell-to-bell.” (Diocesan Policy 119) See the appendix of this handbook for a school calendar.

Attendance requirements

Regular and prompt attendance is an important component to the success of your child’s school learning experience. The education state law requires students must be in attendance 90% of the school year. More than 10% absences for any reason at any grade level may result in failing the class/course for the year (Diocesan Policy 305). Students with more than 10% absences may not be permitted to re-register for the following school year.

Absences include, but are not limited to, sickness, death in the immediate family, and weather or road conditions making travel dangerous or any other unusual cause acceptable to the principal. Appointments such as doctor and dental visits should be scheduled outside school hours whenever possible. Family vacations on school time, including leaving early for holidays, are discouraged. (Diocesan Policy 305)

According to diocesan policy, to be counted present, a student must be in attendance at school for a minimum of four hours of the instructional day. (Diocesan Policy 120)

When a student is absent

When a child is absent from school, email attendance@holyfamilycs.org and the homeroom teacher in order to inform the school office that your child will be absent. Please include the following in the communication:

- Student name
- Student homeroom
- Reason for absence

When the child returns, please provide the receptionist in the front office a note from the parent. If the child has been seen by a doctor, a separate note should be provided to the front office.

Obtaining make-up work

If a student has a one-day absence, s/he should take the day to rest and recover. In the case of two days of absence in a row, a parent may call the school office by 9:00 a.m. on the second day to ask for assignments and books to be left in the school office for pick-up after school. All work may be made up from absences. However, the teacher is not required to provide the work in advance. Make-up work is to be completed in one day for each day absent.

Release of students during school hours

If you know in advance that a student must leave early, for example, for a dentist appointment that could not be scheduled outside school hours, you should send an email to attendance@holyfamilycs.org and the homeroom teacher with the information regarding the early dismissal including the time that your child will be picked up. Please come to the office early enough to sign out and pick up your child. Please avoid picking up your child from the office between 3:00 p.m. and dismissal time because of the increase in traffic. **We recommend that if appointments must be scheduled during the school day, that they are scheduled during physical education or elective classes not during School Mass or academic core classes.** See Family Portal for your middle school students’ daily schedule.

If the need arises during the same day to pick up your child early, please call the office in advance. To avoid disruption, parents may not go to the classroom for the child. If the child returns during the day, s/he should come to the office to check back in, and then school staff will escort the student to class. If the student has been in class for any part of the day, it is not necessary to provide a note the following day when the student returns.

Late arrivals & tardies

Teaching children to be on time starts very early in life. When they arrive on time and are picked up on time, children learn lifelong skills. Students who arrive to the classroom after 8:00 a.m. are required to obtain a tardy slip from the office before they will be admitted to class. A staff member will escort the student to class.

Excused Tardies are designated as students arriving late due to a medical/dental appointment when proof of the visit has been presented in the office.

Unexcused Tardies are given to students who arrive for school after 8:00 a.m. and who have not had an excused medical/dental appointment. Students are counted tardy if they are not in the classroom by the start of class.

Admissions procedures for new students

Holy Family has a relationship with seven supporting Catholic parishes that includes special consideration in the admissions process. New students who have met the admissions requirements (age, ability to succeed academically, behavioral acceptability and immunization requirements) may be accepted into the school in the following order:

- Sibling relationship with a continuing student
- Participating parishioner in one of our 7 supporting parishes
- Additional Catholic students
- Non-Catholic students

School parents and the community at large will be notified in a timely way about the deadlines, requirements and fees for new admissions. Continuous enrollment is usually in early February.

Diocesan policy 300 provides details regarding the age of the entering students by grade and the requirements of age verification by an official birth certificate. Students must reside with their parent/legal guardian.

All students applying for Pre-kindergarten through Eighth grade must participate in readiness screening through the school. There will be a small fee for the assessment, which will be conducted by trained evaluators. The results will be made available to the family and school and will be used to make developmentally appropriate placement decisions.

In reviewing the file of a new applicant with a diagnosed special need, the school will review the applicable diagnostic and evaluative information and evaluate its ability to satisfy the special needs in light of the overall impact to the school and the ability to accommodate the student. (Diocesan Policy 300)

Continuous enrollment

Once a student enrolls at Holy Family, it is assumed the student will remain at the school through 8th grade unless the family notifies the school of withdrawal or the school determines it is not in the best interest of all involved for the student to return. In February, each family's FACTS account is charged the non-refundable Re-Enrollment Fee to hold a student's spot for the following year unless the school is notified of withdrawal prior to the scheduled deadline.

Membership in the supporting parishes

For purposes of admissions priority, membership in the supporting parishes means that the family has satisfied their respective pastor's definition of a participating parishioner. Different pastors use different criteria, so families should communicate directly with their church office for questions. Students from the seven parishes receive admissions priority. Verification of parishioner status is conducted annually by the Director of Admission.

Inquiries/Application process

A parent may submit an online inquiry form for a new student up to 20 months in advance of the time the student would enter the school for the first time. The school will maintain contact through email to provide additional admissions information. The admission cycle begins in the fall preceding the year of enrollment. Families should watch the school website for information regarding Parent Information Sessions. The inquiry form can be found online in the Admissions section.

Nondiscrimination

Schools within the Diocese of Austin do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in: (i) the admission of students; (ii) the offerings of rights, privileges, programs, or activities generally made available to their students; or (iii) the administration of educational policies, admissions policies, loan programs, athletic programs, employment practices or policies, or other school-administered programs.

Holy Family Catholic School complies with all applicable State and Federal discrimination laws. Catholic schools may show preference in admission for Catholic students (Diocesan Policy 122).

Teacher/Class requests

Sometimes at re-registration a parent may have a belief that a certain type of teacher will best serve the child in the coming year. The administration respectfully declines to accept requests for specific teachers because such requests are often based on limited information or information taken out of context. In preparing classroom assignments, the administration and faculty do consider classroom balance and individual student needs.

SECTION V. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

School climate

Holy Family Catholic School intends to live up to its name. All students, staff, parents and community members are called upon to show unity of purpose, as well as other characteristics of holy families such as respect for all things sacred, respect for all life, inclusiveness, responsibility, collaboration, and having each other's best interests at heart.

Holy Family Catholic School seeks to establish a school climate that mirrors family life through trust, spirituality, closeness, collaboration and responsibility, where *faith, culture, and life are brought into harmony* (Congregation for Catholic Education, *Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, n. 33.).

A climate of inclusiveness

Most of the offenses listed below under Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior will rarely occur in our school. They are listed here for the purpose of outlining examples of unacceptable behavior. However, a special word is needed about the goal of inclusiveness, since this principle is frequently violated among children and in schools. Students of all ages will be taught that name-calling, bullying, ridiculing, teasing, and excluding have no place at school and are not only unnecessary, but also intolerable. Parents are encouraged to reinforce these ideas at home.

Behavioral expectations

All students in grades PK-8 are expected to obey school rules and to develop the skills of personal responsibility and polite interaction with others.

Students enrolled in Holy Family Catholic School are responsible for their compliance to the academic and behavioral guidelines of the school. Each parent and student are responsible to act in a manner that upholds the mission of Holy Family Catholic School.

As parents are the primary educators of their children, it is their responsibility to ensure the positive behavior of their children and to adhere to the rules of the school. Parents are required to actively monitor their child's progress in all areas of the school including behavior.

All students and parents are required to act in a polite and respectful way to teachers, administrators and employees of the school. Anyone who acts inappropriately to any Holy Family employee may be asked to leave the property. If further action is needed, the police may be notified.

Disruption of school activities

No person or group of people acting in concert may engage in disruptive activity or disrupt a lawful activity on the campus or property of the school. The school may report any person who violates this policy to local law enforcement officials. Violations of this policy by a student are grounds for disciplinary action. (Diocesan Policy 322)

Standards of behavior for adults

Staff, parents and other members of the school community are called upon to model similar good standards of behavior as well. Adults in the Catholic community should be good listeners, remain mutually supportive and inclusive of one another, maintain appropriate confidentiality, and handle disagreements in a spirit of conciliation, including any social media conversations or group texts.

Volunteers on the campus are especially reminded to keep conversation positive and limited to appropriate topics. Volunteers are also asked to refrain from posting pictures of students involved in school activities on their personal social media sites without the expressed permission of other students' parents. Observations of concern should be reported to an administrator.

Standards of behavior for students

Classroom and school policies are designed to offer increasing self-discipline that is an indication of one's capabilities of accepting the responsibilities and privileges of being a Christian adult. To that end, citizenship and work habit guidelines are provided below:

Citizenship

- Be polite and kind to others, both adults and students, in speech, action and manner
- Display respect and prayerful participation during worship times
- Work in cooperation with others
- Obey all school and classroom rules and procedures
- Respect school and personal property
- Properly greet adults and use mannered language ("please", "thank you")
- Include and offer assistance to others whenever possible

Work habits

- Be prepared for class with materials and assignments
- Work conscientiously and use time wisely
- Complete all assignments on time
- Actively participate in the learning process
- Display good grooming

General guidelines for students & families

- Rolling backpacks are not permitted for students in grades PK-1. These young students are not able to maneuver rolling backpacks well enough to avoid creating safety hazards.
- Students in PreK and Kindergarten may bring nap items, such as a small stuffed animal, blanket and/or travel pillow. These items should all be small enough to fit inside the backpack.
- Selling items on campus which are not part of a Holy Family fundraiser is not allowed.
- The distribution of party invitations of any kind on the campus is not allowed, except for school sponsored events or if the entire class/grade is invited.
- Cameras are not permitted on campus by students at any time, unless used for yearbook purposes.
- No outside drinks, like Starbucks or other brands, may be brought into classrooms in the morning.

Cell phones/Personal electronic devices

It is generally recommended that young children should not bring cell phones, tablets, or any other electronic devices to school. Individual family needs should be discussed with the homeroom teacher.

Cell phones and other electronic devices may be brought to school under the following conditions:

- Electronic devices must be kept inside backpacks in the OFF position between 7:30 a.m.-3:45 p.m. and during any after-school activity in which the student is participating. If a student needs to use a phone to contact a parent/guardian, a teacher/staff member must give permission and supervise the call.
- Electronic devices must be kept in lockers or backpacks during school hours.
- No electronic devices may be used for picture taking.
- Electronic devices may not be used for game playing, applications, internet or email access or making purchases of any kind.
- Students who violate any of the rules regarding cell phones or other electronic devices may forfeit their privileges of bringing them to school and receive a disciplinary consequence. The consequences for misuse of the cell phone or other electronic device can include, but are not limited to, seizures, fines, retention or disposal. (Diocesan Policy 323)

****A special note about social media-** Students are expected to act responsibly and respectfully on social media sites at all times. Research shows that what students post online has a significant impact on

their daily interactions at school and on their emotional well-being. Parents are expected to monitor what their students post on social media sites in order to guide them in proper online interactions.

Bullying Policy

All students must respect and abide by principles of good, Catholic, moral conduct. Teachers will teach students that bullying others, including teachers and other personnel, will not be tolerated in a Catholic school. Parents/legal guardians are expected to reinforce these standards at home.

Bullying is prohibited. The Holy Family School community shall not tolerate any bullying on school grounds or at any school activity on or off campus.

For the purposes of this policy, “bullying” means:

- A form of overt and aggressive behavior that is intentional, hurtful, and repeated.
- With bullying, there is an imbalance of strength: bullied children are taunted, harassed, rejected, and assaulted by one or more individuals.
- A bully’s goal is to have power over people.

Bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following types of conduct:

- Relational (intimidation, coercion, inciting others to commit acts of bullying, spreading rumors or lies, and deliberate exclusion or isolation of an individual or group),
- Verbal (name-calling, teasing, threats, and racist, sexist or bigoted remarks),
- Physical (pushing, shoving, tripping, hitting, slapping, kicking and pinching)

“Cyber-bullying” means bullying through the use of any electronic means, including, but not limited to, text messages, e-mail, applications, social media sites, or phone calls. Cyber-bullying is a form of bullying.

Students, faculty/staff and parents are to report all allegations or believed cases of bullying, of any kind, to the Assistant Principal. All allegations will be promptly investigated. Persons who allege bullying by others should, to the extent possible, maintain evidence of the alleged bullying (for example, copies of cyber-bullying statements or other evidence of other types of bullying).

Holy Family subscribes to the [STOPit](#) web program, where students can anonymously report the following via mobile apps, web forms, or phone calls: bullying, cyberbullying, inappropriate teacher/student relationships, violence/threats, weapons possession, drugs/alcohol, substance abuse, and intolerance/discrimination. As soon as the report is filed, it is shared with the school administration and an investigation is conducted. The proper disciplinary action against any person found to be in violation of this policy will be determined by the Assistant Principal. (Diocese Policy 321)

Staff intervention. Holy Family Catholic School expects all staff members who observe or become aware of an act of bullying to take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene – unless intervention would be a threat to staff members’ safety. He/she shall report the bullying to the school administration for further investigation.

Students and parents shall report bullying. Holy Family School expects students and parents who become aware of an act of bullying to report it to the Assistant Principal for further investigation. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting bullying may be subject to the administrative consequences.

Investigation procedure. Upon learning about a bullying incident, the Assistant Principal will thoroughly investigate, interview all students involved, and will contact the parents of the aggressor(s) and the victim(s). This investigation may include interviews with students, parents, and school staff; review of school records; and identification of parent and family issues.

Consequences/Intervention. Consequences for students who bully others shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include counseling; a parent conference, detention; suspension and/or expulsion. Depending on the severity of the incident, the Assistant Principal may also take additional

steps to ensure student safety. These may include implementing a safety plan; separating and supervising the students involved; providing staff support for students as necessary; and developing a supervision plan with the parents.

Technology and Internet Acceptable Use Policy

The Diocese of Austin Catholic schools are committed to providing an Internet safety policy which includes technology protection measures. The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law to address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school computers and other devices capable of accessing the Internet. The school's Technology and Internet Acceptable Use Policy meets and exceeds all requirements of CIPA. All parents will be asked to sign that they agree to uphold the acceptable use policy for technology at school, in school-related activities, and away from school. Students in grades 2 and above will be asked to sign as well. (Diocese Policy 331) (See *"Technology" in Section VII.*)

Academic integrity

In keeping with the mission of our school, students are expected to participate in the learning process through earnest participation and preparation, honesty and personal responsibility. Students should be respectful of their peers, the faculty, and the school by being trustworthy. Essentially, each student should do their own work and credit sources properly. Any violation of cheating or plagiarism will result in disciplinary action and a loss of credit until the work is completed individually and independently.

Student Behavior and Discipline

Holy Family students are educated to become men and women of faith and character having sound moral principles and the academic training necessary to assume their responsibilities as productive citizens. All rules and regulations are created and enforced with the expectation that Holy Family's philosophy and mission will be met.

School discipline is necessary to maintain a safe learning environment for students and adults. Ultimately, the goal is for a student to self-regulate appropriate behaviors. Adherence to these policies and procedures indicates a student's willingness to be a positive member of the Holy Family community.

Holy Family recognizes that students are personally responsible for their actions and behavior. Inappropriate actions and behavior will not be accepted or tolerated and students will be held accountable. Holy Family expects that students, as well as all members of the school community, will treat others equally and respectfully. They will refrain from the willful or negligent use of slurs of any form against persons on the basis of race, language spoken, color, sex, religion, disability, national origin, immigration status, age, sexual orientation, or political belief. Holy Family expects that students will not be involved with illegal activity, gangs, or inappropriate groups. Holy Family maintains a "Zero Tolerance" standpoint in regard to weapons, illegal drugs, and gang affiliation. Students are expected to actively support and assist the school in maintaining a campus free from drugs, alcohol, weapons, gang activity, and/or any situation harmful to the school or school community.

As a member of the Holy Family community, students have the responsibility to help care for others, their property, and the image of Holy Family. Students are encouraged to inform a staff member when students violate the behavioral expectations.

Holy Family recognizes that parents have a key responsibility in the discipline of their children and actively includes them in the school's disciplinary process. Communication lines will be kept open by parent phone calls, letters, conferences and parent/teacher conferences.

The purpose of the Holy Family disciplinary process is to clearly indicate to students when their actions and behavior are inappropriate and unacceptable. Classroom discipline is the responsibility of each classroom teacher who informs students and parents of their behavioral expectations at the beginning of the course. If the classroom teacher's disciplinary measures fail to produce a change in behavior a

student may be referred to the Assistant Principal for further consequences and actions which may include, but are not limited to administrative detention, suspension, behavioral contract and expulsion.

Holy Family does not use physical force for disciplinary purposes or corporal punishment. (Diocesan Policy 319)

Student Recognition for Following Expectations

Holy Family students are expected to adhere to the expectations of the school. However, the faculty and staff recognize that positive praise and recognition encourage students to continue to make positive choices that align with the virtues. Faculty and staff may recognize students through several different manners including verbal praise and communication with families.

Holy Family School Discipline

Students are responsible for overall good conduct in or out of school. Students represent themselves, their family and their school both on and off the school campus. We believe that all students can and will meet **expectations** (rules, guidelines) and we expect students to come to school in an environment that allows them to learn and grow through their heart, mind, body and soul. We believe that consistent discipline provides this safe and nurturing environment, is not meant to be punitive, and matches consequences with individual choices.

Level 1 Behaviors-a lapse in expected behavior on the part of the student.

Examples of Behaviors	Possible Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bringing Toys/Gadgets to school• Cell Phone Use• Difficulty with Transition/Tardy• Disrespect toward others• Distracting Noise• Failure to Follow Directions• Inappropriate Language• Leaving Classroom without a Pass• Lying/Tattling/ Teasing/Gossiping• Misuse of School Property• Not Having Materials• Off-Task Behavior• Refusal to Comply• Running in hallways• Uniform Code Violations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Redirection• Reflection/Think Sheet• Communication to parent/guardian• Classroom detention• Parent Conference

Level 2 (Referral) Behaviors- a lapse in expected behavior on the part of the student. When a referral behavior occurs, the teacher will refer the student to the assistant principal. In each instance, the assistant principal will investigate, and the assistant principal will contact the parent/guardian. The behavior and assigned consequence(s) will be recorded in FACTS.

Examples of Behaviors	Possible Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continuous Level 1 Behaviors• Academic Dishonesty (Plagiarism/Cheating)• Bullying/Harassment• Creating a False Emergency• Cutting Class/Skipping School• Destruction of Property• Missed Detention• Open/persistent defiance/disrespect toward authority• Public Display of Affection• Technology Violations• Unauthorized Use of School Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Detention• Suspension• Referral to law enforcement• Financial responsibility

Level 3 (Referral) Behaviors- a grave lapse in expected behavior on the part of the student. When a referral behavior occurs, the teacher will refer the student to the assistant principal. In each instance, the assistant principal will investigate, and the assistant principal will contact the parent/guardian. The behavior and assigned consequence(s) will be recorded in FACTS.

Examples of Behaviors	Possible Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous Level 2 Behaviors • Creating a False Emergency • Drug/Alcohol/Vape Possession • Physical Assault • Theft/Gambling • Weapon Possession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension • Expulsion • Referral to law enforcement • Financial responsibility

Suspension:

The Assistant Principal will make a reasonable attempt to communicate with the parent/guardian prior to the suspension and provide a written notice to the student indicating the day(s), date(s) and type of suspension to be served (in or out of school). The suspension is recorded in FACTS. Upon returning to school, the student and parent must meet with the Principal (Diocesan Policy 320).

If a student receives suspensions totaling 10 school days in a school year, they will receive notice of an expulsion review meeting. In rare cases, the student may be suspended for ten (10) days with an immediate recommendation for an expulsion hearing review.

- **NOTE: Until the suspension is served, a student cannot attend or participate in any extracurricular activity.**
- **NOTE: Anyone convicted of a delinquent or criminal matter inside or outside of the school environment is subject to expulsion. Any student serving an existing expulsion from another school and requesting enrollment into Holy Family will not be enrolled at Holy Family during the length of the expulsion and will go before a review board to determine if admittance into Holy Family will be approved at a later date.**

Expulsion Review Board:

This Board is made up of four (4) members. The Principal, the Assistant Principal and two (2) teachers not directly involved with the specific incident. This discipline review will include all documentation of the incident(s) and any/all student records on file. A recommendation to expel or offer a consequence "in lieu of" expulsion will be provided to the President. The final decision will be made by the President.

Expulsion

The expulsion of a student is a last resort. It is used when the matter is serious and other corrective actions are not effective or appropriate. Expulsion is for the remainder of the year (Diocesan Policy 320).

Readmission for the following year is unlikely.

Enrollment continuation

Attending a Catholic school is a privilege, not a right. The Principal or President can, at any time, withdraw any student when such is in the best interest of the school. (Diocese Policy 300)

A student who leaves Holy Family or any Diocesan Catholic school, under unfavorable terms, or who is requested to leave, will not be re-admitted to the school or another Catholic school in the Diocese of Austin without the receiving principal consulting with the former school. (Diocesan Policy 300)

Unfavorable terms include, but are not limited to:

- academic performance

- emotional or behavioral concerns
- unpaid financial balances

Search and seizure

Lockers, desks and other storage spaces are school property and the school reserves the right to search them at any time. Dangerous weapons, illegal substances, cell phones and any possessions forbidden by the school handbook may be seized. If the principal or a teacher believes that a student is carrying any such items, the principal/teacher should ask the student for it. If the student refuses, the student may be asked to empty pockets, purses, backpacks, etc. If the student still refuses, the principal/teacher will make the decision to either:

- gain possession of the article immediately if persons are in danger;
- request the parent/legal guardian come to school to conduct the search of the student;
- follow suspension and/or expulsion policies;
- call the local police department

Holy Family has a policy on acceptable use of cell phones and the consequences for misuse of the cell phone, which may include but are not limited to seizures, fines, retention or disposal. (Diocesan Policy 323)

SECTION VI. SCHOOL UNIFORMS

FlynnO'Hara Uniforms serves as our uniform vendor and sells our required uniform elements and other accessories. The company website for Holy Family's landing page is www.flynnohara.com/school/TX017 . There is also a FlynnO'Hara store in San Antonio that carries Holy Family's uniforms should you be in their area. The address is 2108 NW Military Hwy., San Antonio, TX 78213.

The "required" uniform elements are ones that must be worn on Mass days, group and individual picture days, and other specified days. Items listed as optional may be worn on other days. These items must be purchased at FlynnO'Hara Uniforms.

The following details are provided for the fully adopted uniform and their proper guidelines:

	PreK-4 Girls	PreK-4 Boys
Required Bottoms (purchased through the vendor)	Plaid jumper	Youth Navy Pull On Pants (PreK required, K optional) or Boys Navy Flat Front Pants
Optional Bottoms (purchased through the vendor)	-Navy pants -Plaid skort	-Youth Navy Pull On Shorts (PreK and K) -Boys Navy Flat Front Shorts
Required Top (purchased through the vendor)	White puff sleeve blouse with navy piping (or long sleeve blouse with piping)	White oxford shirt (short or long sleeve)
Optional Top (purchased through the vendor)	White or light blue logoed polo	White or light blue logoed polo
	5-8 Girls	5-8 Boys
Required Bottoms (purchased through the vendor)	Plaid Knife Pleated Skirt	Khaki flat front pants
Optional Bottoms (purchased through the vendor)	Khaki skort Khaki pants	Khaki flat front shorts worn fingertip length of longer
Required Top (purchased through the vendor)	Light blue short-sleeved blouse	Light blue oxford (short or long sleeve)
Optional Top (purchased through the vendor)	White or navy logoed shirt	White or navy logoed shirt
Optional P.E. Uniform (purchased through the vendor)	-Logoed navy basketball short -Logoed grey athletic t-shirt	-Logoed navy basketball short -Logoed grey athletic t-shirt
	All Girls	All Boys
Socks/Tights	-Solid black, white, or navy blue socks with no logo -Solid black, white or navy blue tights - no logos, patterns, or sequins are allowed	-Solid black, white, or navy blue socks - no logos, patterns, or sequins are allowed
Shoes	-Saddle shoes in navy and white - All white (including stitching and logo) athletic shoes* *Velcro required for PK-K	-All black (including stitching and logo) athletic shoes* *Velcro required for PK-K
P.E. Shoes	Students in grades 2-8 may wear uniform shoes or bring athletic shoes to change into for p.e. class.	Students in grades 2-8 may wear uniform shoes or bring athletic shoes to change into for p.e. class.

Belt-required for all pants with belt loops	black, solid leather or braided belt	black, solid leather or braided belt
Inside jackets/sweater/sweatshirts (purchased through our vendor)	-Logoed navy fleece jacket -Logoed dark grey or navy sweatshirt -Logoed navy pull over or cardigan sweater	-Logoed navy fleece jacket -Logoed dark grey or navy sweatshirt -Logoed navy pull over or cardigan sweater

Additional Guidelines for All Students

	All Girls	All Boys
Hair	Natural in color Eyes should be visible Worn in a non-distracting style	Natural in color Eyes should be visible Should not exceed the eyebrows, mid ear or the top of the uniform shirt
Shirts	Shirts must be tucked in throughout the day unless the no-tuck oxford is worn	Shirts must be tucked in throughout the day
Undershirts	t-shirt worn under the shirt may not show at the collar or sleeve	t-shirt worn under the shirt may not show at the collar or sleeve
Earrings	One small stud earring per ear may be worn in the earlobe. Hoop earrings are not permitted.	One small stud earring per ear may be worn in the earlobe. Hoop earrings are not permitted.
Jewelry	Scapulars and religious medals are allowed to be worn tucked inside the blouse or shirt	Scapulars and religious medals are allowed to be worn tucked inside the blouse or shirt
Wristwatches	Wristwatches are allowed. Any device that is "smart" must have the capabilities disabled during the school day. Examples of "smart" include the ability to take videos, take pictures, connect to the internet, text, or receive emails	Wristwatches are allowed. Any device that is "smart" must have the capabilities disabled during the school day. Examples of "smart" include the ability to take videos, take pictures, connect to the internet, text, or receive emails
Nail Polish	Clear nail polish is permitted	No nail polish permitted
Make-up	Students in grades 7 and 8 may wear foundation, powder, concealer, clear lip gloss, and mascara	No makeup permitted
Other accessories	Any other accessories including but not limited to tattoos, temporary tattoos, bracelets, or rings are not permitted to be worn.	Any other accessories including but not limited to tattoos, temporary tattoos, bracelets, or rings are not permitted to be worn.

Spirit-dress Guidelines

- Students should follow the guidelines for the uniform policy.
- The only change to the uniform policy is that students are permitted to wear a Holy Family Catholic School t-shirt or sweatshirt.

Themed-dress and Non-uniform guidelines

- Students are expected to be neat and well groomed, following the standards of modesty and good taste. Parents should assist children with choosing clothing that matches the theme and is appropriate for the school day.
- Clothing should cover the abdomen.
- Clothing with writing, embroidery or advertising that is obscene, offensive, or in contradiction to the teachings of the Church are not permitted. In addition, students may not wear, distribute, or display items that promote a political agenda, campaign, cause or individual running for political office.
- Open-toed shoes are not permitted.
- Students are required to wear the appropriate themed spirit shirt for the day.

SECTION VII. ACADEMICS/ SCHOOL PROGRAM

The curricular program

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten at Holy Family are developmental programs that offer the student a gateway to a multi-year program of educational experience. They take into consideration the emotional, physical, social, spiritual, and intellectual development of 4- and 5-year-old children, exposing them to a wide variety of curricular elements at an age-appropriate level. These programs are substantially different from day care settings. Students participate in religion, language arts, mathematics, physical education and recess daily. They participate in social studies, science, guidance, and social emotional activities at least weekly.

Students in grades 1-6 will study according to minimum daily time requirements:

- religion
- language arts (includes reading, vocabulary, English grammar and composition, spelling, handwriting, speaking, listening)
- mathematics and,

according to minimum weekly time requirements:

- social studies (includes elements of history; geography; economics; government; citizenship; culture; technology, and society; and social studies skills)
- science
- physical education
- health
- fine arts (art, music, theater arts)

An appropriate curriculum or set of concepts will also be taught for guidance and for technology. Students will be assigned to a homeroom teacher each year and will have other special area and core teachers assigned as students progress in grade levels.

Students are expected to participate in all curricular areas.

Students in grades 7-8 will study a year each of religion, language arts, mathematics, Spanish, social studies, and science. 7th and 8th grade students will take two elective credits annually with at least one credit in physical education.

Middle school students are expected to participate in all curricular areas.

The religion program

Holy Mass and worship activities

Our most important activity of the week is participation in the Holy Mass. Students in grades 1 and above attend Mass weekly on Thursday mornings. The only exception to Thursdays is if a Holy Day of Obligation falls on a different day of the school week. PK and Kindergarten students begin attending Mass weekly later in the fall. Parents and guests are always welcome. Mass begins promptly at 10:00 a.m. at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, and it is important for students to be on time, just as any other day.

While our aim in worship activities is joyful praise, the school staff also seeks to ensure the highest standards of respectfulness at these times. Students enter the church in silence and in prayerful preparation for the celebration and participate with disciplined reverence. Parents and guests in attendance are asked to model this same disciplined reverence by maintaining quiet before, during, and after Mass.

Other examples of how we recognize the special atmosphere of these activities:

- Because student contributions to Mass or a prayer service are acts of worship, we do not applaud them.

- No video or still pictures may be taken during these celebrations since students are helping to facilitate prayer and worship as opposed to performing.

Sacraments

The religion curriculum includes knowledge and application of concepts regarding the sacraments of the Catholic Church. However, only a parish has jurisdiction to oversee and provide specific preparation for first reception of the sacraments, such as First Holy Communion and First Reconciliation. Therefore, children preparing for these sacraments will need to participate in their home parish programs designed for this purpose. The school has offered to help each parish religious education coordinator to provide timely information regarding home parish dates and rules.

At Mass, students who have not made their First Communion and non-Catholic students will have the opportunity to approach the altar with their class. These students may cross their arms across their shoulders and receive a blessing from the priest.

Service activities

Service in charity is an important part of the religion program and the overall school experience. The priorities for these activities at Holy Family include: (1) school wide activities that support Austin area needs 2) class/grade level activities that support areas of focus or study; and (3) school wide activities that support global needs.

In addition to these school wide service activities, the eighth-grade students will participate in service projects in the community that highlight the social justice component of the religion curriculum.

Report cards/Progress reports

Teachers monitor student progress in many ways, including direct observation, teacher-made tests, published tests, and performance assessments. Each nine weeks, marks are determined for each subject area for the report card to be issued electronically to parents and students. Midway through the first quarter, a brief parent conference is held to discuss strengths, areas of improvement, and the student's overall adjustment. Progress reports are sent twice per quarter if the student's progress needs attention. parents are encouraged to visit the Family Portal (formerly RenWeb) frequently to see their child's academic progress. An optional parent conference is held in the late spring. (See *"Testing Program"* in this section.)

Grade Report Schedule 2023-2024

	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
Start of Quarter	August 14	October 16	January 3	March 13
End of Quarter	October 13	December 15	March 8	May 24
Report Cards Issued	October 20	January 8	March 22	May 31

Eligibility for student activities

Students who wish to participate in athletics and/or other student activities are required to maintain a certain level of academic success as well as meeting behavioral standards set forth by the school. Students must maintain a 70 average in all subject areas and may not receive a U conduct grade in any area on a report card or progress report.

Students who earn below 70% in a subject area on progress note or report card will be placed on probation. During that time, the student may participate in student activities as long as the student completes all work assignments and communicates with the teacher weekly during the probation period.

At the next eligible period, the student must have 70 averages in all subject areas and may not receive a U conduct grade on a report card or progress report. Students who continue to earn below 70 in any subject become ineligible.

Eligibility is determined at progress report and report card time.

If a student becomes ineligible for participation in student activities at progress report or report card time, he/she will not be eligible until the next reporting time. (Diocesan Policy 307)

Grading scale

In grade levels and courses where letter and/or number grades are used, the following grading scale conversion will apply:

A = 93-100 B = 83-92 C = 70-82 Failing mark = 69 and below

Parents are encouraged to monitor their child's progress on Family Portal for those students receiving numerical grades in grades 3-8. They are encouraged to sign up for e-mail notifications for grades that drop below 70.

Promotion requirements

Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten, as developmental programs, recognize that students make progress at different rates. Promotion is based on a holistic picture of the student's readiness for the expectations of the next level. Students are assessed on a list of skills as to their level of mastery, which provides information for student progress.

To be promoted in Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten, a student shall attain a mark of Progressing by the end of the year in the skills of: Social/Emotional Development/Work Habits, Language Arts, Math, Social Studies/Science/Health and Religion. In addition, students must meet the attendance requirements for promotion. (Diocesan Policy 301)

Grades 1-2: Students are assessed on a list of skills as to their level of mastery, which provides information for student progress in the areas of: Language Arts (Reading and Writing), Social Studies, Math, Science and Religion. In addition, a student shall attain a mark of Progressing by the end of the year for the skills in language arts and in mathematics. Students must also meet the attendance requirements for promotion, which are noted below. (Diocesan Policy 301)

Grading Scale for PK – 2nd grade

M = Mastery of Grade Level Standards
P = Progressing
E = Emerging
AC = Area of Concern

Grades 3-5: To be promoted from one grade level to the next, a student shall attain for the year an overall average of 70 or above which is derived by averaging the final numerical grade for language arts, mathematics, social studies, science and religion. In addition, a student shall attain an average of 70 or above in language arts and in mathematics. Students must also meet the attendance requirements for promotion, which are noted below. (Diocesan Policy 301)

Grading Scale	Personal/Social Development
A= 93-100	O- Outstanding
B= 83-92	S- Satisfactory
C= 70-82	N- Needs Improvement
F= 69- Below	U- Unsatisfactory

Grades 6-8: To be promoted from one grade level to the next, a student shall attain an overall average of 70 or above for the year in all courses taken. In addition, a student shall attain an average of 70 or above in four of the following subjects: language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and religion. In addition, students must meet the attendance requirements for promotion, which are noted below. If 8th grade students meet the criteria for promotion, they will be eligible for graduation from Holy Family Catholic School at the end of the school year. (Diocesan Policy 301)

Grading Scale
A= 93-100
B= 83-92
C= 70-82
F= 69- Below

Personal/Social Development
O- Outstanding
S- Satisfactory
N- Needs Improvement
U- Unsatisfactory

Attendance requirements for promotion

More than 10% absences for any reason at any grade level will result in failing the class/course for the year. (Diocesan Policy 305) Students with more than 10% absences may not be permitted to re-register for the following school year.

Learning differences

Holy Family currently serves a wide range of academic abilities within its student population. While all enrolled must be able to meet at least the minimum requirements for promotion, many students with special needs are served at Holy Family. The ability of students to be academically successful at Holy Family depends on the support that a child needs to access the curriculum.

Teachers work with a parent/guardian to communicate a child's progress in the classroom. If a student's progress is falling below the expected learning standards, the teacher will communicate with the parents and share interventions that have been tried. Following those discussions, parents may speak with the Assistant Principal in order to discuss the eligibility criteria for free evaluation and services through the local public-school system.

Those students who have had an evaluation completed that resulted in a diagnosis may be eligible for accommodations at Holy Family. After a student is evaluated, the documentation should be submitted to the school, so that our learning support team can create an accommodation plan which is shared with the family and faculty.

Current documentation that verifies the need for accommodations is required from a qualified medical, educational, or psychological professional. Current documentation is defined as that which has been completed within three years of the date of the evaluation. Upon review of the documentation, Holy Family will determine which accommodations and/or recommendations can be implemented.

A reasonable accommodation is a change made to the teaching or testing procedures in order to provide a student with access to information and to create an equal opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills. Accommodations address how a student learns, they do not change what is learned.

Modification is defined as a change to the general education curriculum or other material being taught. Modifications are not provided within the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Austin.

An Individual Education Program ("IEP") is a federally-funded plan for students determined eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act ("IDEIA"). Principals and teachers of Catholic schools do not develop IEPs; however, the administration of Holy Family can assist in the referral for evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services.

Being able to meet a child's educational needs is of paramount importance. However, reasonable accommodations do not ensure success. If a child's educational needs cannot be met by Holy Family, we will inform the parents to allow them to explore educational institutions that have the resources and expertise to meet the child's needs. (Diocesan Policy 304)

Classroom enrichment & remediation

The early childhood years of PreK, Kindergarten and first grade provide an opportunity for the child to grow socially, emotionally and academically. This is the time that a strong foundation is formed and there is broad learning in many new areas. Children begin to develop skills in language, reading, phonics, and mathematics; and while there are developmental milestones, each student progresses at their own

individual rate. Teachers at these grade levels will have benchmark goals for learning that they will share with parents throughout the year. It is important that families support the efforts of the faculty and work with their children as suggested. While group learning will be the norm, as they grow and develop, they will be exposed to individualized instruction.

Standardized test scores, given each year to students in the first through eighth grades, will serve as a guide for any needed remediation and enrichment. Students in first through eighth grades whose scores fall at or above the 90th percentile in Reading Total and/or Math Total will qualify for classroom enrichment in those areas. Students whose scores in Reading Total or Math Total fall at the 40th percentile or below will qualify for classroom remediation in those areas. Enrichment and remediation will be provided in the regular classroom setting through a variety of methods by the subject area teacher.

DECATS (DeBusk Enrichment Center for Academically Talented Scholars)

The Diocese of Austin sponsors a three-week summer enrichment camp for rising 4th, 5th and 6th grade students who attend Austin area Catholic schools. Qualifying students are nominated by their school and must meet the requirements set by the program director. The program director will notify students and their families by mail in the early spring.

Criteria for advanced math classes

The following criteria qualify a student for **Math 7 Accelerated in 7th Grade:**

- 90thile + on the 6th grade achievement scores on NWEA MAP Math Total
- 90thile or higher on the algebra readiness assessment given at the end of the 6th grade
- Final course grade of 93 and above in 6th grade Math

The following criteria qualify a student for **Algebra I in 7th Grade:**

- 98thile - 99thile on the 6th grade achievement scores on NWEA MAP Math Total
- 95thile or higher on the algebra readiness assessment given at the end of 6th grade
- Final course grade of 93 and above in 6th grade Math

The following criteria qualify a student for **Algebra I in 8th Grade:**

- 95thile + on 7th grade achievement scores on NWEA MAP Math Total
- 95thile or higher on the algebra readiness assessment given at the end of 7th grade
- Final course grade of 90 and above in 7th grade Math 7 Accelerated

The following criteria qualify a student for **Geometry in 8th Grade:**

- 98thile - 99thile on the 7th grade achievement scores on NWEA MAP Math Total
- 98thile or higher on the algebra readiness assessment given at the end of 7th grade
(to ensure continued mastery of mathematics)
- Final course grade of 93 and above in 7th Grade Algebra

Determination about class placement will be made each year, following a review of assessment information and grades. Letters will be sent to parents in the summer if the school is recommending placement in Math 7 Accelerated or if their placement in advanced classes changes between 7th and 8th grade. *In the event that students do not meet the criteria at the end of an advanced course, repeating of the course may be required.*

While most parents prefer for their students to be “challenged,” there are sometimes unintended consequences to those decisions. For this reason, we believe there are several things for parents to consider before placing students in advanced math classes, including the following:

PreAP Algebra I is a high school course, with much content to cover and a high degree of mastery to be achieved. Often considered a key foundation course, its full mastery is essential to future courses such as Algebra II and beyond.

Course grades often include grades that might result in an impression of greater mastery than actually exists, such as homework where assistance is available, or the opportunity given to redo assignments.

For that reason, the information gathered on independent assessments can be more helpful in making decisions; including the annual NWEA test scores and the algebra readiness test given in May of each year.

Important additional information:

High schools vary widely on how they will view the successful completion of Algebra I in the 8th grade. At this time, public high schools accept Catholic middle school Algebra courses once we verify that the course follows the state TEKS (objectives). For information regarding the process for receiving high school Algebra I credit, families should communicate with the high school.

Catholic high schools vary in how they assess students and what their suggested placement is for their high school math program. In some cases, it will be required to retake Algebra I as a freshman if math placement scores don't meet the criteria.

Receiving high school credit for Algebra in 8th grade may result in the child taking considerably harder classes to complete their four years of required math credit in high school. In order determine the expectations and requirements for whether credit from Holy Family will transfer to a Catholic high school, families should communicate with the high school.

Homework

The purpose of homework is for students to be able to support the learning in the classroom through the following:

- Independently practice a skill or concept
- Study for an upcoming assessment
- Become familiar with information in preparation for a new lesson that will be taught

Homework and grading guidelines are designed to offer gradually increasing expectations for students, ultimately resulting in the skills needed for higher education, particularly Catholic high schools. The following are guidelines for homework allotment for the average student with average motivation and ability to concentrate.

- Kindergarten – weekly assignment lasting 15 to 20 minutes that require parent involvement, such as book reading, review of letters or numbers, thematic projects, etc
- Grades 1-8 - Homework will be assigned Monday through Thursday. Depending upon the level of difficulty or the topic, assignments may vary. However, if your child's homework times regularly exceed those indicated, please contact the teacher(s). Homework may also involve projects that are assigned over a period of several days or weeks. Parents can help their child by establishing a quiet space to work on homework and helping ensure that the work is completed. Some projects, upcoming tests may necessitate weekend homework.

Homework should take about 10 minutes per grade. For example, a student in 4th grade should expect about 40 minutes of homework. For students enrolled in advanced math classes, students should expect to spend additional time completing homework.

Grade 1	10 minutes	Grade 4	40 minutes
Grade 2	20 minutes	Grade 5/6	50-60 minutes
Grade 3	30 minutes	Grades 7/8	70-80 minutes

School outings

When the faculty judges that a school outing is a significant enhancement for the instructional program, information will be provided to parents, and a signed permission slip is required. Since behavior expectations will be clearly specified for each outing, the school does not accept liability for injuries sustained through not meeting those expectations while participating in a school outing. Parent participation in school outings may be limited by transportation, safety, or the requirements of the organization being visited. EIM certification is required of all volunteers who accompany students on school outings. If private vehicles are used, a copy of each driver's valid driver's license and proof of insurance is to be filed at the school. Drivers must follow all federal, state, and local driving laws. Drivers

may only take students to the locations listed on the expected itinerary. School outings are a privilege, not a right. Only students who act responsibly will be permitted to go on school outings. (Diocese Policy 329)

Testing program

All students in grades 1-8 throughout the Diocese of Austin take the NWEA MAP Assessments testing series in the early fall, winter, and spring. This assessment tracks the academic growth and progress of each individual student, and it will compare the student's scores with grade-level counterparts on the national and diocesan level, provide information for future instruction and curriculum planning, and provide a broad picture of our school's performance. The student's individual scores will be sent home within six weeks of testing.

Students in grades 5 and 8 take the ARK, a standardized religion test in the spring. Individualized test scores are not sent by ARK, although the school receives an overall composite to assist us in making decisions about religion activities and resources.

All students applying for Pre-kindergarten through Eighth grade must participate in readiness screening through the school. There will be a small fee for the assessment, which will be conducted by trained evaluators. The results will be made available to the family and school and will be used to make developmentally appropriate placement decisions.

Students in grades 6 and 7 take an algebra readiness test at the end of the school year. This information along with NWEA MAP Assessment scores and report card grades are used to recommend placement in accelerated math courses.

Family Portal

Holy Family uses integrated school management software, Family Portal, that supports the administration, faculty, parents, and students of the school with a comprehensive database of information. Family Portal, which is the parent component of FACTS, can be accessed from the school website and allows families to enter emergency contact, demographic, and other pertinent family information. Students in grades 3-8 will have numerical grades, attendance, and homework entered in Family Portal. To establish an account, each family should access the FACTS logo located on the homepage of the Holy Family website and follow the first-time user directions to create an account and login. The District code is HOLY-TX. It is important that you use the email address that the school has on file for you to set up your account. Parents are expected to update the contact information in Family Portal if information changes. Parents are expected to review and update necessary information in Family Portal upon the start of a new school year.

Students in grades 5 through 8 will be given a username and password that they may use to access Family Portal. They will be able to see their grades, homework and assignments but will not be able to change family demographic information. You may choose to allow them to login under your email and account information. However, be aware that anyone that has access to your account can make changes to contact information also, as well as to set notification requirements for grades and missing work that the parent has established.

Technology

Holy Family Catholic School intends to teach students to use technology as a tool for acquiring and sharing knowledge. As technology is so much a part of the fabric of our daily lives, the approach used at Holy Family is integration. This approach means that technology is used by all teachers as a support to their content areas.

We believe that technological proficiency is not only a workplace skill but also a high-school skill. Therefore, the Internet principles included in the Technology Applications curriculum used by most accredited schools in Texas must be addressed with our students in a meaningful, timely and developmentally appropriate way.

We believe that it is consistent with a philosophy of challenging Catholic school education that students be taught responsible use of the Internet, implemented through systematic teaching and scrupulous supervision. However, students' use of the Internet should be conducted according to the maturity in responsible use that they have had time to develop.

Technology is experienced throughout the campus. Kindergarten classrooms have access to computers which can be used in small groups. First grade through eighth grade classrooms are equipped with enough laptop computers so that each student has one to use in every classroom. A separate technology classroom is located in the Wisdom building. Our campus has internet access provided through a high-speed fiber internet connection. A network appliance is installed on our network that provides a firewall and content filtering compliant with the Children's Internet Protection Act. It offers internet security for our students and protects our network. Classroom computers offer instructional support, and the technology classroom offers access and training for applications and other technology related learning including coding and robotics. The faculty incorporates the use of classroom computers to enrich instruction. Students are encouraged to do all printing for assignments at home before coming to school.

Students have access to a range of software packages and web-based programs including, Lexia Reading, IXL Math, and Microsoft Office 365 (O365). Students also have access to G Suite (formerly known as Google Apps for Education). These accounts are limited to interacting within our school's domain only. Math, Science and Social Studies curriculums are enhanced through online resources at Pearson.com and McGraw-Hill.com. Instructional focus is placed on the student's developing thinking, literacy and numeracy skills in a problem-solving process. Additional skills of planning, organizing and evaluating information are taught by the technology teacher who collaborates with classroom teachers to integrate technology into classroom assignments.

Technology and Internet Acceptable Use Policy

The Diocese of Austin Catholic schools are committed to providing an Internet safety policy which includes technology protection measures. The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law to address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school computers and other devices capable of accessing the Internet. The school's Technology and Internet Acceptable Use Policy meets and exceeds all requirements of CIPA. All parents will be asked to sign that they agree to uphold the acceptable use policy for technology at school, in school-related activities, and away from school. Students in grades 2 and above will be asked to sign as well. Acknowledgment of this handbook also implies agreement to the Internet Acceptable Use Policy. The Internet Acceptable Use Policy can be found in the appendix of this handbook. (Diocesan Policy 331)

Guidance and counseling

There is a distinction between guidance and counseling. Guidance consists of instructional practices and strategies that assist students' understanding of their unique worth and their relationship with others. Holy Family Catholic School's guidance program is a part of the school program and complements learning in the classroom. It is child-centered, developmental and proactive. Teachers occasionally invite approved guest speakers to team teach guidance curriculum objectives. The program encourages students' social, emotional, spiritual, physical, and educational growth at each stage of their development. The purpose of guidance with students, parents, and teachers is to help students maximize their potential.

Holy Family has a School Counselor available regularly to meet with individual and small groups of students, parents, and faculty to support students' social, emotional, spiritual and educational growth.

Private Counseling, on the other hand, is more of a one-on-one interaction between an adult and a child and is used when more in-depth counseling is indicated. It is arranged by the parents with outside private counselors.

Library

The Holy Family library serves as a resource for students, faculty, and families. The library currently houses 20,000+ volumes. Classes have regularly scheduled library visits throughout the school week.

The library also maintains a parent collection, which offers a variety of resources for check-out. Parent volunteers and parents visiting the library must sign in at the school office before going to the library.

Private tutoring

If a parent is considering a selection of an outside tutor or additional educational support, we strongly recommend a conference with the teacher first, to help determine if tutoring is needed and, if so, what type will be most beneficial.

SECTION VIII. STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND RECOGNITION

Student activities program

In keeping with our stated mission to develop the whole child, Holy Family strives to offer a variety of stimulating but developmentally appropriate student activities outside the regular class period. These activities are chosen and approved to enrich the school experience; to provide opportunities for students to extend their abilities and interests and to develop new ones; and to foster self-esteem through purposeful participation. A student activities program should emphasize skill-building, teambuilding, and a student's pride in his or her involvement and improvement.

Student activities are a privilege, and participation implies certain responsibilities on the part of the student and his/her parents. To participate, a student must meet the age requirement for the activity, must be prepared to fulfil the responsibilities of the activity and, in most cases, must be in good standing academically and behaviorally.

A middle-school student who is absent from school for illness, who leaves during the school day for illness or is suspended may not attend an athletic or social activity after school or in the evening.

The Athletic Handbook is distributed to all 5th-8th grade student athletes, and an acknowledgement form must be signed by the athlete's parents before participating in athletics.

Play Like A Champion Today

Holy Family uses the "Play Like A Champion Today" educational program as the backdrop to our athletic program. This *Sports as Ministry Initiative* was designed by the University of Notre Dame's Center for Ethical Education. At least one parent per family involved in Holy Family Athletics will be required to attend a parent training.

Specialty programs

Occasionally the school may make space available for an extracurricular activity offered by someone outside the school staff for a fee. These persons are screened for permission to advertise and must comply with Ethics and Integrity in Ministry policies. However, if a concern arises with one of these programs, it should be resolved between the parent and the provider.

Students signing up for these programs do not have to remain eligible to participate, but parents should consider withholding the privilege when grades or behavior need to improve.

Student recognition

The student recognition program is based upon developmental appropriateness and is designed to promote student pride in accomplishment and improvement. Our focus is to recognize personal achievement rather than competition among peers.

In grades 2-8, students are eligible for the Angel awards each month. Each homeroom teacher chooses a student who models each of the virtues being studied that month. The students are recognized after Mass once a month. Grades 5-8 are recognized at each report card for A honor roll or A/B honor roll, both of which require satisfactory conduct grades.

In the spring of each year, the Library Manager recognizes students in grades fourth through eighth who have read five, ten, fifteen, or twenty books on the yearly Lectio Program list.

Students in grades fourth through eighth grade are also recognized in the spring by the local chapter of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas in different academic and fine arts areas that center around a Catholic theme.

At Promotion, eighth grade students who achieve certain academic criteria are eligible for the President's Education Awards Program, given by the United States Department of Education.

SECTION IX. FINANCIAL MATTERS

Tuition and fee policies

Two tuition categories will be available for families:

- Catholic
- Non-Catholic

The tuition category will be established when the student is notified of admission acceptance. The tuition category is determined by a student's Baptism in the Catholic church or a parish's verification that the family is a participating member of the parish.

Tuition rates may be changed from Non-Catholic to Catholic or Catholic to Non-Catholic in consideration of additional information.

Fees for new students include

- A nonrefundable Application processing fee
- A New Student Fee that is nonrefundable unless an accepted student with fees paid does not enroll at Holy Family due to a family's relocation out of town.
- An Annual Enrollment Fee

Refund of a new student fee closes the student's application file. If the family requests that the student's file be reactivated, they will have forfeited any priority consideration as an enrolled student.

Every student, including new students, will be assessed an Annual Enrollment Fee that is nonrefundable.

The school uses a tuition management company which charges an annual administrative fee per family. This fee is nonrefundable according to the company's policy.

Early Withdrawal/Tuition Refund.

Twenty percent of gross tuition is assessed for early withdrawal after August 1. A tuition refund will be prorated based upon the number of school days at time of withdrawal and a 20% retainment of gross tuition for early withdrawal.

Tuition assistance

Need-based tuition grants are available. Families who wish to apply must complete an application through the FACTS Grant and Aid Assistance Program and attach the most recent W-2's and the tax return from the prior year. The company conducts a financial need analysis and considers the cost of living in the Austin area plus many other factors. The Business & Finance Committee of the Board of Directors uses this analysis as a guideline when matching need with the funds available. This process is confidential.

The usual time for this process coincides with Continuous Enrollment dates, but a family may apply at any time. Families must apply for the grant each year. Receiving a grant one year does not guarantee the same grant or any grant for the following year.

Financial obligations and records release

All financial obligations must be satisfied before academic records for a withdrawing student may be released.

Charitable giving

Holy Family has a robust annual giving program, lead by our Angel Fund (formally Choir of Angels), which allows the Holy Family community and other benefactors to support our students in all areas of the school, including tuition assistance, academic resources and technology, teacher professional development and religious retreats. Launched each school year, giving to the Angel Fund forms the foundation of annual giving at Holy Family. There are two additional fundraising events held throughout

the year that also impact our students – The Holy Family Gala and our Run with The Angels Fun Run. Families are encouraged to support these events annually at levels that are personally appropriate.

There are numerous ways to make financial gifts to the school including current gifts of cash or securities, planned giving commitments and in-kind gifts. We encourage all parents who work for a company that has a matching gift program to leverage that program to amplify each gift you make to the school. For questions, or for those interested in donating to specific needs or in discussing options for planned gifts, please contact our Director of Advancement at x2116.

Tuition and fees related to initiating or continuing admission are not tax-deductible; however, donations to the school are deductible since Holy Family is a 501 3(c) organization.

Families are asked not to request funds from other parents in classes or programs without the permission of the Principal.

Patrons' family businesses

Patrons who have family business enterprises are invited to advertise at no cost. These businesses will be posted in the Resource Document section of the Family Portal. However, access to Family Portal is a privilege designed to enhance social communication and therefore is not intended to be used for the purpose of facilitating business solicitations. We respectfully request that patrons' business conversations and transactions take place at times that do not interfere with student activities or procedures.

There are several opportunities throughout the year for businesses to serve as sponsors of various events or through our Business Sponsorship Program. These opportunities allow businesses to support our school and to receive additional recognition. Contact the Advancement Office for more information.

SECTION X. MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Hope building serves approximately two hundred and seventy-five students and over thirteen faculty members. The purpose of this information is to inform parents, students, and faculty of the policies and procedures of Holy Family Catholic Middle School, grades 5-8.

Rationale

Young people undergo more rapid and profound personal changes during the years between 10 and 15 than at any other period of their lives. The self-contained elementary classroom with one primary teacher is not able to optimally address the intellectual, physical, social, spiritual, or emotional needs of the middle school adolescent. Therefore, the middle school model was created as a transitional period between elementary school and high school.

Fifth grade is the “hinge” year between elementary and the full middle school program. To meet their developmental needs, capabilities, and talents, grades five through eight have a homeroom, and educators who teach departmentalized subjects. Students are offered a more varied choice of elective and special area courses as they advance in grade. They have opportunities for additional extracurricular activities as well.

Philosophy

Holy Family Middle School creates warm, inviting classrooms where learning and learners are celebrated. A safe climate, inviting, and caring promotes a sense of community.

Our philosophy is that each of us needs to take **responsibility** for our thoughts, words, and deeds. Students are encouraged to have **self-discipline**. However, if a student has difficulty with the following expectations, they need to learn the life lesson that decisions and choices come with both privileges and consequences.

We expect that individuals treat all others and him or herself with dignity and respect. Students and adults recognize, accept, and celebrate one another's differences and diversity with a spirit of inclusiveness. Our middle school students are expected to adhere to the following expectations.

General behavior guidelines

All students, faculty, staff, and parents should exhibit a Christian spirit by respecting self, others, and property contributing positively to the learning environment, and following school and classroom procedures.

Discipline

Middle school students must comply with all requirements of this handbook, including the general behavioral guidelines in the Standards of Conduct section.

Merits

Holy Family Middle School uses a merit program to emphasize the positive aspects of student behavior and student choices. The merit program works in conjunction with the Angel Virtue program and serves to highlight the virtues studied each month. Students earn merits when they exhibit positive behaviors, such as the whole class quietly entering the classroom with all materials read or stopping and helping another student when needed. Merits can be given to a whole class or an individual student and can be given, like demerits, by all teachers, administrators, and staff members. As homeroom classes accumulate merits, they choose with their teacher how they will “spend” merits.

Homework

Homework is designed to enrich and reinforce the material taught during the school day. Students are expected to put forth their personal best on all assignments. When students do not complete their homework, they fall behind in their academic success. To ensure that students have an opportunity to be successful academically as well as to develop the life skills of responsibility, time management,

organization, working independently, and meeting deadlines, the middle school faculty will follow these procedures concerning late or unacceptable homework:

- All assignments are to be completed and turned in on the date due.
- Students that submit assignments after the original due date will receive partial credit.

*We recognize that occasionally extenuating circumstances arise at home that makes it difficult to complete homework. In these limited situations, a late penalty will not be assessed for missing homework if a parent sends a note the next morning. The student is expected to complete homework at the earliest opportunity.

Parents and students are encouraged to check grades on Family Portal regularly. Teachers will record scores within one week of the due date and usually two weeks for projects. Please contact the Director of Admission if you have a problem accessing your child's Family Portal grades.

Homework time estimates are given in Section VII, Academics/School Program. This parameter may vary according to each student's work and study habits. The homework assignments may include reading, studying, or completing written work. Regular homework assignments will not ordinarily be given on Fridays or during holiday breaks. Occasionally there may be an exception to this policy. Advance math classes often require additional time for studying. Weekend work may be necessary to complete long term assignments such as reading books for book reports, editing compositions, or gathering research. Good time management habits will decrease the amount of stress a student experiences in completing homework. Long term assignments and projects will be assigned well in advance, and students are responsible for keeping track of all assignments and test dates and learning how to pace their preparation time. *See block scheduling for homework suggestion.*

Block scheduling

Block scheduling will be used for social studies and science in fifth and sixth grade and for all subjects in seventh and eighth grades, which will schedule students on alternate days for all subjects. Homework for these classes should be completed that evening.

Student Council

The purpose of the Student Council is to lead and represent the student body. The goal is to form a positive, unified student community. The student council is responsible for planning and facilitating a variety of school events and projects. For students to participate in student council, they must meet the criteria adopted. If a student council member's grades or conduct do not meet the requirements, s/he will be placed on probation. If there is no improvement, s/he will be replaced by an alternate chosen by the student council advisor in consultation with the Assistant Principal.

Uniforms

To foster a positive environment of excellence and school identity, uniforms must be worn appropriately at all times. See Section VI of this handbook for the uniform regulations.

Alternative dress day code

Circumstances will arise where middle school students will be given the privilege of wearing alternative attire to school. Students are expected to wear attire that is consistent with standards of modesty and decency. (Diocesan Policy 325) Inappropriate messages on tee shirts are not allowed. The teachers or administration will determine if a student is inappropriately dressed. If a student is inappropriately dressed, the student may be sent home to change, or a behavior notice issued.

Lockers

Students in grades 5 to 8 will be assigned a locker. Lockers are a privilege, not a right. They are to be treated properly, for example, do not overstuff. Students may only use lockers at designated times. They are to be opened and closed gently. The locker must be kept orderly and the floor area around lockers neat at all times. Be courteous and aware of the noise level when classes are in session.

Ear buds in middle school classrooms

Ear buds or earphones may only be used at the direction of the teacher for specific middle school classroom activities.

Afternoon dismissal

Parents of Middle School students have several options for their students at dismissal time. Parents with high school students at St. Dominic Savio High School can complete the Biker/Walker form and have their student walk to St. Dominic Savio High School using the crosswalk near the carline dismissal area. Students should also be designated as a walker to Savio in the PikMyKid app. Students with Biker/Walker form on file can walk home using the sidewalks and crosswalk in front of the school near Neenah Avenue. Students can also go to our dismissal carline and be picked up by parents.

Please note that, for safety reasons, we will not send students to a waiting car in the parking lot or to any other area on campus except those areas listed above.

APPENDIX