



# ST. RITA SCHOOL

**In the Classical tradition**

## Elementary School Parent and Student Handbook 2025-2026

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and  
of love, and self-control." (2 Timothy 1:7)



*This school is accredited by the Virginia Catholic Education Association whose accreditation process has been approved by the Virginia Council for Private Education as authorized by the Virginia State Board of Education.*

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# **I. PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION/MISSION STATEMENT**

## ***DIOCESAN PHILOSOPHY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION***

*Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations teaching them to carry out everything I have commanded you.*

*Matthew 28:19-20*

These words of Christ addressed to the apostles at the Ascension bestowed on the Church the office of teacher. Obedient to this divine challenge, the Church provides education permeated with the spirit of Christ and dedicated to promoting the full development of the human person.<sup>1</sup> The two-fold goal of Catholic schools is to provide an environment which will foster rich religious training as well as solid academic education in a Catholic, value-oriented manner.

<sup>1</sup> Declaration on Christian Education #3

## ***DIOCESAN MISSION STATEMENT***

The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Arlington are an essential component in the educational ministry of the Church. Our schools are committed to providing an education rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ where Catholic doctrine and values and academic excellence prepare each student for a life of faith, service, and integrity.

## ***SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY***

### Mission Statement

Saint Rita School believes that “the soul of education is the education of the soul” (Pope Pius XI). We are a small Catholic school in the classical tradition, dedicated to forming children intellectually and spiritually following the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church. We treasure faith in Jesus Christ and are dedicated to serving His people.

### Vision

In order to be an exemplary Catholic school, Saint Rita School will be:

- A place where students, teachers, staff and school families work together toward the ultimate goal of human existence - knowing, loving and serving God in this world, so as to live with Him forever in the next.
- A place where school parents actively participate in the education of their children, especially in their religious education.

- A place where catholic school families provide a model of home living by praying and attending Sunday Mass together, and by participating in the sacramental life of the Church.
- A place where students and families of all faith backgrounds are welcome to share the blessings of a Catholic school.
- A place where teachers witness to the Faith by their words and deeds and through prayer and example promote the ongoing formation and spiritual growth of their students.
- A place where students grow in the love of learning.
- A place where students experience a challenging curriculum and are given the tools needed for academic success.
- A place where students are exposed to the great words of sacred and secular art, so as to appreciate the role of beauty in faith and education.
- A place where instruction in music, foreign language, technology and physical education provides a well-rounded educational experience.
- A place where students are prepared for a life of sanctity and service in an ever-changing world.

### Philosophy

The Sisters of Saint Joseph opened Saint Rita School in 1952. Their mission is to: “live and work so that all people may be united with God and one another.” S.S.J. Constitution. The Saint Rita School philosophy is built on the charism of the Sisters of Saint Joseph: a mission of social outreach, academic excellence, and hospitality, which enhance our Catholic identity.

Saint Rita School provides an environment that allows our families and the entire community to become close to God. We encourage virtue, character, and habits of mind essential for growth. Our school community recognizes the face of Christ in every child and celebrates their diversity. We embrace the mission to give our students the necessary foundation for success in this life and the next.

Our philosophy of learning calls us to be models of our Catholic Faith. We provide a traditional and challenging curriculum with differentiated instruction, fine arts, and technology. We impart a strong Catholic Faith in partnership with our students’ parents.

### Partnering with Parents

Family Culture, Virtue, and Character

Pope Pius XI stated that the school is, "by its very nature, an institution subsidiary and complementary to the family and to the Church.”

At Saint Rita, our partnership with parents is foundational. From our earliest days, we have believed that true education begins at home—and that parents are the first and most important educators of their children. We are honored to walk alongside you in forming children who are academically strong, spiritually grounded, and growing in virtue.

As we affirm in our Philosophy: “We partner with our parents to develop the academic potential of our children and help them become the saints God made them to be.” That formation includes more than academics—it’s about shaping character, cultivating virtue, and nurturing a life rooted in faith. Also noted in our Philosophy, Saint Rita School is “a place where school parents actively participate in the education of their children”. Throughout the year, our calendar is filled with seasonal events, fundraising efforts, service opportunities, and coffee with the principal, among many other activities — all intentionally infused with meaningful “nuggets” of personal and family formation.

We also offer special programs designed just for you, providing opportunities for spiritual enrichment and practical support as you grow in your role as a parent and faith leader within your family.

**Resources provided by Saint Rita School:**

- Women’s Retreat & Workshop
- Fatherhood Conference
- Heaven in Your Home (monthly gatherings)
- First Steps Family Enrichment Course ([Learn more](#))
- A monthly spiritual challenge, newsletter, and podcast
- Parent Coffee

**Real Presence Collective: The philosophy**

In an effort to provide our students with a childhood free of personal, internet capable devices and social media accounts, St. Rita School invites its parents to come together to enable their children to become the well-adjusted, joyful, fully-alive men and women that God created them to be via The Real Presence Collective: *An Incarnational Approach to Friendship, Families, and the Good Life*. This pledge stems from our philosophy and offers a practical invitation to join us in cultivating a culture of presence.

**SRS Parents’ Book Club:**

Starting with *The Anxious Generation* this past school year and continuing with *The Tech Exit: A Practical Guide to Freeing Kids and Teens from Smartphones* for the 2025-2026 school year, our parents are invited to participate in monthly book clubs with the PTO supporting the purchase of the books. Monthly gatherings are casual, encouraging, and parent-led, with the PTO generously supporting the purchase of books. All parents are welcome—we’d love to have you join the conversation.

**Character Development**

At Saint Rita School, “We encourage virtue, character, and habits of mind essential for growth.” Character development is not an add-on—it’s integrated into everything we do. Virtue formation is woven throughout our curriculum, daily routines, and school culture. The home is an extension of this formation. A strong family culture reinforces the habits that, over time, become virtues—preparing children for a life of holiness, happiness, and human flourishing. The school



and home work together in the task of passing on the riches of a classical education through consistent and coherent actions.

## ***STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK***

Each school shall utilize the Office of Catholic Schools (OCS) template to develop and distribute a handbook for students and parents/guardians. All local policies and procedures must be in conformity with the Office of Catholic Schools' policies, guidelines and regulations.

A committee, representative of the total school community, shall be involved in the development and periodic revision of this handbook. The handbook shall be updated annually to reflect policy and procedural changes. Principals shall establish a process for review and revision of local school policy to ensure changes reflect the input of key stakeholders. All parents, along with students in middle and high school, are required to provide a signature of receipt acknowledging they have read the rules and regulations outlined in the handbook, and they agree to abide by those rules (*Appendix AG-1 and AG-3*). An acknowledgment form will be provided to students upon receipt of the handbook. The form must be signed and returned by Friday of the first full week of school. Failure to have a signed form on file will not prevent the school from enforcing its policies and/or prevent a student from enrolling or continuing to be enrolled at the school.

Faculty and staff members shall be given access to all school handbooks.

In light of the unique situations which may arise in the educational process, and because it is impossible to foresee all school issues that arise, the faculty and administration reserve the right to address and to take appropriate action for any such situations not specifically referenced in this handbook. In addition, in view of the unique and essential religious mission of the school, it is expressly understood that the school may take action in cases where moral offenses occur which reflect adversely on the school, the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, or the Roman Catholic Church, or which interfere with the ability of the school to perform its religious mission or effectively maintain the intimate working relationship of the school and the Community of Faith.

This handbook may be modified by the school after reasonable notice to the parents/students of the effective date of any changes. Any section headings are for convenience of use and shall not affect the interpretation of any provisions. If the school should elect not to take action in a particular situation, this shall not be construed or interpreted as a waiver or preclude the school from acting in a subsequent situation of the same or similar kind.

Handbooks and all subsequent changes are subject to prior written approval by the Diocese. To the extent any local handbook or policy statement therein may be inconsistent with the policies, guidelines, or regulations of the Office of Catholic Schools, the Office of Catholic Schools' policies, guidelines, or regulations shall be of controlling force and effect.

## ***PARENTAL/GUARDIAN ROLE***

In this handbook, the term “parent” refers not only to a child’s natural or adopted parent, but to a student’s non-parent legal guardian or to any person or agency authorized to act in place of parents.

Since parents/guardians have given their children life, the Catholic Church recognizes parents as the primary and principal educators of their children. The Catholic parents’ promise at baptism to raise their children Catholic supports this premise. The Catholic school exists to assist parents in the Christian formation of their children. Since the school is a continuation of the education children are receiving at home, diocesan schools should demonstrate respect and support for the parents in their important and challenging task.

As foundation for a faith-community, parents are invited and encouraged to participate in the school’s celebration of prayer and liturgy.

Parents are encouraged to participate in the programs which are developed for the education of their children. The wide spectrum of this involvement includes volunteer work, participation in parent-teacher conferences, attendance at meetings and seminars designed to help parents assist their children at home, and active involvement in the school’s Parent-Teacher Organization.

Parents are expected to support the school’s mission and commitment to Christian principles and support the school policies as outlined in school handbooks (i.e., annually sign the school’s Handbook Agreement Form). One of the conditions for initial and continued enrollment at the school is receipt of this signed form indicating the parent’s support of the school’s philosophy, policies, and regulations.

If a parent repeatedly or seriously violates proper school protocol, displays inappropriate or disruptive conduct toward students, or displays disrespectful, disruptive or harassing behavior toward teachers or toward school, parish, or diocesan staff (in verbal, written, or digital form), the school may take corrective action. Such corrective action may include, at the discretion of the principal (and, for parish schools, the pastor of the parish) the following: imposition of particular rules or procedures the parent must follow in interacting with the school and its students and staff; restriction or termination of the parent’s access to school or parish property; dismissal of the parent’s child(ren).

The school may impose other appropriate corrective action, without prior recourse, based upon the nature of the parent’s conduct and the surrounding circumstances.

## ***SEXUAL IDENTITY POLICY***

The Diocese of Arlington is committed to providing a safe environment that allows students to develop and prosper academically, physically and spiritually, consistent with Catholic teachings and principles affirming that the body reveals each person as male or female and that the harmonious integration of a person’s sexual identity with his or her sex is an expression of the

inner unity and reality of the human person made body and soul by God and in the image and likeness of God. In fulfillment of these religious truths, our Catholic educational environment shall reflect a relation to persons (including name and pronoun usage, uniforms, access to facilities and overnight accommodations, and eligibility for single-sex curricular and extracurricular activities) that is respectful of and consistent with each person's God-given sexual identity.

Recognizing that each person is created in the image and likeness of God ensures that dignity is safeguarded, and safe environments are fostered. When parents send their children to Catholic schools and when persons choose careers in Catholic education, they should expect an environment consistent with the truth that God-created sexual identity speaks to His vision for each person's relationship to Him, oneself and others. Behavior and expressions of a person's sexual identity within the school environment that are inconsistent with these principles and/or which cause disruption or confusion regarding Catholic teachings on human sexuality are prohibited. The full cooperation with this policy of school officials, faculty, parents and students is required and a condition precedent to the continued enrollment of each student and the continued employment of each employee, and the enforcement of this policy by the school is deemed a spiritual mandate.

## ***NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE***

Catholic Schools, administered under the authority of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, comply with those constitutional and statutory provisions, as may be specifically applicable to the schools, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, marital status, disability, national origin, or citizenship in the administration of their educational, personnel, admissions, financial aid, athletic, and other school-administered programs.

This policy does not preclude the existence of single sex schools, nor does it conflict with the priority given to Catholics for admission as students. This policy also does not preclude the ability of the school to undertake and/or enforce appropriate actions with respect to students who advocate on school property or at school functions, any practices or doctrines which are inconsistent with the religious tenets of the Catholic faith.

## ***NON-CATHOLIC STUDENTS***

The presence of students from other faiths provides a wonderful diversity to the school. However, the presence of non-Catholic students in the school shall not alter the primacy of Catholic religious formation as an integral component of the school's educational program. As such:

- a. Non-Catholic students are expected to participate in the religious formation and education programs of the school.
- b. Non-Catholic students must participate in liturgies (except for reception of the

- Eucharist), retreats, other religious functions, and religion classes for credit.
- c. Non-Catholic students may be exempt from formal co-curricular or extracurricular sacramental preparation programs but not from the catechesis held during the school day.
  - d. All students are expected, for testing and discussion purposes, to be knowledgeable of the Catholic Church's positions on scripture, revelation, and moral practices. While Catholic teaching respects the various faith traditions of the students attending the Catholic school, parents/guardians must be aware that it is the Catholic position that will be taught.

## **II. ACADEMICS**

### ***CURRICULUM***

Curriculum encompasses the sequentially ordered learning experiences which the school provides for its students. The total curriculum includes the development of Catholic values and attitudes, as well as the attainment of knowledge and skills necessary for the student's spiritual, moral, intellectual, social and physical development.

The basic curriculum for the school (but not necessarily for each grade level) includes the following subjects: Religion, Reading, Language Arts (English, Spelling, Handwriting), Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts (Art and Music), Health and Safety, Physical Education, Technology, Library and World Languages.

The following path is outlined for those students capable of completing High School Geometry in the eighth grade.

#### **GRADES FIVE TO SIX**

For placement in Pre-Algebra in the sixth grade:

Students must satisfy the following criteria:

- a. Math Composite standardized test score National Percentile: 96 or above on the Spring Standardized test.
- b. Class grade in 5th grade math: 93 or above.
- c. End of year diocesan comprehensive grade-level test: 93 or above (recommended time of testing – May of 5th grade year).
- d. Favorable teacher and principal recommendation.

## **GRADES SIX TO SEVEN**

For placement in Algebra I in the seventh grade:

Students must satisfy the following criteria:

- a. Math Composite standardized test score National Percentile: 96 or above on the Spring Standardized test.
- b. Class grade in Pre-Algebra: 93 or above.
- c. Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test results: 85 or above (recommended time of testing – May of 6th grade year).
- d. Favorable teacher and principal recommendation.

Because the Algebra I course incorporates numerous word problems that students need to solve, a teacher's recommendation should take into consideration the reading comprehension standardized test score when making a final decision for placement in Algebra I.

## **GRADES SEVEN TO EIGHT**

For placement in Geometry in the eighth grade:

Students must satisfy the following criteria:

- a. Math Composite standardized test score National Percentile: 96 or above on the Spring Standardized test.
- b. Class grade in Algebra I: 93 or above.
- c. Scoring 77 or above on the Diocesan Algebra I exemption exam.
- d. Favorable teacher and principal recommendation.

The following path would be followed by those students identified as capable of completing Algebra in the 8th grade.

## **GRADES SIX TO SEVEN**

For placement in Pre-Algebra in the seventh grade:

Students must satisfy the following criteria:

- a. Math Composite standardized test score National Percentile: 93 or above on the Spring Standardized test.
- b. Class grade in 6th grade math: 93 or above.
- c. End of year diocesan comprehensive grade-level test: 93 or above (recommended time of testing – May of 6th grade year).

- d. Favorable teacher and principal recommendation.

## **GRADES SEVEN TO EIGHT**

For placement in Algebra I in the eighth grade:

Students must satisfy the following criteria:

- a. Math Composite standardized test score National Percentile: 93 or above on the Spring Standardized test.
- b. Class grade in 7th grade math: 93 or above.
- c. Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test results: 80% or above (recommended time of testing – May of 7th grade year).
- d. Favorable teacher and principal recommendation.

The Algebra I course incorporates numerous word problems that students need to solve. A teacher's recommendation should take into consideration the reading comprehension standardized test score when making a final decision for placement in Algebra I.

Eighth grade students must satisfy the following criteria to receive credit for Algebra I instruction and placement in the next level of high school math instruction:

- a. Pass the Algebra I course.
- b. Score 77 or above on the Diocesan Algebra I exam.
- c. Receive teacher recommendation for placement in the next level of high school math instruction.

If a student does not score 77 or above on the exam, a compelling case made by the teacher through the use of the Teacher Recommendation Form (*Appendix X*). The form is then forwarded to the high school. The decision of the high school will be final.

## ***VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION***

If the need arises for the school to move to virtual instruction:

- 1. Maintain effective communication between teachers, students and families about the virtual learning plan.
- 2. Teachers must include a balance of synchronous and other offline opportunities for learning and feedback.
- 3. Feedback is paramount and students should be accountable for their work. Assignments shall be assessed in a timely manner to provide feedback to the student.

## ***ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES***

The school recognizes the beauty and potential inherent within each student. In an effort to foster continued growth, the school embraces the opportunity to provide assistance and services for students with disabilities according to the resources available within/to the school. Parents/guardians are considered an integral part of the process.

In order to accommodate a student who has been evaluated for special learning needs, parents are obligated to share educational/psychological testing results and any resulting plan with the school. The refusal to provide such information is grounds for terminating enrollment in the school. A student may be admitted on a probationary basis with dates and criteria of evaluation clearly established in writing.

If a student has a documented disability, a copy of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Services Plan (ISP), 504 plan, and/or Student Assistance Plan (SAP) should be maintained in the student's confidential file. Students who have a documented disability, but do not qualify for services through the local public school, may be eligible for interventions through a Student Assistance Plan written at the Catholic school.

When a student qualifies for special education services through the public school and will not receive services, an Individualized Catholic Education Plan can be written following the information in the Guidelines for Serving Students with Disabilities.

Students with disabilities are expected to follow the school's policies and honor code.

## ***IMPLEMENTATION OF FAMILY LIFE PROGRAM***

Catechesis in sexuality is an important and sensitive component of a comprehensive program of catechesis. According to the Second Vatican Council, "As they (children and young people) advance in years, they should be given positive and prudent sexual education." Education in sexuality includes all dimensions of the topic: moral, spiritual, psychological, emotional, and physical. Its goal is training in chastity in accord with the teaching of Christ and the Church, to be lived in a wholesome manner in marriage, the single state, the priesthood, and religious life.

## ***TEXTBOOKS/SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS***

Students are issued textbooks and supplemental materials at the beginning of the school year and are expected to return those books to their classroom teacher in similar condition. Students are responsible for paying for replacements if the book is damaged, defaced, or lost. It is the responsibility of the principal and the staff to ensure the use of textbooks which reflect a truly Christian and Catholic philosophy. The Office of Catholic Schools reserves the right to prohibit the use of a specific textbook/textbook series.

## ***RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY FOR TECHNOLOGY AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)***

There is no expectation or right to privacy or right to freedom of speech when using the school's computer resources, which are the school's property. Any use of the school's computers and internet access must be in support of education and research and be consistent with the educational objectives of the Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools.

Using school facilities for internet access and email is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use which includes but is not limited to: unauthorized transmittal or improper use of copyrighted materials or materials protected as trade secrets; transmission of threatening or obscene materials; vandalism of computer files; and violation of computer security as determined by the school administration can result in a cancellation, denial, suspension and/or revocation of those privileges by the school administration and also subject the student to other disciplinary action.

Electronic and/or digital communications with students should be conducted for educationally appropriate purposes and employ only school-sanctioned means of communication.

Users must adhere to local school policy that may further define uses of mobile devices. Access will be determined by the administration of the school. If a particular mobile device is to be used for an educational purpose, the school administration and/or teacher will provide parameters for this use.

Additional responsibilities for use of school facilities for the internet and email are:

- a. When using networks or computing resources of other organizations, students must observe the rules of that organization regarding such use.
- b. Users should not reveal their personal addresses or phone number(s) and shall not reveal the personal address or phone number(s) of others without their authorization/permission.
- c. Users are reminded that e-mail is not guaranteed to be private. Operators of the network/system have access to all e-mail. Messages relating to, or in support of illegal activities, may be reported to the authorities.
- d. Students shall immediately notify the system administrator/school administration if they suspect that a security problem with the system and/or the internet exists.
- e. Any attempt to log onto the internet or the school's network/system as a systems administrator will result in a loss of user privileges at the school. Any user identified as a security risk by the school administration/systems administrator due to a history of actual or suspected unauthorized access to other computer(s), network(s), or system(s) may be denied access to the school's computers, networks, and/or systems.
- f. Users of artificial intelligence (AI) shall generally abide by:
  - i. Teachers and administrators are responsible for supervising students using AI technologies to ensure compliance with this Responsible Use Policy (RUP).



- ii. Users are accountable for their actions when using AI technologies. Any misuse or violation of this RUP may result in disciplinary action.
  - iii. Students must use AI technologies in a respectful and responsible manner, treating others with courtesy and consideration in both virtual and physical interactions.
  - iv. Students are expected to create and consume content that is appropriate for an educational setting. Content that is offensive, discriminatory, or violates school policies is strictly prohibited.
  - v. Users should create and access AI content appropriate for an educational environment. Permission and supervision by a teacher or school administrator are mandatory for students to use AI tools at school. Please note that many AI programs require users to be at least 13 years of age for use. Schools should be thorough in their research of the AI programs' Privacy Policy.
- g. Users shall abide by generally accepted rules of network etiquette, which include but are not limited to:
  - i. Messages to others shall be polite and shall not be abusive.
  - ii. Messages shall use appropriate language and shall not use obscenities, vulgarities, or other inappropriate language.
  - iii. Use of the network shall not disrupt use of the network by others.
- h. The diocese/school makes no warranty of any kind, whether express or implied, for internet service. The diocese/school will not be responsible for any damages suffered. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence, user errors, or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the internet is at the user's risk. The school specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through internet sources.
- i. Examples of Unacceptable Uses – Users are not permitted to:
  - i. Use technology in sexting or cyber bullying: to harass, threaten, deceive, intimidate, offend, embarrass, or annoy any individual.
  - ii. Post, publish, or display any defamatory, inaccurate, violent, abusive, profane, or sexually oriented material. Users must not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, or threatening language. Users must not knowingly or recklessly post false information about persons, students, staff, or any other organization.
  - iii. Use a photograph, image, video, or likeness of any student or school employee without express permission of the individual, individual's parent/guardian, and the principal.
  - iv. Create any site, post any photo, image, or video of another except with express permission of the individual, the individual's parent/guardian, and the principal.
  - v. Attempt to circumvent system security.

- vi. Deliberately visit a site known for unacceptable material or any material that is not in support of educational objectives.
- vii. Violate license agreements or copy other protected media.
- viii. Use technology for any illegal activity.
- ix. Use of the internet for commercial gains or profits is not allowed from an educational site.
- x. Breach confidentiality obligations of school or school employees.
- xi. Harm the good will and reputation of the school or school employees.
- xii. Transmit any material in violation of any local, state, or federal law. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, licensed material, and threatening or obscene material.

Users must immediately report damage of school equipment to the appropriate school officials. The school has the right to monitor student use of school computers, computer-accessed content, AI, and social media. Social media refers to activities that integrate technology, telecommunications, and social interaction through the use of words, images, video, or audio tools. Examples include, but are not limited to, social websites, blogs, message boards, wikis, podcasts, image and/or video-sharing sites, live webcasting, and real-time communities. Because this is a constantly evolving area, this policy applies to all new social media platforms whether or not they are specifically mentioned in this policy.

Violation of the above policy will be dealt with by the administration of the school. Violation of this policy may result in any or all of the following:

- a. Loss of use of the school network, computers, and software including Internet access.
- b. Disciplinary action including, but not limited to, dismissal and/or legal action by the school, civil authorities, or other involved parties.

The school retains the right to discipline students for their actions, regardless of when or where they occur, when those actions negatively impact the school's image, reputation, and/or the safety and well-being of the school community. This covers inappropriate behavior in cyberspace including but not limited to messages, chat room commentary, comments/pictures, videos, postings on social networking sites, blogs, wikis, gaming chats, digital transmissions, and other technology related activity.

## ***TESTING***

The school's testing program is intended to assist teachers and administrators in a systematic evaluation of the academic and religion programs, to identify students' strengths and weaknesses, and to aid in the revision of the curriculum and planning of instruction.

In addition to academic tests for grading purposes, the school will administer standardized religion and achievement tests according to the diocesan testing program. All eighth grade students take the high school placement test used in determining placement in diocesan high schools. Teachers are encouraged to review the format, and style of the High School Placement Test as well as test taking strategies with their students. Extensive class time to prep students for this test is not encouraged.

## ***HOMework***

Homework reinforces skill acquisition, retention of content knowledge, and formation of good study habits. Although homework has different purposes at different grades, homework is required at all grade levels. The amount of homework a child may have on any given day will vary depending upon the nature of the assignment, the amount of work the child completes in school that day, and the speed at which the child completes his/her work at home.

### **SUGGESTED TIME ALLOTMENTS**

At Saint Rita School, the content of assigned homework, aside from time spent studying for tests and quizzes, is primarily two-fold: mathematics, so students may practice and reinforce concepts already learned in the classroom, and reading assignments, so students may come prepared to class ready to participate fruitfully and efficiently in classroom discussions.

Understanding that students have formative activities outside of school and homework, not least of which is spending time with their families, Saint Rita School has implemented the following guidelines for the maximum amount of time a student should spend outside of school hours completing homework:

Homework does not have to be assigned every day, but should generally fall within these guidelines:

- Grades 1-3: 15 minutes daily
- Grades 4-5: 30 minutes daily
- Grades 6-8: 60 minutes excepting courses that can be taken for high school credit such as Algebra and Latin, which may require more daily homework

If a student consistently exceeds these maximum times, the parent or student themselves should contact the appropriate teacher(s) to clarify what the cause may be to find the best solution. Teachers will coordinate the scheduling of quizzes and tests and notice is to be given to students.

Parents are encouraged to monitor homework for satisfactory completion. Student planners for homework assignments and calendar notes are required for each student and will be supplied during the first week of school for students in grades 2-8. Students are expected to give their best effort in finishing homework completely to include checking for spelling, neatness, and proper grammar, as well as cursive handwriting and proper page heading when appropriate. Parents are encouraged to speak with their child's teacher if an emergency arises that makes it difficult for their student to complete their work on a specific day.

## **Middle school testing policy**

As a general policy:

- Students will be given 1 weeks' notice (or more) regarding upcoming tests.
- Teachers will coordinate testing activities to ensure no class is overloaded on any particular day.
- Consistent weekly testing days for certain subjects will be employed to the extent practicable. This schedule does not infer that every class/subject will have a test once a week. On the contrary, it simply indicates what day of the week each subject/teacher will schedule tests on.
- If it becomes necessary, it is possible for a teacher to test on a different day of the week, but that decision would be made after coordinating with the other Middle School teachers, and generally would be an exception to the established schedule.
- The goal (although it is not a rule) is for no class to have more than 2 tests on any given day.
- Tests in Latin 7 and 8 and Algebra I are scheduled at the instructor's discretion.
- Students should be aware of upcoming tests in all subjects and note their agenda accordingly so they can allot sufficient study time to prepare for tests.

## ***PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION***

Teachers are expected to be reasonably available to parents/guardians throughout the school year to keep the lines of communication open in the best interest of the students. Parent-teacher conferences can be scheduled throughout the school year if necessary. Parents should first privately contact a teacher with any concerns about a student or class concerns before seeking intervention by the school administration.

In the event a parent desires to discuss a problem with his/her child's teacher, the parent should make an appointment for a private meeting with the child's teacher. Teachers welcome the opportunity to discuss a matter of concern with parents before it becomes an actual problem. Any parent who wishes to speak with the principal may do so after an initial meeting with the classroom teacher. Similarly, parents should discuss matters of concern with the school principal, and pastor when necessary, before bringing them to the Office of Catholic Schools.

### **SCHEDULING AND OTHER CONFERENCE INFORMATION**

Parent-teacher conferences are held for all students in the school during the month of November. Additional parent-teacher conferences can be set up as needed and held at a time mutually agreed upon by teacher and parent. The principal/assistant principal should be notified so they know can be available if the teacher or parents would like them present. Parents are encouraged and should contact their classroom teacher if they have any questions regarding their child's progress. Grades are to be regularly updated in PowerSchool and are intended to give parents of students in grades 3-8 a snapshot as to how their child is progressing throughout the trimester.

## ***GRADING/REPORT CARDS***

Evaluation of the student is based on teacher judgment and observation of the student's daily work, class participation, effort, and performance on teacher-prepared assessments to include but not limited to tests, projects, portfolios, and other tools of assessment.

The purpose of report cards is to present to parents/guardians information about how their student is performing in his/her academic studies, and to alert them to any problems.

Students with identified disabilities who have a current IEP or Student Assistance Plan should receive an asterisk on their report card grade when modifications have been made to the curriculum. A modification changes the content, instructional level, or student workload of subject matter or tests. Conversely, accommodated programs should not be denoted.

### **GRADING SYSTEM**

#### **Grades 1-2**

- M Meets Grade Level Standards – Child consistently meets skills
- P Progressing Towards Grade Level Standards – Child is in process of developing skill
- NI Needs Improvement – Child is not demonstrating skill

### **ACADEMIC PROGRESS SCALE**

The letter M, P or NI is indicated in the appropriate box for each subject area.

\*(asterisk) indicates modified curriculum.

**Grades 3-8** use numeric (percentage) grades. Below 70 is designated by an F.

### **INDICATORS FOR EFFORT, SPECIALS, AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT:**

- 3 Very Good
- 2 Satisfactory/Good
- 1 Needs Improvement
- X Unsatisfactory

Parents have access to student performance in grades 3-8 via PowerSchool, our online grade book system. Parents are encouraged to monitor their student's grades so they can be aware of any failing or near failing performance in any given class. Teachers will update student grades weekly (unless class only meets weekly) to reflect the student's progress throughout the trimester so students and parents can address academic concerns in a timely manner. Students are issued paper report cards at the end of each trimester. In addition to updating grades in PowerSchool, teachers will contact the parents of students failing a subject in order to enlist their aid in helping their child improve their academic performance.

## **Honors**

St. Rita School awards first and second honors to students in grades 4-8 at the end of each marking period according to the following scale:

- First Honors: 93 or above in all academic subjects, no grade lower than “2” in specialty classes, and no development mark lower than “2”
- Second Honors: 85 or above in all academic subjects, no grade lower than “2” in specialty classes, and no development mark lower than “2”

## ***PROMOTION/RETENTION/PLACEMENT POLICY***

A major goal of the school is to help students to complete each academic year satisfactorily. The repetition of a grade is recommended when it is deemed by the school to be necessary and advantageous to the particular needs of the student.

- a. The final decision to promote or retain a student is based on the student’s academic performance and best interest as determined by the principal.
- b. Teachers will notify parents/guardians if their child is not progressing satisfactorily toward a passing grade in the course.
- c. Elementary students failing one or two academic areas must successfully complete a remediation program approved by the principal in order to be promoted to the next grade. If a student fails three or more core academic subjects, the student will not be promoted to the next grade.
- d. Students who have not successfully completed summer school or another program approved by the principal but would not benefit from being retained in the grade may be “placed” in the next grade level; however, the school must prepare and implement an “Academic Intervention Plan” for the student as a condition of placement.

Parents should be kept informed about the inability of their child to progress satisfactorily. This takes a combined effort on the part of the student, parent, and teacher. Parent access to PowerSchool for grades 3-8 is a beneficial aspect of communication regarding a student’s progress and as a result, parents are encouraged to check PowerSchool frequently and discuss any concerns with their child and teacher. Parents are also urged to both review their child’s homework agenda each night and ensure completion of homework.

In the younger grades, the weekly (or home study) folder is a valuable communication tool. We encourage parents to review their student’s weekly folder as a means of strengthening the bond between home and school.

If, in the teacher's judgment, a student is in danger of failing a course, the administration should be notified first, and arrangements made for a conference with the parents in a timely fashion.

## ***SCHOOL COUNSELORS***

School counselors are available to confer with students in areas which may extend beyond academic matters. While the conferences are generally confidential, the counselor may need to disclose certain information to parents/guardians, school administration, or other authorities

### **III. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

## ***ADMISSIONS***

### **DIOCESAN INITIAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Students who desire an educational experience founded on the Catholic philosophy of education and who fulfill the age, health, academic, and behavioral requirements are eligible to apply for admission to the school.

The school sets registration procedures and admission policies. The availability of space and the order of preference for admission is determined by the school according to the following general criteria:

- a. Children from the parish
- b. Children from parishes without schools
- c. Children from parishes with schools (for sufficient reason)
- d. Children from non-Catholic families

If approved by the pastor, and where practicable, siblings may receive special consideration.

### **AGE FOR ADMISSION TO KINDERGARTEN**

*Under Virginia state law (Code of Virginia 22.1-254) school attendance is compulsory for children who have reached their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday on or before September 30<sup>th</sup> of any school year.* Readiness testing (fine/gross motor, speech, and language screen) is required for kindergarten entry and within 60 days of school admission for new students in grades 1 – 3. Additional school readiness testing may be conducted at the discretion of school officials. In those cases where the school has sufficient reservations regarding the potential for success, those students may be admitted on a conditional basis with dates and criteria of evaluation established in writing; however, the decision of whether to extend or remove conditional admission status should be made by school officials at their discretion.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL ADMISSION: PRESCHOOL – GRADE 5**

- a. Presentation of an original birth certificate (schools are expected to keep a copy of the certificate on file)
- b. Baptismal certificate for Catholic students
- c. Proof of custody where applicable
- d. Current report card and previous academic years' report card as applicable
- e. Current standardized test scores and previous years, if applicable
- f. Completed Diocesan Application Form (*Appendix J*)
- g. A non-refundable application fee
- h. A fully executed MCH 213G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form or other U.S. state equivalent, which stipulates the following must be submitted prior to the student beginning school:
  - i. Proof of exact dates of required immunization as required by the Code of Virginia. Immunization records are required to be signed and verified by a licensed healthcare provider.
  - ii. Physical examination covering all required aspects as mandated on the MCH 213G within 12 months prior to the first day of school and entering a new school for the first time. Equivalent school entrance physical forms from another state may be acceptable. (Note: A pre-school physical does not take the place of the required kindergarten entry physical even if it was completed within the 12 months prior to kindergarten entry. This is because some aspects required for kindergarten are not included in a pre-school physical – e.g., hearing and vision screening)
- i. Proof of satisfying tuition requirements at any former diocesan school if previously enrolled in a diocesan school

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO GRADES 6 – 8**

- a. Presentation of an original birth certificate (schools are expected to keep a copy of the certificate on file)
- b. Baptismal certificate for Catholic students
- c. Proof of exact dates of immunization with signature of licensed healthcare provider
- d. Physical examination covering all required aspects as mandated on the MCH 213G within 12 months prior to the first day of school. Equivalent school entrance physical forms from another state may be acceptable. A Virginia High School League (VHSL) sports physical is also acceptable in lieu of a MCH 213G and is also required if a student will be participating in athletics.
- e. Records from previous school, including standardized test scores
- f. Proof of custody where applicable



- g. Completed Diocesan Elementary or High School Application Form (*Appendix J*)
- h. A non-refundable application fee
- i. A fully executed MCH 213G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form or other U.S. state equivalent, which stipulates the following must be submitted prior to the student beginning school:
  - i. Proof of exact dates of required immunization as required by the Code of Virginia. Immunization records are required to be signed and verified by a licensed healthcare provider.
  - ii. Physical examination covering all required aspects as mandated on the MCH 213G within 12 months prior to the first day of school and entering a new school for the first time. Equivalent school entrance physical forms from another state may be acceptable.
- j. Proof of satisfying tuition requirements at any former diocesan school if previously enrolled in a diocesan school.

#### **GENERAL CONDITIONS OF ADMISSION**

A student is admitted to the school on the premise the student intends to learn the Catholic religion and be educated in a Catholic environment. In certain cases, students may be admitted on a probationary basis subject to the student successfully completing one or more subsequent interim evaluations. Students with academic or other needs (i.e. behavioral), which cannot be reasonably addressed by the school, may be denied admission.

School application forms may request disability-related information. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not prohibit a school from asking questions about a student's disabilities provided that information does not automatically prohibit a student from applying.

#### **F-1 (NON-IMMIGRANT)**

- 1. F-1 (Nonimmigrant) students who apply for admission to a Diocese of Arlington Catholic school will be considered for admission, upon meeting the following conditions:
  - a. Meets Diocesan admission requirements:
    - i. A fully executed MCH 213G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form or equivalent, which stipulates the following must be submitted prior to the student beginning school:
      - 1. Proof of exact dates of required immunization as required by the Code of Virginia with signature of licensed healthcare provider.
      - 2. Physical examination covering all required aspects as mandated on the MCH 213G within 12 months prior to the first day of school and entering a new school for the first time. Equivalent school entrance physical forms from another state may be acceptable. (Note: A pre-school physical does not take the place of the

required kindergarten entry physical even though it was completed within the 12 months prior to kindergarten entry. This is because some aspects required for kindergarten are not included in a pre-school physical – e.g., hearing and vision screening.)

- ii. F-1 (Nonimmigrant) students who enroll in a school in the Diocese for the first time must provide documentation that they are free from communicable tuberculosis.
  - b. Currently holds or is in the process of obtaining an F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student visa;
  - c. Resides at the same U.S. address as the guardian, who is identified as such on the I20 application and recorded in SEVIS;
    - i. Guardian Permission and Agreement Form must be completed and signed by parent and guardian. (*Appendix AJ-2*).
    - ii. Guardian cannot house more than two international students. Policy may be amended if requested in writing from a guardian in certain situations. For example, if international students are related to one another and/or related to the guardian.
  - d. Pays tuition in full upon school admission;
    - i. There is no refund given for registration, tuition or other related fees.
  - e. Carries applicable healthcare insurance, including for emergencies, that may be needed while in the United States;
    - i. The Diocese of Arlington does not provide healthcare insurance for international students.
  - f. Shows adequate English proficiency for the grade level to which they are applying. The level of English proficiency should allow students to pass all classes/subjects, including world language class. Schools cannot substitute normal curriculum classes with English support classes and must report an official grade for all subjects.
2. Students meeting the above criteria and accepted for admission must complete the Diocese of Arlington I-20 Application Form and return the form to the school the student will be attending. The school must forward the Diocese of Arlington I-20 Application Form to the Office of Catholic Schools with the original signature of principal or admissions director.
3. When a student is transferring *from* another school outside the Diocese, the originating school must transfer the existing I-20 in active status to the Diocese of Arlington. A Diocese of Arlington *International Student Transfer Report* must be completed by the originating school and returned to the Office of Catholic Schools along with the *I-20 Application Form*. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the originating school within 15 days of leaving that school to have the I-20 transferred;
  - a. A student must maintain status by attending classes until the transfer release date. Lack of attendance before the transfer date would be a violation of status and the

- student's SEVIS record should be terminated;
- b. The student must report to the school within 15 days of the program start date and enroll full time in the first required session/term at the school;
  - c. When a student is transferring *to* a school outside the Diocese of Arlington school system, the Diocese of Arlington must transfer the existing I-20 in active status to the new school. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the Office of Catholic Schools within 15 days of leaving the Diocesan school to have the I-20 transferred.
4. In order for international students to maintain F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student status, the Department of Homeland Security requires ongoing accounting. In that regard, schools are responsible for ensuring the enrollment status of all F-1 (Nonimmigrant) students is reported correctly. Reports for elementary school international students will be accessed through the Student Information System district database. Specifically, the school shall:
- a. Create and update elementary F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student record in the Student Information System, ensuring all fields pertaining to international students are completed. All F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student records must be completed and/or updated within 15 days of the beginning of every semester;
  - b. Notify the Office of Catholic Schools via the Semester Report on Status of F-1 (Nonimmigrant) Students Form if an F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student has been accepted by that school and fails to report to the school within 30 days of their program start date;
  - c. Notify the Office of Catholic Schools via the Semester Report on Status of F-1 (Nonimmigrant) Students Form within 15 days when an F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student transfers to another school or departs the United States;
  - d. Report via the Semester Report on Status of F-1 (Nonimmigrant) Students form any legal change in the name, address, or guardianship of an F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student within 10 days.
5. For students who hold a visa other than F-1, refer to Visa Types (*Appendix AJ*);
- a. Students who are currently in B-1 or B-2 status cannot begin their studies prior to approval of their change to F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student. Obtaining a change of status is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.
  - b. Students who are currently in B-1 or B-2 status may be enrolled to audit classes at the discretion of the principal for a limited time (generally not more than two months) but must still meet Diocesan admission requirements pertaining to the MCH 213G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form and provide documentation that they are free from communicable tuberculosis.
  - c. Students with a J visa for short-term exchange students will not be accepted into diocesan schools.
6. Any student applicant whose passport, United Nations travel document or other United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) documents indicates that the

student is a refugee, asylee, parolee, lawful nonimmigrant or legal permanent resident may be admitted to the schools of the Diocese of Arlington under normal requirements for admission. This policy would also include undocumented children.

## **CLASS PLACEMENT**

The principal/administration and faculty reserve the right to place students in a class which is consistent with the results of the student's prior academic records and any admission testing.

## ***ATTENDANCE***

### **DIOCESAN POLICY FOR ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS**

In order to achieve the goals and objectives of the curriculum, regular attendance by the student is mandatory.

The school (K-8) is normally in session no fewer than 180 days per academic year or the length of time as required by the Virginia Catholic Education Association.

Once a child is enrolled in the school, it is the duty of the teachers and administrators to insist on regular attendance in order that the student can progress successfully through the curriculum. Neither the Diocese, the Office of Catholic Schools, the school, nor any of its employees are, however, responsible for ensuring actual attendance. This is the responsibility of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).

Students in grades kindergarten through grade eight who miss ten or more days of the school year, whether excused or unexcused, and who have not satisfactorily completed the required work, may be considered for retention. Certification of absence by a physician is an exception to the ten-day limit. However, satisfactory completion of required work is still required.

If efforts to work with a family to improve a student's attendance are unsuccessful, a school should not keep an absentee student enrolled. Relatedly, schools should not continue to collect tuition from a family whose student is not regularly attending school.

### **ABSENCE/TARDINESS/LEAVING SCHOOL**

In order to ensure continuous progress in school, regular attendance and habits of punctuality are essential. The school defines proper procedures as:

- a. A written excuse, explaining the reason for absence and signed by the parent/guardian, must be presented upon a student's return to school.
- b. Persistent absences may cause serious academic problems (including but not limited to course failure) and could result in the dismissal of the student. The administration or the class teacher will normally review the matter with parents/guardians before a

decision is made by the administration. Persistent absences may also result in the student being subject to appropriate administrative action.

- c. Except in cases of emergency as determined by the principal/administration and/or a faculty member (as applicable or necessary), a student may only (a) be released from school with the prior written authorization of the student's parent/guardian, or (b) leave the school grounds with the prior authorization from the principal/administration.

## **TARDINESS**

The tardy student will normally be subject to appropriate disciplinary action by the school administration or by the class teacher. A student who is tardy, as determined by local policy, should report to the principal's office or attendance office. A student who arrives late with an excused reason (i.e. doctor's note) is counted tardy. The student who is tardy due to unexcused reasons may be subject to appropriate administrative action. Frequent cases of tardiness should be brought to the attention of the principal so that the parent/guardian may be contacted.

## **ABSENCES FOR OTHER REASONS**

When parents wish to take their student out of school for several days for personal and/or medical reasons, the parents should discuss the student's progress with the teacher. However, the school is under no obligation to provide a tutor, make-up work, or special testing schedules for such a period of absence. The administration has the sole discretion to determine the conditions and terms governing such absences.

## **ATTENDANCE/REPORTING PROCEDURE**

### **ABSENCE**

A parent/guardian must notify the school office of a child's absence from school by 9:00 am on the morning of the absence. This may be accomplished by emailing [attendance@saintrita-school.org](mailto:attendance@saintrita-school.org). If the parent/guardian does not report the absence, the school will need to contact the parent/guardian at home or at work to confirm the absence. Students who are absent more than three days due to an illness are to submit a doctor's certificate (note) detailing the nature of the illness and any restrictions that are to be placed on the child's activities.

### **ANTICIPATED ABSENCE**

Parents should be mindful of the impact of unnecessary absences and should plan family outings and vacations on non-school days. If parents determine that such an anticipated absence is necessary, they must discuss the absence with the principal ahead of time in order to formulate a plan whereby the least amount of disruption to that student's learning occurs. Teachers are not responsible for providing any advance assignments for students. Students will be required to make up any missed work, including quizzes and tests, upon their return to school. Students who

are unable to adequately complete all missed work may be considered for retention in that grade.

The student has the same number days to complete the work as they were out for an excused absence. All quizzes, tests, projects, etc. must be made up during this time. Any work not satisfactorily completed within the allotted days will be given a grade of “zero” and no additional opportunity will be given to make up the missing work.

## **TARDINESS**

Punctuality is important for both the student developing good habits and for the smooth operation of the classroom. A student is considered tardy (and will be marked as such) if they arrive to their homeroom after morning prayers have begun. The student will be issued a tardy slip in the office and then expected to quietly enter their classroom/homeroom to begin their day. Late arrivals have a negative impact both on the student who is tardy and on their entire class. Adequate time should be given by the parents to allow students to unpack and prepare their books for the day. Classes begin promptly at 8:10 am and students are expected to be prepared by that time.

Students may not enter a classroom late without first receiving a tardy slip from the office. Please note that tardies are recorded on both the report card and on the student’s permanent record. Perhaps more importantly, hurrying to class and arriving late is unsettling to children and starts their day out on a more challenging footing. Being tardy should be avoided when possible.

If persistent tardiness occurs, the administration will adhere to the following procedure:

- If a child exceeds 10 tardy days per semester, an email or letter from the principal to schedule a conference will be sent to parents/guardians. During this meeting, various solutions to tardiness will be addressed.
- If, following the initial parent meeting to resolve the tardiness issue, the pattern of tardies continues, a subsequent meeting will be required to discuss why the initial plan has failed and consider whether enrollment at Saint Rita should continue, in light of the circumstances.

## **MEDICAL EXCUSES**

When possible, medical and dental appointments should be made on non-school days or before or after school. Parents/guardians must meet their student in the office before leaving for an appointment, and the student must check in at the office upon returning from an appointment.

Parents are expected to complete and return the School Dismissal Form to the school office at the beginning of each year, so the school has a current record of children authorized to walk home or of other families authorized to pick up their child. Notice must still be given to the main office when someone other than the child’s parent or regular pickup person will be bringing them home that day.

## **RELEASE OF STUDENTS**

Early release of students should be requested in writing on the morning of the early release by sending an email to [attendance@saintrita-school.org](mailto:attendance@saintrita-school.org). Parents needing to pick up their child early from school must do so by 2:40 pm on a regular school day or 11 am on a half-day. Parents arriving between 2:40-3:10 or 11-11:30 will be asked to wait for their child to be dismissed at the normal time with his or her class.

## ***TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER SCHOOL***

The school must be notified in writing by the parent(s) of a student regarding a decision to transfer a student to another school, including the last day the student will attend classes at school. All school-owned materials such as textbooks and library books must be returned to school and all fees paid before leaving. Student records will be sent to the new school upon a “Release of Student Records Form” from the new school. All fees and tuition **MUST BE PAID** prior to the release of the student’s records.

## ***ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL***

Saint Rita School holds the following policy of traffic, pedestrian, bike, and bus safety for its students and communicates this policy to all school personnel, students, and their parents/guardians. Older students at Saint Rita School may serve as traffic/pedestrian safety patrols at the discretion of the school principal. Within the scope of this designation, the students shall work under the supervision of and in cooperation with the school principal and the local police liaison for safety issues. To keep arrival and dismissal safe and orderly for all involved, parents are asked to adhere to and support the following arrival and dismissal procedures.

### **CAR ARRIVAL**

1. Cars enter through the Russell Road entrance between the Church and Parish Center. Note that there are two lanes to facilitate preschool drop-off on the left and K-8 thru traffic on the right. Once through the car gate, cars make an arc around the perimeter of the lot, keeping the cone line to the immediate right, and coming to a stop where at the designated “stop” sign where school administrators will be standing.
2. Students may exit cars beginning at 7:50 am when an adult or safety patrol officer opens the first car’s door.
3. Students must always exit on the right (passenger) side of the car, for their safety, and proceed directly away from the cars and toward the school building.
4. Parents must remain in the car during drop-off. Carline attendants will assist students as needed with car doors or gathering their belongings.
5. All cars must wait for the car ahead to resume driving before proceeding; passing other cars in the drop-off line is strictly prohibited.
6. Families arriving after carline drop-off has ended must park, and parents must walk the

children to Door 1 on Russell Road, ring the bell and sign them in at the office.

#### **PEDESTRIAN OR BIKE ARRIVAL**

No student can be on school grounds prior to 7:50 am unless they are enrolled and have been checked in to the morning Extended Day Program, if offered or are serving as a safety. At 7:50 am, all walkers and bikers should enter through the pedestrian gate on Russell Road. No walkers or bikers should enter through the carline once cars have started to move.

At 7:50 am, students may enter their classrooms if a teacher is present. Morning prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance are said over the public address system at 8:10 am to begin the day. All students not in their homeroom when morning prayer begins will be considered “tardy” and will be marked as such. Students who are tardy may not enter homeroom without a tardy slip from the

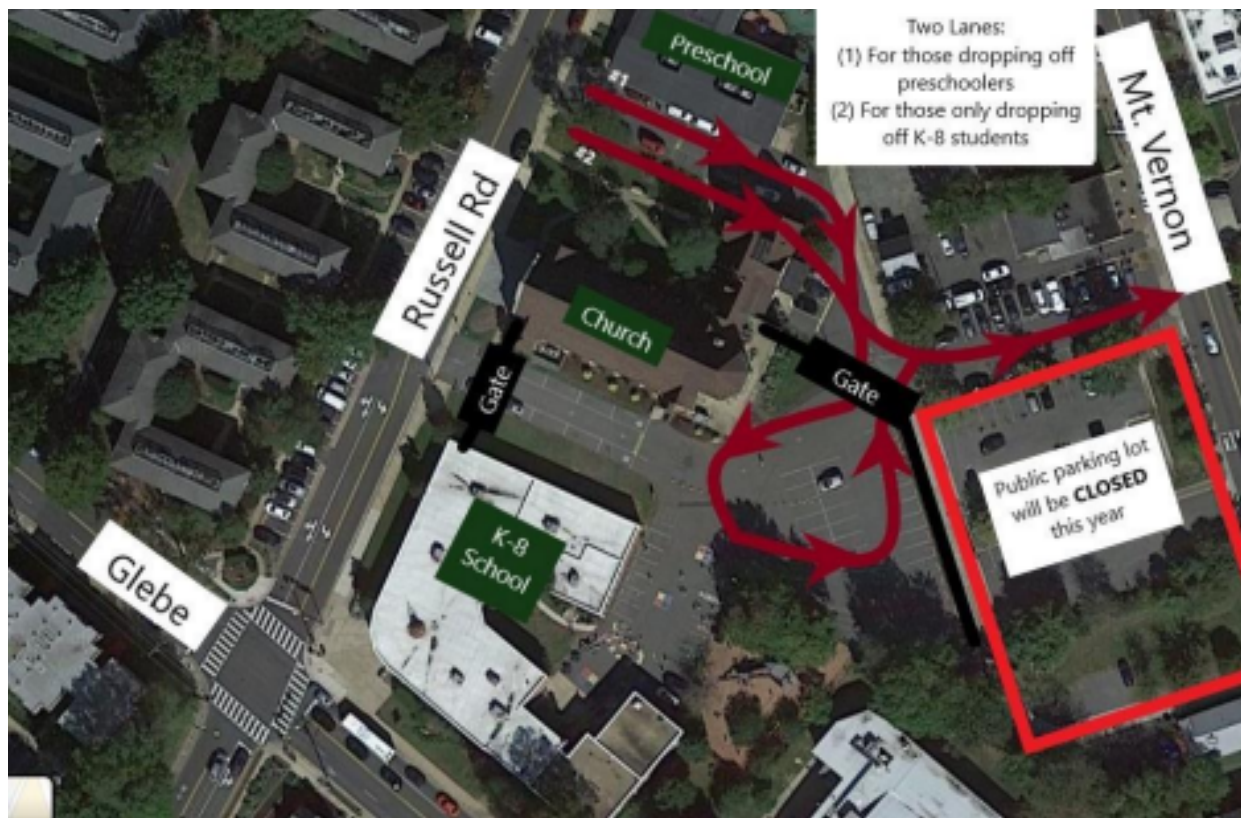
**Dismissal:** Normal dismissal time follows prayers and announcements at 3:10 pm (2:10 pm on Wednesdays). Faculty members are assigned to supervise students to their dismissal destination. Any student who is not picked up when carline is finished will be signed into Extended Day and charged the normal fee until the parent or their authorized designee picks them up.

***For the sake of their safety, students may not deviate from their standard dismissal protocol unless express written permission has been given to the school prior to dismissal that day.*** This includes sending a child to Extended Day if the student is not a regular attendee of the program or having a child picked up by anyone not listed as an authorized designee. Children may not call home to change dismissal plans.

Parents are asked to be mindful of all safety regulations regarding morning drop off, late arrivals, and afternoon pick-up. The safety of all our children is imperative, so we ask parents to honor our arrival and dismissal plans. ***Under no circumstances are children to be dropped off on the street (Russell or Glebe Roads)*** or be picked up by car at these locations. Students are expected to cross Russell Road under the supervision of the crossing guard on duty.



A diagram of standard car line procedures can be found below.



## ***LUNCH/MILK PROGRAM***

Rules for acceptance and participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child Nutrition Programs are the same for all students without regard to race, color, sex, age, handicap or national origin. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any USDA related activity should write to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, DC, 20250.

### **MILK**

Saint Rita School is not participating in a milk program this year.

### **LUNCH**

Saint Rita School has partnered with LunchLink, formerly known as Wholesome Foods, to provide hot lunch to students whose parents order it. Parents arrange and pay for these orders directly with LunchLink through their website.

Good nutrition and balanced eating are to be always encouraged. Soda and coffee type drinks are not permitted for students during the school day and parents are highly

encouraged to limit sweets and other non-nutritious food items. Students are expected to have eaten breakfast before arriving at school. No opportunity will be given to do so during morning homeroom.

Students must follow their homeroom policies regarding water bottles, which can only contain water. All plastic water bottles must be clear; steel is an acceptable alternative, but the bottle may be opened if there is any concern the bottle contains a liquid other than water. During class, students, at the teacher's discretion, may get water from the water fountain or their bottle when needed.

## **IV. GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES**

### ***ADMINISTRATIVE***

#### **STUDENT CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP**

At the time of school entry or at any other time where a change in custody status/arrangements occurs, it is the responsibility of the parent(s) to provide the principal/administration with a true and correct copy of the legal document for any student for which there is a legal custody agreement or for any student not residing with his/her parent.

School communication with the appropriate guardian is essential. Accordingly:

- a. Custodial parents should identify, in writing, other adults who may have access to information regarding their child.
- b. Non-custodial parents may receive information (when requested) regarding the child unless specific documentation to the contrary is provided in the legal custody agreement.

#### **ACCESS TO RECORDS**

Parents/Guardians have a right (unless prohibited by the courts in a custody agreement) to the timely inspection, during school hours, of the educational records (cumulative and confidential) of their child. The school shall respond to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records.

If the education records of a student contain information on more than one student, the parents' access is limited to the specific information about their child only.

Student records shall be open to authorized school personnel only (principal, assistant principal, and those to whom they extend access within a given year).

The school administration may elect to provide, at cost, photocopies of a student's educational

records to parents, but documentation is to be stamped “unofficial.”

### **TRANSFER OF RECORDS**

Schools may disclose a student’s cumulative record (i.e. Permanent Record card, attendance card, test results) to another school with legitimate educational interest provided a written request for such records is received, or when those individuals to whom the custodial parent/guardian has given written permission, have requested the child’s records to be released. Parent signature is required for release of a student’s confidential file (i.e. special education records, psychological reports, disciplinary records, anecdotal information, or reports by the school counselor).

Only copies of student records may be released. Original Cumulative Health Record and MCH-213 transfer with the student.

Parents/guardians may not hand-carry records to another school, except under extraordinary circumstances. If this occurs, the records are to be placed in a sealed envelope and marked “hand carried.”

As a general rule, each school, at the discretion of its principal, shall have the right not to certify the student’s graduation or provide transcripts of the student’s academic record to third parties such as other schools, colleges, or employers, or to issue a Certificate of Diploma to the student, if there has been a breach of a material condition of the contract (i.e., failure to meet financial obligations, infractions against the school’s code of conduct).

### **CONFIDENTIAL ACADEMIC RECORDS**

Parents/guardians are obligated to share educational/psychological testing results and any resulting plan with the school. If a student has a documented disability, a copy of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Services Plan (ISP), 504 plan, and/or Student Assistance Plan (SAP) should be maintained in the student’s confidential file. The refusal to provide such information is grounds for terminating enrollment in the school.

Confidential records for dis-enrolled students are merged with the students’ cumulative files.

### **RETENTION OF RECORDS**

Permanent record card (to include transcripts, attendance record, and standardized test results) is to be retained indefinitely.

The following student records are to be retained for 25 years:

- a. IEP/ISP or 504 Plan
- b. Student Assistance Plan
- c. Eligibility Minutes

d. Student Support Team Minutes

The following student records are to be retained for 7 years, or when the students reaches the age of 25, whichever is greater:

- a. Application
- b. Counselor Notes
- c. Discipline Notes
- d. Court Documents
- e. Psychological Reports

### **SCHOOL VISITORS**

All persons other than school staff and currently registered students must first report to the school office immediately upon entering school grounds, sign-in, and wear an identification tag when visiting the school.

### **SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS**

All materials prepared by parents/guardians for release to the parish or school community must be approved by the principal or his/her designee.

### **PRINCIPAL’S COMMUNICATION**

The principal writes a letter to families each week which is normally distributed on Thursday through the weekly electronic newsletter. This newsletter includes school news and information regarding upcoming events. If you are not receiving this weekly letter, please contact the school office so we can include you on the email distribution list: [office@saintrita-school.org](mailto:office@saintrita-school.org).

The school website [www.saintrita-school.org](http://www.saintrita-school.org) is updated regularly and is a source of information for prospective and current parents. The school handbook is also posted on the school website.

The principal can be reached via email at [principal@saintrita-school.org](mailto:principal@saintrita-school.org).

### **TAKE-HOME COMMUNICATION**

All materials prepared by parents/guardians for release to the parish or school community must be approved by the Principal or his/her designee.

Each family will receive a weekly ParentSquare Newsletter, which will be distributed electronically every Thursday. Parents who have “opted-in” for hard copies of flyers will receive these communications via a “Thursday Folder”. Students are to return these folders every Friday

morning during homeroom. Thursday folders will be sent out to all families throughout the year when there are schoolwide forms to go out such as interim reports, report cards, permission slips, etc. These are sent home with the youngest child in the family unless otherwise noted by contacting the school office. These electronic newsletters and folders contain important information and are a vital aspect of the educational teamwork and bond between school and home. Please read them thoroughly each week.

All members of the school faculty and staff have email addresses, which are published on the school website. Every effort will be made to respond to email/phone calls by the next business day.

### **TELEPHONE USE/MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS**

No student may call home during the school day. Please make sure your student has all the necessary materials/uniform items/lunches etc., for their day before dropping them off in the morning. Students may not call home for homework, permission slips, lunches, after school activity items, etc. or to change their dismissal plans. Should a parent need to get in touch with the student during the day, for urgent reasons, they should call the school office at 703-548-1888. Please give the office sufficient time to answer/deliver messages.

Saint Rita School has serious concerns with children's use of cellular devices, texting, social media, etc, and strongly discourages its families from giving this technology to elementary and middle school students. The school has launched a partnership with parents called "Real Presence Collective" to help support families in this endeavor.

If a parent believes that there is a serious and specific need for their child in Grades 5–8 (not allowed at all for K-4) to possess a device (e.g., medical necessity, family emergency communication), they may request an exception by contacting the principal directly at [mbusekrus@saintrita-school.org](mailto:mbusekrus@saintrita-school.org) to discuss the circumstances. Approval is granted only at the discretion of the administration and is not guaranteed.

#### **Important Notes:**

- Approved exceptions will require written documentation and clear guidelines for the device's storage and use, as determined by the principal.
- Approved devices must be turned in upon arrival at school and will be returned at dismissal. Use of approved devices during Morning Care, after-school programs (EDC), or extracurricular activities is not permitted.
- Students who bring unauthorized devices to school will be subject to the following disciplinary actions:

### Consequences for Unauthorized Devices on School Grounds:

1. First Offense: Confiscation of the device, detention, and demerit issued. Parent/guardian must retrieve the device at a time set by the administration.
2. Second Offense: Confiscation, detention, demerit, and a required meeting between the parent/guardian, student, and administration.
3. Third Offense: Confiscation, detention, and permanent revocation of any future device privileges.

Saint Rita School is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged devices. We appreciate your partnership in helping us to maintain a focused and respectful learning environment.

### INCLEMENT WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In addition to the traditional 180 school days, schools should add at least three extra days to the school calendar each year to accommodate days off due to inclement weather or other non-weather-related emergencies. In the event these inclement weather/emergency days are not used, schools may dismiss for the summer after completing the required 180 school days. If, however, during the course of the year, the school uses more than three inclement weather/emergency days, it is not necessary for the school to extend its school year beyond the 183 budgeted days, provided the school has surpassed 1,038 hours of instructional time (as defined by the Commonwealth of Virginia).

Saint Rita School makes independent decisions to delay, close, or dismiss early due to inclement weather or other emergencies. Saint Rita School administrators take the forecasts, local conditions, and decisions of local public school districts and neighboring Catholic schools into account when making these decisions. The school community will be notified via email and School Messenger. When possible, we will communicate the evening before when we've made a decision to close or delay opening. When we need to make a same-day decision about school closures or delays, we will inform you by approximately 5:30 AM. If, during the course of the year, the school uses inclement weather/emergency days, it may be necessary to modify the published school calendar.

If school closes unexpectedly for a single day, there will be no academic requirements for that day. If, however, the school will be closed for an extended period due to, weather, public health, or community concern, the school may transition into virtual instruction for the required duration. These will be count as instructional days.

When Saint Rita School is closed for the day (due to inclement weather or other non-weather-related emergencies) the following will apply:

- All school-related extra-curricular activities, interscholastic contests, team practices and field trips will be cancelled.

- Extended day care programs will be closed all day.

## **PHOTOS AND OTHER MEDIA**

Parents/guardians may opt their children out of participating in videotaping, audio recording, school pictures, other photography, or participation involving the Internet. When a parent decides to exercise this right, the school is required to use the Waiver/Right to Object Form (*Appendix N*). All student or parental publications are subject to review and approval by the school administration prior to publication.

## **MEDIA CENTER**

All materials chosen for the media center must be appropriate for students, not only in age level and reading ability, but also for their capacity to foster our students' moral development. All materials shall conform with diocesan policies and guidelines regarding Catholic education.

Parents, guardians or teachers who object to print or multi-media materials used in the classroom must complete an Objection to Content Form (*Appendix K*) after they have read the book or viewed the media and then submit it to the school principal. Those objecting to materials obtained in the school media center should complete Objection to Content Form for Library Materials (*Appendix K-1*). A review committee (to include an Office of Catholic Schools member) will subsequently discuss the objection and decide the disposition of the challenged material. The parent or teacher initiating the review should be personally notified of the results of the review. The Superintendent of Schools has the final say in any subsequent question of this review.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Class visits to places of cultural or educational significance enhance the lessons of the classroom. Field trips, virtual or in person, are planned by teachers and approved by the school administration in order to achieve educational objectives. Financial considerations may bear on the feasibility and frequency of field trips.

Field trips are considered an extension of the school day and the code of conduct will apply.

A permission form signed by a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) must be obtained prior to a student participating in each activity (*Appendix R*, available in PowerSchool).

In the event private automobiles/vehicles of students, parents, or other authorized adults of at least 21 years of age are to be utilized to transport students on field trips, the drivers and/or the vehicle owners must have a valid driver's license and sufficient liability, medical, and uninsured motorist insurance coverage as defined by the Diocesan Risk Manager. Evidence to this effect must be presented to the principal/administration for review and approval prior to the use of such vehicles. Appendix R-1 must be used for this purpose. The principal/administration shall have

the right to prohibit, for any reason, a proposed driver from transporting students on a field trip.

Youth weighing less than 100 pounds may not be seated in the front seat.

Cell calls and texting are not permitted while driving.

Parents/guardians are to be furnished with detailed written information about the field trip and must be given the opportunity to “opt out” their children from the field trip.

Teachers and other school employees should not drive students in their personal vehicles.

It should be understood, in rare instances, world conditions and specifically threats of terrorism against Americans may necessitate the cancellation of school-sponsored trips.

School-sponsored ski trips are not permitted.

Alcohol shall NEVER be served to minors, regardless of cultural norms and/or parent permission while on a field trip.

All medications given on field trips must comply with medication administration policies. For a student with prescription medication and/or medically necessary health related procedures or treatments, a trained individual needs to be present on the field trip such as” a school nurse, parent/guardian, or designated family member to ensure care in the case of an emergency. If a trained individual of the school is unable to chaperone the student on a field trip, it is the responsibility of the parent to provide a trained individual to accompany the student.

## **OVERNIGHT TRIPS**

Overnight trips are not permitted for elementary school children.

## **MARCH FOR LIFE POLICY**

Students are offered varied opportunities to participate in activities that promote the sanctity of life.

Principals may permit students in grades 7 and 8, with permission of their parent/guardian, to participate in the March for Life in a group sponsored by the school or the parish. Procedures detailed under “School-Sponsored Trips” must be followed. The principal is not authorized to permit students in grades K through 6 to participate as a group in the March for Life. Students with written parental permission may accompany their parents on the March for Life.

Students who accompany parents on the March for Life should not be marked as absent for that day. From time-to-time it has been the case that world or local events raise concern about the advisability of school-sponsored student participation in the March for Life and related events. When this happens, principals should use prudent judgment when deciding on attending the



March and should consider appropriate alternatives that can be conducted at the school level.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS/CEREMONIES**

Students must earn their certificate of completion. The school does not guarantee the award of this certificate to students. In order to graduate, students must satisfactorily complete (by attaining a passing grade) all courses as required by the Diocese of Arlington and the Commonwealth of Virginia. In addition, students must comply with all school regulations and policies.

The principal shall have the right to withhold certification of a student's graduation or provide transcripts of the student's academic record to other schools, or to issue a Certificate of Completion to the student, if there has been a breach of a material condition of the contract (i.e., failure to meet financial obligations or infractions against the school's code of conduct).

Graduation ceremonies should be simple and dignified.

The Liturgy is highly recommended. Certificates signifying completion of studies may be given upon completion of 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

## ***PARENT ORGANIZATIONS***

Parent-Teacher Organizations (and like-named entities) support the critical relationship between schools and parents, the primary educators of their children. These organizations support the principal to advance the school's mission.

Every school should have an effective Parent-Teacher Organization. It can help mobilize the parent community regarding legislative proposals impacting Catholic education. The work of PTOs and like organizations shall be guided by the PTO Handbook and the direction of the pastor and principal.

All parent organization activities and all materials prepared by parents for release to the Parish or school community must be submitted to the principal or designee for approval prior to implementation and/or distribution.

All PTO monies must be deposited in the parish or school account as designated by the pastor. In consultation with the principal, the PTO officers should prepare a budget and submit it to the pastor and principal for approval.

PTOs shall have by-laws which establish, among other things, term limits for officers as well as the organization of committees. Persons nominated to serve as a PTO board member must receive the approval of the pastor and principal.

St. Rita School benefits from an active Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Our goals are to support and assist the faculty and staff in their mission of educating our children, to raise money

for the school, and to create a strong sense of community among our families.

The PTO is led by an Executive Board, including a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and preschool representative. PTO organization and operations are described in their By-Laws.

To accomplish our goal of supporting the school, the PTO administers a Family Stewardship Program. All families are required to participate by giving 25 shares of service (12 shares for single-parent families) to the school over the course of the academic year. Opportunities to sign up for various activities and programs occur at the start of the school year. Additional opportunities will be publicized as the school year goes on in the weekly PTO newsletter. There are many options for earning service hours during the school day, at home, and by participating in week-night and week-end events. Families may choose to pay a fee in lieu of service. Please see the following Family Stewardship Program Policy for details.

Our children reap numerous benefits from the generous offering of time and effort by our many active families. The PTO is always looking for enthusiastic participants and new ideas, and we welcome you to join us!

### **St. Rita School Family Stewardship Program: Sharing your time, talent & treasure**

The educational experience at St. Rita is enhanced by the stewardship commitment of the families who share their time, talents, and treasure with the school community. Taking part in the Family Stewardship Program is not intended to be a hardship. Each family is asked to commit to several Stewardship “Shares” for each school year. Volunteering opportunities will be listed, and volunteering hours reported, on the Parent Square app – please refer to instructions sent home about how to sign up for the app.

#### **Shares can be earned by:**

1. Complete one hour of volunteering for the school or PTO (on-site or off-site) 2. Donate an item(s) in the value of \$30. Purchasing and supplying food or event supplies for a class party, monthly faculty lunch, or any school event should be documented to be counted for Stewardship Shares. Every \$30 equals one (1) Share.

2. Volunteering for PTO Board and certain PTO Coordinator positions will automatically satisfy your family’s Stewardship Commitment. Additionally, other PTO Volunteer positions are worth a specified number of shares and will allow families to earn more at one time.

#### **Commitment per Family**

€ 25 shares per two-parent family

€ 12 shares per one-parent family

In being mindful of the very busy lives of the St. Rita families, the request of either 25 or 12 shares, which averages to 2.5 and 1.2 hours/month, respectively, should be manageable and not prove to be a hardship. However, in the spirit of mercy and compassion, if your family situation

makes fulfilling this commitment a hardship, either of time or of finances, please contact the PTO President for a confidential exemption of part or whole of your family's Stewardship Commitment. Any exemption is only applicable for the current school year. Additionally, families with a deployed parent will automatically receive an exemption of 50% of their Family Stewardship Commitment, but you must inform the PTO President as soon as you learn about the family member's deployment.

### **Balance of Stewardship Commitment**

€ \$30 per unfulfilled Share

The PTO works hand in hand with the school in providing a number of stewardship opportunities. For families who are unable to complete their Stewardship commitment in a school year, there will be a \$30 fee for each unfulfilled share. This will be collected via FACTS and those families with a Stewardship Share balance will receive an invoice near the end of the year with the balance collected in June via FACTS.

Should a family experience extenuating circumstances and find they are unable to fulfill their commitment, they may contact the Family Stewardship Coordinator and/or PTO President to request a confidential exemption.

## ***FUNDRAISING***

Any program of generating additional revenue should have the approval of school leadership (pastor, principal, head of school). These activities should be organized and executed so that the school program is not interrupted.

Students may participate in, and cooperate with, worthy collections and fundraising projects conducted by a school or parish, provided such activities have been approved by the school leadership (pastor, principal, head of school).

## ***TRANSPORTATION/PARKING***

### **Arrival**

Cars are to arrive from Russell Road through the second entrance to St. Rita's, proceed around the rectory to the large playground and pull up to the drop-off area following directions from patrols. Parents remain in the car, and children exit on the right side of the vehicle (assisted, as needed, by staff on carline duty). If morning Extended Day is offered, children arriving before 7:50 am should proceed directly to Extended Day. If morning Extended Day is not offered, children are not permitted to be unattended on school grounds prior to 7:50 am. At 7:50 am, school doors will open and children arriving from carline can proceed through the primary door (Door 4) or the upper hall door (Door 5). Walkers can enter the Russell Road doors (Door 1). Once inside, children then proceed directly to their classrooms.

Children arriving after 8:10 am **must be escorted** by their parent/guardian to the Russell Road door (Door 1) and signed into the office.

## **Dismissal**

After prayers at 3:10 pm (Wednesdays on 2:10 pm), all students will be escorted by teachers and staff to their dismissal destination. The default destination of every student will be carline. Other destinations must be specified by the parent/guardian at the beginning of the year using the school drop-off form, and changes to that must be given to the office, in writing, ahead of dismissal time.

**Walkers** will be dismissed to Russell Road through the gates between the Church and the School. ***Under no circumstances are children to be dropped off on the street (Russell or Glebe Roads) or be picked up by car at these locations.***

**Extended Day Program** students will exit the building with the carline students and proceed to the school hall entrance to be signed in by the EDC staff.

Cars are to follow the instructions of staff or faculty on duty in the upper playground. Generally, all cars are to pull into the three horseshoe-shaped lines designated on the upper playground after entering the property from Russell Road. Once the three lines are filled, any later-arriving cars must wait in their queue to form a second carline. These cars will enter the parking lot through the car gate as soon as the first arc of cars begins exiting. ***Under no circumstances are families waiting in this queue to leave their cars to walk up to meet their students. Doing so creates serious safety concerns. Please wait until second carline to enter the parking lot safely and proceed to the dismissal point as directed***

**Children may not proceed through parked cars without an adult escort.** The faculty or staff member on duty will direct cars leaving the upper playground only when no children are moving toward cars or entering cars in the three lines. Departing cars will exit onto Mt. Vernon Ave. or Russell Road as directed by staff. As cars depart from the parking lot, second carline will enter.

Parents are asked to be mindful of all safety regulations regarding morning drop off, late arrivals, and afternoon pick-up. The safety of all our children is imperative, so we ask parents to honor our arrival and dismissal plans.

**The cardinal rule for dismissal is that no child should ever be moving when cars are moving.**

## V. FINANCES

### ***DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM***

#### **APPLICATION PROCESS & REQUIREMENTS**

All school families participating in the program must submit the same application form (available in English and Spanish) along with all supporting tax documents as required and a processing fee payable to the private vendor.

To be eligible to receive funds from this program, students must satisfy all of the criteria described below:

- a. Student is a baptized Catholic or convert officially received into the Church.
- b. Family resides within the boundaries of the Diocese of Arlington.
- c. Family is registered and an active member of the parish.
- d. Student attends, or is accepted by, a Catholic school in the Diocese of Arlington.

The deadline for submitting applications to the contracted vendor is determined annually. Applications received after the stated due date will be considered for tuition assistance if funds are still available.

Although students from families residing on local military bases are not domiciled in a Diocesan parish, those students are eligible for the Diocese of Arlington Tuition Assistance Program.

The funds from the program will be paid directly to the school that the qualifying student attends. Schools will credit the tuition accounts for those families who have been approved to receive aid for that school year.

### ***SCHOOL TUITION POLICIES***

A family's tuition obligation continues even if the school shifts to a virtual model. The education of each student continues with teachers planning and delivering lessons and assessing student progress. Report cards will be distributed at the end of each grading period. If a parent/guardian cannot make the regular tuition payment, the principal should be notified as soon as possible to create a payment plan.

## ***TUITION AND OTHER FEE SCHEDULES***

### **TUITION AND FEES 2025-2026**

***Tuition is paid in 12 monthly, non-refundable payments starting in June of 2025.***

<b>K-8 Tuition</b>	<b>Catholic in parish rate</b>	<b>Catholic out of parish rate</b>	<b>Non-Catholic rate</b>	<b>Book/materials fee per student</b>
1st Child	\$10,530	\$12,955	\$15,670	\$500
2nd Child	\$6,370	\$8,035	\$10,560	\$500
3rd Child	\$5,210	\$6,610	\$8,655	\$500
4th+ Child	\$0	\$0	\$4,295	\$500

<b>Preschool Class</b>	<b>Tuition</b>	<b>Snack/materials fee per student</b>
2 day Angels	\$5,430	\$150
3 day Angels	\$7,520	\$200
3 day Lambs	\$7,520	\$200
5 day Shepherds	\$9,610	\$250

*We offer a \$500 family discount if you have two or more children enrolled in Preschool.*

#### **ADDITIONAL FEES:**

*In addition to initial non-refundable application fee*

- **Registration/Re-registration Fee:** \$100 per student, non-refundable and charged via FACTS to new students upon acceptance and to returning students on January 3, 2025.
- **Tuition Deposit (for new families):** \$300 per student, non-refundable and charged via FACTS upon acceptance. This will be credited toward the total tuition due for 2025-2026 when regular payments begin in June.
- **K-8 Book/Materials Fees & Preschool Snack/Materials Fees:** Non-refundable and processed via FACTS on March 12, 2025. See amounts in chart above.

## **VI. CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### ***PARTICIPATION***

In order for sportsmanship to be rooted in Catholic values, it is expected that coaches, athletes, and fans display respect, civility, and responsibility in words and actions before, during, and after all athletic contests and/or practices. These policies are developed to assist the schools in accomplishing their goal of providing a Catholic education which is rooted in the teachings of the Catholic faith, especially the practice of respect for each person. The policies outlined in this section exist to ensure good sportsmanship and fair play.

Participation in co-curricular and extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right. Students who successfully meet the school's academic requirements and adhere to the code of conduct may participate in co-curricular and extracurricular activities.

When possible, separate athletic teams will be offered for each sex. Young people will participate on teams consistent with their biological sex and may not participate on teams offered for the other sex. When (for example, in swimming or track) a team may include both sexes, individuals will participate in events consistent with their biological sex. In the case of golf, if separate male and female teams are not offered, members of both sexes may participate together on a single team in the same events. Girls are not allowed to participate in boys football and/or wrestling activities. Male wrestlers may not compete with female wrestlers from other schools at any time.

Students participating in school-sponsored team athletic activities must have proof of an annual physical. Submission of a pre-sport participation physical examination form and consent form for elementary- and middle school-based athletic program participation is required, excluding parish CYO.

### ***TRANSPORTATION OF ATHLETES***

Students participating in a school-sponsored sport who wish to travel to and from practice and games in a privately owned vehicle must have a written permission from their parent/guardian.

Although CYO athletic teams are separate and distinct from parish/school activities, the pastor/principal retains the right of possible intervention by the school in the event a significant incident would bring the reputation of the parish and/or school into question within the community.

### ***SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS***

The school is not responsible for providing supervision for students who remain on school property after the conclusion of the instructional day, unless the student is enrolled in an extended day/after care program, or participating in a school-sponsored activity (such as athletics or theater).

## **VII. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES & BEHAVIOR**

### ***CODE OF CONDUCT***

In all areas of learning, discipline must be considered in the development of the whole person. The Code of Conduct is based on the Gospel message of Jesus. Growth in self-discipline, a responsibility for Catholic moral values and a loving respect for the rights of all persons is encouraged and nourished by the Code of Conduct. To achieve these ends, parents/guardians, faculty, and students work together to create a Catholic school environment. These basic components include:

- a. Teachers have a right to teach. No student will stop the teacher from teaching.
- b. Students have a right to learn. No student will stop another student from learning.

Based upon the Catholic moral values and loving respect for others taught by Jesus, students:

- a. will be honest and committed to integrity.
- b. will be respectful and courteous toward all teachers and adults.
- c. will refrain from harassment of any kind.
- d. will use appropriate language.
- e. will speak respectfully to and about others.
- f. will complete all assignments and participate fully in class.
- g. will respect all school and personal property (see *Care of School Property*).
- h. will refrain from any deliberate disruption in the school.
- i. will adhere to the school's cell phone policy.
- j. will comply with the Responsible Use Policy for Technology and Artificial Intelligence.
- k. will demonstrate good sportsmanship when engaged in all school-sponsored co- and extracurricular activities.
- l. will be present for all required activities unless officially excused by the administration.
- m. will adhere to the dress code (see *Dress Code*).
- n. will not give or receive unauthorized assistance on tests, quizzes, or assignments.



- o. will not leave school grounds during the school day for any reason without permission from the principal/administration.
- p. will not bring to school, nor possess at school, any real or toy knives, guns (or any facsimile thereof), sharp objects that may be used as a weapon, matches, lighters, sparklers, laser devices, or any facsimile thereof. It is understood if this term is violated, suspension, or expulsion may result (see *Substance Abuse/Weapons* and *Inappropriate Materials*).
- q. will maintain, and support others who maintain, a safe and drug-free environment at, or near, school and at all school-sponsored functions/activities with the understanding that possession or distribution of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or any other substance that may be harmful or dangerous and forbidden, to include drug paraphernalia, will result in suspension or expulsion from school (see also *Substance Abuse/Weapons*).
- r. will not engage in any physical or verbal contact with another student which could be interpreted to be an inappropriate display of affection. Such conduct is prohibited on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
- s. will, at all times, whether at school or in the community, conduct themselves in a manner which reflects the Catholic values and principles of the school.

All of the conduct expectations include student use of the internet.

The school observes this Code of Conduct because it is built on fundamental Catholic social teachings. The role of the principal/administration, staff, and faculty is to work with the students and parents/guardians to assist the students in developing a strong Christian attitude toward life.

## ***SUBSTANCE ABUSE/WEAPONS***

The school makes every effort to make students aware of the dangers and consequences of the unlawful use of substances.

It is unlawful for any person to manufacture, sell, distribute, or possess with intent to sell, give, or distribute any controlled substance, imitation controlled substance, or marijuana while upon the property of the school; on any school bus; upon any public property or any property open to the public use within 1,000 feet of the school (or any school bus stop when students are waiting to be picked up and transported to or are being dropped off from school or a school-sponsored activity). If a student knows or suspects that any of the foregoing activities are occurring, he/she must immediately report the matter to the school administration/faculty so the appropriate law enforcement agency may be contacted.

If a student is suspected or is discovered to have (a) violated the foregoing policy with respect to any controlled substance, imitation controlled substance or marijuana or (b) used, possessed or distributed alcohol, tobacco, or e-liquids while upon the property of the school; on any school bus; upon public property or any property open to the public use within 1,000 feet of the school (or any school bus stop when students are waiting to be picked up and transported to or are being

dropped off from school or a school-sponsored activity), the student will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. In the event school officials believe that a student is under the influence of an illegal substance, the parents/guardians will be notified, and the student will be removed from class. School officials reserve the right to require that the student be taken for drug testing within 24 hours and that the results of the testing be shared with the appropriate school officials. If a violation of the law has occurred, the proper law enforcement agency will be contacted.

A student shall not possess or use drug paraphernalia, including, but not limited to: e-cigarette delivery devices, e-cigarette accessories, vaping devices, water pipes, cigarette paper rolling machines, and miniature scales on the property of the school, on any school bus and/or at any school-sponsored activity, whether discovered in an authorized search of his or her private property or on school property (e.g., lockers). Any student who violates this provision will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

A student shall not possess, use, or threaten to use on the property of the school, on any school bus; and/or at any school sponsored activity, any weapons (including but not limited to any pistols, revolvers, rifles or other firearms, stun weapons, tasers, knives, flailing instruments [which may sometimes be known as nunchucks or fighting chains], sling shot, metal knuckles, any type of pointed metal throwing disk or dart, mace, pepper spray, or other similar propellant or any type of explosive, incendiary or poison gas, bomb, grenade or rocket) or any facsimiles thereof, or any object that can be used with the intent of threatening or harming an individual, except when expressly authorized by a member of the school administration/faculty for authorized school purposes (such as knives for use only in food preparation activities in family life/home economics class; chemicals solely for use in instructional lessons as part of the school's academic curriculum; etc.). Any student who violates this provision will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. If there is reason to believe a violation of law has occurred, parents as well as the proper law enforcement agency, will be immediately contacted.

The Diocese of Arlington is committed to providing a safe environment that allows students to develop and prosper academically, physically, and spiritually, consistent with Catholic teachings and principles. When a student has expressed to another student or adult, that he/she wants to harm or kill another individual, do harm to the school, mentions weapons, etc., it is the responsibility of the school leadership to investigate this further. A behavioral threat assessment will be conducted (Appendix O-1). In consultation with the Diocese, it will normally be the case that the non-emergency police line in the school's jurisdiction will be notified when threats are made.

## ***DISCIPLINE***

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems which arise, this handbook empowers the faculty

and administration to take disciplinary action for any behavior (within or outside of the school community) which violates the spirit, philosophy, and code of conduct of the school, even though not specified.

In justice to the other students, circumstances may dictate that a student be removed temporarily or permanently from the particular school setting.

#### **USE OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

In cases where a student is continually disruptive of others or in the case of a single serious disciplinary infraction, the teacher will apprise the principal/administration of the situation. They will assist in the development of a course of action to be taken to correct the situation.

Students who lack self-discipline or who violate the rights of others can expect disciplinary action. Each offense will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the age of the student, the nature of the infraction, and the severity of the case. Repeated infractions can result in more serious consequences, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion, but there is no requirement for progressive discipline.

#### **DISCIPLINARY MEASURES**

The following are some approved disciplinary measures:

- a. Counseling and/or conference with the student and family
- b. Assignment of special tasks
- c. Denial of privileges
- d. Detention
- e. Probation
- f. Suspension
- g. Expulsion

#### **SUSPENSION**

Suspension may be imposed as determined by the principal/administration. Once the principal/administration suspends a student, parents/guardians may be required to sign a behavioral contract in which they signify their understanding of the problem and agree to work with the school in correcting the situation.

The failure of the parents to execute the above referenced agreement shall preclude the student from returning to the regular instructional program. This policy applies to in-house and out-of-school suspensions.

## **EXPULSION**

Expulsion may be resorted to when one or all of the following are present:

- a. a serious infraction of school rules occurs;
- b. the student has demonstrated continuing disregard of school rules for which other means of discipline have proven ineffectual;
- c. the student's continued presence in the school is considered by school officials to be a serious hindrance to the safety or welfare of the school community;
- d. a parent/guardian repeatedly or seriously violates proper school protocol, displays inappropriate or disruptive conduct toward students or displays disrespectful, disruptive, or harassing behavior toward teachers, school, parish, or diocesan staff.

If the principal/administration believes it necessary to expel a student, the principal/administration will notify the student and the student's parents about the student's action and provide them with an opportunity to respond in accordance with the school's disciplinary hearing process before making any final decision on the matter.

A parent/guardian whose child is expelled may appeal this decision in writing to the Superintendent of Schools within 5 working days from the time of written notification.

During the pendency of any appeal, the expelled student shall be removed from the school community in compliance with the expulsion notice unless otherwise directed at the discretion of the principal/administration.

Students who have been expelled from any Diocesan school may not apply for admission to that school or another Diocesan school for a minimum of one (1) year from the date of expulsion.

## ***STUDENT REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES***

Privacy of individual students must be balanced against the need to protect the health, welfare, and safety of other members of the school community.

### **STUDENTS AND STUDENT PROPERTY SEARCHES**

The principal/administration or his/her designee has the right to protect the health, welfare, and safety of school patrons against drugs, weapons, unauthorized publications, and other contraband materials. Search of a student's person and/or personal property on school property (e.g. automobiles, etc.) or at school activities may be conducted by the school principal/administration or other designated officials. It is only necessary that a search be reasonable and related to the school rights in these regards. The failure of a student to voluntarily submit to a search shall be presumptive evidence of the existence of contraband and grounds for appropriate disciplinary

action.

### **INTERROGATION OF STUDENTS**

Unless provided with a court-issued warrant, the head of school or principal and the Office of Catholic Schools must first be consulted before law enforcement authorities are allowed to speak to any student about alleged illegal activities. This policy does not apply to Child Protective Services (CPS) officers, who are by law entitled to interview children.

The questioning by police officers of students in school or on school grounds about alleged illegal activities shall meet the following conditions:

- a. The principal, the assistant principal, or the principal's designee shall be alerted.
- b. The police officers shall report to the principal's office.
- c. Permission from the student's parent/guardian must be acquired, either by phone or in person, prior to questioning.
- d. The principal or a school representative shall be present.
- e. The questioning shall be conducted in a private room where participants cannot be seen or heard by students and/or other school personnel.

The police officers may take legal actions that they deem necessary.

### **STUDENTS AND STUDENT PROPERTY**

Students are solely responsible for their own personal property. The school accepts no responsibility for items left unattended in the common areas of the school. It is the responsibility of the student to turn in wallets, watches, and other valuables to the physical education teacher/coach when participating in athletic events away from school. Items of personal property or clothing not directly related to academic or athletic events sponsored by the school should not be brought to school.

### **SCHOOL LOCKERS AND DESKS**

Lockers and desks are school property and are subject to searches by school authorities to protect the safety of all. A student to whom a locker or desk has been assigned, has vis-a-vis other students, exclusive use of the locker or desk but has no proprietary rights versus the school.

In grades 6-8, students receive the privilege of keeping school supplies in lockers. These lockers must at no time contain food or liquids. Students may not apply stickers or markers (dry erase or otherwise) to the surfaces of the locker (inside or outside).

## ***CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY***

Students are to care for school property in a respectful manner. Students who deface or damage school property or the property of others will make financial restitution. If library books are not returned, students will be assessed an amount equal to the value of the book or its replacement, whichever is greater, as determined by the principal/administration.

Students are expected to pick up trash they generate in the classroom and on school grounds. The failure to clean up after themselves can result in the loss of privileges.

## ***DRESS CODE***

The dress code provides a standard for our students, which fosters an environment conducive to learning and respectful behavior.

Final decisions regarding the school uniform and dress code rest with the principal/administration.

### **UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS & OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION**

New uniforms are available from our retail partner listed below, and second-hand at the school's Uniform Closet, which will be opened at designated times for parents to purchase items.

Flynn and Ohara  
Fair City Mall  
9650 Main Street Unit 20  
Fairfax, VA 22031  
[Website](#)

A copy of the uniform guidelines are posted below and can also be found under the “Parent Resources” tab on the school website [www.saintrita-school.org](http://www.saintrita-school.org).

## **St. Rita Uniform Code: Kindergarten to 8th Grade**

*Properly wearing our uniform helps keep our school environment conducive to learning. Parents will be notified if children are not wearing the uniform properly or violating the dress code; blatant or repeated infractions may result in disciplinary consequences.*

	Boys	Girls
<b>Summer Uniform:</b> Option pre-Columbus Day and post-Easter Break, except Mass Days	Uniform green polo shirt & uniform khaki shorts or uniform khaki pants Belt (for shorts with belt loops) All-white sneakers with all-white socks or all-black sneakers with all-black socks Uniform PE sweatshirt can be added as needed	Uniform green polo shirt & uniform khaki skirt or uniform khaki pants All-white sneakers with all-white socks or all-black sneakers with all-black socks Uniform PE sweatshirt can be added as needed

<b>Formal Uniform:</b> Year-round uniform; required Columbus Day to Easter break and all Mass Days	White collared button-down oxford-style shirt (long or short sleeve) Uniform plaid tie Uniform green vest or sweater Uniform khaki pants Black belt (for pants with belt loops) All-black socks and all-black dress shoes or all-black sneakers.	White Peter Pan collar blouse (K-5) or collared button-down blouse (6-8) (long or short sleeve) Uniform plaid jumper (K-5) or uniform plaid skirt & green vest/pullover sweater (6-8) Bike shorts worn under jumper/skirt (should not extend below hem) All-black socks (knee highs preferred) or tights with all-black dress shoes or all-black sneakers. Dress shoes should be flat heel loafer/Oxford/Mary Jane style <i>Girls can also wear white blouse with green vest, uniform khaki pants, belt, and dress shoes</i>
<b>PE Uniform:</b> PE Day only	Uniform gray PE t-shirt (with uniform green PE sweatshirt as needed) Uniform green PE mesh shorts or uniform green PE sweatpants St. Rita Spiritwear (shirts/shorts/pants) and House Hoodies can be worn on PE Days All-white sneakers with all-white socks or all-black sneakers with all-black socks	
<b>Dress Down Days:</b> As announced, on some 11:30 Dismissal days	On designated dress down days, students may wear clean and modest clothes in keeping with the designated theme, avoiding tank tops or crop tops, sweatpants, leggings-as-pants, flip flops, crocs, clothing with rips, tears, or controversial political/social text or imagery. Pants/shorts/skirts/dresses must be worn at the natural waist, hem lengths no shorter than 2-3 inches above the knee. Problematic attire may result in the privilege of dressing down being revoked for that particular student for the rest of the year.	
<b>Dress UP Days:</b> As announced, but possibly including Epiphany, May Crowning	<b>Sunday Best:</b> Button down shirt and tie with belted khaki-style pants (or similarly dressy outfit) Dress shoes	<b>Sunday Best:</b> Dress or blouse with skirt (or similarly dressy) Flat/low heel (less than 1 inch) dress shoes No spaghetti straps or low cut Add tights, sweaters if cold - they'll go outside!

**Dress Code Rules & Regs:** Wearing the uniform well shows respect for oneself and others and helps everyone focus on growing in knowledge and virtue together. Children's clothes should fit well and be neat, clean, and presentable at all times. Shirts should be tucked in, pants/shorts worn at the natural waist, hem lengths no shorter than 2-3 inches above the knee. Non-uniform outerwear cannot be worn inside the classroom. You are naturally beautiful! Hair cannot be dyed or highlighted (temporarily or permanently), and boys' hair must be kept shorter than their collar. No make-up, colored nail polish, rings, or bracelets can be worn. A regular watch (not smart watch) and a religious medal/cross/crucifix on a light chain can be worn, and girls (only) may wear small stud earrings and hair ornaments of black, dark green, or school plaid. *Uniform pieces are available at our retail partner, Flynn O'Hara (online or in Fairfax store), and secondhand pieces are available in our school's Uniform Closet (\$1/item or trade-ins, limit of 2 of each item per child - open at designated times).*

## ***INAPPROPRIATE MATERIALS***

Students are not permitted to possess the following items on school property or at school

functions:

Students will not bring to school, nor possess at school, any real or toy knives, guns (or any facsimile thereof), sharp objects that may be used as a weapon, matches, lighters, sparklers, laser devices, or any facsimile thereof. It is understood if this term is violated, suspension, or expulsion may result. (From code of conduct above)

Electronic games or devices, including PDA's, MP3 players, and iPods, are not permitted on school grounds. Any electronic device found on a student during the school day, or during Extended Day, will be held by the principal until a parent retrieves it in person. Laser pens, laser pointers, as well as liquid correcting fluid are not permitted on school grounds.

Books, magazines, or any other printed material which contains, whether in text or picture, anything contrary to the Catholic moral teachings are not permitted on school grounds. At the principal's discretion, any such materials found on school grounds will be confiscated and held by the principal until the student's parent/guardian retrieve them in person.

## ***PLAYGROUND REGULATIONS***

1. Students will remain in the building until the supervising adult escorts them to the playground.
2. Classes will follow schedules and special regulations governing the use of the enclosed playground area including:
  - Students will enter and leave the playground/convent garden through the double door gate.
  - No ball games are to be played in the enclosed playground/convent garden area.
  - No playground equipment (balls, jump-ropes, etc.) are allowed within the enclosed playground structure.
  - Slides are to be slid down feet first only. Only one student is permitted on the slide at a time. Students are not to climb up slides (Grades K-4).
  - No branches should be broken off of trees, no playing with sticks, or climbing trees are allowed.
  - Students are not to dig in the dirt or the mulch.
  - Food and drink may not be consumed inside the enclosed playground area except when sitting on a bench.
3. Students are to place their trash in the trashcans provided. Littering on school grounds is not permitted. Students are expected to clean up after themselves and will lose privileges if they fail to do so.
4. Students may not play around or between parked cars. A playground supervisor must retrieve balls from under parked cars.
5. No student may play by the steps down to the school hall.
6. Jump ropes and other playground equipment are to be used for the original purpose. Tug of war or putting ropes around any student is not permitted.
7. No student is to leave the playground to retrieve a ball. If there are sufficient monitors on duty, a playground supervisor may go after the ball.
8. No running on or jumping off the structure.



9. No standing on top of the rails or climbing onto roof of structure.
10. On spinning spider web:
  - o Max of 25 K-4th graders on it at once
  - o Max of 15 5th-8th graders on it at once
  - o No crawling underneath it when spinning
  - o No lying down with one's head sticking out while web is spinning
11. No hanging on the basketball hoop. Students are not to adjust the height. Only an adult supervisor (K-4) may adjust the height of the hoop.
12. Playground supervisors are to be treated with respect and their corrections must be responded to immediately. Any playground supervisor may place a student in "time-out" for unacceptable behavior.
13. When recess is over, all students are to return equipment to the equipment bags, lineup, and stand silently for prayer (may be sung) with their class. Ready and reverent is required by all.
14. Students may not throw snow, ice, or slush at others on school property.

## ***LUNCHROOM REGULATIONS***

Given the risk of potential harm, students' access and use of microwave ovens is prohibited in grades preschool through grade 5. Student meals provided by parents/guardians must not be heated in microwave ovens by school personnel and/or school volunteers.

The school administration can determine if middle school students may use a microwave oven.

Students in Kindergarten and First Grade eat in their classrooms under adult supervision. Grades 2-8 eat in the School Hall with adult supervision. Students should have a well-balanced lunch including a beverage such as water, milk, or juice. No soda is to be brought into school. If plastic water bottles are used, they must be clear. Any steel bottles may be opened to verify they contain only water.

Students are expected to exercise good hygiene and manners when eating. All trash, spills etc. must be taken care of by the student. Students must properly dispose of all their trash before being dismissed from lunch. Parents need to be sure to send the appropriate utensils with their student so they can eat their meal.

## VIII. HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELFARE

### ***STUDENT HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELFARE***

Parents/guardians have the primary responsibility for the health and well-being of their children. School health services supplement, rather than substitute, for parental care and concern for the health of the students.

#### **PREVENTION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND/OR CHILD ABUSE**

The Catholic Diocese of Arlington Policy on the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse generally applies to all clergy, all employees, and all volunteers.

It is the policy of the Diocese that sexual misconduct and/or child abuse while performing any work or activity under the auspices of the Diocese is contrary to Christian principles and outside the scope of any authority, duties, and/or employment of any clergy, employee, or volunteer.

Virginia law imposes upon school personnel the legal responsibility of reporting to the local child protective services agency any incident of suspected child abuse or neglect.

School personnel who suspect the abuse or neglect of a student must report the matter directly to Child Protective Services and to the school principal (who in turn will call the Vicar General). The school principal should complete Attachment B found in Appendix G, which must be sent to the Vicar General. The school principal must inform the superintendent as well.

In accordance with the *Code of Virginia*, (Section 63.2–118, “Any person required to make a report or conduct an investigation or family assessment, pursuant to this chapter may talk to any child suspected of being abused or neglected or to any of his siblings without consent of and outside the presence of his parent/guardian, legal custodian, or other person standing in *loco parentis* or school personnel.”

#### **WELLNESS POLICY**

The Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools Wellness Policy meets minimum federal standards and establishes goals for physical education, nutrition, and healthy environments in schools. All schools must develop, and continue to evaluate, local school wellness policies. The local policies create a framework for increased student activity, staff wellness, safe and healthy environments, and the elimination of foods of minimal nutritional value during the school day. All schools have wellness committees to implement, sustain, and evaluate the local wellness program.

## **STUDENTS WITH SUICIDAL IDEATION**

The Diocese of Arlington is committed to providing a safe environment that allows students to develop and prosper academically, physically, and spiritually, consistent with Catholic teachings and principles. When a student has expressed to any adult, that he/she wants to harm or kill him/herself, it is the responsibility of that adult, school counselor, school nurse or administrator to investigate this further. Refer to Appendix O for details on how to proceed in aiding the student and the family in seeking appropriate help. The school may require documentation and information regarding the threat to self and request accommodations that may impact their academics or social interactions while at school. It is recommended that schools participate in suicide prevention training to aid school faculty and staff in recognizing signs, language and behaviors that could be perceived as concerning. (e.g., SafeTALK, Living Works, QPR)

## **ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID**

The parents/guardians of an injured student will be notified of the accident/injury by the principal/administration or the principal/administration's designee as soon as reasonably possible, taking into consideration such factors as the apparent severity of the accident/injury and the priority of providing assistance to the student.

If an incident results in a medical condition or injury which can be reasonably known to the appropriate supervisory faculty/staff member and/or the principal, the school and/or its staff are authorized to render reasonable basic first aid if such direct medical assistance would, in the opinion of the school, serve to minimize the severity of the injured person's condition. As an example, staff should initially resort to using only ice, band aids, soap and water when treating cuts and/or scrapes to avoid any possible known or unknown allergic reactions to salves or creams. In addition, staff may secure a professional diagnosis and/or treatment if such action, in the opinion of the school, appears to be reasonably warranted. The school and school officials shall be expressly held harmless from any liability costs or expenses associated with the professional diagnosis and/or any treatment or first aid provided (including but not limited to the cost of transportation), such costs or expenses being the responsibility of the injured party or, if a student, the student's parents.

## **AIR QUALITY AND PREVENTION OF HEAT/COLD RELATED ILLNESS**

When students and activities require time outside, schools will monitor weather related to the "feels like" temperature. To prevent heat and/or cold related illness, outside activities may be restricted based upon a heat index or wind chill factor, which registers in the caution level. Schools will consult local weather reports and Appendix F-15 for guidance in outdoor activities. Schools that do not have air-conditioned classrooms are permitted to provide early dismissals in accordance with Appendix F-15.

## GENERAL ILLNESS PROCEDURES

Each school will provide a health office or comfortable space, apart from the student population, where children who become ill or injured can be cared for following *Virginia School Health Guidelines*.

Students with fevers and/or contagious or infectious diseases will be sent home promptly and will be excluded from school while in that condition, according to the Virginia Department of Health regulations. Once a child is determined to need to go home, a parent or guardian must pick up their child from school within a reasonable amount of time to control the spread of illness. If parent or guardian is not available, the emergency contact will be called. Once the student is confirmed to be free of communicable illness by a health care provider or is fever free/symptom free for 24 hours without taking anti-fever medications, the student may return to school. This policy also applies to resuming after-school and extracurricular activities.

When a student is requesting a waiver from participating in Physical Education classes and/or recess, parents are required to submit a written statement from their child's physician which states any activity restrictions with regard to participation in Physical Education classes and/or recess. The statement is expected to include a specific time frame for the activity restrictions.

## MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION OVERVIEW

All school clinic, administrators, and staff are required to administer medication within the framework of the procedures outlined in diocesan policy and summarized here.

All prescription and over the counter (OTC) medications may be administered during the school day under the following conditions:

- a. When the need for administration of medicines during school hours has been confirmed by the school nurse/health assistant (or the school administration);
- b. After the first dose of any medication has been given at home;
- c. When the parent/guardian provides and transports the medication to and from school and the medication is given directly to the school nurse/health assistant or a senior member of the school administration;
- d. When there is a licensed health care provider's written order signed by the parent/guardian requesting the school administer the medication or to permit the student to self-administer the medication;
- e. When the medication is brought to the school in its original container stating the name of the student, the dosage and method of administration prescribed by a licensed health-care provider. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to notify the school of any changes to the original prescription. The new prescription must also be brought to the school in the original container as stated above;
- f. When the appropriate medication authorization form (*Appendix F-6*) has been

completed, signed by the parent/guardian and accompanies the medication;

- g. For any medication, parents must document the number of tablets or dosages to be secured for administration by authorized school personnel. If tablets are to be divided, the parent or guardian is responsible for dividing the tablets in order to achieve their child's proper dosage.
- h. Herbal and homeopathic medications will not be given in Diocesan schools without written authorization by a LHCP that shall include desired and adverse effects. Protein supplements will not be administered unless directly requested by a physician with a health treatment plan.
- i. Students should not attend school while taking prescribed Schedule II narcotics (e.g. Percocet, oxycodone, hydromorphone) for any legitimate reason. If a student needs a Schedule II narcotic analgesic, they shall remain home until they are able to control pain with OTC medications.
- j. Benzodiazepines (e.g. klonopin, Ativan, diazepam) prescribed as needed (prn), should not be administered in any school setting. This does not apply to students diagnosed with a seizure disorder.

Under no circumstances are medications to be shared with other students.

If a student with a known condition warrants oxygen treatment at school, the treating LHCP and registered nurse shall develop a written plan of treatment including all equipment and supplies.

The Diocese of Arlington does not permit the use, possession, or transfer of marijuana including Cannabidiol (CBD), Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC-A) and Cannabis Oil, for any purpose. Students who qualify under local law to use marijuana for medical purposes may not possess, store, use or share marijuana on school property or school-sponsored events.

Picc Lines, Heparin/Saline Locks, and Central Venous Lines may be present in students with specialized health care needs. Dressing changes, heparin flushes, and other medication administration via these lines are to be done at home, not at school.

When the medication is epinephrine, trained school employees are permitted to administer EpiPen injections when:

- a. the parents advise the staff most directly involved with the student of the situations when an EpiPen may need to be administered (e.g., symptoms indicating that a person is suffering from severe allergic reaction, basic procedures for administering the EpiPen with a suitable demonstration);
- b. parents of students requiring such injections provide a licensed health-care provider letter attesting to the life-threatening allergy;
- c. parents agree to execute the release of liability/hold harmless agreement regarding the use of the EpiPen.

All diocesan schools will maintain non-student-specific school stock epinephrine. This school stock epinephrine can be used in an allergy-naïve student when anaphylaxis is suspected. Employees at the school will be informed of the location where the medication will be stored, and they will be appropriately educated on its use.

All diocesan schools will maintain naloxone, an opioid antagonist, to be available for use if opioid overdose is suspected in any individual on school campus. Any student receiving naloxone will be transported via EMS to the local emergency room and cleared to return to school. All staff will be trained in how to recognize opioid overdose and administer naloxone.

A student is NOT permitted to self-medicate. The school does not assume responsibility for medications taken independently by the student. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis for students who demonstrate the capability to carry and self-administer emergency lifesaving medications (e.g. inhaler, EpiPen).

All OTC and prescription medications are to be kept locked in the clinic/school office and be administered by the school nurse, clinic aide, principal, or trained designee. No student is to carry/possess medications without appropriate medical authorization. No medication will be administered unless the school has received a signed copy of the Medication Authorization Form (*Appendix F-6*). OTC medications do not require a health care provider's signature unless the medication is required for four (4) or more consecutive days.

It shall be the student's responsibility to come to the clinic/school office at the appropriate time for medication unless a health care provider or parent/guardian indicates in writing that the student cannot do this.

Within one week after expiration of the effective date on the order, or on the last day of school, the parent/guardian must personally collect any unused portion of the medication. Medications not claimed within that period will be destroyed.

#### **LIFE THREATENING ALLERGY**

Schools will utilize current resources and reputable materials such as: Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE) and the CDC's *Voluntary Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies in Schools and Early Care and Education Programs* to develop allergen management communications for student handbooks, classrooms, and parental publications.

All schools must provide an annual in-service educating school faculty and staff about the policy. Training will include minimizing the risk of exposure to life threatening allergens in the school setting as well as anaphylaxis recognition, medical management, and incident reporting.

Schools will utilize the policy to develop allergen management communications for student handbooks, classrooms, and parental publications. Schools will select and train staff to be utilized as anaphylaxis response teams responsible for managing an allergic crisis.

Parents/guardians of students with a life-threatening allergy must inform the principal and school

health personnel of any allergies and provide schools with fully executed diocesan documents. Parents/guardians are expected to supply schools with any emergency medications as prescribed and may additionally provide the student with “safe” foods for classroom celebrations involving food. Schools will utilize diocesan documents to formulate an emergency care plan for the student and will share this care plan with those involved with the student including, but not limited to: teacher(s), food service, bus drivers, and janitorial staff.

#### **TELEHEALTH**

Medical appointments made via telehealth cannot be facilitated in the school building. If a student has been scheduled for a telehealth visit for medical reasons, the parent/guardian will need to check his/her student out of the school building and complete the appointment in the privacy of their vehicle or at home.

If a school is able to adequately support virtual regularly scheduled therapy sessions in the building (e.g., occupational or speech therapy) for students with a documented diagnosis, they can do so on a case-by-case basis after evaluating the specific circumstances.

#### **SPECIALIZED STUDENT CARE NEEDS**

The parent/guardian of any student on a continuing regimen for a non-episodic condition shall inform the school principal/administration and identify, in writing, the student’s supervising health care provider. If necessary, and with parental written consent, there may be occasions when the school needs to communicate with the health care provider regarding possible effects on the student’s healthcare management, special emergency procedures, or behavior at school.

#### **TOILETING/INCONTINENCE**

Although the vast majority of school staff would assist in an emergency situation, as no child should be left in wet or soiled clothing, it is important to note that there is no expectation that routine and predictable incidents are to be dealt with by school staff.

Parents/guardians will always be contacted in incidents of soiling. The exception to this policy is the student with a prescribed health-related treatment or procedure plan obtained in writing from a LHCP, with proper authorizations in writing by the parent or guardian.

For preschool students, it is recognized that continence training is an area of development which is reached at different ages for all children and that every child has individual needs which are respected. The preschool director will determine age-appropriate protocols for the student population.

#### **USE OF CRUTCHES**

An order from a licensed healthcare provider is required to use crutches at school. If a student arrives at school on crutches without a licensed health-care provider order, the parent will be called to take the student home.

# ***CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES***

## **DISEASE**

Parents/guardians must notify the school within 24 hours if their child or any member of the immediate household has developed a communicable disease. Parents must notify the school immediately if the disease is life threatening. Parents must pick up their sick or injured child in a timely manner when contacted. If the parent cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called to pick up the child.

The protection and welfare of each individual student is of great importance in the schools of the Diocese of Arlington. In an effort to enhance the protection of students:

- a. No daycare/preschool, elementary, middle, or secondary school student may attend class without documentary proof of adequate immunization in accordance with Virginia Department of Health's school entry requirements (or modified schedule as approved by licensed health care provider) on the Virginia School Entrance Health Form MCH-213G (*Appendix F-2*).
  - i. A certificate of immunization is not required for any student for whom the school has written certification from a licensed doctor of medicine or osteopathy, licensed nurse practitioner, or the local health department, that one of more of the required immunizations may be detrimental to the student's health. The certification must indicate the specific nature and probable duration of the medical condition or circumstance that contraindicates immunization. The Virginia School Entrance Health Form (MCH-213G) provides a space for such a certification to be made
  - ii. On a basic level, for the good of society, the Catholic church generally encourages the use of immunizations. The Church teaches that questions of immunization are "left to a matter of conscience" and parents have the right to decide about the health of their children in this matter. Parents or guardians who object to the administration of immunizing agents for their child on the grounds that this conflicts with their religious tenets or practices must produce a notarized Certificate of Religious Exemption form (*Appendix F-18*), which will be retained in the student health record. Schools may request a statement from their parish priest or affiliate, describing such objection to specific immunizing agents. If an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable illness occurs, the student who is not immunized against that disease, will be excluded from school for an undetermined period of time, as per the instructions of the State Health Commissioner and the public health department.
- b. Students who have traveled or resided in a foreign country for three months or more where tuberculosis is common are required to provide documentation, prior to school entry, of a negative tuberculosis skin test or chest x-ray result. All diocesan schools



- are responsible for compliance with local health department regulations pertaining to tuberculosis screening and treatment.
- c. Students with fevers and/or contagious or infectious diseases will be sent home promptly and will be excluded from school while in that condition, according to the Virginia Department of Health regulations. (See General Illness Procedures.)
  - d. School health personnel will follow the Virginia Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart, found in the *Virginia School Health Guidelines*, when referring suspected cases of communicable disease to the local health department for excluding or readmitting a student.
  - e. The Diocese of Arlington has comprehensive guidelines for school/parish-based influenza vaccination clinics. The liability associated with the vaccination of children is great. The Diocese of Arlington does not promote school-based vaccination clinics for children during school hours, and in the absence of the parent, with the exception of a state or federal emergency. Any school wishing to offer an onsite school immunization program must comply with all aspects of the Memorandum of Agreement. Vendors wishing to serve as vaccinators must be fully vetted by the Office of Risk Management prior to the signing of any contract for services.

## LICE

All students identified as having an active case of lice will be excluded from school until they receive treatment. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide appropriate and adequate treatment for the student and home environment as recommended by their health care professional. Readmission to school is determined by the school nurse/administration based upon re-inspection and the effectiveness of treatment. Follow up treatment is expected and verified by the school nurse/administration. Classroom contacts may be inspected.

## ***BLOODBORNE DISEASE***

The Christian community is called to respond to the sick in our midst with compassion and justice. The diocese recognizes its obligation to protect the rights of individual students infected with Hepatitis and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and to provide a safe environment for students, staff members, and the public. Students who are infected with bloodborne Hepatitis, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), or HIV-related conditions must be provided the opportunity to receive a Catholic school education.

Since it is known that bloodborne Hepatitis and HIV are not transmitted through casual contact, any student who is infected will continue education in a regular classroom assignment unless his or her health status requires otherwise. It is the intent of the Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools to follow the recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Virginia Department of Health, which state that most bloodborne Hepatitis and HIV-infected children be allowed to attend school in an unrestricted setting, and that decisions regarding school attendance be based on the medical condition of each child and

the expected type of interaction with others in that setting.

Persons involved in the implementation and monitoring of this policy shall maintain confidentiality of records in compliance with federal and state law and diocesan policy. All diocesan schools shall also maintain a program of information and training for school staff members to ensure a consistent and accurate understanding regarding prevention of exposure to bloodborne pathogens. This includes training related to the proper application of universal/standard precautions.

## ***FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS***

Fire drills, with the complete evacuation of the school building, will be held once a month. Records of these fire drills will be kept in the school office. St. Rita School is inspected by the Fire Marshall for the City of Alexandria at least once a year and records of these inspections are also on file in the school office. A permit issued by the Fire Department is displayed in the upper hall of the school.

All regulations and policies established by the Alexandria City Fire Department are followed by St. Rita School. In the event of a major disaster or weather emergency, St. Rita School has an emergency preparedness policy in place, in coordination with the City of Alexandria emergency services.

## ***HARASSMENT***

Harassment can take place in person or in writing and can be physical, verbal, or electronic. Regardless of its form, the Diocese of Arlington prohibits it.

This policy applies to the school site itself, to all school-sponsored and affiliated activities and events, whether in school or out of school, including but not limited to special events, field/service trips, retreats and/or other overnight trips, sporting events and practices, to all forms of transportation used by school personnel and students to come and go to the school and school-affiliated activities, and to all forms/use of technology.

Furthermore, since student behavior, whether inside or outside of school, reflects on our schools and can have a significant impact on life at school, there are times when it is appropriate and important for school administration to respond to incidents that occur outside of school and beyond school hours. Therefore, the schools reserve the right to discipline those in the community who engage in harassment of other school community members at any location and at any time if such harassment takes the form of obscene, libelous, slanderous language or incites violence, invades the rights of others, or contributes to a substantial disruption of the school community. Therefore, if such harassment originates outside of school and it comes to the attention of school staff, appropriate action will be taken to maintain a safe and respectful work and academic environment. As the primary educators of their children, parents have the responsibility to handle harassment issues not involving the school and that are occurring outside of school.

Bullying, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation against anyone who has reported these behaviors is prohibited. Students engaging in these behaviors are subject to disciplinary and/or legal action. Students, parents, employees, and service providers are responsible for reporting incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation on campus. School principals will ensure that all illegal behaviors are reported to the appropriate local authorities and the Superintendent of Catholic Schools immediately.

## ***SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND/OR SEXUAL ABUSE – STUDENTS***

No student is to sexually harass or sexually abuse another person. All reports of harassment or abuse will be thoroughly, and appropriately investigated, and disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate, up to and including expulsion. Instances of sexual abuse, that has been investigated and confirmed, will result in suspension at a minimum. If it appears that a violation of criminal law may have occurred, the matter will be reported to law enforcement authorities. During the investigation of an alleged crime, a student alleged to have perpetrated or participated in it may need to be asked to leave campus.

Any student who believes that he or she has been sexually harassed or abused needs to immediately report such information to a trusted member of the school staff. If a student makes a report, the staff member will report the information to the principal. A student who is uncomfortable for any reason with reporting such alleged harassment/abuse to a trusted member of the school staff, or is not satisfied in doing so, may report the matter directly to the Superintendent of Schools. Any information reported shall, to the extent possible, be treated as confidential.

No student will be subject to any retaliation or disciplinary action on the part of the school for reports of sexual harassment/abuse made in good faith.

Children under 17 years of age cannot legally consent under Virginia State Law to having sex or sexual contact with an adult. **Any sexual contact between a student under 17 and an adult is a crime. It must be reported to the police.**

In addition, any sexual or romantic conduct between a school employee or an employee of a contracted service provider and a present student of any age, even if 17 years of age or older, and even if consented to or welcomed by the student, is strictly prohibited by this policy while the student is attending a diocesan school and for one year post-date of graduation, and will result in dismissal of the adult involved. As such, this policy prohibits sexting between students and employees or employees of contracted service providers and the showing of pornography to any student by any such adult. Such activity will result in the dismissal of the adult involved and the reporting of such conduct to the appropriate authorities.

In an effort to minimize/address sexual harassment/abuse, students in grades 6 to 12 must receive appropriate age level instruction pertaining to harassment by September 30 of every school year (*Appendix AB*). The Validation of Sexual Harassment Instruction must be completed and submitted annually to the Office of Catholic Schools by September (*Appendix H-1*).

## **BULLYING**

Bullying is defined as any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the person being bullied; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between aggressor or aggressors and person being bullied; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. Bullying includes cyberbullying. Bullying does not include inappropriate developmental teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. Physical intimidation or assault
- b. Extortion
- c. Oral or written threats, including text messaging
- d. Malicious teasing
- e. Putdowns
- f. Name calling
- g. Threatening looks
- h. Gestures or acts of aggression (overt and covert)
- i. Cruel rumors & false accusations
- j. Social isolation
- k. Cyberbullying

Bullying is prohibited. School personnel will not tolerate any bullying on diocesan school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity (on or off school grounds). In addition, the Office of Catholic Schools expects students and parents who become aware of an act of bullying or cyberbullying to report it to appropriate school personnel (e.g. principal, teacher, school counselor). The Office of Catholic Schools expects staff members who become aware of an incident of bullying or cyberbullying to take appropriate steps to intervene unless intervention would be a threat to staff members' safety. If a staff member believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying persists, he/she shall report the bullying to the school principal for further investigation.

In cases of reported bullying, the principal or designee shall interview all students involved (i.e. the alleged aggressor(s) and the alleged target(s)) and investigate, as appropriate. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents/guardians, and school staff; review of school records; and identification of parent and family issues. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting bullying will be subject to appropriate consequences.

Consequences for students who bully others shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include:

- a. Counseling

- b. Parent conference
- c. Detention
- d. Suspension and/or expulsion

Depending on the severity of the incident(s), the principal may also report incidents of bullying to law enforcement.

## ***HAZING***

Hazing is defined as the imposition of strenuous, often humiliating, tasks as part of a program of rigorous physical training and initiation.

Hazing is prohibited. School personnel will not tolerate any hazing on diocesan school grounds, in virtual school, or at any school-sponsored activity (on or off school grounds). In addition, the Office of Catholic Schools expects students and parents who become aware of an act of hazing to report it to appropriate school personnel (e.g. principal, teacher, school counselor). The Office of Catholic Schools expects staff members who become aware of an incidence of hazing to report the hazing to school administration for further investigation.

In cases of reported hazing, the principal or designee shall interview all students involved (i.e., the alleged aggressor(s) and the alleged target(s)) and investigate, as appropriate. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents/guardians, and school staff; review of school records; and identification of parent and family issues. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting hazing will be subject to appropriate consequences.

Consequences for students who engage in hazing shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include:

- a. Counseling
- b. A parent conference
- c. Detention
- d. Suspension and/or expulsion

Depending on the severity of the incident(s), the principal may also report incidents of hazing to law enforcement.

## ***RACISM***

Racism is defined as prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism by an individual, community, or institution against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- a. Discrimination
- b. Victimization
- c. Oral or written threats, including text messaging
- d. Malicious teasing
- e. Putdowns
- f. Name calling
- g. Threatening looks
- h. Gestures or acts of aggression (overt and covert)
- i. Cruel rumors and false accusations
- j. Social isolation
- k. Cyber-racism (racism that takes place using digital devices)

Racism is prohibited. School personnel will not tolerate any racism on Diocesan school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity (on or off school grounds). In addition, the Office of Catholic Schools expects students and parents who become aware of an act of racism to report it to appropriate school personnel (e.g. principal, teacher, school counselor). The Office of Catholic Schools expects staff members who become aware of any racism incident to take appropriate steps to intervene unless intervention would be a threat to staff members' safety. Every instance of suspected racism should be brought immediately to the attention of school leadership.

In cases of reported racism, the principal or designee shall interview all students involved (i.e., the alleged aggressor(s) and the alleged target(s)) and investigate, as appropriate. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents, and school staff; review of school records; and identification of parent and family issues. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting racist behavior will be subject to appropriate consequences.

Consequences for students engaged in racist behavior shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include:

- a. Counseling
- b. A parent conference
- c. Detention
- d. Suspension and/or expulsion

Depending on the severity of the incident(s), the principal may also report incidents of racism to law enforcement.

## ***RESPECT FOR LIFE***

A fundamental tenet of our Catholic faith is that human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. In the event of a student pregnancy or participation in an abortion, the school may condition continued enrollment in the school upon the student's/family's compliance with the foregoing and other corollary tenets of the Catholic Church.

## ***ASBESTOS MANDATORY YEARLY NOTIFICATION***

### **ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION**

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) which requires schools to be inspected to identify any asbestos-containing building materials.

The law further requires an asbestos management plan to be in place. You are welcome to review a copy of the asbestos management plan at the school during regular business hours.

## ***VIDEO SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS***

School leadership at each individual school must install video surveillance cameras in order to maintain a safe and secure environment.

- a. Video surveillance cameras may be placed in public locations deemed appropriate. Such locations may include, without limitation, school entrances/exits, lobby areas, hallways, classrooms, cafeterias, athletic areas, gathering spaces, and outdoor grounds, as well as school buses.
- b. Restrooms, changing rooms, private offices, nurse's offices, and locker rooms are excluded from security camera use.
- c. It is recognized that it will not be possible to monitor all building areas, rooms, and grounds, or to monitor any location at all times.

To the extent video images may be deemed appropriate to create student records or personnel records, the school shall comply with any applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance, retention, and disclosure.

Video images obtained by the school shall be viewed by authorized school and diocesan personnel as necessary. The school and the diocese may rely on the images obtained by the video surveillance cameras in connection with the enforcement of diocesan or school policies, regulations, codes of conduct, building rules, and other applicable laws or rules, including, but

not limited to, use of such images in student disciplinary proceedings and matters referred to local law enforcement agencies in accordance with applicable law. Video images may become part of a student's educational record in accordance with applicable law.

All video recordings shall be stored in a secure place. Recordings will be saved for no less than 60 days and may be retained longer if deemed appropriate. All video recordings are the sole property of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington. Release of such videos will be made only with the permission of the diocesan Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee.

## **X. EXTENDED DAY**

### ***EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM***

The school offers an extended day program on days when the school is in session for students who are currently enrolled in the school's academic program. See Section IV, *General School Policies*, regarding fees to utilize this program. Parents/guardians must sign their child(ren) in/out when they are being placed in/released from the program at the beginning and end of the school day, respectively. All provisions in this handbook (except Section II, *Academics*, but including the section on *Technology*), apply to the Extended Day Program.

### ***CRISIS MANAGEMENT/EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN***

A Crisis Management/Emergency Preparedness Plan has been developed and approved. All employees have been trained accordingly.

### ***OVER-THE-COUNTER SKIN PRODUCTS***

All non-prescription drugs and over-the-counter skin products shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Non-prescription drugs and over-the-counter skin products shall not be kept or used beyond the expiration date of the product. All products to be used must have a Medication Administration Form (*Appendix F-6*) completed by parent/guardian.

For all over-the-counter skin products:

- a. written parent/guardian authorization noting any known adverse reactions shall be obtained;
- b. shall be in the original container labeled with the child's name;
- c. does not need to be kept locked, but shall be inaccessible to children under five years of age;



- d. any center-kept sunscreen shall be hypo-allergenic and have a minimum SPF of 15;
- e. children nine years of age and older may administer their own sunscreen, if supervised.

When insect repellent is used, a record shall be kept that includes the child's name, date of use, frequency of application, and any adverse reaction. Manufacturer's instructions for age, duration, and dosage shall be followed.

## ***LICENSING INFORMATION***

The Commonwealth of Virginia helps assure parents/guardians that child day programs that assume responsibility for the supervision, protection, and well-being of a child for any part of a 24-hour day are safe. The Code of Virginia, Section 63.2-1716, allows child day centers operated by religious institutions the opportunity to file for an exemption from licensure by meeting documentation and other requirements specified within the religious exemption law.

## ***RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION***

In compliance with the Code of Virginia, Section 63.2-1716, ALL Diocese of Arlington Preschools and are religiously exempt from licensure and are classified as a "religiously exempt child day center."

If you would like additional information about the licensing of child day programs or would like to register a complaint, please call the Office of Child Care Licensing toll-free at 833-778-0204.

## ***INSURANCE***

The extended day program is covered by public liability insurance through the Diocese of Arlington and the Catholic Mutual Relief Society of America. Student insurance must be provided by the family through their own policy or purchased through an independent school insurance provider.

## ***TAX INFORMATION***

Because the Internal Revenue Service requires identification of care givers in order to claim a credit for child and dependent care expenses, the program staff will complete and return to the parent/guardian any W-10 that is sent in, provided Part II is already completed by the parent.

## ***PARENTAL/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT***

In compliance with state regulations for state licensed programs, a custodial parent/guardian shall be admitted to any child day program. Such right of admission shall apply only while the child is in the child day program (63.2-1813 of Code of Virginia).

### **Arrival/Dismissal Procedures For Children Attending Extended Day:**

7:00 am: students may start arriving and depositing belongings; quiet play/homework time

7:50 am: students proceed upstairs to their respective homerooms

### **Afternoon EDC:**

3:15 pm: students arrive, unpack, wash hands

3:35 pm: snack

3:50 pm: recess

4:30-5:00: quiet play/homework time

5:00: free play

6:00: parent pick-up

### **Transportation Safety**

Parents are to walk all children, including older students, to EDC in the morning and sign them into the program. No child is to be left on the premises before the EDC program opens for the day. Parents should be mindful of activities occurring on parish grounds and be sensitive to foot traffic.

### **Authorized Pickup**

The EDC staff maintains records of authorized and non-authorized individuals for student pick up. Individuals authorized for pick-up must be listed on the student's emergency care form. In the absence of that, parents/guardians may submit a signed note or email communication authorizing specific individuals to pick up their child. Emergency care forms and notes authorizing student pick up are maintained in the EDC files. All students are to be signed out of EDC before they leave the school premises.

### **Late Pickup Procedures**

EDC staff will attempt to contact parents/guardians of children who remain at EDC after normal hours to determine their anticipated arrival time and make reasonable staffing adjustments to ensure the child is safe. Child safety policy requires two staff members to stay with any children not picked up by the time EDC closes for the day. Parents should make all reasonable efforts to arrive before EDC is scheduled to close. A late fee will be charged for the time that accrued during the child's late stay.

EDC retains the right to remove students from the EDC program if they are consistently being picked up after the program has ended.

## APPENDICES

### Diocesan Forms:

Permission for Emergency Care Form (*Appendix F-1*)  
Confidential Student Health History Update (*Appendix F-1A*)  
Confidential Student Health History Update (Spanish) (*Appendix F-1B*)  
Confidential Student Health History Update (Vietnamese) (*Appendix F-1C*)  
Virginia School Entrance Health Form (*Appendix F-2*)  
Asthma Action Plan with Indemnification (*Appendix F-3*)  
Anaphylaxis Action Plan with Indemnification (*Appendix F-4*)  
Diabetes Quick Reference and Indemnification (*Appendix F-5*)  
Virginia Diabetes Medical Management Plan (*Appendix F-5A*)  
Diocese Medication Authorization Form (*Appendix F-6*)  
Wind Chill Factors/Heat Stress Index (*Appendix F-15*)  
Certificate of Religious Exemption (*Appendix F-18*)  
Seizure Action Plan (*Appendix F-20*)  
Code of Conduct for Personnel and Volunteers in the Diocese of Arlington.English (*Appendix G-1*)  
Codigo de Conducta para el Personal y Voluntarios en la Diócesis de Arlington.Spanish (*Appendix G-2*)  
Photo, Press, Audio, and Electronic Media Release for Minors (*Appendix N*)  
Parent Permission for School Sponsored Trip Participation.English (*Appendix R*)  
Permiso De Los Padres Para Excursiones Patrocinados Por La Escuela.Spanish (*Appendix R-A*)  
Use of Personal Vehicle (*Appendix R-1*)  
Elementary/Middle School Handbook Agreement Form (*Appendix AG-1*)

**SIGNATURE PAGE**

**ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK AGREEMENT FORM**

**PARENT/GUARDIAN**

I have received a current copy of the Parent/Student Handbook. In doing so, I have explained the content of this document to my child(ren). I acknowledge and agree to the policies obtained therein and will require my child(ren) to comply with the policies which apply to students.

I also realize during my child's enrollment at the school I will be informed from time to time, formally or informally, of various changes in school and/or Diocesan policies. I understand the school and/or Diocese reserves the right to change policies at any time with or without advance notice. I further understand it is required for me to sign this form in order to continue my child's enrollment at the school.

\_\_\_\_\_ **(PARENT'S SIGNATURE)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **(PRINTED NAME)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **(DATE)**

**FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS ONLY**

**I have read the Parent/Student Handbook and agree to observe all school regulations.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **(STUDENT'S SIGNATURE)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **(STUDENT'S SIGNATURE)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **(PRINTED NAME)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **(DATE)**