

Our Lady Help of Christians Academy



Parent-Student Handbook

2024-2025

Society of St. Pius X, Denver, Colorado, Inc. • St. Isidore Catholic Church

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OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS ACADEMY

INTRODUCTION

Our Lady Help of Christians Academy, a private Catholic school for grades K through 12 and a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, operates under the guidelines of the United States District of the Society of St. Pius X. This handbook is provided as a reference to school parents and students regarding school policy. Our Lady Help of Christians Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin in the administration and hiring of personnel, admissions, or any other school administered programs.

Our Lady Help of Christians Academy provides children with a thorough Catholic education founded upon traditional principles. The school strives ultimately to form good Catholic citizens, men and women willing and able to work for the restoration of all things in Christ, freely submitting to the reign of Our Lord in the spiritual, moral, intellectual, and physical realms.

MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

Our mission as a private Catholic school is to develop the minds, bodies, and souls of students in accordance with the perennial educational and moral principles of the Roman Catholic Church. We operate under the Society of Saint Pius X, and provide a structured, traditional, social, and academic environment in which students pursue truth and develop virtue within a rigorous, balanced curriculum, and take active part in the life and liturgy of a thriving community fully committed to developing Christian values. By providing an atmosphere of serious scholarship and Catholic vitality, Our Lady Help of Christians Academy strives, as inspired by the motto of the Society of Saint Pius X, to equip students "To restore all things in Christ."

Learning is a profoundly human process, one best accomplished through patient, qualitative drawing out, rather than mechanistic, quantitative filling up. The school strives continuously to provide the best possible facilities, tools, and material resources, in terms of texts and an integrated curriculum, simultaneously recognizing that our teachers' mastery of subject matter, ability to communicate, and, above all, love for our students, are what finally foster a desire for learning in those students. Our curriculum challenges minds; our teachers work with God to form souls.

ADMISSIONS

Admission packets are available through the school office. Kindergarten applicants must be 5 years old before the first day of school.

School personnel will administer entrance exams to prospective students for grades 1-12 before initial grade placement. Students entering grade 1 must take an entrance exam only if they did not complete Kindergarten at Our Lady Help of Christians Academy in the academic year immediately prior to their entrance. Kindergarten students are not tested. A review of academic, testing, and behavioral records from any previous school(s) is a part of the placement process for students entering grades 7-12. Parents must notify the school of any learning, emotional, or behavioral handicaps prior to an applicant's admission.

Religion is integral to the education offered at Our Lady Help of Christians Academy. All students must submit to the entire curriculum as offered: they must attend all religion classes, conform to all school policies, and participate in all scheduled activities.

As a matter of policy, new students automatically remain on academic probation for at least a semester.

New Students

The school considers any child not enrolled in the school during the previous semester a new student for enrollment purposes.

The following are required for new student enrollment:

- A letter of recommendation from student's Pastor or from the most current classroom teacher
- All academic, standardized test, and behavioral records
- Individualized Education Program (IEP) for students with any documented learning disability.
- Completed registration forms
- Registration and fee payments
- A photocopy of the official state-issued birth certificate (A certified copy is not necessary.)
- Physical examination, including hearing and vision screening, with physician documentation
- Baptism and Confirmation certificates, when applicable
- Notarized copies of official custodial documents, when applicable
- Vaccination records showing completion of required inoculations, or medical exemption or conscientious objection form as mandated by state law
- Meeting with the Principal

Returning Students

The following are required for returning student enrollment:

- Demonstration of adequate academic and disciplinary performance to warrant continuation
- All registration forms completed and turned in by deadline
- Tuition payments current and all fees paid
- Registration and book fees paid
- Vaccination records, medical exemption forms, or exemption statements must be current
- Custodial / legal documents provided and up-to-date, if applicable
- Meeting with the Principal (as applicable)

COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE FAMILY AND SCHOOL

In the effort to provide a true Catholic formation, Our Lady Help of Christians Academy needs the cooperation of the parents of its students. The Academy strives to implement the laws of God and the discipline of the Church, imperative for the students' sanctification as well as for their proper intellectual development of the student. Without parental reinforcement—initially entrusting the school with educable children, and supporting school policy and procedures throughout the educational process—the school can accomplish little of lasting impact. With this in mind, the school urges parents to observe the following:

Communication

Parents must provide, in an open and timely manner, any information (concerning health, behavioral idiosyncrasies or difficulties, spiritual and intellectual strengths or weaknesses, physical deficiencies, etc.) that may be helpful or necessary in the proper formation of the child. Withholding necessary information not only impedes the efforts of teachers and administrators but indicates a potentially damaging mistrust. In order to maintain the vital cooperation between family and school in the work of education, all communication (written, email, or verbal) between parents and school personnel is expected to be conducted in a civil manner. Use of threatening or intimidating language constitutes a direct attack on the necessary unity among educators, and therefore may result in immediate student dismissal or, in less severe cases, may be used as a factor in determining family eligibility for re-enrollment.

Spiritual and Moral Formation

The primary role parents fulfill as educators of their children relates most specifically to the formation of good intellectual and religious habits and attitudes, and the development of a genuine love for learning and the Faith. A balanced and joyful home life, in which children may receive their first experiences of the nourishing authority and protective affection of their heavenly Father, will foster a respectful and affectionate docility in the children that is vital for their education and healthy development as human beings and children of God.

Regulation of Electronic Media

Television, electronic games, social media, and recreational internet use not only impede the intellectual and spiritual progress of the student, but pose potentially severe moral risks. By their nature, electronic media work directly against the goal of education, which is, in part, to draw the child into reality. Parents are urged to eliminate or at least minimize exposure to these media in the home to the greatest extent possible. Movies and TV should be thoroughly screened for content and spirit, and should generally be forbidden on school nights. Our Lady Help of Christians Academy asks parents to forbid their children to access the internet without supervision or to create, host, or maintain personal websites or social media accounts, or to participate in online social networking. Further, all infractions listed in the Handbook apply to physical as well as electronic and cyber environments: students will incur the same punishment for lying or conduct or spirit prejudicial to the school online, for example, as they would for those same things in person. Those who choose to participate in the cyber domain should bear in mind that the World Wide Web is an open and generally unsecured environment: true privacy does not exist there, and they must assume that all postings are instantaneous, global, and permanent.

Use of cell or “smart” phones or watches requires specific mention. These now ubiquitous devices are often useful, especially as a means of emergency communication. They also, however, represent one of the most prevalent sources of distraction, exposure to moral danger, and detachment from reality in our culture. The smartphone, in particular, is not a passive, but rather an active tool that has the capacity, if not consciously and conscientiously restricted and regulated, to overcome its user. Our Lady Help of Christians Academy, therefore, asks parents not to allow their children to own a personal smartphone or internet capable device.

Especially because of their capacity to distract, student cell or smart phones or watches (or any personal electronic devices) are not allowed on campus at any time or at any school sponsored events. If student drivers have phones, they must be left in their cars. Further details follow in the “General Rules & Guidelines” section of this handbook.

For more guidance upon use of technology, please read carefully the *Digital Safety* appendix at the end of this handbook and attend school presentations about the dangers of technology.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict is often the result of poor communication and misinformation. Parents are asked to exercise discretion and follow school procedure if a child expresses school related dissatisfaction or problems: both the school and the parents must avoid on the one hand, assuming ill will, or on the other, denying the possibility that a problem could exist. In the case of student conflict with a teacher, parents need to withhold assessment of the situation until they have first contacted the teacher involved. Only after this initial contact, and if the conflict remains unresolved, should parents contact the appropriate school principal. Direct recourse to the principal is justified when an issue relates directly to overall school policy, or to some matter difficult to present discreetly to the teacher or to the principal. In any case, parents should ask school officials about matters of concern to ensure proper understanding rather than engaging in potentially harmful judgment based upon secondhand information. A spirit of disunity and mistrust among educators is detrimental to the formation and healthy development of the child.

Discretion

As a matter of charity and unity, parents are asked to avoid discussion of any faults, difficulties, or problems—actual or perceived—with the Academy or its staff in the presence of students. Beyond being an objective source of scandal, this spirit of criticism severely undermines the operation of the school and destroys the children’s confidence in any authority.

Homework Supervision

Parents are expected to supervise homework to ensure completion and accuracy. This daily investment of the parents' time is one of the strongest proofs they can give to children of their respect for and support of the school and education generally.

Paternal Participation

As an extension of God's authority and Catholic hierarchy, and as heads of families, fathers must take an active interest in the education of their children in matters of curriculum, school activities, and especially their children's progress. As St. Thomas Aquinas teaches, "It is obvious that the upbringing of a human child requires not only the mother's care for his nourishment, but much more the care of his father as guide and guardian, and under whom he progresses in goods both internal and external ... Or the father devolves the upbringing of the child." (IIa IIae q. 154, a. 2, c.) As their primary intellectual and moral guide, the father needs to realize that his children will be the reflection of his own thought and attitudes.

Financial Obligation

Parents must fulfill to the best of their ability all points of the enrollment contract, including the support of official fundraisers. This is a matter of justice towards teachers and students alike—please see details in the "Tuition, Fundraising & Readmission" section later in this handbook.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, from which all grace flows, will be attended by the students on Mondays through Fridays at 11:30 a.m. as part of the regular schedule.

In addition to assisting at Mass, students will recite daily prayers before and after school, and at meal times. Students will observe seasonal devotions throughout the Liturgical Year.

Students will have the opportunity to go to confession each week during school hours, and priests will be available for confession during morning Mass when possible.

All students must have their own missals and rosaries. Girls must also have their own white chapel veils.

DAILY SCHEDULE

General Schedule

The school day for all grades consists of classroom instruction, recess, and lunch. School is in session Monday through Friday from 7:50 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Hourly Schedule

Monday- Friday

7:50 a.m. First bell, Line up
7:55 a.m. Attendance, Prayer
8:00 a.m. Classes Begin
11:30 a.m. Mass
12:15 p.m. Lunch
3:30 p.m. Dismissal

ARRIVAL, DEPARTURE AND DISMISSAL POLICY

Hours of Operation

School is considered in session from 7:50 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. The school remains open from 7:30 a.m. until 3:40 p.m. On early dismissal days, students will be dismissed at 12:00 noon, unless otherwise noted. It is important that students arrive on time every day for maximum learning to take place.

Student Drivers

High School students with licenses may drive themselves and others to school, subject to legal license restrictions and with written permission from their parents AND the parents of designated passengers, as applicable. A list of approved passengers for each student driver will be maintained in the school office and in the student driver's vehicle. Students may not drive anyone other than the persons specified to or from school, or to any school-related activity. Students may park only in designated areas.

Arrival

On-time arrival at school is a matter of justice toward teachers and students. Students are to arrive at school no later than 7:50 a.m. Students not in line-up for morning prayers at 7:55 will be marked "tardy" for the day. Parents of students arriving late to school, must come into the building to sign in their child(ren) at the secretary's desk.

Please use only designated areas for student drop off (and pick up).

Students may not arrive before 7:30 a.m. and, if on site prior to this time, will not be allowed into the school until then. The Academy is not responsible for students who arrive before this time.

Departure

School dismissal is at 3:30 p.m. Students will wait in a designated area for parents to pick them up. Parents must pick up students promptly, and in no event after 3:45 p.m. Teachers will make every effort to ensure that children are ready for pick-up at dismissal time.

Once a parent has arrived for pick-up, the student is considered under that parent's care and supervision. Dismissed students are expected to go directly to their cars. Students may not be left unsupervised in the school building or on school premises. The Principal may impose disciplinary penalties if children consistently remain on campus after hours.

Early Departure

Parents must inform the school office in advance of any instance when a student needs to leave the school premises before the usual dismissal time. The reason for the early dismissal (doctor or dentist appointment, etc.) must be indicated. Whenever possible, parents should schedule appointments outside of school hours. Parents who need to pick up students during the school day must go to the school office to pick them up.

The school requires advance written notice if someone other than the parent will pick up a student for an appointment.

Early Dismissal

On occasion, school may be dismissed early for special evening events or for other reasons. The school will notify parents in advance of these early dismissals.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Healthy students are expected to attend school every day. Students absent from school more than 18 times in an academic year *may be retained in the same grade or denied a diploma* for excessive absenteeism. The Principal will make the final decision in these cases.

Absence

In the case of an unforeseen absence, parents need to notify the school office by 9 a.m. and provide an explanation.

In the case of an extended absence, parents must make arrangements with the school for schoolwork. Students returning to school after an illness or absence must bring a written note of explanation to the secretary. Absence due to sickness exceeding five consecutive academic days requires an explanatory note from a physician.

At the Principal's discretion, students with four or more absences in an academic quarter may be penalized by the loss of a full letter grade in each major academic subject for that quarter. Student absences for which parents provide no explanation will be unexcused. Unexcused absences may result in disciplinary action. Assignments missed on account of unexcused absences will be penalized at the Principal's discretion.

Students who are at school less than 2 hours on a given day will be marked "absent" for that full day. Students who must leave school before completing 4 hours will be marked absent for a half day. Students absent for more than half a day may not participate in any extracurricular activities on that same day, including musical and play rehearsals, or sports practice.

A student who is taken out of school before the end of the academic year and who has not completed class work and final exams prior to departure is subject to a final report card grade of INCOMPLETE.

Foreseen Absences

In the case of foreseen absence, parents must provide the school with advance written notification. Planned absences (for special occasions such as out-of-town weddings or funerals, etc.) require the further permission of the Principal. Whenever possible, parents should avoid making personal plans that will result in missed class time.

In order to avoid disrupting the schedule of the class or of the school, retarding the child's academic progress, and sending conflicting messages to the children regarding the importance of academics and duty of state, families are expected to plan vacations around the school schedule. Absences for vacation taken during the academic term will be considered unexcused, and students may receive zero credit for all missed class work, assignments, and exams.

CALENDAR

This year's academic calendar is included at the end of the handbook. School officials will notify parents of any changes, should they occur. It is the parents' responsibility to be aware of important school dates and functions. Working parents should take special note of the school's days off, early dismissals, conference dates, etc., and should make every effort to arrange their work schedules accordingly. Please note that the best way to see changes to the academic calendar is by checking the school website at <https://ourladyhelpofchristians-academy.com/en/news-events/events/all>

Student participation in functions noted on the school calendar (including occasional evening activities such as music performances) is mandatory unless explicitly indicated otherwise.

MEAL POLICY

Parents should closely supervise all school meal preparations made by their children. Students—especially younger children—need sufficient, healthful nourishment in order to function properly in school. Hungry children will lack energy and concentration; those given excessive sugar frequently exhibit hyperactivity and irritability.

Food Allergies

Parents must notify the school of any and all food allergies, their specific nature, and severity.

Breakfast

On special days, when there is Mass in the morning, students should bring a breakfast to school. Students will have about 10-15 minutes for breakfast. Any special morning Mass will be announced in advance so that parents can send a breakfast to school for their child(ren).

Lunch

All students should bring lunches to school each day. Please mark all containers with the family name. Good manners are expected at the table. Please go over manners with your children.

Heating Meals at School

Teachers will not be able to heat up your child's breakfast or lunch, due to limited time. Parents are asked to send meals that do not need to be heated or to use a container that will help retain the heat for the food.

HEALTH POLICY

Communicable Disease

A student suffering from a contagious illness or a bad cold will not be allowed in school. Should an outbreak of a communicable disease occur, children not vaccinated against that disease (for which a vaccine exists) must be removed from the school for a period of time determined prudent by medical professionals.

Parents must report all instances of communicable disease to the school office. Communicable diseases include but are not limited to: covid-19, chicken pox, pink eye, flu, impetigo, head lice, scabies, measles, mumps, whooping cough, ring worm, roseola, strep throat, German measles, mononucleosis, and scarlet fever. Parents unsure of the communicability of an illness should consult a medical professional and call the school office before sending a child to school.

Illness and Injury

Parents will be notified in the case of serious illness or injury that occurs at the school. In such cases, the child(ren) will be sent home only in the care of a parent or person designated by the parent. If immediate notification is not possible due to the nature of the injury or circumstances, the school will act in compliance with the registration releases and permissions and will notify the parents/legal guardians in a timely manner. In emergency situations, the school will contact emergency medical services and parents (or designated personnel) as expeditiously as possible.

Vaccinations

State law requires that children enrolled in all Colorado schools be vaccinated against certain diseases, while allowing for medical and non-medical exemptions. Parents must therefore submit applicable pupil vaccination documentation, and provide updates as required. Parents assume all legal and financial responsibility in representing to the school whether or not the child is in compliance with all required immunizations.

SSPX Statement on Vaccination

Schools of the US District of the Society of Saint Pius X comply with vaccination policies of local health and education authorities while adhering to moral principles of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church does not oppose vaccinations in principle, but it does consider as morally illicit the development of vaccines from aborted fetal tissues. In 2005, the Vatican clarified¹ the proper position of all Catholics on this matter, and the SSPX adheres to that declaration.

Schools of the SSPX also support parental authority and freedom of choice, in matters not opposed to the moral law. If the state law does not mandate vaccination, neither do our schools. In the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease, our schools work closely with local and state officials to respond according to the guidelines prescribed by the governing authorities.

Medications

¹ Pontifical Academy for Life. Moral reflections on vaccines prepared from cells derived from human aborted fetuses. Cf. *The Angelus*, February 2006, vol. 29, n. 2.

The school may not dispense medication without professionally indicated direction. Students may not self-medicate, with the exception of insulin pumps, epinephrine (EpiPen), and asthma inhalers. The following forms, available from the secretary's office, must be completed, signed, and dated in every applicable case and returned to the secretary's office:

- Request for Prescription Medication to be Administered During School Attendance;
- Request for Non-Prescription Medication to be Administered During School Attendance;
- Asthma Action Plan;
- Allergy Action Plan.

Parents should administer medication at home whenever possible, and should ask their doctor or pharmacist to develop an at-home dosing schedule to avoid the need for medication administration at school.

Students may only bring prescriptions and other medications to school in original containers, appropriately labeled by a pharmacy or physician, and must give them to the school secretary. Dosing directions should be clearly marked on each container. School personnel will not administer first-time medications.

LOWER SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The curriculum for kindergarten through sixth grade includes the following subjects: religion, language arts (learning to read and write, grammar, dictation, literature, composition), history and geography, mathematics, nature study and science, music, art, and physical education. These will be taught at the appropriate developmental level for each grade.

Fine arts—music (sacred and secular), poetry, art, and drama—are an important part of the curriculum. The school encourages performing skits, copying and drawing pictures, and dramatizing poetry and singing, along with creative projects and presentations in all subjects.

Religious Instruction

Formal religion instruction holds the place of honor in the curriculum. Classes include an ordered presentation of the Catholic Faith through the study of Christian doctrine, the life of Our Lord, the Mass, the liturgical year, Bible history, and the lives of the saints. Children are taught to memorize the catechism, and at the same time to see behind these truths the face of Our Lord, calling them to lives of holiness in union with Him. Thus, students are encouraged to develop a profound spiritual life in union with the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church.

Literature and Language Arts

SSPX schools place great emphasis on a literature-based language arts program. Good literature is essential to the proper, healthy development of both the intellectual and spiritual lives. As Our Lord knew when He chose to teach through parables, stories naturally engage the intellect, inspiring wonder and understanding. Literature presents accurate depictions of reality, including the best and the worst of human nature, allowing students to experience — vicariously yet profoundly — circumstances and scenarios that will inspire them to embrace the good and reject the bad. Through reading, discussing, and writing about good literature, students gain an openness to the realities of the soul, and thus are made docile to the call of grace, which draws them toward the highest of all realities. Dictation and poetry are a preparation and an extension of the study of literature, inspiring the intelligence and nourishing the memory with beauty. The study of grammar is the handmaid of literature, enabling children to penetrate the essentials of the written word and to express themselves with clarity and elegance.

Other Subjects

The other classroom subjects likewise harness the curiosity and strengthen the nature of the students. Math teaches accuracy, order, and logic; science explores the beauty of God's plan in the natural world; history reinforces the study of human nature and the world, bringing to life real heroes and important events and connecting causes and effects; geography integrated with history broadens students' cultural awareness and helps to develop a truly Catholic perspective.

UPPER SCHOOL CURRICULUM

At the foundation of the education offered at Our Lady Help of Christians Academy is the idea that human reason can discover and understand an order outside itself, the order created by God. Students receive a thorough and integrated view of this reality through the organic unity of all subjects. They learn to think in an orderly fashion, and to speak and write as clearly as they think, and ultimately to judge with wisdom and prudence.

At Our Lady Help of Christians Academy, students learn from the saints, ancients, and secular masters through literature, history, philosophy, math, science, and religion. By opening to them the treasury of human knowledge, teachers strive to inspire students with an ardent love of truth and an increasingly clear vision of their final end. By teaching them to think not only critically but classically, and to integrate that truth into their own actions, an Our Lady Help of Christians Academy education prepares students both to face the concrete conditions in the world, and to embrace supernatural as well as natural happiness.

The following is the standard curriculum of the Academy. Dependent upon academic capacity, some students may transition to a more vocational curriculum starting in the 11th grade. While all students will be assessed in accordance with the grading scale of this handbook, and will be eligible for the honor roll based upon their achievement level, only those students who complete the curriculum listed for grades 9-12 below will be considered for overall academic distinction (e.g. Valedictorian and Salutatorian).

7th Grade

My Catholic Faith I
Grammar
Literature
Early Modern History
Life Science
Math 7
Music
Art
Physical Education

9th Grade

Religion
Latin I
Western Literature I
Ancient History
Biology I
Algebra I
Music
Art
Physical Education

11th Grade

Religion
Rhetoric
Latin III
Early Modern History
Physics
Algebra II
Music
Art
Physical Education

8th Grade

My Catholic Faith II
Grammar
Literature
Modern History
Earth Science
Math 8
Music
Art
Physical Education

10th Grade

Religion
Latin II
Western Literature II
Medieval History
Biology II
Geometry
Music
Art
Physical Education

12th Grade

Religion
Logic
Spanish II
Modern History/ U.S. Government
Chemistry
Business Math or Advanced Math
Music
Art
Physical Education

Graduation Requirements

To be eligible to graduate from Our Lady Help of Christians Academy, a student must complete, at a minimum, the following number of years of study in the required high school subjects listed below:

- Religion – 4
- English – 4
- History – 4 (includes 1 year of Government/Civics alone or integrated)
- Latin – 2
- Math – 2
- Science – 2
- PE – 4
- Music – 4
- Art - 2

The table below indicates the number of credits that each course merits, how many credits are available for each course over the course of a student’s high school education, and the number of credits that need to be attained by a student in a given course in order to graduate.

| Course | <i>Credit per year</i> | <i>Total credits available in four years</i> | <i>Credits needed to graduate</i> |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Religion | 1 | 4 | 3 |
| English | 1 | 4 | 3 |
| History | 1 | 4 | 3 |
| Science | 1 | 4 | 3 |
| Mathematics | 1 | 4 | 2 |
| Foreign Language | 1 | 4 | 2 |
| Music | .5 | 2 | 1 |
| Physical education | .25 | 1 | .5 |
| Art | .25 | 1 | .5 |
| Total | 7 | 28 | 18 |

Graduation eligibility will be determined by the Principal, based on academic performance, effort, conduct, and acknowledgement of the parent’s financial obligation to the school. Seniors who fail required courses during their final year in high school or who fail to attain the minimum credits necessary for each course may be denied graduation. In such cases, parents will be notified during the final quarter, except in cases where students have jeopardized their graduation by poor results in the final quarter or on final exams.

Commencement Honors

The Principal determines the valedictorian, salutatorian, and those to graduate with academic distinction.

GRADING AND ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

Grading Scale

| <i>Letter Grade</i> | <i>Grade Points</i> | <i>Numerical Range</i> |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| A+ | 4.00 | 100-97 |
| A | 4.00 | 96-94 |
| A- | 3.67 | 93-90 |
| B+ | 3.33 | 89-87 |
| B | 3.00 | 86-83 |
| B- | 2.67 | 82-80 |
| C+ | 2.33 | 79-77 |
| C | 2.00 | 76-73 |
| C- | 1.67 | 72-70 |

| | | |
|---|------|-------|
| D | 1.00 | 69-65 |
| F | 0.00 | 64-0 |

Academic Discipline/Probation

The school will issue report cards at the end of each quarter. Parents should pick up their children's report cards promptly at the secretary's desk at the time indicated. Parents must sign the report card envelope and return it to the Academy as quickly as possible.

Students earn grades based on the percentage scale above. 65% or higher constitutes a passing grade.

Any student demonstrating consistently poor academic performance will be placed on academic probation by the Principal for a designated period of time. If probationary students show no substantial progress, their parents will meet with the Principal to determine a proper course of action, which may include expulsion.

Students must understand that extensive paraphrase, excessive quotation, and unattributed sources constitute plagiarism, the theft of another's work. Teachers will provide thorough critiques of papers and drafts, taking special care to elucidate the nature of legitimate research. Teachers will inform the principal of suspected plagiarism. In confirmed cases, the principal will determine appropriate sanctions and consequences.

All academic discipline and ultimate consequences remain at the sole discretion of the Principal.

Progress / Deficiency Reports

The school will issue deficiency reports at the midpoint of each quarter to all students maintaining a D or F average in any subject. The school may also issue deficiency reports when a pattern of poor conduct exists. The report will include comments and recommendations from the teacher. Our Lady Help of Christians Academy encourages parents with concerns to communicate with teachers about their children's performance.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents are required to attend all parent-teacher conferences to discuss grades, general academic performance, character, and moral development with teachers.

HONOR ROLL

The Honor Roll exists to reward outstanding scholastic achievement and to recognize those students who demonstrate superior and sustained motivation, responsibility, hard work, and character. Students who receive any conduct grade of C- or below will be ineligible for the Honor Roll. Students who have been suspended for any reason will be ineligible for the Honor Roll.

Students in grades 4-12 are eligible for the Honor Roll as follows:

Summa cum Laude

Final overall weighted average of 97% (A+) or above, with no final grade in any subject below a 90% (A-)

Magna cum Laude

Final overall weighted average of 94% (A) or above, with no final grade in any subject below an 87% (B+)

Cum Laude

Final overall weighted average of 90% (A-) or above, with no final grade in any subject below an 83% (B)

HOMEWORK AND HOMEWORK POLICIES

Teachers assign homework to reinforce knowledge, instill a sense of responsibility, encourage time management, and develop independent study habits. This daily effort on the part of the student is essential to the formation of profound, lasting qualities of heart and mind. Students must turn in assignments on time, and make up homework assignments missed due to absence.

Parents are asked not to do their children's work for them. As a fundamentally dishonest circumvention of student duties, this would undermine both the teaching and the learning processes, and seriously impede the development of good study habits. Parents should, however, supervise homework, offer any needed assistance, and see that their children have sufficient time and a suitable place in which to complete assignments.

Homework Time Guidelines

K-2: No assigned homework. **It is highly recommended that parents read to their children and review catechism as often as possible—time recommendations below—to get them into the habit of doing some schoolwork at home each day.** Once the child begins to read it is beneficial to have him/her read orally to someone every night. Below is a list of other possible activities to do with children after school:

- **Kindergarten:** read to children.
- **1st grade:** review of catechism questions, oral reading, review of poetry, practice math flash cards (10 minutes)
- **2nd grade:** review of catechism questions, oral reading, review auto-dictation and poetry, review of grammar definitions, practice math flash cards (10 minutes)

Homework is routinely assigned to students in grades 3 –12. Reasonable expectations of daily homework requirements:

- **3rd grade:** 20 minutes
- **4th grade:** 30 minutes
- **5th grade:** 45 minutes
- **6th grade:** 1 hour
- **7th through 8th grades:** 1 ½ hours
- **9th through 12th grades:** 2 hours

These are general guidelines. Actual requirements will depend on the child's ability to work diligently and efficiently both in class and at home. Parents should not allow their children to linger indefinitely over homework, but should set appropriate limits and require accountability for unfinished work.

Teachers will strive to respect the above guidelines, and the school in no way obliges or encourages giving unnecessary homework – merely busy-work for its own sake. Weekend assignments may, on occasion, require more time than those given on weeknights.

Homework and Class Work Expectations

Our Lady Help of Christians and its teachers expect students to work to the best of their abilities, and parents should encourage students to take the time and care necessary to complete assignments well. Incomplete or poorly completed assignments may need to be redone. Students should take time to avoid misspellings and numerous cross-outs, and should keep homework papers in a protective folder or permanent notebook as applicable. Teachers will not accept soiled or damaged papers.

Teachers will publish specifications for homework, to include acceptable formats, paper, notebooks, pens and pencils.

Late Work

Students must complete assignments by the morning of the day they are due. Teachers will penalize late assignments percentage points for each day they are late, and will not accept work more than 5 days late.

Homework Requests and Make-Up Assessments for Absences

Students are responsible for obtaining missed assignments from their teachers or classmates. Ignorance is not an excuse. Parents may call the school office for assignments no later than the morning of the due date, and may either pick up assignments at the end of the school day, or have them sent home with siblings. Academic penalties will be given for assignments that are turned in late. Homework that is not turned in after a period of time set by the teacher will receive a zero.

Long-term projects and assignments given prior to a student absence are due on the original due date and must be delivered to the school on that day. Students should expect to take tests announced prior to an absence on the day they return to school.

Summer Homework

Teachers may assign summer reading, craft or nature projects, or other directed projects.

UNIFORM POLICY

A school uniform acts as a visible sign of the unity of a student body striving to achieve a common goal. Bearing this in mind, the standard remains *uniformity*, not individuality or fashion. While the school strives to develop strong individuals, the well-formed student will possess a true depth of character, and a personality strong from within, not defined from without. A uniform facilitates all of this by minimizing the possibility of disordered, vain, or immodest self-expression that seeks primarily to draw attention to self. Beyond this, uniform dress reinforces a sense of solidarity and belonging, and eliminates the significant social pressures associated with style consciousness and competition. Uniforms do not suppress individual expression; willingness to submit to the uniform policy indicates humility and maturity.

This handbook establishes the basic “letter of the law,” but students, aided by their parents, should discern and submit more importantly to the spirit of the uniform policy. Rather than defining each allowable or disallowable clothing item, the school relies on parents, students, and faculty to understand the purpose of uniforms and to comply with the intention of the regulations. Parents with questions or concerns should feel free to contact the school for clarification.

Hygiene and Appearance

For their own health and the consideration of others, students must bathe properly and regularly. Students must appear at school in clean, pressed, and complete uniforms. Damaged or excessively worn uniform items are unacceptable. Students must remain in full uniform while on the school property, even after school.

Make-up

Make-up and cosmetics are forbidden, with the exception of medicated bases prescribed by a physician. In these cases, students must provide a note from the prescribing physician. Fingernail polish—colored or clear—is forbidden.

Jewelry

Jewelry is forbidden, with the exception of a fine-gauge necklace with a single religious medal. Girls with pierced ears may wear a single stud earring in each ear. Boys may not wear earrings.

Hair

Fad hairstyles for boys or girls are forbidden. Hair coloring (dying, highlighting, etc.) is not permitted. Boys must be clean-shaven, well-groomed, with hair cut traditionally, off the collar and ears. Girls are to keep their hair pulled back and out of their faces. Any ribbons, hair bands, or other hair accessories are to be simple in design and color (black, blue, gray, white). Bright colors and/or big bows and flowers are not allowed.

Uniform Order Forms

Uniform order forms may be obtained from the school office. Certain uniform pieces must be purchased from the uniform company, Educational Outfitters. These are indicated below. Other uniform components

may be purchased from other retailers.

Required Uniform for Girls, K-6

- Two uniform jumpers, which extend to at least 2 inches below the knee. Extra length, if necessary, is available from the uniform company as a special order. If you need to order extra length, be sure to indicate this on the order form and allow additional time for delivery. (Must be purchased from Educational Outfitters)
- Long bicycle shorts or leggings must be worn under the jumper but may not extend below the hem line of the jumper
- Peter Pan collared white blouses, long or short sleeved
- Plain short sleeved white undershirt
- Navy cardigan sweater with embroidered school emblem (Must be purchased from Educational Outfitters)
- Navy criss-cross tie
- White, black, or navy blue knee-high socks, ankle socks, or tights (Low-cut socks or no-shows are not allowed).
- Black or navy shoes; clean and polished; no high heels, thick-soled or large tread shoes
- One white triangular shaped chapel veil
- Girls must be dressed appropriately for all kinds of weather. When they wear boots, they should bring school shoes to wear in class. No outside coats or hoodies may be worn inside the school building.
- Athletic/tennis shoes are required for playground

Required Uniform for Girls, 7-12

- Two uniform skirts, which extend to at least 3 inches below the knee. Extra length, if necessary, is available from the uniform company as a special order. If you need to order extra length, be sure to indicate this on the order form and allow additional time for delivery. (Must be purchased from Educational Outfitters)
- Long bicycle shorts or leggings must be worn under the skirt but may not extend below the hem line of the skirt
- White Oxford blouse, buttoned-down collar, long or short sleeved.
- Plain short-sleeved white undershirt
- Navy V- Necked cardigan sweater with embroidered school emblem (Must be purchased from Educational Outfitters)
- Gray criss-cross tie
- White, black or navy blue knee-high socks or tights
- Black or navy shoes, clean and polished; no high heels, thick-soled or large tread shoes
- One white triangular shaped chapel veil

- Girls must be dressed appropriately for all kinds of weather. When they wear boots, they should bring school shoes to wear in class. No outside coats or hoodies may be worn inside the school building.
- Athletic/tennis shoes are required for playground

Required Uniform for Boys, K-6

- Navy blue uniform pants
- Black belt
- Plain white Oxford button-up shirt, buttoned-down collar, long or short sleeves
- Plain white short-sleeved undershirt
- Navy blue or black socks
- Black shoes, clean and polished
- Navy sweater vest with embroidered school emblem (Must be purchased from Educational Outfitters)
- Navy tie, appropriate size
- Boys must be dressed appropriately for all kinds of weather. When they wear boots, they should bring school shoes to wear in class. No outside coats or hoodies may be worn inside the school building. There is an optional fleece jacket with embroidered school crest that may be purchased from Educational Outfitters that the K-8 boys may wear in the school building during cold weather.
- Athletic/tennis shoes are required for playground

Required Uniform for Boys, 7-12

- Gray uniform pants (Must be purchased from Educational Outfitters)
- Black belt
- Plain white Oxford button-up shirts, buttoned down collar, long or short sleeves
- Plain short-sleeved white undershirt
- Navy blue or black socks
- Black shoes, clean and polished
- Grades 7th - 8th - Boy's navy sweater vest with embroidered school emblem (Must be purchased from Educational Outfitters)
- Grades 9th - 12th - Boy's navy sweater vest with embroidered school emblem (OPTIONAL) (Must be purchased from Educational Outfitters)
- Grades 9th - 12th - Boy's navy blue sport coat with embroidered school emblem (REQUIRED) (Must be purchased from Educational Outfitters)
- Navy tie, appropriate size

- Boys must be dressed appropriately for all kinds of weather. When they wear boots, they should bring school shoes to wear in class. No outside coats or hoodies may be worn inside the school building. There is an optional fleece jacket with embroidered school crest that may be purchased from Educational Outfitters that the K-8 boys may wear in the school building during cold weather.
- Athletic/tennis shoes are required for playground

Recreation Uniform, Boys (grades 4-12)

- P.E. uniform shirts, must be purchased from the school, and athletic pants
- Athletic shoes

Recreation Uniform, Girls (grades 4-12)

- P.E. uniforms shirts and skirts, both must be purchased from the school.
- Athletic shoes

NOTE: Girls must wear modest skirts, dresses, or jumpers whenever on school or church grounds. Parents, visitors and volunteers are asked to follow these guidelines and expectations as well whenever on campus.

GENERAL SCHOOL RULES AND GUIDELINES

Character training is an important element of the education at Our Lady Help of Christians Academy. The school expects loyalty, respect, and good manners, as well as immediate, cheerful cooperation from all students. Good discipline results, in large part, from the natural response students have to a gentle but firm command of respect rather than a rigid enforcement of a long list of rules. However, the school imposes certain rules to maintain order and to help students develop the habits of discipline, courtesy, etiquette, and culture necessary for intellectual and spiritual advancement.

Forbidden Items

Teachers will confiscate these and other inappropriate items.

- Cell phones or smart phones or devices, including smart watches
- Electronic devices including but not limited to radios, CD players, MP3 players, CDs, DVDs, and electronic games of any kind
- Books, magazines, pictures, comics, letters, notes, etc. of immoral or inappropriate content
- Any drugs or alcoholic beverages
- Any tobacco or smoking paraphernalia, including matches, lighters, and “e-cigarettes” or other non-medical vapor emitting devices, etc.
- Weapons of any kind

Confiscated phones or other items will be returned to parents of violators of these rules at the discretion of the Principal.

General Classroom Behavior

- Students will raise their hands and wait to be called upon before asking or answering questions.
- Students will stand and respectfully greet all adult visitors to the classroom, addressing them by their appropriate title: Father, Sister, Mr., Mrs., Miss, etc.

Lunchroom Behavior

- Students need to bring a bag lunch. Lower school students are not allowed to bring soda to school, and candy is discouraged.
- Students may not use the microwave or any other kitchen appliances.
- Students will clean up after themselves and will help maintain the overall cleanliness of the cafeteria.

Playground Expectations

- Weather permitting, all students are expected to go out for play during recess. The school requires detailed written notification if a student cannot participate in recess activities for health or other reasons.
- All students must have a change of footwear for recess and proper clothing for cold weather. Students from the fourth grade up must have a P.E. uniform.
- For safety reasons, the school does not allow rough play or tackle football.
- Children must remain within established boundaries.
- During inclement weather, recess will take place indoors.
- Running and horseplay are forbidden inside the school.

Parties and Gift Deliveries

- Students may not take delivery of flowers, balloons, gifts, etc. during the school day.
- **Birthday Parties:** While recognizing the special nature of student birthdays, the school does not allow birthday parties for individual students. Subject to teacher discretion, however, students may bring snacks on their birthday to share with fellow classmates during lunch.
- **Feast Day and Holiday Parties:** Teachers, parents and students will not arrange classroom parties other than those approved by the school Principal.

Respect for School Property

- The school will not tolerate any abuse of school property or acts of vandalism, including defacing or damaging desks or books. Parents will be billed for damages; the student will be required to do any necessary clean-up.
- Students will help maintain an orderly environment in the school by properly looking after their own belongings and cleaning up after themselves.
- Students will keep hardbound textbooks covered at all times. The cover should display the student's name, grade, the book title, and subject. Damaged or lost books will be replaced at the parents' expense.
- All property brought into the school or maintained by the school including school locker, desks and any other temporary or permanent storage areas on the grounds of the Academy are subject to searches which are with or without cause or suspicion and may be preventative in nature. By bringing items onto Academy grounds, each student and his/her parent(s) provide his/her consent for the school to search desks and lockers provided by the school for student use, at any time school authorities determine such a search is necessary.

Restroom Use

- Students will use only designated restrooms.
- Barring legitimate emergency, high school students may not take restroom breaks during class time.
- Barring legitimate emergency, students grades 5 and up may not take restroom breaks during Mass.

General Items

- Students may not pass personal notes or written communications of any kind. Invitations to non-school sponsored social events should be distributed outside of school and off campus to ensure parents are aware of such activities, and to preclude any implication of school endorsement.
- Students must generally maintain silence in the school. Moderate noise is permitted during recess and breaks.

- Students may not run, jump, or roughhouse in any part of the school building.
- Students may not chew gum on school premises.
- Students may use the school phone only in emergencies, and only with permission from a school official.
- Students may not leave school premises during the school day without permission.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Our Lady Help of Christians Academy applies the principles of Catholic education to student discipline. True charity at times obliges correction and even punishment, but as a means of encouraging amendment, not inflicting suffering or fostering resentment. The Catholic educator strives to win the heart of the student: both instruction and discipline rest on a foundation of charity. As Christ Himself showed, unwavering admonition does not preclude patience and kindness, and those corrected with charity will learn to embrace virtue motivated by filial love rather than servile fear.

Our Lady Help of Christians Academy does not use corporal punishment. Disciplinary measures consist chiefly in the restriction of activities and privileges. Depending on circumstances, the school may limit or deny recreational activities, impose detention or study hall, assign work tasks, etc. The school will punish students based on the severity of the infraction as follows:

Minor Infractions

Minor infractions are incidents attributable more to thoughtlessness than to a defective disposition or ill will. Examples of minor infractions:

- Disorderly desks or lockers
- Incomplete, dirty, or excessively worn uniforms.
- Neglect of school property
- Causing disturbances in class or during line-up
- Neglect or improper performance of academic duties

Teachers will correct minor infractions in the classroom, and may choose to require in-school detention, study hall or other means, at the teacher's discretion. Unless a pattern develops, the school will not inform parents of these offenses.

Major Infractions

Major infractions are incidents of a more serious nature indicating knowledge of wrongdoing. Examples of major infractions:

- Insubordination or deliberate disobedience;
- Unexcused absence;
- Unexcused tardiness;
- Fighting;
- Bad language;
- Persistent failure to submit homework;
- Failure to show up for a detention;
- Use or possession of forbidden electronic devices;
- Use or possession of tobacco products;
- Excessive repetition of minor infractions such as those listed above.

The Principal will handle infractions of this nature. Students will be punished with detention or other means, at his discretion. A detention may entail extensive janitorial work or after-school study hall. Students guilty of major infractions may be excluded from extra-curricular activities. For both in-school and after-school detentions, the Principal will send home a disciplinary note which must be signed and returned by the student's parents.

Grave Infractions

Grave infractions are incidents indicating knowledge of wrongdoing with social and moral ramifications. Examples of grave infractions:

- Conduct or spirit prejudicial to the school;
- Offensive behavior or lifestyle not in line with that of a traditional Catholic school student;
- Lying, cheating, or any academic fraud, including plagiarism;
- Any illegal activity;
- Use, possession, purchase, attempts to purchase or sell drugs or drug paraphernalia or alcohol;
- Possession, purchase, or selling of weapons or fireworks;
- Grave or repeated disrespect;
- Theft;
- Vandalism or destruction of property;
- Indecent fraternization;
- Obscene expressions, gestures, writings, or conversations, including postings of such nature on the Internet;
- Possession of immoral material;
- Excessive repetition of major infractions such as those listed above.

The Principal will handle infractions of this nature. Students will be punished by suspension or expulsion, at his discretion. Suspensions may be of shorter or longer duration, depending on the gravity of the offense. Students caught cheating will face serious consequences. Older students, in particular, will generally be suspended for cheating, as a minimum, and may well be expelled, dependent upon the circumstances, even for a first offense. A lack of integrity is simply unacceptable in a serious Catholic environment. Work missed during the time of suspension may receive a zero, at the Principal's discretion. Expulsion, once imposed, will last for the duration of the academic year. The Principal may grant readmission at his discretion.

Notice of Disciplinary Action

Parents will be notified officially, by way of a disciplinary notice, of major and grave infractions, and of the disciplinary measures taken. A copy of the notice will remain in the student's file. The Principal may request a meeting.

Miscellaneous Rules & Consequences

Loyalty and respect, as well as immediate cheerful cooperation, are the virtues expected from all students. Immature or uncivilized behavior will not be tolerated.

All buildings and areas on campus in which the student does not have immediate academic interest are off-limits, with the exception of the chapel.

Dependent upon the level of an infraction, the Principal may choose to restrict an offending student's access to Academy functions for a period of time. "Academy functions" include, but are not limited to the following school activities: sporting events, concerts, fundraising activities, science fairs, geography fairs, awards ceremonies, and running the Jog-A-Thon. If parents have any question about whether or not restricted students may attend a school event, they must inquire at the school before assuming the ability to participate.

There are different levels of restriction from Academy functions. Generally, the Principal will specify the duration of event restrictions. Expelled students may not attend any Academy functions until re-admittance to the school, or the graduation of their class. Parents may appeal in writing to the Principal for changes in restricted status. If parents have doubts about restrictions, they should contact the school rather than making any assumptions.

Fraternization: should school activities require interaction between boys and girls, students of the school are expected to display proper, courteous behavior toward each other. Inappropriate, unnecessary interaction will result in suspension or expulsion.

Disciplinary Probation

Any student demonstrating consistently poor conduct will be placed on disciplinary probation by the Principal for a designated period of time. While on disciplinary probation, a student is ineligible to participate in any extra-curricular activities. If a student in a probationary status shows no substantial improvement in behavior, his or her parents will meet with the Principal to determine a proper course of action, which may include expulsion.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ELIGIBILITY

Students who participate in extracurricular activities should not jeopardize their grades by sacrificing excessive time to non-academic functions. Good grades and good conduct are always expected as prerequisites to participation in any extracurricular activity.

Eligibility Requirements

An overall grade average of 70% or above, AND
No more than one failing grade

Eligibility for a given activity will be determined for that entire activity (e.g. sport season) based upon grades attained at a given period of the academic year. For example, eligibility for basketball will be determined based upon student grades at the beginning and the middle of the basketball season.

A student's eligibility status (eligible or ineligible) will remain unchanged for the season unless the Principal changes a student's status based upon noted student negligence in academics, conduct, or any other area.

Additional Considerations

- Student employment outside the home during the school week is strongly discouraged. If a student's academic performance is deficient and he or she works outside the home on school days, parents should insist upon a change in work schedule or job termination. The Principal may separate academically deficient students with jobs who continue to sacrifice academics for employment.
- Students on disciplinary probation are ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities.
- Students who receive a major detention are suspended from extracurricular activities for a minimum of one week.
- Students are ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities on any day they are absent from school. This includes students who are absent for morning classes and arrive at school after lunch.
- Students who are on the ineligible list are encouraged to utilize their time studying in order to regain eligibility. Ineligible students are, therefore, not permitted to remain at school to watch any extracurricular activity or practice.
- Students who violate any Academy rule, regulation, or policy may be declared ineligible at the discretion of the school Principal.
- The Principal reserves the right to waive these restrictions on a case-by-case basis.

STUDENT SAFETY

Student safety, moral and physical, is a primary concern. Our wide-ranging activities are important for student formation but carry some risks. At the district level, all SSPX USA schools are governed by a robust Abuse Prevention and Response program, put in place to ensure student safety, which includes screening of all employees in positions of trust with students and annual faculty training. Locally, we have a Safety and Security department responsible for maintaining physical security of the campus and planning and overseeing emergency response drills in the schools.

Privacy, Safety, and Use of School Facilities

Our Lady Help of Christians facilities including all campus restrooms, locker rooms, bedrooms, showers, changing rooms or any other private area separately designated for use by students or attendees will be separately designated based on one's sex as reflected by his/her original birth certificate. Any entrance by members of the opposite sex for custodial/maintenance or emergency purposes is allowed with proper notice and safeguards. All students, administrative/school staff, parents, invitees and licensees must comply with this policy in order to preserve the safety and privacy rights of our students and in efforts to maintain a proper environment conducive to a proper Catholic formation.

Activities

There are a range of school-sponsored activities that contribute to our students' broader development, from field trips, sporting events, and retreats during the school year to camps over mid-year or summer breaks. Detailed policies and procedures for higher risk and more elaborate activities like camps are covered in other district documents. Field trips are covered in this handbook because they affect all parents and students.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips provide meaningful and enjoyable learning experiences for students and are mandatory academic events when scheduled. Parents agree to and sign the "Permission to Transport," "Release of Liability Agreement," and "Permission to Treat" during on-line enrollment.

The school will inform parents of field trips (or other activities) throughout the year by means of an additional notification for the specific activity, which must be signed and returned to the school prior to the event.

Field trips are a student privilege and not a right. Students may be denied field trip privileges if they are not performing well academically and behaviorally. Students who do not participate in a field trip will be marked absent for that day.

APPOINTMENTS AND CONTACT WITH SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Appointments with Teachers or Administration

Parents may request meetings with any member of the school faculty or administration. Such meetings should be scheduled in advance through the school office.

Contact with Teachers

Parents should contact teachers regarding school matters during regular school hours.

The school will not call teachers out of the classroom or away from other supervisory duties to take calls during school hours. Teachers who receive messages relating to school matters will return phone calls during available free periods. Teachers will respond to messages left after hours at their earliest convenience.

Parents should not contact teachers at their homes, via cell phone or other electronic means, or at parish functions (or in other social settings) regarding school matters.

VISITOR POLICY

Visitors

Visitors to either the upper or lower school, including parents, must check in with the secretary at the front desk in the lower school. Visitors are not allowed in the classrooms while class is in session.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In case of severe weather (tornados, severe thunderstorms, ice storms, etc.) during school hours, students should remain at school. The school will maintain contact with the U.S. Weather Service and Office of Civil Defense for tornado warnings or other severe conditions. In the event of a tornado warning, students will assemble in the safest locations within the buildings, and the school will follow procedures recommended by the Office of Civil Defense. Parents should not attempt to pick up children during emergency conditions prior to dismissal time. During emergencies, as at all other times, teachers will not release children to any person other than parents unless specifically notified by the parents. In the case of a crisis or lockdown on campus parents will be notified of an offsite location for parents to gather and await further details.

Fire and Tornado Drills

Fire drills are mandatory, and the school will conduct them regularly throughout the year. The school will conduct tornado drills as required. During drills, students must maintain silence and behave in a controlled manner while following the instructions of the school faculty. This is to ensure their safety and that of other students, faculty, and staff members.

Inclement Weather and School Closings

A decision to cancel school under adverse weather conditions is made in the interests of the students' welfare and safety. Since our school is located within the Bennett School District 29J, our closings will coincide with those of this public school district. If they are closed, we will also be closed. Parents will be notified via text messages when there is a school closing. School closings will also be published via the school email or Flocknote.

If severe storms begin after the school has begun, parents may pick up students and form carpools at their discretion. The school will contact parents in the event of an early closing, and parents should have an emergency transportation plan in place in case they cannot come and pick up their child or children.

TUITION, FUNDRAISING, AND FINANCIAL AID

Tuition

As it is a matter of justice, contractual obligation, and the financial stability of the school, parents must take their tuition obligations seriously. Parents, who for valid reasons cannot meet their monthly obligation as agreed upon in the enrollment contract, must contact the Principal to inform him of the difficulty and make alternative arrangements, such as a payment plan.

In the absence of special arrangements made with the Principal, the school may apply late fees to missed payments. The school may require parents to withdraw students until they can meet financial obligations. The school reserves the right to withhold report cards, transcripts, and diplomas in these cases.

All parents are encouraged to register with FACTS as an efficient and helpful way to make their tuition payments. The specific page for parents of Our Lady Help of Christians Academy students to sign up with FACTS is

<https://online.factsmgt.com/signin/45W2K>.

Fundraising Obligations

Fundraising provides necessary operating income, and allows the school to maintain tuition costs well below average for private institutions. Fundraising also instills in students a sense of ownership and responsibility. Participation in official school fundraisers is mandatory for all families.

Contact the school office for information on fundraising buyout options.

Financial Aid

Parents who anticipate that they will not be able to pay the full tuition for their students in a given year must apply for financial aid with FACTS before the school year begins.

Each year, Our Lady Help of Christians may be able to provide a limited amount of financial assistance to families in legitimate need, though the amount available depends entirely on benefactor donations earmarked for this purpose. To be considered for financial aid assistance, applicants must:

- Submit a completed financial aid application for the current year
- Submit a copy of a tax return and other applicable documentation for the previous year
- Maintain a monthly payment schedule as developed with the Principal
- Support and participate in all official school fundraisers

Families receiving financial aid will be asked to contribute to the overall good of the school by performing some assigned volunteer work or services.

Financial Aid may also be given in the form of tuition credit obtained by means of work services performed to help the school. If a parent is interested in working in some way at the school to help offset tuition, the school office is to be contacted, and possibilities will be discussed.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers are vital to the successful operation of the school. Those interested in volunteering should contact the school office. For security purposes, volunteers may be asked to complete a routine background check release.

Confidentiality Agreement

Volunteers must understand the importance of confidentiality and students' privacy rights. Any information obtained or overheard while volunteering at the school, or in any capacity in or out of the classroom, must remain confidential.

Volunteers will:

- Respect the confidentiality of all faculty, staff, and students;
- Remain in designated work areas;
- Dress appropriately for activities;
- Know and adhere to Academy rules and expectations;
- Notify the school office and the appropriate teacher if they cannot come when expected.

Volunteers will not:

- Hold unscheduled conferences with teachers;
- Visit classrooms of their own children unannounced;
- Bring their own children other than those directly involved to scheduled activities without prior approval;
- Use cell/smart phones or other personal electronic devices while supervising children in class, on the playground, or on field trips, except to fulfill assigned duties.

WITHDRAWAL, TRANSFER, AND READMISSION

Withdrawal Guidelines

In the event of withdrawal from the Academy during an academic year:

- Parents should arrange a meeting with the Principal to discuss and/or finalize the withdrawal.
- After making the decision to withdraw, parents must inform the Principal and return all borrowed books and materials to the school.
- Faculty will have at least three days to prepare materials for the withdrawal.
- The contract signed for enrollment is binding: parents must pay all fees and reconcile all accounts.

Readmission after Withdrawal

The school will not guarantee readmission to students withdrawn from the academy during an academic year for reasons other than relocation or health. At the discretion of the Principal, the school may impose a one year waiting period before considering a request for readmission. In these cases, the school will consider these children to be new students for purposes of admission and enrollment.

Transfer

Our Lady Help of Christians Academy will not automatically release records to another school in the case of transfer. The new school must request student health, scholastic and standardized test records from the Academy in writing with a transcript release form.

Our Lady Help of Christians Academy reserves the right to withhold all records until all financial obligations have been met.

APPENDIX: DIGITAL SAFETY GUIDE

General Observations

Although we are created by God in His own image, our wounded nature makes us prone to make mistakes, a tendency only enhanced by advances in technology. Most of us now routinely use devices that are capable of instantly putting before our eyes anything and everything—information, music, pictures, and videos.

Primary Reasons to Beware of the Internet:

- It is a resource, easily accessible anywhere on a smartphone, designed and controlled by people who want to make money and who are very good at captivating our attention.
- It is the provider of social media platforms: Instagram, Snapchat, Tumblr, TikTok, Facebook, WhatsApp, Pinterest, etc., widely considered to be quick and easy means for friends to stay in touch. Most platforms provide open access to anyone, however, and have frequently been used maliciously to promote pornography and subject users to extreme social pressure.
- It is the predominant source of pornography, which comprises one-third of the billions of gigabyte data freely available worldwide. Pornography is not only morally reprehensible but also neurologically dangerous, eliciting responses in the brain that resemble the addictive reaction to hard drug use. Addiction to pornography has nothing to do with a person's moral character or upbringing—it can happen to anyone.

General Rules for Parents:

- Recognize that no one is immune to the challenges imposed by the ascendancy of technology. Guard against naivete on the one hand and overreaction to problems on the other.
- Using smartphones, laptops, or any computer with access to **unprotected** internet is an irresponsible use of technology, not unlike leaving loaded guns on the table in a houseful of curious children.
- It is **immoral** to allow children to use the internet unsupervised.

General Guidance:

- Lead by example: start by examining and restricting your own internet use.
- Open and maintain lines of communication with your children. Conversations about sensitive topics are difficult but necessary. Initiate discussions with them about the internet and social media. Focus on positive education rather than mere, unexplained prohibition. The goal is responsible use of technology in the context of building virtue.
- Having explained the challenges of using technology, establish clear limits, rules, and accountability for screen time that apply to all internet users in the household. For example, no use behind closed doors, or in the bedrooms, or during family gatherings, meals, or outings.
- Encourage transparency. Reassure your children that they can and should come to you for advice about anything. If they are ever troubled by something they see or experience online, they should stop what they are doing and tell you right away.
- Learn about resources for parents, such as filtering apps and secure Wi-Fi routers, to protect everyone in the home from the dangers of the internet.
- Provide for and encourage healthy screen-free recreation and activities such as sports and hobbies.
- Spend quality screen-free time with each child often and avoid using technology as a babysitter—the youngest are most susceptible to becoming captivated and addicted to the screen.

- Postpone providing personal smartphones for older children until the final year of high school or later.

Resources

ProtectYoungEyes.com (PYE). PYE is currently one of the best resources available. Dedicated to raising awareness of digital safety threats and to providing practical instructions for device protection from inappropriate internet material and social media abuse, they offer:

- a free website and weekly email that include thorough up-to-date information regarding the latest apps and games that parents should be concerned about.
- an app with easy-to-follow instructions and information for digital protection.

The SSPX does not have any official affiliation with PYE, and we might not agree with everything that they present regarding parenting, in general. Nevertheless, PYE is a very valuable resource for internet safeguards.

FightTheNewDrug.org; TruthAboutPorn.org

Books. *Digital Minimalism* by Cal Newport is an excellent book about healthy tech use. A more complete list of reading resources will be published soon.

Safe routers. Phone and home internet protection begins with a safe router that filters the internet at the source (Wi-Fi), therefore protecting all devices with access to home Wi-Fi. Recommendations:

- **OpenDNS,**
- **CleanBrowsing.org**
- **Gryphon**

Layered Protection

- Provide multiple layers of protection with accountability apps, which are the best for developing good habits of responsible phone use and for preventing overuse, escapism, and occasions of sin. A good combination would include:
- **Covenant Eyes** a safe internet source (VPN) and a monitor of everything on the screen, making “loopholes” impossible, and provides an accountability partner.
- **Bark** which monitors social media and texting at a parent-set level, including everything that is sent in communications as well as apps downloaded.

THE BEST PLAN for developing good phone habits and avoiding occasions of sin or threats to privacy is to use cell phones without internet capacity. Here are our recommended devices in order of preference:

1. **Wisephone**

- It looks like a smart phone but has no internet or social media capability.
- It has a basic maps/navigation app.
- It can be used with your family network provider.
- It has a **family portal for accountability.**
- Techless.com

2. **Lightphone**

- It is extremely simple, with no internet or social media capability.
- It has a basic maps/navigation app.
- It can be used with your family network provider.
- Thelightphone.com

3. **Gabb**

- It looks like a smart phone but has no internet or social media capability.
- **It has no maps/navigation.**
- **It has no parental control.**
- **It needs its own network provider.**
- It is a less expensive option than others listed.

- Gabbwireless.com
4. **Pinwheel**
- It looks like a smart phone but has no internet or social media capability.
 - **It has no maps/navigation.**
 - **It has a very thorough parental control system—so thorough that this is not really recommended for adults.**
 - It can be used with your family network provider.
 - It is a less expensive option than others listed.
 - Pinwheel.com

Setting up a safe internet connection can be confusing and time consuming but considering the risks of real inevitable threats to our souls and to those entrusted to us, establishing preventative measures is well worth the effort.

Let us support each other in the quest for digital safety for the sake of souls. Please talk about it and share information.