# St. Christopher Parish School

## Parent / Student Handbook

## GOODNESS ~ EXCELLENCE ~ SERVICE

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Mascot: Chargers
School Colors: Blue and Gold

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## A. General Information

**Welcome to St. Christopher School**

The administration, faculty, and staff of St. Christopher Parish School welcome you and your family to our school community. The teachers and staff are committed to the mission, philosophy, and schoolwide learning expectations. Our fundamental objective is to provide your child with a solid education in a Catholic environment. We strive to help develop responsible and caring individuals who use Jesus as their model for life.

We recognize that you, the parents, are the primary educators of your children. However, we are partners with you and together we can provide a quality Catholic education for the children of St. Christopher Parish School.

**Purpose of the Handbook**

The Parent/Student Handbook contains the mission, philosophy, policies, and procedures for St. Christopher Parish School in accordance with directives from the Department of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The Handbook continues to be a work-in-progress from year to year as we strive to outline guidelines that help to create a safe and comfortable learning environment. **The principal reserves the right to amend or add to the Handbook at any time.** Notices of new or amended policies will be sent out via email. We require that you read the Parent/Student Handbook and sign and return the *Parent/Student Policies Agreement* form that indicates your acceptance of the policies and procedures stated in the Parent/Student Handbook.

**History of the School**

St. Christopher Parish School was established in March of 1954 and ground was broken for the school in August of that same year. On February 1, 1955, the school was opened to the first four grades with an enrollment of 270 students. The Benedictine Sisters of St. Lucy's Priory originally staffed the school. These dedicated women guided the school's growth from an enrollment of 270 in 1955 to approximately 900 students in 1963. With ever-growing demands on the resources of religious communities, the Benedictine Sisters withdrew from the school in 1979. From 1979 to 1997, the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity of Manitowoc, Wisconsin administered and taught at the school. In May, 1997, the first lay principal was hired.

The school continues to be a vital part of the parish's history. School families participate in a wide variety of parish activities and services. Religious formation, academic excellence, service and creative programs are a continual part of St. Christopher Parish School's history. We have been and will continue to be committed to quality Catholic education.

**Accreditation**

St. Christopher Parish School is fully accredited by the Western Catholic Education Association (WCEA) and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

**Mission Statement**

St. Christopher Parish School is dedicated to the growth and development of its students, in order to be responsible and participating members of a Catholic faith community.

**Philosophy**

We are dedicated to serve, love, and understand our diverse school community as we assist parents/guardians in their role as primary educators of their children. We strive to provide students with a strong religious and academic education, and the discipline necessary to grow in respect of God, others, and self. We will achieve these goals by:

- Nurturing and developing moral and spiritual values through active participation within parish, **family,** school, and community at large
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment
- Encouraging and presenting various aspects of religious life
- Acknowledging and incorporating the academic standards of California and the Archdiocese
- Providing a curriculum that is creatively integrated to educate students by enhancing their own learning capability
- Holding parents, students, and faculty accountable for adhering to school policies
- Modeling Christian behavior as a staff
- Being examples of positive role models

**Relationship of School to Parish**

The parish school has a strong relationship with the parish community. The school makes every effort to be self-supporting in the area of finances, but the parish does give financial support by sharing some expenses.

**Schoolwide Learning Expectations**

**GRADES 3-8**

GOODNESS
We expect all students:
1. to respect God and all of His creations
2. to be a Christian example in the community
3. to be responsible for their actions
4. to work cooperatively with consideration for the opinion of others
5. to be respectful of their bodies by making healthy choices
6. to respect and value the various cultures and their traditions

EXCELLENCE
We expect all students:
1. to develop a proficiency in written and oral communications
2. to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills
3. to understand the use of technology in order to fully participate in a highly technical world
4. to read at grade level for cognitive development and personal enrichment
5. to develop and use their talents in an appreciation of all art forms, including music and visual arts

SERVICE
We expect all students:
1. to serve others so they may appreciate and understand their role as a Catholic Christian
2. to respect the environment by being responsible for its care and maintenance

**GRADES TK-2**

GOODNESS
We expect all students:
1. to respect God's people, places, and things
2. to make good choices
3. to be responsible
4. to use teamwork
5. to always believe in yourself
6. to exercise and eat healthy
7. to appreciate other cultures

EXCELLENCE
We expect all students:
1. to learn to write and speak clearly
2. to learn to use technology
3. to read, read, read
4. to think to solve problems

SERVICE
We expect all students:
1. to take time to help others in need
2. to take care of God's world

**Staff Roles and Responsibilities**

**Pastor**

The pastor is ex officio the chief administrative officer of the school. He implements the policies of the Catholic School Board and, on points not covered by Archdiocesan policy, he determines policies consistent with Board policy and appropriate to the needs of the school. The pastor/administrator has administrative, personnel, finance, and spiritual responsibilities in relation to the school.

**Principal**

The principal, as delegate of the pastor, has immediate responsibility for implementing the philosophy of the school in its regular operation including administering the entire school program as well as supervising the staff and the instructional program.

**Instructional Staff**

The instructional staff is responsible for the daily instruction of the students in accordance with curriculum guidelines and time allotments as established by the Archdiocese. The instructional staff is also responsible for the evaluation of student progress and the communication of such progress with the parents/guardians.

**Instructional Assistant**

The instructional assistant's primary role is to enhance teacher effectiveness and improve student learning.

**Morning/Enrichment Program Staff**

Morning/Enrichment Program personnel are responsible for the general supervision and management of the children in the morning and after school care programs in accordance with school policies and procedures.

**Office Staff**

The office staff assists the principal in the operation of the school.

**Parent-Teacher Group**

PTG exists to support the school and is important for the school's viability. Parent, parent-teacher organizations, and their members do not have any authority to act independently on behalf of the school or parish. They are not "agents" of the school or parish and any actions taken must receive the official written approval of the pastor and/or the principal as the case may be.

The main functions of a parent or parent-teacher teacher organization are to raise funds for the school's current operational expenses, to promote parental support for the school program, and to increase mutual understanding between school and parents. The membership of the parent teacher organization shall include the pastor, the principal, the parents or legal guardians, and the faculty of the school, where applicable. Financial operation of a parent or parent-teacher organization shall be governed by the regulations for financial operations as found in the parent or parent-teacher organization bylaws.

**Office Hours**

Regular office hours are Mondays– Fridays from 7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

**Daily Schedule**

The day begins at 7:50 a.m. and ends at 2:45 p.m. (except Mondays)

7:50 a.m. First bell
7:55 a.m. Tardy bell – Class begins
10:00 a.m. Recess
12:00 p.m. Lunch/Recess
1:00 p.m. Dismissal – Monday (faculty meetings)
2:45 p.m. Dismissal -Tuesday-Friday

**Supervision ends 15 minutes after dismissal time. Students not picked up within 15 minutes of dismissal will be signed in to the after-school enrichment program and family will be billed accordingly.*

**Emergency Cards**

All parents/guardians are responsible for providing the school with correct phone numbers, addresses, emergency contacts, etc. Parents/Guardians are required to inform the school office immediately when there are changes to a home, cell or work phone number or address, the names of persons to notify in case of an emergency, or to any medication prescription for a student. The Emergency Card gives the school permission to choose a physician in an emergency.

In case of emergency, the Emergency Card will be shown to the paramedics or emergency room staff to authorize treatment, and to advise them if a student has any particular medical needs or is on medication. Therefore, it is imperative that the information be accurate, complete, and up-to-date.

When a student becomes ill or is injured, the parent or guardian will be contacted. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, another person listed on the emergency card will be contacted. The school will not be held responsible if a parent/guardian or emergency contact cannot be located in the case of an emergency.

**Arrival/Dismissal Procedures**

**Arrival**

1. Parents are asked to enter the parking lot via Glendora Ave. through the second driveway entrance.
2. Proceed along Bramble Hall. Turn right to the basketball/dismissal area.
3. Parents may drop off the children in the basketball/dismissal area.
4. Proceed and exit onto Christopher St.

Students may be walked on campus from Christopher Street. If students are late they must be escorted to the office.

Students arriving earlier than 7:30 a.m. will be placed in the morning childcare program. Fees will apply. At 7:30 a.m., students will begin to line up in areas designated by grade.

**Dismissal**

After school, students will assemble with their class and will wait in the dismissal area to watch for their cars.

1. Parents/guardians are asked to enter the parking lot via Glendora Ave. through the second driveway entrance.
2. Proceed along Bramble Hall and enter campus through the sliding gates. Continue as directed by the safety committee.
3. Parents/guardians will pull up to the dismissal area and children enter the car.

Students may be picked up from Christopher Street.

***On rainy days or days of extreme heat, parents are asked to park and come directly to the classrooms to pick up their child(ren).***
The safety of our children is the number one concern to all of us. By cooperating with our staff and our student council safety patrol procedures, you will be assisting in maintaining the safest situation for the children.

**After School (Enrichment) Program**

After school care is available from dismissal to 5:45 p.m. daily while school is in session unless otherwise noted on the school calendar. There is an extra fee charged for this program. The amount depends on the number of days and hours the student attends. If the financial obligation for the Enrichment Program is not kept current, then the parent/guardian will be asked to withdraw their child from the program.

Students not picked up within 15 minutes of dismissal time will be checked in to the After-School Program and the families will be billed accordingly. A fee of $1 per minute is charged for any student picked up after 5:45 p.m.

**School Telephones/Cell Phones**

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to help promote personal responsibility in the students. The degree of responsibility varies with the age of the child. Students should be responsible for bringing their school materials each day. Parents/Guardians are discouraged from bringing these items to school. School telephones are for business purposes only. Students may only use the office phones in an emergency or after having received written permission from the teacher. **Forgotten homework, P.E./Mass uniform, permission slips, etc. do not constitute emergencies.**

Students are not allowed to have cell phones on during the regular school day or while attending morning/afternoon daycare or any school-related activity. Students found using cell phones without permission from the principal or teacher will have them confiscated and returned to the students' parents. Students with cell phones will be required to turn in their cell phones to the homeroom teacher at the beginning of each school day. Phones will be returned at dismissal.

**School Lunches**

The school has partnered with the Archdiocese and uses their lunch services. Lunches cost $3 and recess snacks are $1.75. Applications are available for free and reduced lunch and snack options. Lunch order forms are sent out prior to the beginning of the month so pre-orders can be turned in. If your child forgets his/her lunch and you plan to drop it off, please label it clearly with your child's first and last name and grade level. Students can check the office for lunch at their lunchtime. Classrooms will not be disrupted to deliver lunches.

**Parties**

Classroom parties are a means of celebration and community building among the students. Classroom parties are held for all students at Halloween, Christmas and at the end of the year. Other parties may take place for special occasions with the approval of the principal. The teacher and room parents coordinate classroom parties. Classroom parties are **not** held for students' birthdays. Parents/Guardians may send in a simple treat (cookies, donuts, or cupcakes) for their child's birthday to be distributed at the end of the day, with the approval of the homeroom teacher.

**Communications Procedures**

**School-Parent Communication**

The school's newsletter is sent home **via email** every Monday with relevant information regarding the school and/or parish.

Teachers can be contacted through their email address.

**Parent-School Communication**

St. Christopher Parish School's faculty strives to establish cooperative relationships with parents. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to speak with teachers about progress and concerns related specifically to their children. Frequent communication to clarify matters should take place as often as necessary.

**Communication with the principal and teachers should be arranged through the school office. If a parent wishes to meet with a teacher, he/she should first contact that teacher through the school office or via email/written note to schedule an appointment. If a matter is not resolved after having attempted to address the concern with the teacher, the parent may then request a meeting with the principal. The principal will endeavor to mediate and resolve the matter. Please note that the principal should not be contacted about a teacher until the parent has first met with the teacher to discuss the concern. Mornings before class begins are not appropriate times for conferences (unless an appointment has been confirmed) since teachers are preparing for the day ahead. Teachers should not be approached during afternoon dismissal since their responsibility is to supervise students at that time.**

**Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences are held at the end of the first trimester reporting period. Other conferences may be scheduled at the request of the parent, teacher, or administrator.

*Parent/Student Complaint Review Process*

Concern for the dignity and rights of each person are intrinsic to the Church's mission as a true witness to the spirit of the Gospel.

Circumstances may give rise to conflicts among students, parents and school staff. All parties are encouraged to use every available means to resolve these conflicts when they occur. However, if the involved parties are unable to resolve their conflicts, families may use the Parent/Student Complaint Review Process for additional assistance. All those participating in the Complaint Review Process are responsible for striving toward reconciliation and shall act in good faith. Legal representation is not permitted at any meeting or mediation of the Complaint Review Process. Any person filing a complaint is to be free from restraint, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal in any form.

**School Level**

The person bringing the complaint is encouraged to try to resolve the complaint by discussing it with the persons directly involved. If resolution is not achieved, the complaint should be discussed with the principal (or the pastor, if the principal is the subject of the complaint). For elementary schools, if the principal is unable to resolve the conflict, the principal will bring the pastor into the process as appropriate. After reviewing the facts and facilitating discussion of the problem the principal will respond to the person bringing the complaint.

**Department of Catholic Schools Level**

If the complaint is not resolved at the school or parish level, the complaint may be submitted in writing to the supervisor at the Department of Catholic Schools, outlining the concerns and reviewing the local process. The supervisor will review the complaint (with such consultation as may be appropriate) in a timely fashion and will endeavor to mediate and resolve the matter. However, if no agreement can be reached, the supervisor will make a final determination concerning the resolution of the complaint, based on the application of Archdiocesan and school policies and/or regulations, and communicate that determination, which will be final and binding, in writing to all parties.

*Code of Christian Conduct Covering Students, Parents, Guardians and Other Responsible Adults*

The students' interest in receiving a quality, morally based education can best be served if students, parents and school officials work together. Normally, differences between these individuals can be resolved. In some rare instances, however, the school may find it necessary, in its discretion, to require parents or guardians to withdraw their children.

It shall be an express condition of enrollment that the students and parents or guardians shall conform themselves to standards of conduct that are consistent with the Christian principles of the school, as determined by the school in its discretion. These principles include, but are not limited to any policies or procedures set forth in any student/parent handbook of the school. These Christian principles further include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Parents or guardians are expected to work courteously and cooperatively with the school to assist the student in meeting the academic, moral and behavioral expectations of the school.
- Students and parents or guardians may respectfully express their concerns about the school operation and its personnel. However, they may not do so in a manner that is discourteous, scandalous, rumor driven, disruptive, threatening, hostile or divisive.
- Any parent or guardian or other person whose conduct in a place where a school employee is required to be in the course of his or her duties materially disrupts class work or extracurricular activities or involves substantial disorder is guilty of a misdemeanor. This statement does not apply to any otherwise lawful employee concerted activity, including but not limited to, picketing and the distribution of handbills.
- Any parent or guardian, or other person who insults or abuses the principal or any teacher in the presence of other school personnel, students or parents and at a place which is on school premises or public sidewalks, streets, or other public ways adjacent to school premises or at some other place if the principal or teacher is required to be at such other place in connection with assigned school activities, risks the continuation of his or her child in the school.
- These expectations for students and parents or guardians include, but are not limited to, all school- sponsored programs and events (e.g., extended care, athletics, field trips, etc.).

The school reserves the right to determine, in its discretion, when conduct is of such a severe nature as to warrant immediate action without warning.

**Safe Environment Training for Children and Youth**

The school and the parish religious education programs have established ongoing safe environment training programs for students, children and youth. All parents are provided home-based materials to help them understand and support their student's education

regarding child sexual abuse. The approved programs include the **Archdiocese of Los Angeles Self-Protection Program, Protecting God's Children®** and **VIRTUS® Teaching Touching Safety *(Mandated September 1, 2006)***.

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles Self-Protection Program 1-12 was developed by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles to assist the parishes and school to comply with the US Conference of Catholic Bishops mandated self- protection programs. It is to be presented annually at each grade level.

VIRTUS Protecting God's Children is being implemented in Grades TK-8 in Catholic elementary schools throughout the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The program is designed to be age-appropriate, to support students in understanding occasions of abuse, and to give them confidence in reporting and asserting themselves in situations where they feel unsafe.

VIRTUS Protecting God's Children is a K-12 program being implemented in religious education programs and Catholic schools. This program is a vehicle through which parents, teachers, catechists and youth ministers give students the tools they need to protect themselves from those who might harm them.

The Archdiocesan Office of Safeguard the Children works with the schools and Directors of Religious Education in the parishes to establish these programs. Questions concerning Safe Environment Training can be forwarded to the principal.

*Guidelines for Adults Interacting with Minors at Parish or Parish School Activities or Events (*Revised January 2010*)*

Adults acting in a staff, faculty, ministerial or other paid or volunteer position in the Archdiocese are role models who are called to treat each minor with respect and care. Clergy/staff members, faculty/volunteers serving either in a paid or volunteer position need to maintain professional relationships with minors whether on or off parish or parish school locations. **Please review the following guidelines and sign the "Acknowledgment of Receipt" for the file at the parish or parish school where you work or volunteer.**

- Clergy/staff members/faculty/volunteers will ensure that minors are properly supervised at all times, thus providing them a safe environment. Minors must be viewed as "restricted individuals" because they are not adults and are not independent.
- If Clergy/staff members/faculty/volunteers who are supervising minors observe a situation where civil law, parish and/or school rules are being violated, they must take appropriate action immediately.
- Clergy/staff members/faculty/volunteers should always be aware they have considerable personal power because of their ministerial positions. Therefore, they will maintain respectful ministerial relationships, avoiding manipulation and other abuses of power.
- Clergy/staff members/faculty/volunteers must avoid assuming the role of a "father or mother figure" which may create an excessive emotional attachment for all parties.
- Attraction between adults and minors is possible, and care and caution should be taken in all interactions. The parish/school administration should be informed immediately if such an attraction exists. Dating or sexual relationships between a staff member/faculty/volunteer and a minor are inappropriate and unethical. Dating or sexual relationships between a staff member/faculty/volunteer and a minor are unlawful.
- Communications with minors (e.g., notes, email and internet exchanges, telephone calls) must be for professional reasons only.
- Discussions of a sexual nature must always take place in an appropriate educational context. Sexual jokes, slang or innuendo are inappropriate when interacting with minors.
- Clergy/staff members/faculty/volunteers will respect confidential information concerning minors or confidential information of a personal nature shared by a minor. However, if a minor shares confidential information that could pose a threat to the minor or to others, the staff member/faculty/volunteer has an obligation to notify the proper authorities.
- When Clergy/staff members/faculty/volunteers are supervising minors or young adults at parish/parish school-sponsored activities, they may not be under the influence of alcohol, may not consume alcohol in the presence of persons under age 21, nor offer alcohol to them.
- When a Clergy/staff member/faculty/volunteer is alone in a room with a minor, the door must be open or there must be clear visibility through windows.
- Clergy/staff members/faculty/volunteers are to engage in games or sports activities with minors only in the presence of other adults, or in a place openly accessible/visible to others.
- Clergy/staff members/faculty/volunteers planning parish/parish school events in their homes with minors must have the permission of the parish/school administration. In addition, Clergy/staff members/faculty/volunteers may not have any minor in their homes without the knowledge of the minor's parent or guardian.

- Clergy/staff members/faculty/volunteers may not drive minors unless it is to or from a parish/parish school- sponsored activity and may never drive alone with a minor. Driving minors requires parental permission slips that indicate the transportation is by personal vehicle. The parish/parish school administration must approve any use of personal vehicles. Trips involving minors must have a sufficient number of adult chaperones and minors to preclude the appearance of inappropriate personal involvement with minors.
- Parent/guardian written permission is required for the publication of a picture of a minor.
- Adults are permitted to interact alone with minor(s) only after complying with Archdiocesan policies regarding fingerprinting and safe environment training. They may work with minors only as part of a team if they do not have these requirements.

*See "Forms" section at the end of this Handbook for the Guidelines signature page to be returned to school before beginning any volunteer assignment.*

*Boundary Guidelines for Junior High and High School Youth (*Revised August 20, 2007*)*

To ensure the safety of the children in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, all youth volunteers, both junior high and high school students, including students who are already 18, who work or volunteer with children/youth in school or parish settings must receive training on these boundary guidelines before undertaking their ministry in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and must sign a Code of Conduct form to verify that they understand their obligations. *See "Forms" section at the end of this Handbook for the Guidelines*

*Zero Tolerance Policy*

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles will not knowingly assign or retain a priest, deacon, religious, lay person or volunteer to serve in its parishes, schools, pastoral ministries, or any other assignment when such an individual is determined to have previously engaged in the sexual abuse of a minor.

Under the Zero Tolerance Policy of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, any person guilty of sexual misconduct with ***a minor under the age of 18:***

- ***May not have any paid or volunteer assignment in any ministry in the Archdiocese, and***
- May not volunteer in any non-ministerial activity or event where he or she has any possibility of more than incidental contact or supervisory or disciplinary power over minors.

Any parent or guardian who is a registered sex offender must contact the principal to discuss the requirements in order to assure compliance with the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Zero Tolerance Policy.
As a member of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles community, the school wants to assure that it follows both Megan's Law and the Archdiocese's Zero Tolerance Policy.

**Counseling Policy**

The mission and purpose of the school is education. The school does not assume the responsibilities proper to the family and to society. The school may not assume the responsibility for psychological counseling or therapy because it is not qualified or licensed to provide such counseling or therapy. The school may engage in the following activities in addition to providing classroom instruction:

- Provide advice regarding academic subjects and student progress in school
- Give limited guidance to students who present with non-academic personal issues or situations
- Provide referrals to marriage and family counselors, child psychologists, licensed academic psychologists, psychiatrists and similar professionals for diagnosis and treatment. If the school provides referrals to parents, the list must include at least three names of qualified persons or entities
- Retain, where necessary, appropriate professionals to provide educational testing that is needed for assessment of a student's academic ability, learning patterns, achievement motivation, and personality factors directly related to academic learning problems, or psychological counseling services for the school. Prior to entering into such a contractual relationship, the principal will ensure that the person is credentialed, licensed or otherwise properly qualified. The school may refer a student for specific or additional testing, as appropriate, generally at the parent or guardian's expense

In cases of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect or abuse of vulnerable adults, the Archdiocesan
Victims' Assistance Ministry is available as a resource. The Victims' Assistance Ministry provides outreach and guidance to those suffering from abuse; sponsors a faith-based trauma recovery program; and assists in informing parish, school, archdiocesan and

governmental authorities of the allegations of abuse or neglect. Referral to the Victim's Assistance Ministry is not a substitute for mandated reporting of suspected abuse. Such a report must be made in accordance with Archdiocesan policy.

**Security Procedures**

**Closed Campus**

To preserve the academic environment and school security, archdiocesan and parish schools are designated as "closed campuses." No person may enter the campus unless authorized by the school administration or designated personnel. Visitors must present themselves at the school office if they are seeking information or have business to conduct with the school.

**Visitors to Campus**

**All visitors to campus, regardless of length of time spent on campus, must check in at the school office.** If a visitor will remain on campus outside of the office area, a visitor's pass is to be worn at all times while on campus. Parents/Guardians who volunteer must also check in and receive a volunteer badge. Parents/Guardians are not to go to the classrooms, parish hall, lunch tables, or playground area to pick up students for appointments or to drop off lunches, etc. without first checking in at the school office. Parents/ guardians listed on the student's emergency card may visit the student's classroom with prior permission from the teacher and principal. Visitors must sign out before leaving campus. Visits must be for school purposes only.

**Release of Students**

For the safety of all students, no student will be allowed to leave the school during the day without being signed out by a parent/guardian or other authorized adult listed on the student's Emergency Card. We recommend listing as many names as possible of people authorized to pick up your child.

*Safety and Emergency Procedures*

The following information is provided so that parents and students will become familiar with safety procedures:

**Fire**

In the event of a fire, students will be immediately evacuated to a safe area until fire officials declare school buildings safe for re-entry. In the event of minor injuries, staff certified in first aid will treat students. In the event of more serious injuries, the fire department ambulance will transport students to the nearest facility for medical treatment. If you hear that there has been a fire at school, do not call the school. Phone lines must be left open for emergency calls, and it is not likely that staff will be available to answer phones. Fire drills are held monthly.

**Earthquake**

In the event of an earthquake, students will follow the drop, cover, and hold procedure and take cover under their desks until the shaking stops. Students will report to the field after the teacher has determined it is safe to do so. If students are in the yard, they should drop and cover where they are and report to the field when it is safe to do so. DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL. The phone lines must be kept free for emergencies. Listen to the radio or television. We will be operating under the directives given for the public schools in our area.

If students are dismissed, students will be checked out one at a time, and we ask for your patience as we ensure proper release of each child. When you arrive to pick up your child, please follow the directives of the school personnel. Students will not be allowed to leave the school premises alone. It is very important that parents/guardians remain calm during these procedures. The faculty and staff are here to protect your children, so we ask for your full cooperation in the event of an emergency. A student will not be allowed to leave the school premises except to those persons identified on the student's emergency release card. **It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that the information on the emergency card is current and correct.** If there are any injuries, students will be taken to the nearest facility. Parents will be notified as soon as phone lines permit if their child is injured. In the event of a major earthquake, children will be supervised until parents are able to reach the school grounds. Earthquake drills are conducted at least once per trimester.

**Air Pollution Conditions**

The school follows the directives of the Southern California Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) based on health advisories issued by that agency.

**No Smoking**

St. Christopher Parish School is a non- smoking facility.

**Glass**

Drinks or other food in glass bottles or containers are not allowed on campus.

**Research Projects and Rights of Parents**

Parents must be informed if research projects involving their children are to be conducted at the school and must be provided with sufficient information about the research to enable them to give informed consent. Parents have the right to withhold permission allowing their children to participate in research studies. Parents have the right to withdraw their children at any time from a research project without reprisal. Parents have the right to request to preview the materials to be used in a research study involving their children. Requests to review the Research Materials should be made with appropriate written advance notification to the school and to the researcher.

Except in a limited range of research areas where an Institutional Review Board determines that a waiver of assent is appropriate, student assent to participation in a research project must be obtained. If a student reaches the age of consent applicable to the subject matter of the research project, the student must be given the opportunity to provide informed consent. Students have the right to withhold their assent and have a right to withdraw without penalty. Students who are not participants in research studies may not be singled out in any way or penalized.

**Removal of Students from School During School Hours**

No agency, organization, or person other than a parent or guardian who has custody or a delegated school employee is allowed to take a student from the school premises during school hours or immediately before or after school.

Exceptions to this rule may be made only:

- By the parent or guardian, when properly identified
- Upon the written request of the parent or guardian after proper verification
- By properly identified law enforcement officers when an arrest is made
- By properly identified representatives of law enforcement agencies, in case of emergency, as determined by the principal

Legally, the responsibility of notifying the parent or guardian of a student taken from the school by a law enforcement officer or representative of a law enforcement agency rests with the law enforcement officer. However, the principal of the school should also immediately inform the student's parent or guardian except when a minor has been taken into custody as a victim of suspected child abuse, as defined in Section 11165 of the Penal Code or pursuant to Section 305 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

**Interview and Removal from School of Students by Police Officers**

Police officers have the right during the school day to interview students who are suspects or witnesses.
School personnel should not hinder the release of a student to police officers. School personnel are not liable for releasing students for this purpose, or other legitimate law enforcement purposes, which require taking the pupil from the school if they are taken with "proper standard of care" which is defined below. When a student is taken into police custody and removed from school during school hours, the school will inform the parent or guardian except in child abuse cases and will maintain a record of circumstances involved. Students can be removed from school during school hours by law enforcement only under the following conditions:

- By properly identified representatives of law enforcement agencies who are making an arrest, with or without a warrant, presenting a warrant for the arrest of a pupil, or taking a student into custody without a warrant
- By properly identified representatives of law enforcement agencies when not making an arrest or taking a child into custody as stated above under the following conditions, with the express permission of the parent obtained prior to the release of the pupil and in cases of emergency, when the parents cannot be reached
- By properly identified representatives of a Child Protective Agency when taking a child into custody. Principals must notify the Department of Catholic Schools if a student is removed from school by law enforcement or Child Protective Services.

**Interview of a Student During School Hours by a Police Officer**

Upon presentation of proper identification to the principal or his or her designee, duly authorized representatives of law enforcement agencies and the child protective agencies in the performance of their official duties shall be allowed to interview students in those cases in which an interview out of school hours is impossible, impractical or would duly interfere with the enforcement of law. Although the law does not require it, the parent or guardian should be informed by the principal that such an interview has taken place, except upon

request of law enforcement. It is the policy of the Archdiocese that an adult, either a parent or guardian or school staff person will be present for any interview unless the student selects otherwise. Before releasing the student for the interview, the principal must exercise the "proper standard of care" which is to:

- Obtain a business card and confirm the identity and official capacity of the police officer and the authority under which he or she acts, and, in the case of the release of the student to the officer, the reason for such an action
- Child Protective Agency workers may interview for the purpose of their legal obligations to investigate reported child abuse or neglect. Child Protective Agency workers are authorized to assume custody to remove a child from school.

Before a student is taken into police custody and removed from the school during school hours, the school will attempt to inform the student's parent or guardian. The school will maintain a record of the circumstances involved. In cases of child abuse, parental notification is the responsibility of police officers.

**Informing the Parent or Guardian When a Student Has Been Removed from School by a Police Officer**

While it is the duty of the police officer to notify the parent or guardian of the person taken into custody or placed in detention, the school principal shall take immediate steps to notify the parent or guardian of the minor regarding the release of the student to the officer and regarding the place to which the student is reportedly being taken, except when a student has been taken into custody as a victim of suspected child abuse. Even in the case of child abuse it is the Child Protective Agency's duty to notify the parent or guardian.

**Parent/Guardian Right of Visitation**

In the cases listed below, it is preferable that the principal and the parent(s) work out a mutually agreeable alternative to interrupting the student's school schedule.

**Non-Custodial Parent**

A parent who does not have legal custody of his/her child, but has the right of visitation, may visit, subject to the school's visitor's policy, unless the school has received a legal order prohibiting such a visit. The parent/guardian who has custody should present legal evidence regarding the extent of the other parent's visitation rights. If a parent without visitation rights attempts to visit a student at school, the principal will inform the custodial parent/guardian. Divorced or separated parents must file a court-certified copy of the custody section of the divorce or separation decree with the principal's office. The school will not be held responsible for failing to honor arrangements that have not been made known in writing.

**Child in Foster Care**

When a parent whose child is in a foster home makes a request to visit with the child at school, the school will inform the agency which was responsible for placing the child in the foster home.

**Work Permits**

Under California law and other relevant laws, a minor student may not work without a work permit issued by the appropriate authority. To obtain a work permit, certain information is required from the student's school. Information regarding work permits and how to apply is available from the California Department of Education website: *www.cde.ca.gov*.

The minor/student, after obtaining a promise of employment, must obtain a "Statement of Intent to Employ Minor and Request for Work Permit". The minor, the employer, and the parent/guardian must each complete their sections and submit the completed application to the school. The school will verify the information entered on the application by the minor and parent/guardian and will also examine the student's records and consult the teacher to confirm the student's satisfactory academic achievement to date. The student must then submit the form to the "work permit issuing authority." If all requirements are met, the work permit issuing authority may issue the "Permit to Employ and Work." The "work permit issuing authority" is the Superintendent of the local public school or those persons authorized in writing by the Superintendent to issue the permit. A copy of the signed work permit must be kept in the student's file. For additional information and forms see http://www.dir.ca.gov/DLSE/ChildLaborPamphlet2000.html

**Privacy and Access to Records**

Maintaining confidentiality is the legal, ethical, and professional responsibility of every member of the school community, including students, parents/guardians, teachers, instructional assistants, and all other employees. Every member of the school community must respect the privacy of all students, families, employees, the principal, and the pastor.

**Pupil Records**

“Pupil records” means any record related to a student that is maintained by a school or one of its employees. It includes health records. It does not include “directory information” or a school employee's informal notes, if the notes remain in the sole possession of the maker and are not made available to others, except to a substitute**.**

Only the principal, as custodian of the records, authorizes the release of pupil records. Only teachers or administrators charged with pupil oversight have the right to view or use pupil records. A teacher’s aide may view or use pupil records only with direct teacher supervision. Pupil records may be released by judicial order such as a subpoena or a search warrant. In specific cases, such as suspicion of kidnapping, police officers may be given access to records.

Parents and legal guardians of minors have the absolute right to access their child’s pupil records in the presence of school personnel. Parents or legal guardians may grant any specified person written consent to access specifically identified pupil records. In cases of legal separation and/or divorce, California state law gives the custodial parent and a non-custodial parent with visitation rights, the right to access and examine pupil records. However, only the custodial parent may consent to the release of records and has the right to challenge the content of the records and to write responses to information regarding disciplinary action. A non-custodial parent without visitation rights has no right of access to records of any kind.

**Directory Information**

"Directory information" means one or more of the following items: pupil's name, address, telephone number, date and place birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous public or private school attended by the pupil.

The school will, to the extent possible, minimize access to student telephone numbers or personal email addresses, unless the parents or legal guardians’ consent to broader access. To the extent possible, users should try to minimize access to or distribution of student telephone numbers or personal email addresses, unless the parents of legal guardians’ consent to broader access.

Room parent rosters, class lists, telephone numbers, email address lists or any other personal information about families and students are considered confidential and may be used only for the purposes specified. In no cases should commercial enterprises be given access to directory information.

**Parent’s Authorization to Use Child’s Personal Information**

Whenever a student’s image, name, voice and/or work is to be published or used for non-commercial purposes, including, but not limited to, publicity, exhibits, printed or electronic media broadcasts, student publications, marketing or research, parents must execute the *Parent’s Authorization to Use Child’s Image, Name, Voice and/or Work for Non-Commercial Purposes* giving permission for such publication.

## Verbal/Written Confidences

Confidential information may be provided by students or parents/guardians to school employees in many ways. Students may confide in staff verbally, in writing, such as a note or a writing/journal assignment.

All school employees must respect the verbal or written confidences of adults and students, except in cases where the health or safety of the student or others is involved. If the confidence received relates to a health or safety issue, the pastor, principal or other person in charge or appropriate authorities must be notified promptly, keeping in mind the rights of privacy that apply. Archdiocesan policy on reporting suspected abuse of children or vulnerable adults must be followed when applicable.

**Student Transfers, Withdrawals, and Graduation**

Whenever a pupil transfers from one school to another, a copy of the Cumulative Student Report and the original Health Record will be transferred by the former school upon a request from the school where the pupil intends to enroll and a release from the parent or guardian. The original Cumulative Student Report remains at the school.

A record of the transfer, the reason for the transfer, and the name of the school to which the student is transferring or entering after graduation should be entered on the original copy of the Cumulative Student Report and in the Student Attendance Register.

Official transcripts are not given to students or parents. The school grants full credit for all work a student accomplishes up to the time of transfer. Principals may be required by the County Board of Education to report the severance of attendance by any student.

**Withholding of Records**

Under California law, a private school cannot refuse to provide student records to a requesting school because of any charges, including tuition or fees that are owed by the student or parent. However, the school may withhold from parents or guardians the grades, diploma, or unofficial transcripts of a pupil pending payment of certain amounts for damaged property, the return of loaned property or unpaid tuition or fees.

**Cumulative Pupil Record**

Full and accurate records, including standardized test results, of each student are entered on the official archdiocesan Cumulative Student Record form and are kept on file permanently. Only authorized personnel have access to these records. Health records are maintained in a separate file. Permanent records cards include only the following information:

- Personal and family data with certification of name, place and date of birth of the student and the name and address of the parent or guardian having custody of the student
- Standardized test data
- Transcript of classes
- Attendance information shall be included
- Record of withdrawal or graduation and place to which any copy of the record is sent
- Verification of or exemption from required immunization through high school graduation

**Student Illness & Accident Procedures**

If a student becomes ill at school he/she should report to the teacher on duty. The student will receive a note to take to the office. At that time, the office staff may call and notify the parent depending on the nature of the illness or injury. Health Office notes are sent home with details outlining the illness/injury and treatment. Depending on the severity of the illness (fever, suspected contagious disease/illness, vomiting, diarrhea, undiagnosed rash, uncontrolled coughing, etc.), the parent might be instructed to pick up their child to be taken for further attention. If your child should show any of the above symptoms prior to coming to school, please keep him/her at home. Unusual illnesses will be reported to the Department of Catholic Schools. If a student suffers a head injury at school, parents will be notified. If additional treatment is necessary, the school will call 911. An accident report will be filed, and serious accidents will be reported to the Department of Catholic Schools.

Only minor and very basic first aid will be administered by staff to students. No secondary treatment, such as changing or removing bandages, will be administered.

**Medication**

The school will not furnish medications. All medications administered at school shall be provided by parents.

- A release stating the nature of the medication, signed and dated by the doctor and also signed by the parent, must be provided. See *Medication Authorization and Permission Form.*
- Medications administered at school must be in the original container and labeled. The day's dosage must be sealed, labeled and have the student's name attached. It shall be in an appropriate container, and kept in the school/nurse's office.
- The student shall come to the office for medication.
- Because of the risk of students sharing medications, students may not carry medication of any kind to be self-administered at school. In the event a student is seriously at risk without an epi-pen or inhaler on his or her person, consideration will be given for a variance.
- Students may not be given medicine prescribed for other family members
- The medication regulations apply to both prescription and non-prescription medications
- Students who are diabetic are allowed to test their blood sugar at school in the health room or office and self-administer medication as necessary. The parent or guardian of a diabetic child must sign the *Diabetic Consent Form* and other appropriate medication permission forms and return them to the school. All medications must be kept in the school office and appropriately labeled as described above. School employees may not administer injections to diabetic children except in emergencies.

No exceptions will be made to the procedure for medication. If parents/guardians do not provide the completed medication form with the prescribed medication, they will have to come to school and personally administer the medication.

**Student Accident Insurance**

The Student Accident Insurance Program is provided for all full-time students in archdiocesan schools/parish. This program assists only with medical expenses incurred because of accidental bodily injury sustained by students while attending school, while traveling to or from school or while participating in a school sponsored and supervised activity, including school sponsored sport and extended day programs.

**Health Records**

Every school must comply with all Health Department requirements. Every school has a Health Record Card for each student enrolled in the school. Upon transfer to another school, the student health records are forwarded with the student's transcript to the receiving school.

**Communicable Diseases**

The school cooperates with the local health officer in measures necessary for the prevention and control of communicable diseases in school age children – Education Code, Section 49403(a). A student who has been absent from school because of a reported communicable disease must have a permit issued by the Public Health Department, a physician, or a nurse before he or she is readmitted to school.

**Allergies**

Some students may have severe, life threatening allergies, such as a peanut allergy. While the school will make reasonable efforts to prevent or minimize an allergic student's contact with allergens, the school does not promise an allergy-free environment.

**Computer Games/Toys/Radios/Electronics**

Students may not bring laser pointers, toys, radios,computer games, trading cards, magazines, other electronic devices, etc., to school unless they are being used for a class project or report with the permission of the teacher and/or principal. It is at the discretion of the teacher and/or principal if any of the above items are confiscated and may be kept in the office until the end of the school year in June. The school will not be held liable for any of the above items if they are lost or stolen.

**Gradelink**

Gradelink can be accessed from any computer with an Internet connection. The parent interface provides parents/guardians a means to stay up-to-date with their child's current academic progress, view grades, and set up email alerts. Parents/Guardians are provided with the school ID, their username, and their password at the beginning of each school year. **www.gradelink.com**.

**Textbooks**

Textbooks and workbooks are the property of St. Christopher Parish School. Students are responsible for the care of the books throughout the year and will be charged for loss or damage of books.

## B. Admission and Attendance

**Guidelines for Admission and Enrollment**

- Priority admission is given to active members of the parish
- Under Archdiocesan guidelines for financial considerations, the optimum number of students per classroom is thirty-five (35)
- The required age for transitional kindergarten students is four (4) years of age on or before September 1; required age for kindergarten is five (5) years of age on or before September 1
- The required age for first grade students is six (6) years of age on or before September 1
- All students must comply with current California immunization and health requirements prior to enrollment
- The parish school will strive to have Catholic education accessible to as many students as possible, both with its educational programs and financial considerations; however, it may have insufficient resources to meet the educational and financial needs of all students
- The pastor and principal will review a student's continued eligibility for enrollment in the parish school
- The school establishes its own procedures for admission and enrollment

**School Student Non-Discrimination Policy**

The school, mindful of its mission to be a witness to the love of Christ for all, admits students regardless of race, color, or national and/or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, disability, sex, or national and/or ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies and practices, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school- administered programs, although certain athletic leagues and other programs may limit participation and some archdiocesan schools operate as single sex schools.

While the school does not discriminate against students with special needs, a full range of services may not always be available to them. Decisions concerning the admission and continued enrollment of a student in the school are based upon the student's emotional, academic and physical abilities and the resources available to the school in meeting the student's needs.

**Inclusion Procedures**

Through the mission of the Archdiocese, our schools strive to serve children with varied learning needs. All educators in Archdiocesan schools follow "Directions for the Inclusion Process in Catholic Schools: Support Team Education Plan Process (STEP) and Minor Adjustment Plan Process (MAP)". Parents or guardians who feel that their student may need a minor adjustment to enable him/her to participate in the general education curriculum of the school should consult the student's teacher and principal to determine how best to meet the student's needs. Parents or guardians may request the "Disability Discrimination Complaint Review Process" from the principal to address unresolved issues.

**Absence, Tardiness, & Truancy**

Daily attendance is essential to the learning process. In order to comply with the provisions of the California State law regarding compulsory attendance, a child must attend school each day unless excused for a legitimate reason.

**Absences with Acceptable Excuse**

When a student has been absent, a written excuse signed by the parent or guardian stating the dates and reason for absence is required, and the excuses are kept on file for a period of one year. An acceptable excuse includes illness, attendance at medical or dental appointments, funeral services for family members, quarantine directed by County or City Officials or emergency or special circumstances as determined by the school authorities. If students are absent for more than three days due to illness a doctor's release note must be presented to the office upon return to school. Students will be permitted to make up missed work within the amount of time equal to the days absent. Excessive unexcused absences may result in loss of academic credit. Absences are to be reported to the school office by 8:15 a.m. The school secretary calls all families with unreported absences.

**Extended Absences**

When, for family reasons, parents wish to take their children out of school temporarily, the principal and teacher will discuss with the parents the possible effects of such an absence. **If a student is absent for an extended time, (*e.g.*, 15 or more days), official grades may be withheld**. If a student will be absent for an extended period of time, assignments can be completed upon the student's return to school. Work will be given at teacher's discretion. The student is responsible for all missed class work/homework assignments during his/her absence.

**Leaving School Early**

If a student becomes ill during the day, parents will be contacted. It is essential that current emergency information is on file for each student at the beginning of the year, and that the office is notified of any changes to that contact information. No student will be allowed to leave the school during the day without being signed out by a parent/guardian or other authorized adult listed on the student's Emergency Card. If the student returns that same day, the student must be signed in by a parent/guardian. Requests for early release from class should be kept to a minimum.

**Medical Appointments**

Doctor and dental appointments should be scheduled after school hours as much as possible. Parents should write a note indicating their request to pick up their child for an appointment. Children must be signed out from the school office when leaving for any reason during the day. If students are tardy to school due to a medical/dental appointment, a note from the doctor/dentist must be brought. This is considered an excused tardy.

**Sick or Injured Children**

For the well-being of all children, we encourage parents to keep their child at home when sick or injured. If a child is sent to school and they feel sick or come to school injured, the office will call the parent to come pick up their child. Any physical activity restrictions that a child must have should be verified by a doctor's note.

**Tardiness**

Each child is expected to be lined up in his/her assigned area by 7:45 a.m. and in his/her classroom when the second bell rings at 7:50 a.m. A student is tardy if not in his/her assigned classroom when the second bell rings at 7:50 a.m. Students who arrive late to school must report to the school office to request a tardy pass. No student will be admitted to the classroom after 7:50 a.m. without a tardy pass. A record of all tardiness is kept in the attendance register and records.

Late arrival is recorded when a student is up to 30 minutes tardy. Early departure is recorded when a student leaves within 30 minutes of dismissal. When a student arrives 30 minutes after the morning bell, it is considered a morning absence (half day). When a student is removed more than thirty minutes before school is dismissed, it is considered an afternoon absence (half day). Please make sure that your child arrives on time each day. Late arrival can be disruptive to class routines.

**Truancy**

A student who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse three full days in one school year or is tardy or absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day on three occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof, is a truant and shall be reported to the attendance office or superintendent of the public-school district.

In the event that the school suspects that a student is truant (absent from school, without an acceptable excuse), the school administration will contact the parent or guardian. If the school suspects that the student is a habitual truant (absent three times in a school year, without an acceptable excuse) and all resources at the school level have been exhausted, the school principal will notify the local public Child Welfare and Attendance authorities.

A student who has been reported once as a truant and who is absent again from school one or more days, or is tardy on one or more days, without an acceptable excuse, will be reported again as a truant to the attendance office of the local public-school district. A student who has been reported truant three or more times is considered a habitual truant and is subject to dismissal.

If a student has been absent without excuse, and it is impossible to contact the parent or guardian within 24 hours after repeated attempts, the attendance office of the local public-school district, the local police department, Child Protective Services or all of those agencies will be notified.

**Immunization**

All directives regarding immunization, issued annually by the State of California, shall be implemented. No student may be unconditionally admitted to school unless he or she has been immunized against poliomyelitis, measles, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, and varicella for first admission to schools in California. In addition, Hepatitis B immunization is required for students entering preschool and kindergarten. All students entering grade seven are required to present documentation showing the dates when three doses of Hepatitis B and two doses of a measles-containing vaccine have been received. Additionally, students entering grade seven are required to have the Tdap booster shot.

Effective July 1, 2012, TB testing is not required for Kindergarten or 1st Grade entry as previously mandated. Also, students from out of state who are entering any other grade level are not subject to the TB test requirement. As part of the child's well-child/school-entry exam, providers will *screen* for TB risk factors (using a questionnaire), but they will only *test* for TB (complete blood work, etc.) if risks are present.

## C. Academic and Extra- Curricular Activities

**Curriculum Offerings**

St. Christopher Parish School uses the curriculum adopted by the Department of Catholic Schools. This basic curriculum prescribed for all elementary schools beginning in transitional kindergarten and continuing through eighth grade includes Religion; Family Life; VIRTUS® Teaching Touching Safety; Language Arts; Math; Science; Social Studies; Music; Art; Spanish; and Physical Education.

**Physical Education**

All students must participate in physical education. A note from a doctor or parent/guardian is required if a student is not participating.

**Religion Program and Expectations**

Religion is taught every day in all grades according to the minutes mandated by the Department of Catholic Schools. The religion program consists of instruction in the areas of scripture/Christian life, sacraments/worship, morality/social justice, and Christian faith and practice. Religion courses are considered to be academic courses.

Grades in religion courses are based on academic achievement and not on a student's religious affiliation, personal belief, or practice. The religion grade indicates comprehension of subject matter. All students will attend weekly Mass as part of the religion program (TK and kindergarten will begin attending Mass when the teacher determines class readiness and then attend monthly).

**iPads**

Students have access to school iPads provided they follow the Acceptable Use Policy. Parents are expected to assist us in promoting responsible, safe, and appropriate use of the school's iPads. Violation of iPad use guidelines may result in loss of iPad privileges, suspension, expulsion, or the involvement of law enforcement agencies depending on the gravity of the offense, at the principal's discretion.

**Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)**

**Definitions and Coverage**

The Acceptable Use and Responsibility Policy for Electronic Communications ("Archdiocesan AUP") applies to all archdiocesan users of technology, whether adults, children, or youth, and whether they are students, parents, paid staff or volunteers, clergy, or members of religious orders in the archdiocese or at any Location. All users are expected to adhere to the morals and values of the Catholic Church, to respect others, to consider the potential audience and their expectations, and to follow the Archdiocesan AUP and the other policies, standards, and procedures of the archdiocese. Electronic information and communications require particular safeguards and impose unique responsibilities on all users.

The Archdiocesan AUP covers:

- Using devices appropriately from a social and moral perspective
- Maintaining data confidentiality
- Protecting proprietary, confidential, and privileged data, and personally identifiable information
- Maintaining the integrity of security controls and passwords
- Immediately reporting any suspicious conduct or actual violations
- Other activities implicated in the use of electronic devices

The archdiocese prohibits the improper use or alteration of data and/or information technology. Systems of information security are required to protect proprietary data. All users must adhere to the Archdiocesan AUP.

All materials and information created and used, in any medium, in the course of activities for or on behalf of the archdiocese or Location are assets of the archdiocese and/or the Location, as appropriate. This policy also applies to the seminary.

**Definitions**

Electronic communication systems include but are not limited to email, telecommunications systems (including telephone, voicemail, video conferencing, virtual messaging and meetings, social media and video), stand-alone or networked computers, intranets, the Internet, and any other communication or data storage or transmission systems (including "the cloud" or cloud-based services) that may be created in the future.

Electronic communication devices include but are not limited to wired and wireless telephones, smartphones or smartwatches, computers, laptops, tablets, photographic, audio and video equipment, hard drives, flash drives, memory sticks, media players, facsimile machines, scanners, copiers, printers, two-way radios, and other communications equipment that may be created in the future.

Electronic communication materials include but are not limited to emails, text messages, instant messages, postings on social media, audio and visual recordings, photographs, films, microfiche, audio and visual broadcasts, computer operating systems, software programs, electronically stored data and text files, computer and web applications, and all other electronic content that is created, downloaded, uploaded, retrieved, opened, shared, saved, forwarded, printed, or otherwise accessed or stored.

Person in charge refers to the department head, manager or supervisor of an archdiocesan department, entity or corporation; the pastor, administrator, parish life director, pastoral associate, deacon or other person designated as in charge of a parish; parish director of religious education, as designated by the pastor or administrator; the superintendents of elementary schools or high schools, or a principal, president, or head of school, as applicable.

Personally identifying information includes but is not limited to names or screen names; photographs; telephone numbers; work, home, or school addresses; email addresses; or web addresses/URLs of social networking sites or blogs.

Location refers to any parish, school (whether parish or archdiocesan), the Archdiocesan Catholic Center, any Catholic cemetery and mortuary, and any other operating unit in the archdiocese.

Electronic Communication Systems, Devices, and Materials and the Users Covered

Electronic communication systems, devices, and materials and the users covered include:

- All electronic communication systems, devices, and materials used at any Location
- All electronic communication devices and materials taken from a Location for use away from the Location
- All electronic communication devices and materials provided to users by Locations, including devices issued in the IGNITE, Clergy Connect, Sisters Connect, PCL Connect, and similar programs
- All personal devices and materials brought from home and used at a Location
- All personal devices and materials, regardless of where they are situated, that are used in such a manner that the archdiocese and/or a Location may be implicated in their use
- All users of electronic communication systems, devices, and materials, including but not limited to volunteers, clergy and religious, students, parents, employees, staff, or contractors, when those contractors are associated with any activity of the archdiocese and/or the Location

**Ownership and Control**

All electronic communication systems, devices, and materials, provided to users by the archdiocese or the Location, are to be used primarily to conduct official Location and/or archdiocese business, not personal business, whether during or outside regular business hours.

With permission from the person in charge of the Location, individuals may use archdiocesan systems, devices, and materials to access and use the Internet for personal business and web exploration outside regular business hours or during breaks. The Archdiocesan AUP applies to all uses.

The archdiocese and Locations, as applicable, reserve the right to monitor, access, retrieve, read, edit, redact, remove, and/or disclose all content created, sent, received, or stored on archdiocese and/or Location systems, devices, and materials (including connections made and sites visited). The archdiocese also cooperates with law enforcement officials or others, without prior notice. Users can have no reasonable expectation of privacy in use of archdiocesan systems, devices, or materials. The archdiocese reserves these rights with respect to systems, devices, and materials not owned by the archdiocese when they are used under circumstances that implicate the archdiocese.

## Testing and Assessment

Assessment of student learning is a critical component of the educational program. Assessment is ongoing, integrated into teaching and learning, and is formal and informal. The purpose of assessment is to both measure student learning and to adjust teaching to meet the needs of the students. Assessment goals are met through standardized testing, together with curriculum-based assessment and evaluation.

## STAR Assessments

STAR assessments are computer adaptive, using sophisticated item calibration and psychometrics to dynamically adjust to each student's unique responses. STAR Assessments are administered as a diagnostic at the beginning of the year and are administered throughout the year to monitor student growth.

## Curriculum Based Assessment

The purpose of curriculum-based assessment is to guide instructional decisions in meeting goals and to report student progress toward meeting content standards. It is integrated into the teaching/learning process and is varied. Assessment of student learning is ongoing and multifaceted. Students may also be evaluated on their performance as a member of a group while working on performance tasks and projects. Parents will often be asked to sign corrected tests and assignments to stay informed about their child's overall progress.

**Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education (ARK)**

The Assessment of Religious Knowledge (ARK) is designed to measure and enhance the religious knowledge and beliefs of students in Catholic schools. It provides insights to make informed decisions and provide high quality education in faith formation. The assessments are administered annually to students in grades two (2) through eight (8). Individual results are not provided.

**Homework**

The purpose of homework is to reinforce material already taught and to foster habits of independent study. Each teacher determines the homework procedures for his/her classroom. Long term assignments and make-up work may be assigned on Fridays. Students have as many days to make-up their work as they are absent. The following time allotments represent the *average* time that should be spent on homework per day. These time allotments may include daily reading and preparing for exams.

- TK – Kindergarten – Not to exceed 20 minutes per day
- Grades 1-2 – Not to exceed 30 minutes per day
- Grades 3-5 – Not to exceed 1 hour per day
- Grades 6-8 – Not to exceed two 2 hours per day

Teachers plan homework according to the working patterns of their individual class. The time it takes each student to complete their homework will vary according to individual differences. If your child is working hard and spends considerably more time than this on a regular basis, please inform the teacher. Parent notes excusing a child from an assignment are only accepted in case of a family emergency.

**Grading**

Each trimester of the academic year is approximately 13 weeks in length. Mid-way through the grading period a progress report will be issued to the parents. This enables the parents to be kept abreast of their child's achievement. This is not meant to be as detailed as a report card. It is only a general indication of a student's progress. Parent conferences will be held during the year as necessary.

The teacher of each course determines the grade each student receives for any course of study. Except in the cases of clerical or mechanical error, fraud, or bad faith, the determination of the grade is final.

The following scale is used at St. Christopher School in accordance with the Department of Catholic Schools directives for grades 3-8:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A=93-100% | B-=85-86% | C-=70-74% |
| B+=90-92% | C+=80-84% | D=65-69% |
| B=87-89% | C=75-79% | F=64% and below |

The following scale is used at St. Christopher Parish School in accordance with the Department of Catholic Schools directives for grades 1-2. This scale is also used for work habits, behavior grades, and auxiliary subjects (music, P.E., art, and Spanish):

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| O = Outstanding | S = Satisfactory | + = Area of Strength |
| G = Good | NI = Needs Improvement | ✓ = Area of Improvement |

The following scale is used at St. Christopher Parish School in accordance with the Department of Catholic Schools directives for transitional kindergarten and kindergarten:

| | |
|---|---|
| M = Demonstrates expected development | T = Needs more time to develop |
| X = Demonstrates emerging skill | No = Not expected at this time |

**Report Cards and Progress Reports**

The monthly calendars indicate when report cards and progress reports are issued.

**Report Cards**

Report cards are issued at the end of each trimester for students in grades 1-8. The transitional kindergarten and kindergarten report card are issued at the end of the second and third trimesters. A report card for the trimester may be withheld after a total of fifteen (15) absences.

**Progress Reports**

Mid-trimester progress reports are sent home to all students in grades 1-8. Progress reports may also be sent home as needed for students in grades TK-8. Report cards and progress reports must be reviewed by parents, signed, and promptly returned to school. While progress report grades are not part of the student's permanent record, these grades should be taken seriously. Any questions regarding student progress should be directed to the teacher.

**Honors/Awards**

Students in grades 3 through 8 are eligible for the Honor Roll each trimester. Any grade lower than a C- automatically disqualifies a student from the honor roll. The following criteria are required for inclusion in the Honor Roll:

**Per Trimester:**

Principal's Honor Roll
3.75 – 4.0 in all academic subjects
O, G, or S in auxiliary subjects, Behavior and Work Habits
Less than 6 tardies

First Honors
3.51 – 3.74 in all academic subjects
O or G in auxiliary subjects, Behavior and Work Habits
Less than 6 tardies

Excellence - Second Honors
3.0-3.50 in all academic subjects
O, G, or S in auxiliary subjects, Behavior and Work Habits
Less than 6 tardies

Most Improved
Given to students who have shown greatest increase in GPA

An awards assembly is held at the end of every trimester.

**Academic Probation/Retention/Transfer**

Academic Probation

A student who receives two Ds or one F in any academic subject on his/her report card will be placed on academic probation for one trimester. Academic probation restricts the student's participation in school-sponsored extracurricular activities. If grades are not improved at the end of the probationary period, a student may be asked to withdraw from the school.

Retention

The teacher is responsible for consistent evaluation and effective addressing of the learning problems.

- Initially, the teacher shall provide remedial help to the student within the school setting, either by individualized instruction or some form of tutoring.
- If such help proves to be inadequate, the teacher shall advise the parents/guardians to arrange for outside remedial help, such as professional tutoring, parent tutoring and/or a summer session.
- The teacher shall make the principal aware of any student with significant learning problems by the end of the first trimester.
- With the approval of the principal, the teacher shall inform the parents/guardians regularly during the subsequent marking periods of the student's progress or possibility of retention.
- Copies of communication and reports regarding the student's progress shall be kept on file.
- Parents/guardians should check Gradelink on a regular basis to keep aware of their child/ren's progress.

The decision to promote a student to the next grade or to retain him/her in the present grade shall be based upon a consideration of the overall welfare of the student, i.e. made by carefully weighing academic, emotional, and social factors. The principal, in consultation

with the parents and faculty, shall make the final decision regarding retention. Students may not repeat more than one grade at St. Christopher Parish School.

Transfer

Students may be advised to transfer for grounds other than class or school discipline (e.g. academics, special needs). The following procedure is followed for transferring students whose needs cannot be met by the school:

- It has been determined that other schools or agencies have better resources to assist the student.
- Ongoing conferencing with the parents regarding the needs of the student and alternative options have taken place.
- The principal, in consultation with the pastor, makes the final decision regarding the need for transfer.

**Graduation Requirements**

Ordinarily, students who satisfactorily complete the eighth-grade courses and complete a total of 60 service hours may participate in a simple, but dignified graduation ceremony at the parish church. ***All financial obligations and service hours must be clear for students to be eligible to participate in the graduation activities (class trip, etc.) and to receive his/her final report card and diploma.***

**Field Trips**

Field trips are for educational or cultural value and are to be directly related to the curriculum. All field trips require prior approval by the principal. To be able to participate in field trips, VIRTUS training, Live Scan fingerprinting through the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, and a signed and dated *Student Youth and Activity Permission Form* from parents is required. In general, parents are responsible for paying the cost of the field trip (admission, transportation, lunch, etc.). Field trips are a privilege and students may be kept at school if they do not meet behavioral expectations. Teachers may require a parent to accompany a child if there are concerns about the child's health or behavior.

Generally, transportation for field trips is provided by bus. With prior approval from the principal, parent/guardian volunteers may provide transportation. Parent/guardian volunteers driving students in their own cars must be at least 25 years of age, have a clean driving record for the past three years, a valid Class C driver's license and current, valid California automobile insurance. Each vehicle must have individual seat belts for each student. A copy of the parent/guardian's driver's license and insurance declaration page must be kept on file in the school.

The field trip policy applies to class trips, school group trips (e.g. academic decathlon) and trips for school sport teams.

**Chaperones**

If you have been designated by the teacher as a chaperone on a school field trip:

- Please arrive promptly at the designated time and check in at the school office.
- Wear comfortable and appropriate clothing for the particular destination.
- Remember that you are an authority figure responsible for a group of students.
- Chaperones may not take students off the destination grounds.
- Do not use this time to socialize with other parents on the trip.
- Do inform the teacher of problems involving students or others.
- Be proactive when chaperoning; seek assistance from the teacher if a problem arises.
- No siblings or visitors are allowed on the trip; the students need your undivided attention.
- Must be VIRTUS trained.
- Must be LiveScan fingerprinted through the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

**Tutoring**

If a student requires private tutoring or parents wish to have a student tutored in school subjects, the parents are responsible for engaging the tutor and paying all tutoring costs. The school may assist the parents in identifying tutoring resources. Teachers may not be paid for tutoring students assigned to their classes. With prior permission from the principal, teachers may tutor other students who attend the school and be paid for such tutoring by the parents. A school may arrange with independent contractors or entities, who are not teachers or staff at the school to provide tutoring on a fee basis. Independent entities must have appropriate licenses, agreements for use of the premises and insurance. All tutors and entities must comply with the procedures and policies of the extended school day

program and the Archdiocesan Guidelines for Adults Interacting with Minors at Parish or Parish School Activities or Events.

**Extra-Curricular Activities**

**Athletics**

Students in grades 4 – 8 have an opportunity to grow in skill and in spirit through the school athletic program. Sports include volleyball, basketball, and boys/girl's football. Track is available to the students in the 3rd – 8th grades. There is a $75.00 athletic fee per sport. Students must possess at least a C+ in academics and an S in behavior and work habits in order to participate and continue in this program. Students are required to attend school on the day of a game or practice in order to participate.

***Transportation***

Parent/guardian volunteers driving students in their own cars must be at least 25 years of age, have a Virtus certificate on file, have a Lifescan certificate on file, have a clean driving record for the past three years, a valid Class C driver's license and current, valid California automobile insurance. Each vehicle must have individual seat belts for each student. A copy of the parent/guardian's driver's license and insurance declaration page must be kept on file at the school.

**Student Council**

Students in grades 5 – 8 learn leadership skills through the activities of Student Council. Officers are elected in spring and must possess a B+ average in academic work and an S in behavior and work habits. Committee members must have at least a C+ average in academic work and a G in behavior and work habits. Students may run for an office or serve on a committee with faculty approval. The Student Council Moderator must approve all speeches.

## D. Tuition and General Fees

Each family signs an annual enrollment agreement, which outlines the responsible parents' financial responsibilities.

**General Fees**

- A $400.00 registration fee per student is due at the time of registration.
- A $450.00 graduation fee is required of all 8th grade students.
- A $55.00 sacraments fee is required of students receiving the sacraments.
- A $30 fee will be charged for any payment returned as unpaid for any reason. The school reserves the right to discontinue accepting personal checks as a method of payment if a check is returned unpaid.
    - ***All fees are non-refundable.***

**Tuition Collection, Payment Plan, Automatic Deductions**

Monthly payments for 10 or 11 months are made through FACTS Management on the 5th or 20th of the month. These are automatically deducted from your checking account. All tuition is paid through FACTS Tuition Management Co. The following options for payment are provided:

- 11 monthly payments beginning in July and ending in May to the FACTS Tuition Management Co. This is an automatic payment plan through your checking or savings account. Those choosing this plan will authorize their bank to make automatic monthly payments on either the 5th or 20th of each month.
- 10 monthly payments beginning in August and ending in May to the FACTS Tuition Management Co. This is an automatic payment plan through your checking or savings account. Those choosing this plan will authorize their bank to make automatic monthly payments on either the 5th or 20th of each month.
- Students will not be eligible to register for the following school year if school accounts are delinquent.
- Payment of tuition is part of the St. Christopher School parent contract and should be paid on time**.
- The full tuition amount may be paid directly to the school. A 3% discount for full payment will be given if paid in full by June 1 (before school year begins). After that date, no discount will be given.
- **The school will not issue report cards (or diplomas for graduates) if financial obligations have not been met.**

*****We depend on timely payments in order to pay our salaries and other operating expenses. If your account becomes delinquent, St. Christopher Parish School reserves the right to deny students the privilege of participating in school functions until the account has been cleared or arrangements have been made. If an account falls more than 2 payments behind in tuition, your child(ren) will be asked to stay home until the account is resolved.***

**Day Care Program (Morning and After School)**

St. Christopher Parish School offers before care beginning at 7:00 a.m. and after school care ending at 5:45 p.m. unless otherwise noted on the school calendar. Please contact the school office to inquire about regular monthly rates and drop-in rates

**Tuition Assistance**

**Catholic Education Foundation (CEF)**

The Catholic Education Foundation is committed to providing tuition assistance to the most financially deserving students attending Parish elementary and Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Tuition award applications are available through the school. The application process is once a year beginning mid-January through the end of March. CEF awards are granted on an annual basis. Applications are required each year.

**Participation Hours**

The main goal of the participation hours program is parent involvement! Our parents provide the building blocks for the St. Christopher community spirit. Each school family is required to contribute 40 hours of service to St. Christopher Parish School (20 hours for single parents). For any hours not completed, a fee of $20 per hour will be assessed.

**Reporting your Hours**

**Each family is required to send in their service hours to Mrs. Mahon. Service hours will be tracked on Gradelink.**

**Volunteer Requirements**

To comply with the Archdiocese of Los Angeles's Safe Environment Program, all adult volunteers regularly working on campus must have the following on file in the school office:

- Certificate of VIRTUS completion (VIRTUS training expires after four (4) years and may be renewed by attending another live session, a shortened renewal course, or by completing online training updates. For VIRTUS class information, visit www.virtus.org.)
- *Guidelines for Adults Interacting with Minors at Parish or Parish School Activities or Events* form read and signed
- Parents who are regularly working **directly** with children (supervision, classroom helpers, and field trips), must meet the above requirements and are required to have Live Scan fingerprinting through the Archdiocese of Los Angeles

**Other Fees**

**Field Trips**

Generally, the cost of field trips, including transportation, is the parents' responsibility. Costs for field trips depend on destination.

**Labs/Supplies/Projects**

Parents are given a supply list, which includes classroom supplies and art supplies each year. It may be necessary for students to purchase additional materials throughout the school year for labs or other class projects.

**Sports**

Students participating in after school sports will be required to pay a $75 fee per sport prior to beginning practices. Fees are subject to change.

## E. Discipline

**Discipline**

Discipline in the Catholic school is an aspect of moral guidance and not a form of punishment. The purpose of discipline is to provide a school climate conducive to learning and one that promotes character development.

Discipline is maintained in a classroom or school when students work cooperatively with the principal, the teachers, and their classmates towards the attainment of the class and school objectives. However, it should be noted that the legitimate interest of the school extends beyond the school day and beyond the school hours. A student may be disciplined for inappropriate behavior in and out of school if the reputation of the school is jeopardized. The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary

rule for just cause at his/ her discretion.

**School Rules**

The directives in this Handbook, together with the additional rules (classroom, playground, etc.) which are not given here, are intended to aid in the achievement of the goals stated in our philosophy and to ensure order and safety. We encourage the development of self-discipline to the degree that Christian conduct will become normal behavior so that all may profit from an environment of mutual respect.

The following rules will be enforced: Students will show respect to all adults in charge whether in the classroom or on the playground, or while engaged in any school-sponsored function (e.g. after school sports, enrichment program, etc.).

- Students will respect one another by not fighting, calling each other names, teasing, using obscenities, or inappropriate gestures.
- Students may not engage in inappropriate forms of public displays of affection.
- Students will respect school property by keeping it clean and in good repair. This includes books, desks, walls, classrooms, and bathrooms.
- Students will follow rules set forth by the teacher in matters of behavior, assignments, and homework.
- Students will be in complete uniform at all times unless excused for a special occasion.
- Students may not chew gum on school grounds.
- Students may not bring personal play equipment or toys to school (exception: at the teacher's request for classroom purposes).
- Students may not bring inappropriate magazines, books, videos, etc. to school.
- Students may not bring personal electronics to school, unless requested by the teacher; students must abide by the electronics policy stated in the *Parent Student Handbook*.
- Students are not permitted to use or carry cell phones on them during school hours or while in morning or afterschool care.
- Students may not take or destroy property belonging to anyone else.
- Students may not be in possession of drug paraphernalia, obscene pictures, literature, or other unacceptable objects.
- Students must be on time for all classes.

**Maintenance of Effective Discipline**

Effective discipline is maintained when there is:

- Reasonable quiet and order in the building
- Positive correction of behavior
- Constant encouragement of acceptable classroom conduct
- Firm but fair treatment of difficult students
- Consistent follow through

**Disapproved Disciplinary Measures**

The following disciplinary measures are forbidden:

- All corporal punishment, including shaking and slapping is unacceptable
- Language that is sarcastic or calculated to bring ridicule on the student, his or her parents, or background
- Using religious exercises or important class assignments as punitive measures
- Bizarre and unusual punishments
- Withholding or altering rightfully earned academic grades
- Any disciplinary action that isolates a student without proper supervision

**Consequences**

The teacher is responsible for maintaining discipline in the classroom and he/she has the authority to address problems as they arise and give appropriate consequences. Should any serious or consistent discipline issues arise, parents will be contacted and a parent-teacher or parent-teacher-principal conference will be arranged.

1) Conduct Referrals Slips

- Conduct referral slips are given for serious infractions of school and classroom rules
- Students who are habitually disrespectful of teachers, adults, fellow students, or who are seriously preventing the growth of another student are given conduct referral slips

- A conduct referral slip is given to any student whose continued inappropriate behavior, although minor, becomes serious through repetition and takes time from other students, faculty, and administration
- Conduct referral slips must be signed by the parent and returned the following day. If not returned, another referral will be given

Consequences for students with conduct referral slips and dress code violations:

*5 referrals/dress code violations or combination of in one trimester* = 1 detention (Served on Tuesday's from 3:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.)
*3 detentions within one trimester* = suspension and student contract
*3 suspensions* = expulsion from school

2) Detention

- No student shall be required to remain in the classroom during the lunch break, or during any recess. All students shall be required to leave the school rooms at recess and lunchtime, unless it would occasion a danger to health
- Detention after school hours is considered an appropriate means of discipline
- A student shall not be detained in school for disciplinary or other reasons for more than one hour after the close of the school day
- Under no circumstances shall a student be detained at school without the knowledge and consent of the parent or guardian who shall also be informed of the reason for detention and the exact time the period of detention will begin and end
- Any of the reasons listed for expulsion with mitigating circumstances are adequate cause for suspension of a student
- No student shall be suspended from school for more than two consecutive weeks, unless there is an ongoing police investigation of a possible crime, in which case the student may be suspended during the entire investigation
- Notice of suspension must be given to the parents or guardians by telephone or in a conference
- The principal shall schedule a conference with the suspended student's parents or guardians to discuss matters pertinent to the suspension, especially the means by which the parents or guardians and the school can cooperatively encourage the student to improve behavior. The suspended student may be present at the conference
- In no case will a teacher on his or her own authority suspend a student
- If a student fails to return a signed detention notice the following day, the parents will be called and the detention will be served the following week
- Students participating in any extra-curricular activities such as Student Council or Sports will forfeit the privilege of attending the practice and/or game or meeting if detention is also scheduled
- If a student or parent has a question about a particular detention, the student or parent should talk to the teacher or staff member who gave the detention

3) Suspension

Any of the reasons listed for expulsion with mitigating circumstances are adequate cause for suspension of a student.

- No student shall be suspended from school for more than two consecutive weeks, unless there is an ongoing police investigation of a possible crime, in which case the student may be suspended during the entire investigation
- Notice of suspension must be given to the parents or guardians by telephone or in a conference
- The principal shall schedule a conference with the suspended student's parents or guardians to discuss matters pertinent to the suspension, especially the means by which the parents or guardians and the school can cooperatively encourage the student to improve behavior. The suspended student may be present at the conference
- In no case will a teacher on his or her own authority suspend a student

4) Expulsion

**Reasons for Expulsion**

Reasons for expulsion are, but are not limited to, the following offenses committed by students:

- Actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of other students
- Habitual profanity or vulgarity
- Assault, battery or any threat of force or violence directed toward any school personnel or student
- Bullying, harassing or hazing school personnel or other students

- Open, persistent defiance of the authority of the teacher
- Continued willful disobedience
- Use, sale or possession of narcotics, drugs or any other controlled substance
- Use, sale, distribution, or possession of any alcoholic beverages on or near school premises
- Smoking or having tobacco
- Stealing
- Forging signatures
- Cheating or plagiarism
- Willful cutting, defacing or otherwise injuring in any way property, real or personal belonging to the school
- Habitual truancy
- Possession of harmful weapons (e.g., knives, guns, etc.) or materials that can be used as weapons
- Membership in, active involvement in, or affiliation with a gang or group responsible for coercive or violent activity
- Actions in or out of school which are detrimental to the school's reputation
- Violation of the Electronic Use policies and guidelines
- Inappropriate conduct or behavior unbecoming a student in a Catholic School

**Procedure for Expulsion**

Except in cases involving grave offenses, the following steps must be taken:

- A conference must be held with the parents or guardians, student, teacher, and principal present to advise the family that serious action is contemplated unless behavior improves immediately. In parish schools, the pastor should be notified of the conference, given an opportunity to attend and provided a report of the discussion
- If behavior does not improve, the final decision will be announced at a second conference attended by the principal, teacher, and parents or guardians. If the parents fail, without cause, to attend the conference, the pastor, principal, and teacher will reach a final decision. The final decision rests with the pastor in consultation with the principal
- In no case will a teacher on his or her own authority expel a student

Full credit will be given for all work accomplished by the student up to the moment of expulsion

**Written Record**

A written record of the steps leading to expulsion must be kept on file with copies of all communications and reports. The written record is kept on file at the school and a copy is mailed to the elementary supervisor at the Department of Catholic Schools.

**Cases Involving Grave Offenses**

- In cases involving grave offenses, which may include a violation of criminal law or actions so outrageous as to shock the conscience or behavior of the community, the student is immediately suspended and there is no requirement to hold the initial parent-principal conference
- The procedure involving cases of grave offenses is followed when the continued presence of the student at school (even for a short period of time) will, in the reasonable judgment of the principal, pose a serious threat to the health and welfare of another student or students, or faculty members
- When immediate suspension is imposed, with probable expulsion, while the case is being investigated, the rules and the consequences of the violation should be clearly explained to the student and parents or guardians

**Time of Expulsion**

- An expulsion may be made immediately if the reasons are urgent
- Only in exceptional cases shall expulsion of an eighth-grade student who has been in the school one or more years be allowed
- If an expulsion is to take place during the last quarter of the school year or during the last semester in the case of an eighth-grade student, prior approval of the Department of Catholic Schools is required before the expulsion can take effect
- If such action is contemplated, approval shall be obtained before the announcement of the final decision to the parents at the meeting described below

**Reporting of Expulsions**

All expulsion, even if they occur at the end of the year, are reported to the elementary supervisor at the Department of Catholic Schools. The County Office of Education where the school is located may require notification of pupil expulsions.

**Right to Make Exceptions**

The principal, in consultation with the pastor, retains the right to make exceptions in cases where mitigating circumstances call for a different response than policy suggests.

**Home Study**

Circumstances may arise which dictate that a student, at the discretion of the principal, be excluded from school attendance for a period of time. This is a remedy for unusual situations and is not considered a suspension. Students may be given tests, *etc*. outside school hours so that grades can be reported.

**Academic Infractions**

Academic infractions, which carry detention and possible suspension penalties include, but are not limited to:

- Plagiarism: the willful use of the language, ideas, or thoughts of another as if it were one's own original work
- Copying another student's answers in assignments or tests
- Discussing answers during class examinations
- Use or possession of unauthorized notes or materials during a test
- Cheating or cooperation in cheating on a quiz or test
- Being in possession of teacher copies of test, teacher edition books, or other testing materials
- Doing work for another student

Academic infractions will also result in an "F" or "0" in the grade book for that particular assignment.

**Disciplinary Reporting to Parents**

Parents/Guardians are kept apprised of each step in the discipline process. This reporting may be by phone, written notices or conferences.

**Cell Phone Policy/Use of Electronic Devices**

All portable communication devices **must be turned "OFF"** and given to the homeroom teacher at the beginning of the school day. Portable communication devices may **NOT** be turned on at any time during the regular school day for any reason, except to call 911 in emergencies, or with the express permission of the teacher or principal. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, lunch breaks, class changes and any other scheduled or non- scheduled activity that occurs during normal school hours. If a student uses a portable communication device or any of its functions for any reason during the school day without express adult permission, the following measures will be taken:

- The device will be confiscated from the student
- The device will be returned only to the student's parent or legal guardian
- Depending on the circumstances, the student may be denied the right to bring the device to school
- Repeat violations of the policy will result in disciplinary measures appropriate to the circumstances, including expulsion if warranted
- If a device is used for cheating during a test, the student will be removed from the testing situation and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken
- Using AI or Chat GPT

The school is NOT responsible for lost, misplaced, stolen, broken portable communications devices or for any unauthorized use of such devices. The school will NOT pay to replace devices that are lost, misplaced or stolen after they are confiscated and will NOT pay for any communications charges.

**Electronic Communications Policy**

These policies, standards and procedures apply to all users of technology, whether adult, child or youth, whether they are paid or volunteer staff, clergy or members of religious orders, in the Archdiocese or in any Location. These policies, standards and procedures include, but are not limited to, maintaining data confidentiality, maintaining the confidentiality of data security controls and passwords, and immediately reporting any suspected or actual security violations. The Archdiocese prohibits the use or alteration of archdiocesan data and/or information technology without proper authorization. All users have an obligation to protect the confidentiality and nondisclosure of proprietary, confidential and privileged data, as well as personally identifiable information.

*Electronic communications systems* include, but are not limited to, electronic mail, telecommunications systems including telephone, voice mail, and video, facsimile transmissions, stand-alone or networked computers, intranets, the Internet and any other communications systems that may be created in the future.

*Electronic communications devices* include, but are not limited to, regular and mobile telephones (cell phones, smart phones, walkie-talkies), facsimile machines, computers, laptops, electronic notebooks, audio and video equipment, flash drives, memory sticks, iPads®, media players, and other wireless equipment that may be created in the future.

*Electronic communications materials* include, but are not limited to, DVDs, CDs, laser discs, audio and video-tape, audio and visual recordings, films, microfiche, audio and visual broadcasts, computer operating systems, software programs, electronically stored data and text files, computer applications, emails, text messages, instant messages, and all other downloaded, uploaded, retrieved, opened, saved, forwarded or otherwise accessed or stored content.

Parents and students understand that:

- All school systems, all information stored on them and all work performed on them are subject to school supervision, inspection and governance of school policies.
- The school may engage in routine maintenance and monitoring of its computer system.
- The school only provides limited privacy in the contents of student personal files on the school's computer system. The situation is similar to the rights students have in the privacy of lockers.
- The school reserves the right to monitor, access, retrieve, read and disclose all messages created, sent, received or stored on its systems (including connections made and sites visited) to law enforcement officials or others, without prior notice.
- Students may only use the system under the direct supervision of an authorized staff member.
- Where pertinent and approved, students should use care in creating e-mail messages. The contents of e-mail cannot be considered private or confidential. Even when a message has been deleted, it may still exist on a back-up system, be restored, be printed out, or may have been forwarded to someone else without its creator's knowledge.
- Any files downloaded from the Internet and any computer disks received from non-school sources must be scanned with virus detection software. Immediately report any viruses, tampering or other system breaches to the principal or a delegate.
- Students will promptly inform their teacher or other school employee of any message received that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
- The school will not be responsible for supervising or continually monitoring every communication and Internet session for every student and staff member beyond the scope of supervision defined in the user agreement.
- Internet access from outside the school is the domain of the parents / guardians. We expect our parents to be equal stakeholders in the implementation of our computer system policies by monitoring their child's Internet access and electronic use at home in a manner supportive of the school's policies. The school may provide consequences for inappropriate electronic communications among students outside of school, and in some cases, law enforcement may be called to intervene.

Students using St. Christopher Parish School's Computer Systems may not:

- Post personal contact information about self or others. Personal contact information includes address, telephone, school address, parent's names, work address, etc.
- Use social networking sites
- Use obscene, defamatory or disruptive language.
- Harass, insult or attack others.
- Send or post comments or images that would offend someone or an organization on the basis of race, creed, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, political beliefs or disability.
- Upload, download, view or otherwise transmit copyrighted, trademarked, patented or indecent material, trade secrets or other confidential, private or proprietary information. Regarding copyright materials, certain exceptions are given for educational purposes and if there is any doubt, students must consult with their teachers.
- Engage in any other illegal act, such as arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, etc.
- Employ the network for commercial and / or political lobbying purposes
- Access material that is profane or obscene (pornography) that advocates illegal acts or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people.
- Damage, alter, disrupt or gain unauthorized access to computers or other systems: e.g., use others' passwords, trespass on others' folders, work or files.

- Enable unauthorized persons to access or use the school's computer systems or jeopardize the security of the school's electronic communication systems.
- Introduce a virus, attempt to breach system security or tamper with the school's computer system.
- Re-post a message that was sent privately without permission of the person who sent the message.
- Download large files unless absolutely necessary. If necessary, students will download the file at a time when the system is not being heavily used.
- Post chain letters or engage in "spamming" (sending an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people).
- Use computers for any activity other than classroom related purposes (as directed by the teacher).

**Consequences for Violating Any of the Above Policies**

- Disciplinary action, including but not limited to, detention, suspension, permanent loss of access, or even expulsion, depending on the gravity of the offense at the principal's discretion.
- Involvement of law enforcement agencies.

**Limited Liability**

The school makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the school's computer system will be error-free or without defect. The school will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries or interruptions of service. The school is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. The use of any information obtained via this service is at the user's own risk. The school will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system.

**Harassment, Bullying, and Hazing Policy**

St. Christopher Parish School is committed to provide a safe and comfortable learning environment that respects Christian values and is free from harassment, bullying or hazing in any form. Harassment, bullying or hazing of any student by any other student, lay employee, religious, clergy, or school volunteer is prohibited. The school will treat allegations of any such conduct seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential and thorough manner. This policy shall be communicated clearly to faculty, staff, volunteers, parents or guardians and students.

Substantiated acts of harassment, bullying or hazing by a student will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal of the student. Students found to have filed false or frivolous charges will also be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. For students in grades K-3, this disciplinary action shall depend on the maturity of the students and the circumstances involved. For students in grades 4 through 8, the disciplinary action may include suspension or dismissal.

**Harassment** occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment or a school environment that is hostile or intimidating. It includes, but is not limited to, any or all of the following:

- Verbal harassment: Derogatory comments and jokes; threatening words spoken to another person.
- Physical harassment: Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement.
- Visual harassment: Derogatory, demeaning or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, and gestures.
- Sexual harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

**Bullying** is the habitual harassing, intimidating, tormenting, browbeating, humiliating, terrorizing, oppressing and/or threatening of another person. Bullying typically consists of direct behaviors, such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, shoving, and stealing that are initiated by one or more students against a victim or victims. In addition to direct attacks, bullying may also be indirect, such as spreading rumors that cause victims to be socially isolated through intentional exclusion. Whether the bullying is direct or indirect, the key component of bullying is physical or psychological intimidation that occurs repeatedly over time to create an ongoing pattern of harassment and abuse.

Students also may be involved in cyber bullying, which occurs when they bully each other using the Internet, mobile phones or other cyber technology. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Sending inappropriate text, e-mail, or instant messages.
- Posting inappropriate pictures or messages about others in blogs or on Web sites.
- Using someone else's user name to spread rumors or lies about someone.

**Hazing** is any method of initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization or student body or any pastime or amusement engaged in with respect to these organizations which causes, or is likely to cause, bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm, to any student or other person.

It is the responsibility of the school to:

- Establish practices and provide staff development training and age-appropriate information for students, designed to create a school environment free from discrimination, intimidation or harassment.
- Make all faculty, staff, students, parents or guardians, and volunteers aware of this policy and the commitment of the school toward its strict enforcement
- Remain watchful for conditions that create or may lead to a hostile offensive school environment.

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Conduct himself or herself in a manner that contributes to a positive school environment.
- Avoid any activity that may be considered discriminatory, intimidating, harassing, bullying or hazing.
- If possible, inform the other person(s) that the behavior is offensive and unwelcome.
- Report all incidents of discrimination, harassment, bullying or hazing to the principal or teacher.
- As appropriate, the students involved may be asked to complete a formal, written complaint, which will be investigated thoroughly and will involve only the necessary parties. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible.

**Student Threats**

All threats by students to inflict serious harm to self or others, or to destroy property, will be taken seriously. Whoever hears or becomes aware of any threat made by a student should immediately report it to the pastor, principal, or a teacher. The principal will notify the police and the Department of Catholic School immediately.

The student who has made the threat will be kept in the school office under supervision until the police arrive. The parents or guardians of the student who has made the threat will be notified. Any adult or student who has been identified as the potential victim, or mentioned in writing as a potential victim, will be notified immediately. The student who has made the threat will be suspended until the investigation by the police and school has been completed. The decision to re-admit a student who has made a threat will be made by the principal and pastor on a case-by-case basis.

Practical jokes or offhand comments of a threatening nature will be taken seriously and will be investigated. The police may be notified and these actions may result in suspension or removal of a student from school.

**School Searches**

Students' legitimate expectation of privacy in their person and in the personal effects they bring to school must be balanced against the obligation of the school to maintain discipline and to provide a safe environment for the school community. Accordingly, school officials may conduct a search of the student's person and personal effects. School officials do not need a warrant or a parent's permission to conduct a search of the student and/or the school's or a student's personal property, as long as they have a reasonable suspicion that a law or school rule is being or has been violated. An alert from a trained and certified detector dog is sufficient to allow the school official to have a reasonable suspicion and to conduct a search of the student's locker, car, or his or her personal property and effects. In addition to this policy on searches by the school, every student is subject to the Archdiocesan and school use and privacy policies concerning cell phones and other electronic devices, whether the devices belong to the school or to the student. If a student refuses to cooperate in a reasonable search of the school or student property (including electronic devices), the student's parents and/or the police may be called for assistance or referral.

**Dress/Uniform Code**

The school uniforms must be worn on all school days unless otherwise specified. Parents/Guardians and students are expected to cooperate with the uniform code which will be strictly enforced. When a student fails to follow the dress code a uniform referral slip will be issued. After five referral slips have been issued, then a student will have to serve detention. Personal disregard for the dress code will be addressed as a disciplinary matter.

Uniform items are available from Kyrie Design. https://www.kyriedesign.com/stchristopher-school.htm

**Girls Grades TK-8**

- Harris plaid jumper – (Gr. K – 4) to be worn with plain white cotton blouse with a collar and short sleeves.
- Harris plaid skirt – (Gr. 5 – 8) to be worn with a short sleeve white blouse. White or blue polo shirts may also be worn with skirts.
- Skirts and jumper lengths are to be no more than two inches above mid-knee.
- Skirts are to be worn at the waist. (not to be rolled)
- Shorts are not to be folded up at the thighs.
- White button-down blouse with navy cross over tie are to be worn on Mass days.
- P.E. uniform blue logo shirt and blue logo shorts or sweats. (Worn only on PE day or as announced by school.); Appropriate athletic shoe in any color can be worn on P.E. days. Shoes must be tied at all times.
- Royal or navy blue sweatshirt with St. Christopher Parish School emblem, or royal or navy blue sweater- cardigan or pullover sweater
- Hair accessories should be (uniform bows, headbands, berets, etc.) and be of a school color (navy blue, yellow, or white).
- Plain navy blue or black shorts may be worn under the skirts/jumpers but they are not to be longer than the skirts.

*Optional purchase*:

- Navy blue, black, or white leggings with no fringe or lace. Must be worn with socks.
- Navy blue slacks, walking shorts or skorts.
- P.E. sweat pants – may only be worn on P.E. days

**Boys Grades TK-8**

- Solid white or navy blue polo shirt. **Shirts must be tucked in**.
- Black or brown belt must be worn for grades 2-8.
- White Oxford shirt with school logo and plaid tie are to be worn on Mass days.
- Navy blue slacks or shorts.
- P.E. uniform – blue or gold logo shirt and blue logo shorts or sweats (Worn only on PE day or as announced by school.) Appropriate athletic shoe in any color can be worn on P.E. days. Shoes must be tied at all times.
- Royal or navy blue sweatshirt with St. Christopher Parish School emblem, royal/navy blue cardigan or pullover sweater.

*Optional purchase:*

- Navy blue walking shorts.
- P.E. sweat pants – may only be worn only on P.E. days

**General Requirements/Guidelines**

- P.E. uniforms are to be worn only on their designated P.E. days or at scheduled special events as announced by school.
- Shoes may be white, black, gray, or navy blue with laces or zipper closures. A simple logo is permissible if it is the make of the shoes.
- **Slip-on shoes are not allowed**. Socks must be visible and cover the ankles. Shoes must be tied at all times.
- All students are required to wear full dress uniform for all school Masses.
- Full dress uniform for boys includes long pants, white Oxford shirt with school logo and a plaid tie.
- Full dress uniform for girls includes jumper/skirts with white blouse and navy cross over tie.
- All students are required to have a school sweatshirt, sweater, or jacket. They are also required to wear white or navy polo shirts.
- Jackets are permitted in addition to, but not in place of, the school sweatshirt.
- Only school logos on jackets are permitted. **Only royal or navy blue jackets may be worn in the classrooms.**
- Only school logo jackets, school logo cardigans or school logo vests are permitted on Mass days.
- No sweatshirts, hoodies of any kind are permitted on Mass days.
- Walking shorts may be worn throughout the year but are not permitted on Mass days.
- Shoelaces are to be in one solid color and the same colors as listed for shoes (white, black, gray, or navy).
- Sandals or boot style shoes are not allowed.
- Solid white, navy blue, or black socks or solid white, black, or navy blue tights or leggings for the girls with no fringe.
- Solid white, black, or navy blue socks for the boys.
- Uniforms that are over-sized or baggy are not allowed.
- Belts may not extend below the belt line and must be visible when the shirt is tucked in.

- On rainy days, rain boots must be changed to school shoes once you arrive on campus.
- Pants must be free of holes and tears.

FAILURE TO ABIDE BY THE UNIFORM CODE WILL RESULT IN DRESS CODE REFERRALS. **5 DRESS CODE REFERRALS WILL RESULT IN 1 DETENTION, 3 DETENTIONS WILL RESULT IN 1 SUSPENSION.**

**Grooming**

- A simple clean and neatly styled haircut is expected for all students
- Hair styles should not cover the eyes
- Excessive gel and "spikes" are not acceptable
- Both boys and girls are to have their hair out of their face and eyes
- **Students may not change their natural hair color in any manner**
- Colored hair extensions are not permitted

**Make-Up/Nail Polish**

- No make-up, lip-gloss or nail polish is to be worn by students. Clear chapstick is acceptable.
- Acrylic nails are not allowed.

**Jewelry**

- Only minimal jewelry may be worn (**one ring, bracelet, or necklace**)
- For safety, girls are allowed to wear only one stud earring in the lower part of each ear lobe. They are not to extend below the ear lobe. **No hoop earrings**.
- No earrings of neon or bright colors.
- Boys are not permitted to wear earrings.
- Body rings and/or body piercings are not allowed.

**Casual Free Dress Days**

Throughout the year there may be occasions when students are permitted to wear casual dress. Casual dress is a privilege granted to students at different times during the year. Casual dress clothing must be neat and modest. Parents/Guardians are responsible to ensure that students are dressed in a manner suitable for a Catholic school student. The following guidelines must be followed on these days:

- T-shirts generally should not contain writing. If they do, it should be appropriate for Catholic school wear. No advertising for liquor/tobacco, foul words, or inappropriate images/sayings.
- Jeans may be worn if not too tight, baggy, or frayed with holes. Girls may wear walking shorts (same length as the school uniform) or Capri pants and boys may wear walking shorts.
- No spaghetti straps, halter-tops or strapless tops; shirts must reach below the waist line.
- No bare midriff or netted shirts
- No tight fitting blouses/shirts or see through material; must be appropriate in length.
- Socks must be worn and seen.
- **No sandals or boots are to be worn at any time**.

If a student frequently offends against normal standards of dress, grooming, or hygiene, and has been corrected in this regard, the cooperation of parents/guardians shall be sought to correct the problem. Lack of improvement in personal appearance is grounds for the suspension of a student during that school day and the loss of Casual Free Dress privilege for the remainder of the school year.