

St. Francis of Assisi School



STUDENT HANDBOOK

2017-2018 School Year

St. Francis of Assisi School STUDENT HANDBOOK

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FACULTY & STAFF 2017-2018

Administration

John D'Adamo - Principal
Mary Carol Lidinsky - Assistant Principal; IB & Middle School Coordinator
Katie Kerr - Pre-School Director
Carol Will - Director of Admissions & Student Support
Mary Semela - Director of Development

Instructional Staff

Lisa Bradford - Pre-K 2's	Staci Stelmaszczyk - 3rd Grade
Christina Hill - Pre-K 2's	Kara Sherman - 4th Grade
Shamia Hodge - Pre-K 3's	Rosita Jackson - 5th Grade
Katelyn Smith - Pre-K 3's	Scott Sands - MS (SS, PE, Rel., Design); Tech.
Brianne Genter - Pre-K 3-4's	Clare Banks - MS (ELA & SS)
Michelle Hoehn - Pre-K 3-4's	Mary Jo Broderick - MS (Math & Sci.)
TBD - Pre-K 4's	Hanna Guilfoyle - Art; MS (Span. & Sci.)
Angela Pinto - Pre-K 4's	Kathleen LeBlanc - Librarian
Mariya Mohre - PK, Music, PE, & Tech	Jean Kelley - Liturgy
Amy Walsh - Kindergarten	Doreen Williams - Catech. of the Good Shep.
Lana Howell - Kindergarten Aide	Julia Morisi - Soc. Justice, Fam. Life, & Rel.
Susan Smith - 1st Grade	Scarlett Tache - Elementary Spanish
Emily Moeller - 2nd Grade	

Fine Arts Support Staff

Michael Ricigliano - Cartooning
Sean Brennan - Guitar
Andy Bopp - Drama Director
Katie Weaver - Band Director
Dave Pugh - Photographer

Administrative Support Staff

Lauren Duggins - Secretary
Sharon Foley - Academic/Admin Support
Sandra Fabella - Bookkeeper
Katie Gilligan - Nurse Consultant
Cindy Crown - Counselor
Robert Kirner - Maintenance

Staff member email addresses all follow the same pattern - lastnamefirstinitial@sfa-school.org.

Please allow at least one full business day for replies.

A MESSAGE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Welcome to St. Francis of Assisi School! The entire school community pledges its support to you. May Jesus, the model of all teachers, be our encouragement in this important ministry of Catholic education. Surely, He who said, “Let the little children come unto me” (Mt 19:14) will bless the efforts in His name.

St. Francis of Assisi School (SFA) is a co-ed elementary school for grades Pre-K (2) through 8th. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, or protected activity (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the complaint process). Requests for reasonable accommodations for a student with a disability may be directed to the office or the principal. Religion is required for each year a student attends St. Francis of Assisi School. All students enrolled in St. Francis of Assisi School must attend religion classes and services.

The school reserves the right to deny attendance to anyone whose behavior is contrary to the teachings and ideals of the school or whose behavior or attitude is disruptive to the functioning of the student body.

By enrolling a child in a Catholic school, a parent/guardian agrees to the following important responsibilities:

- To be a partner with the school in the education of the child
- To understand and support the religious/moral nature of the school
- To read all communications from the school and request clarification when necessary
- To know who the child’s teachers are and observe parent-teacher conference dates and any special requests for meetings
- To discuss concerns and problems with the person(s) most directly involved, and the administration, before contacting legal authorities
- To be as actively involved in the life of the school and volunteer assistance as possible
- To promote the school and speak well of it to others
- To meet financial obligations in a timely manner and support the fundraising efforts of the school when possible
- To appreciate that Catholic education is a privilege that many persons do not have
- To encourage the child to take responsibility for his/her school work

It is the policy of St. Francis of Assisi School that we do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, or protected activity (ie., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the complaint process) in the administration of our educational policies, admissions policies, athletic, and other school administration programs.

In cases where parents’/guardians’ views and philosophical positions result in repeated non-compliance in regard to school policies, the administration reserves the right to request that said parents’/guardians’ child/children withdraw from the school.

This handbook does not constitute an express or implied contract of any kind. St. Francis of Assisi School reserves the right to amend, withdraw, or modify the policies, procedures, and benefits described at any time. The handbook provides general information on a number of topics but is not intended to be all-inclusive. Any questions regarding this handbook and/or the policies in the handbook should be directed to the school administration.

§ I – School Administration

BACKGROUND OF THE SCHOOL

We are a comprehensive co-ed Pre-school, elementary, and middle school, partnered in ministry to provide a secure, caring, Christian community of learning for children. St. Francis of Assisi School offers a student teacher ratio of 1:15, experienced and well-trained faculty providing students with a vibrant, engaging and nurturing learning environment.

Even as we view our Catholic Identity as the source and summit of our program, we welcome and accept children of every denomination and faith. We offer classes for Pre-school (2, 3, and 4 year old) and Kindergarten through Grade Eight. St. Francis of Assisi School is a co-ed Catholic school with the motto: “*Not just a school, but a way of life.*”

Following St. Francis, who is also the patron of ecology, we work to educate our students, families, and staff to actively work towards being caretakers of our earth. To that end, we are proud of our pollinator garden and our Monarch Sister School Program.

We are the only school in the Archdiocese of Baltimore to offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Program. We have a strong curriculum in all subjects but have been recognized for our work to develop a rigorous and challenging program in this area that teaches students *how* to think, not just *what* to think. In all grades, we strive to teach cross-curricular lessons that involve the students in active inquiry learning.

HISTORY

St. Francis of Assisi is a Catholic parish school in northeast Baltimore. Although the church was founded in 1927, it was not until 1955, when the new church was built on the corner of Harford Road and Pelham Avenue, that the parish school opened with four classrooms, an assembly hall, and an office in the building the church had vacated. Three Sisters of Saint Joseph staffed the new school with an enrollment of eighty-eight students in grades 1, 2, and 3. Mass of the Holy Spirit was celebrated in thanksgiving to God for blessings received and to ask God’s care and guidance for the future. Archbishop Francis P. Keough blessed the classrooms during the first days in the new school. During the summer of 1957, the second floor was added to the school. This gave the school eight classrooms, a library and an office. The first class graduated in 1961 with forty-two students.

In September of 1989, a preschool was established at St. Matthew United Church of Christ. Known as Mayfield Christian Preschool, it was originally co-sponsored by St. Matthew and St. Francis of Assisi and governed by the Mayfield Christian Preschool Board. As time passed, St. Francis gradually assumed operational responsibility for the program, and in the summer of 2008 the preschool was relocated to the first floor of our school.

In the summer of 1997 a third floor was added to our building. This expansion of the facility has enhanced the learning environment and made a statement to the neighborhood that SFA is committed to this area and to the city of Baltimore. The school is a very important part of the parish. May it continue to energize students and parents and continue to build Christ’s kingdom on earth!

MISSION STATEMENT/DECLARACIÓN DE LA MISIÓN

Drawing on the ideals of our patron saint, rooted in the neighborhoods of Northeast Baltimore, branching out to the wider world, and envisioning a future even stronger than our past, St. Francis of Assisi School forms children for a life of scholarship, spirituality, and service, rooted in the Catholic faith tradition:

- Scholarship developed through student inquiry, rigorous assessment, and dedication to lifelong learning;
- Spirituality reflected in a joyful relationship with God and compassion for others;
- Service creating a better and more peaceful world as students embrace cultural, ethnic, and social differences

For more than half a century, "not just a school but a way of life."

Living the Mission

Safe - Promote safety and responsibility in our thoughts, words and actions.

Ownership - Take pride of ownership in our campus, our work, and our mission

Actively engaged - Stay actively engaged in academics, faith, family, and community life.

Respectful - Encourage and model respect, peace, and kindness for all.

LET YOUR SPIRIT SOAR!

Basado en los ideales de nuestro santo patrón, radicada en los barrios del noreste de Baltimore, extendiéndose al resto del mundo, y aspirando a un futuro aún más fuerte que nuestro pasado, la Escuela de St. Francis of Assisi forma a los niños para una vida de conocimiento académico, espiritualidad, y servicio, enraizada en la tradición de la fe católica:

- Conocimiento académico desarrollado a través de investigación, evaluación y dedicación al aprendizaje
- Espiritualidad reflejada en una relación feliz con Dios y compasión por otros
- Servicio creando un mundo mejor y más pacífico, los estudiantes adoptan las diferencias culturales, étnicas y sociales

Por más de medio siglo, "no sólo una escuela, una forma de vida."

Como Vivir La Misión

Seguro - Promueva la seguridad y la responsabilidad en nuestros pensamientos, palabras y acciones.

Orgullo de la propiedad - Tome orgullo en nuestro campus, nuestro trabajo, y nuestra misión

Activamente comprometido - Manténgase activamente comprometido en la vida académica, la fe, la familia y la comunidad.

Respetuoso - Alentar y modelar el respeto, la paz y la bondad para todos.

¡DEJA QUE TU ESPIRITU SE ELEVE!

VISION STATEMENT//DECLARACIÓN DE LA VISIÓN

St. Francis of Assisi School seeks to be a joyful center of the New Evangelization that promotes active and engaged learning through faith, discovery, collaboration, and service.

La Escuela de San Francisco de Asís busca ser un centro alegre de la Nueva Evangelización que promueve el aprendizaje activo y comprometido a través de la fe, el descubrimiento, la colaboración y el servicio.

STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

St. Francis of Assisi School, a Roman Catholic institution, believes in:

- Bringing to life, in the city of Baltimore, the values of St. Francis:
- Peace, love, forgiveness, joy, faith, hope, and understanding
- Inspiring its students to live the Gospel message of Jesus through prayer and service
- Preparing children for the academic challenges of high school
- Offering an emotionally secure environment as an extension of the home
- Embracing cultural, ethnic and social differences
- Aligning its educational program to the dynamic world in which its students live
- Affirming the value of a traditional, sequential educational approach
- Welcoming the time, talent, and energy of parents
- Enjoying the active support and guidance of its multigenerational parish community
- Allowing kids to be kids – fully and vibrantly experiencing childhood

PHILOSOPHY

In 1998, St. John Paul II released his papal encyclical entitled *Fides et Ratio* (“Faith and Reason”). He expressed the relationship between the human capacities for both faith and reason. As educators, we know divergent thinking requires a creative mind able to reach for the profound and the abstract, while convergent thoughts need rational grounding in facts and logic.

The SFA curriculum serves to engage its students in providing them with the problem-solving skills they will use in all academic areas. This education will provide students with an appreciation for the world God has given them by helping them to achieve a successful balance between their faith in God and their sense of reason.

A cross-curricular approach such as this allows for a growing appreciation for the mathematical precision and beauty of Nature to blossom into creative expressions in the Humanities and Fine Arts.

Educating the whole child means balancing both types of thinking – convergent and divergent. While advancing student’s need for intellectual progress, we also foster a desire to remain connected as branches to the “true vine” who is Christ. (Jn 15:1) In all cases, this model of teaching promotes academic discovery and student-centered inquiry. We believe that this helps guide the student to value the pursuit of Truth – the truth of the Gospel that speaks to us in matters of faith, the sciences, and the fine arts.

St. Francis of Assisi School is committed to preparing students for the world they will one day inherit. The workplace of the 21st Century is one that is increasingly reliant on a set of skills focused on technology, creativity, leadership, collaboration, and problem-solving.

SFA graduates go on to the finest high schools in the region and from there to great success in colleges and adult life. We build critical minds and compassionate hearts here – those are the hallmarks of an education at St. Francis of Assisi School!

LOCATION

St. Francis of Assisi School is located in Northeast Baltimore City in the neighborhood of Mayfield. Herring Run Park, Lake Montebello, and Clifton Park Golf Course all border the area. The address is 3617 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21218.

LEARNING WITHIN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

STUDENTS

By insisting that students perform to their full potential, the Archdiocese affirms its belief in the dignity of the individual. The role of the student is an active one. Participation in the learning process enables each student to grow and acquire the skills necessary to identify immediate and long-range goals. It is the student's responsibility to take advantage of opportunities, academic as well as co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. It is the student's obligation to meet the demands these activities require, keeping in mind that at this time the task is to be the best student he or she can be.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents/guardians are the primary educators who work in partnership with the school. Their involvement in their children's education is woven into the fabric of the education process. They support and assist teachers by placing academic and moral demands on students.

Parents/guardians of Catholic school students make a financial and philosophical commitment to their children's education. This creates a unique role which accents the parents' responsibility to oversee their children's academic development while at home, by insisting that students perform to their potential.

Parents/guardians provide family listening, direction, and support. Parents/guardians need to establish an environment for school work. It is the parent/guardian who must encourage the proper use of the student's time after school hours. Furthermore, parents/guardians enhance the academic and co-curricular and extra-curricular activity of the students through their guidance with and/or presence at these functions.

THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

Teachers within the Archdiocese endeavor "to teach as Jesus did." The power of a teacher can never be underestimated; what is done in a classroom affects what is accomplished by the students. The classroom teacher, in the pursuit of excellence, is the facilitator for the learning process. A teacher plays a key role in the education of students by insisting that they perform to their full potential and by affirming their quest for growth, identity, self-worth, and knowledge.

It is the teacher's responsibility to awaken intellectual curiosity, challenge the students to a deeper understanding of the subject, and transmit a genuine love for learning. The expertise of the classroom teacher lies in knowledge of the subject and care for the student. Classroom performance is enhanced by the interaction of the teacher and students

at co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Such a teacher encourages the student to develop abilities and to practice skills. The effect of a teacher is far-reaching; what is done in the classroom influences the student for a lifetime.

PRINCIPAL

The principal is the master teacher who envisions the heights to which the teachers and students can climb. He/she has the responsibility for the spiritual development, the physical safety, and the academic growth of the faith community.

The principal strives to provide the means, both material and philosophical, to insure that excellence is the hallmark of the school. It is his/her responsibility to make those decisions that will achieve this goal. Such decisions should be made collegially with those who share reflections, suggestions, and even disagreement. The principal is accountable to foster a climate in which curriculum growth, spiritual enrichment, and development can flourish. Curriculum development is nurtured by active involvement of faculty and positive support of families.

DEPARTMENT OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The Department of Catholic Schools, through the Superintendent's Administrative Team, has the responsibility to provide an environment in which the pursuit of excellence is ongoing and its achievement measurable. It is the Department's duty to challenge, encourage, and affirm the school communities of the Archdiocese.

The foundation for the pursuit of excellence rests firmly on the rock of accountability. The Superintendent's Administrative Team is accountable to the entire faith community to assure that academic excellence, professional development, and the investigation of new methods and techniques in teaching are central factors in providing quality education.

The Department of Catholic Schools believes academic instruction is built on the premise that the lives of our students must be enriched and enhanced. All of this is accomplished and brought about with the knowledge that God is the source of all gifts.

Archdiocese of Baltimore - Dept. of Catholic Schools Vision & Mission Statement

Vision: Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore nurture and sustain the God-given gifts of every person, especially students, to be used in service to the Mission of Jesus.

Mission: Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore provide a Christ-centered education that is academically excellent and empowers students to reach their full potential – spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially, and morally. Fostered through robust collaboration among all stakeholders, the mission is accomplished through accountable leadership at all levels, ongoing and coordinated strategic planning, centralized efficiencies, and financial sustainability.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY: SHIELD THE VULNERABLE

All staff members and all volunteers must complete the required STAND training through Shield the Vulnerable before being permitted to assist in classroom activities or attend field trips. This program, required by the Archdiocese of Baltimore, is intended for the protection of the youth. The training is conducted online. Contact the office for more information.

ACCREDITATION



St. Francis of Assisi School was established in 1955 and is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools through AdvancED.



The Middle School (Grades 6-8) received authorization in 2015 to offer the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program.

§ II – School Operations

SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

We consider the parent-school relationship vital to your child's academic and developmental success. Effective communication between home and school helps make that relationship a positive and productive one. The most effective means of assisting your child's academic growth are checking homework, reviewing tests, inquiring about projects, test results, school activities, etc. If there is an area of concern in regard to the school environment either socially or academically, please contact the teacher involved to discuss your concern. Your cooperation and support are necessary for effective guidance and discipline. Please be very careful not to make statements in your child's presence that would undermine what we are trying to accomplish together with you.

There are two means of regular communication from the school to all families: the "Brown Envelope" and "With One Voice," the regular email newsletter. Every Wednesday, informational mailings are made available on the school website www.sfa-school.org. Any documents requiring parent feedback will be sent home in the Brown Envelope. We ask that you empty the envelope contents, sign the envelope and return any required information through the Brown Envelope the next day (Thursday). If any school organization has a notice to include in the envelope, it must arrive at school no later than Tuesday at 3:00pm.

Urgent or emergency communication will be through the online emergency system. Phone calls and emails are sent to the main contact numbers for each family. Each fall, families are asked to update this information.

Whenever a situation occurs that causes concern, the concern should be addressed first at the level at which the situation arose. Therefore, the parents should first contact the teacher involved and then, if necessary, teacher and parents should go to the principal. However, PARENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO INTERRUPT TEACHERS EITHER BEFORE SCHOOL OR DURING CLASS HOURS. Teachers should be seen by appointment only. If a conference with the principal or teacher is needed, please call the office or send a note/email at least a day or two in advance of the conference date. Should a written request sent to the teacher be unanswered after allowing sufficient time, the parents are requested to call the office and leave a message with the secretary. The principal will then facilitate communication. In the best interest of students, the school welcomes and encourages verbal and written communication between parents and teachers. The most efficient way to reach school staff is through email. Voice mail is also available but typically is checked only once or twice a day.

Parents whose phone numbers are unlisted must give the school either the unlisted number or a number where the parent(s) can be reached. It is essential that the school have this information in case of emergency. It will be kept in the strictest confidence. Any change of phone number or home address is to be given to the school office and homeroom teacher in writing within one week after change is effective.

URGENT MESSAGES

If it is necessary for a parent to give an emergency message during school hours, please contact the office, and we will see that the message is delivered. It is essential that

students and parents communicate through the school office. Parents and students should not be emailing or otherwise contacting each other independently of school personnel while students are under the school's supervision. Such contact is distracting to students and is a potential source of confusion and misunderstanding for the adults who care for them.

CONFERENCES

Conferences can be initiated by parents or teachers at any time throughout the year. At the end of the first Trimester as indicated on the calendar published on the web, mandatory conferences will be scheduled with all parents from PreK - 8th grade. Sign up for conferences are done online via a link sent out using email. These mandatory conferences are in 15 minute increments and are meant to support the communication established between parents and teachers at Back to School Night in September. Even if your child is not having difficulties, we encourage and require you to meet with your teacher so that there is open communication should difficulties arise in the future.

ADMISSIONS & REGISTRATION

Whereas the Philosophy of the Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore is based on the Christian Social Principles of the Gospel Message, to love and to respect the right of all people, it is the policy of the Department of Catholic Schools that the Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, and/or national or ethnic origin in the administration of their educational policies, or admissions policies, scholarships and loan programs, athletics and other school programs.

PRESCHOOL: Applications for Preschool are accepted beginning at the October Open House. All applications for the waiting list received by a set date in November (the date of the Turkey Dinner) will be placed into a lottery for a position on the waiting list. After that date, names are added in chronological order. In January, after current families have had a chance to register, those on the waiting list will be offered the opportunity to register. Siblings of current students are placed at the top of the waiting list, followed by the children of active St. Francis parishioners. There is no admissions screening for preschool; however, the Director may determine after a period of observation that the child is not yet ready for preschool. In most cases, a placement for the following year will be offered to students in this situation. Children are expected to be placed at the age level that will enable them to comply with Maryland state guidelines that students entering Kindergarten must be five years old by September 1. There is a **non-refundable** Application Fee for students seeking admission to Saint Francis of Assisi School.

K-8: All children applying for admission to grades K-8 submit an application form and are invited for a "shadow day." Students are evaluated, typically by testing and by observation in the classroom situation, to determine their eligibility for our school. Copies of report cards and standardized testing scores are required. Of those eligible, priority for acceptance is given first to siblings of current students, then to children of parishioners. Parishioners are those who are Catholic, properly registered in the parish, regularly practicing the faith by weekly involvement and participation in the sacramental life of the church, supporting

the parish through the use of 30 out of 52 envelopes and actively supporting the parish and church activities. Families are encouraged to use ParishSoft for online giving in place of the weekly envelopes.

Admission of the child to the school is for a probationary period of up to one year. If it is deemed that this school does not fit the child, the parents will be asked to find another school. **Registration is an implied contract renewed each year between the school and parent. The terms of that contract are the policies in this Handbook.**

REGISTRATION

Registration for new students who have completed an application, meet the requirements for admission, and have been accepted begins during Catholic Schools Week in January. In order to register for kindergarten, a child must be five years of age by September 1 of the entry school year. A baptismal certificate (unless the child was baptized at Saint Francis of Assisi or is a non-Catholic) and a birth certificate must be presented at the time of registration. In classes where there is a waiting list, families will be contacted when a space becomes available, and will ordinarily have five business days in which to accept the place and pay the **non-refundable** registration fee.

RE-REGISTRATION

Students abiding by the policies of St. Francis of Assisi School are invited to return for the next academic year. Re-registration requires that all financial obligations have been met and that the fees for the following year are paid. Fees are **non-refundable**. Re-registration begins in December for families already enrolled at St. Francis. SFA families will have exclusive opportunity to re-register for the following school year until the open registration period during Catholic Schools Week in January. Applications for financial aid from the school require re-registration.

ATTENDANCE

It is very important that students in all grades attend classes every day. Missing one day means that the students miss review of the previous day's work, in addition to the material presented on the day of absence. When they return, they are behind and lose that day trying to catch up. One day's absence could be equivalent to three by the time the student is totally back 'on track'. Regular/daily attendance at school is necessary for the total education of the child. It is the responsibility of the student to make up the work missed through absence - this includes tests and quizzes. Students who are absent from school frequently with an inconsistent pattern of attendance (absence of 30 days or more) may be required to attend summer school or repeat the grade.

Attendance is submitted electronically by teachers during homeroom. Parents are required to contact the school before **8:30 A.M.** to report the absence of a child on each day of the absence or leave a message on the School Secretary's voice mail.

The child must present a note or an email from the parent explaining the absence to the homeroom teacher on the first day he/she returns to school. Doctors' and dentists' appointments should be made at times other than during the school day because leaving school interferes with the educational process in which your child is involved. A request to leave school must be made in writing or by email to the school secretary, and the child must

be picked up by a parent at the school office. Students may not leave school without first reporting to the school office, where the parent must sign the child out.

If a student arrives to school after 12:00 p.m., he/she will be marked ½ day absent. Absence from school during the academic year due to family vacations is strongly discouraged. Please note that for these types of inadvisable vacations, teachers will not supply work prior to an absence. Missed work may be obtained only upon return. When a parent requests such an extended absence for a child, the request, along with the school's recommendation, is placed in the child's cumulative folder to insure proper maintenance of the student's permanent record. Students are required to make up all tests, class work, and homework after such absences.

Students who are absent from school may not participate in any after school or evening school sponsored events such as sports, dances, etc.

PUNCTUALITY

Punctuality is essential in all grade levels. Students are considered late if they are not in homeroom by **8:05 A.M.** for opening prayer. Any student arriving after **8:05 A.M.** is considered late, must report to the office for a late slip, and must be signed in by a parent or chaperone who has provided transportation that day. Teachers will not admit students to their homerooms without this pass. Tardiness is entered on a student's permanent record. It is the responsibility of the student to check with the homeroom teacher to receive the necessary communication or work that may have been missed due to lateness. Repeated lateness could jeopardize a student's return to SFA School the next year.

Lateness is disruptive to the class and an embarrassment to the student. In addition, St. Francis of Assisi School discourages early departures and requests that families arrange medical and dental appointments, etc. either after school hours, on Saturdays or during vacation periods. Check the calendar for days when school is not in session. In case of emergency, the student must submit a note to the office, signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s), on the day of dismissal. The note should include the reason for the request and the time the student must leave school. The parent/guardian must sign the student out from the office. A student will be marked ½ day absent if he/she leaves school prior to 12:00 noon.

Perfect attendance for the year means no days absent and no unexcused lateness.

HIGH SCHOOL VISITATION POLICY

Eighth graders are strongly encouraged to schedule high school visitations on days which St. Francis is either closed or dismissed early. A limit of three (3) such days will be granted, which will be considered excused absences. The parent should notify the office if a student will be visiting a high school.

TRUANCY

Truancy is defined as a student absenting him/herself from school without parent/legal guardian permission, or leaving school grounds without permission during the school day. Truancy may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion. In addition, excessive lateness can be considered a form of neglect or truancy.

EXTENDED CARE

The SFA Before and After School Care Program is a Licensed Child Care Facility for children attending St. Francis of Assisi School in grades Prekindergarten through eighth grade. Before Care services are offered from 7:00 AM to 7:45 AM. Aftercare is available from 2:30/2:50 PM-6:00 PM. If you register for Child Care services, you are eligible to use the regular services for which you register and drop-in services as needed. Drop-In service will be available for emergency use. SFA Aftercare closes promptly at 6 PM. Fees for late pick-up (\$1 for every minute after 6:00 PM) will be enforced.

Child Care will not be available for Faculty Retreat, Professional Development, holidays, vacations, the first and last days of school, and possibly other days as determined by the Director. Child care is not available on the afternoons of parent conference days but is ordinarily available on all other early dismissal days. A surcharge may apply for drop-ins on early dismissal days.

Extended Care Inclement Weather Procedures: If the school closes early due to inclement weather, SFA Extended Care will be closed as well. We ask that you make every effort to retrieve your child from school as soon as possible so that our staff can make it home safely. If the school opens late due to inclement weather, Before Care services will be offered beginning one hour before the start of the regular school day.

Extended Care Requirements: All students enrolled in Child Care services (whether on a regular or a drop-in basis) MUST have a completed registration form on file. Students registered for Aftercare services must submit a registration fee. Health forms are required from the State of Maryland for all children who attend Child Care programs at SFA. (These are the same forms required for Preschool admission, but are different from the medical forms required by the school for K-8.) All forms are available on the school's website.

Extended Care Payment Procedure:

Aftercare: Fees remain the same for each month, for a total of nine months (September to May). The last week in August and the first week in June are rolled into September and May, at no extra charge. The contracted amount is due each month, regardless of school holidays, family vacations, etc. Parents are required to pay the fee by the due date using the FACTS payment system. It is the responsibility of the parents to notify St. Francis in writing of withdrawal from the program or of any change in the level of attendance that would require a fee adjustment. Payment of fees must remain current to ensure the child's continued enrollment in the program.

Before Care: Before Care is billed on a drop-in basis. Families using Before Care are billed at the end of the month for that month's actual usage.

Drop-Ins: Emergency childcare is available if there is enough space, to families who have registered for child care and have filled out the appropriate forms. Drop-in charges are billed at the end of each month for that month's actual usage.

How to contact Childcare when the school office is closed: When the school office is closed, please dial the school number (410-467-1683) and then press extension 104 or call 443- 401-7507 which is the Aftercare cell phone.

FINANCIAL MATTERS & TUITION

Each family receives the tuition rates and schedule payment plans for the coming school year in January. The tuition policy is determined by the School Board. Parents wishing to apply for financial aid should follow Archdiocesan guidelines by submitting an application to the FACTS Grant-in-Aid Program. Financial aid requests are evaluated by FACTS and summary reports are issued to the Archdiocese and the principal. Ordinarily, families are notified of financial aid in April.

Under the terms of the enrollment contract, a penalty is applied to withdrawals. All withdrawal notifications must be made to the principal by email or in writing by the deadline indicated on the enrollment contract.

TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

All families are required to sign up for an account using the FACTS Tuition Management Plan. St. Francis does not process payments on site.

FACTS has two components. The first is the “agreement,” which is a series of predictable, scheduled tuition payments (similar to a mortgage or car payments.) The second component is called “incidental billing.” It is used for occasional billing for non-scheduled items such as drop-in Aftercare, field trips, or supplies. It is important to note that incidental bills must be paid within thirty day to avoid late fees.

Tuition will be payable either in full or in ten monthly payments. If tuition is paid in full by the first Monday in May, the family may avail itself of a 2 percent discount.

SFA School reserves the right to withhold report cards and transcripts if a family has any past-due balance. If an account is severely delinquent, the student’s attendance may be interrupted until the account has been brought up to date. Withdrawal of the student may be requested by the school in extreme cases of delinquency.

SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Students may arrive at school starting at 7:45 and should line up with their class on the whitetop. (Students who arrive prior to 7:45 will be sent to Before Care.) The school day begins at 7:55 with the Pledge of Allegiance on the whitetop. **Students entering the school building after 8:05 will be marked late and will be required to have a parent sign them in at the school office.** Class periods in grades K-8 are 40-60 minutes long. All students have recess every day. Full-day Preschool students are dismissed at 2:30; morning preschool students are dismissed at 11:00am. Grades K-8 are dismissed from the whitetop at 2:50. Parents must walk up to the whitetop to pick up their students. Any student not picked up by 2:40pm (preschool) or 3:00pm (K-8) will be sent to aftercare and charged the daily drop-in rate. Before Care begins at 7:00. Aftercare ends at 6:00.

Unless students are enrolled in Before- or After School care, St. Francis of Assisi School is not responsible for supervision of students before or after the times stated above. Parents are required, therefore, to follow the times stipulated when dropping off or picking up students. If the student is participating in a scheduled, supervised activity before or after the hours noted above, specific arrangements must be made for drop-off and/or pick-up at the designated times. If children are participating in before or after school care, parents must comply with the rules established by the program for drop-off and pick-up.

PARKING LOT PROCEDURES

Parents of students in grades K-8 are requested to drive onto the parking lot while dropping off students in the morning. Staff members will be available to assist students out of cars from 7:45-8:05 AM. During this time, parents are not permitted to park on the school parking lot. Orange cones will be placed on the parking lot to indicate where cars are eligible to pass. As a courtesy to other parents attempting to drop off, the disembarking process should take as little time as possible, and the departing automobile should exit using the alley. Please be aware that residents of Chesterfield and Pelham Avenues also use this alley. Appropriate speed and caution should be taken when exiting using the alley.

Parents of preschool students are required to park on the street and walk students to the school in the morning. Preschool students in the 4's and 3's classes arriving from 7:45-8:00 AM may meet their teachers on the white top. ALL students in the 2's class, and any preschool students arriving after 8:00am, must be accompanied by a parent into the building. Any parent wishing to enter the school before 8:10am must park on the street to allow easy access of traffic for parents dropping off.

During the day, the parking lot is used as a recess area and there are a limited number of parking spaces available. Parents arriving at the school during the day are asked to park either on Chesterfield or Pelham Avenues. Half-day preschool students will be dismissed at the Chesterfield Avenue door at 11:00 AM. Parents must park on the street and walk up to the door to pick up their child. At the end of the day, all parents must park and walk up to the whitetop to pick up their children. Parents are permitted to park in the parking lot after 2:25 PM for afternoon pick up. Preschool students will be dismissed at 2:30 PM. Students in grades K-8 will be dismissed at 2:50 PM. For the safety of all of our students we ask that parents pick up children promptly. Students who have not been picked up 10 minutes past their dismissal time will be taken to Aftercare and parents will be responsible to pay a drop-in Aftercare rate.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

SFA follows the same procedure as BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS for closings and late openings for cold/snowy weather. Parents will be notified through our blast email, voice, and text system. SFA does NOT close school for heat because all classrooms are air conditioned. Grades K-8, for a two-hour delay, students should not report to school before 9:50 A.M.

NOTE: During delays, Before School Care (BSC) drop off times will also be adjusted for staff safety. For example, if there is a two hour delay, BSC will begin at 9am instead of the usual 7am. Aftercare is NOT available on weather-related early dismissal days.

PRESCHOOL LATE OPENINGS - If Baltimore County opens 2 hours late:

- AM students will attend class from 10 AM-11:30 AM
- Full Day students will attend class from 10 AM-2:30 PM

We have tried hard to make pre-school available for all when there are late openings with as little confusion as possible. If it is inconvenient for you to send your child on those days, please don't worry about it.

LUNCH

Students should bring a nutritious lunch and snack to school which do not require refrigeration, cooking or re-heating. (In Preschool, refrigerators and microwaves are used.) We encourage fresh fruits and vegetables. Since we do not have lunchroom facilities, it is necessary for the school children to eat lunch in their classrooms. Each child should come provided with a cloth tea towel/napkin to be used as a placemat on top of the desk. On a monthly basis, parent volunteers coordinate a Pizza Lunch for the students.

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (HASA)

All parents are members of the Home and School Association, which meets three times a year and serves as a source of support to both the school and the parent community. The executive board consists of the President, Vice-president, Secretary, and Treasurer. Ordinarily these officers serve a term of two years. Elections for the executive board are held each spring. The Class Parent Coordinator also attends meetings of the Executive Board.

FUNDRAISING

In order to meet the needs of the school that are not covered by tuition or fees, the school sponsors a variety of fundraising opportunities. The oldest, and the only required fundraiser is the Great Turkey Dinner. All families support this event through sales of raffle tickets and volunteering to help with the dinner itself. Families are encouraged to support other fundraisers and events to the extent that it is possible within their families.

STUDENT RECORDS - Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

St. Francis of Assisi School, in compliance with the Buckley Amendment of 1974 (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), has the following policy regarding an individual's right to privacy:

Teachers and other school officials who have legitimate educational interests have access to student education records. Parent(s)/legal guardians have access to their child's/ward's education records. Parents/guardians may contact the principal to schedule an appointment to review records. A representative of the school must be present while these records are being reviewed. In general, any other person requesting access to a student's education record must have the written consent of the student (if 18 or older), parent(s)/legal guardian(s) (if student is less than 18 years old), unless the disclosure is otherwise authorized or required by law. Non-custodial parents, in the absence of a court order to the contrary, will be provided access to the educational or/legal agreement records and other school-related information regarding the student. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of any court orders or legal agreements regarding access to educational records.

A log must be maintained of each request for access to and each disclosure of educational record information other than disclosure to parents or students 18 or older or school officials. The log should contain the name of the person(s), the date, and the legitimate interests the person had in requesting or obtaining the information.

FAMILY DIRECTORY

The Family Directory will be prepared each year and distributed during the first trimester. Permission to reprint address and telephone numbers for the school directory is indicated on your child's registration form at the start of school. Changes of address, phone, or email should be reported to the school office.

Parents have the right to request that the School correct records they believe are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. Parents who wish to request an amendment of the student's records should write to the Principal and clearly identify the part of the record they believe is inaccurate or misleading and the information they believe should be included in a corrected record. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested, the School will notify the parent of the decision and the parent's right to request a hearing.

Parents generally have the right to consent in writing to disclosures of information from a student's education record. However, there are certain exceptions to the consent requirement, including disclosures under the following conditions:

- To School officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the information. A school official is a person employed by the School or the Archdiocese as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff); a person or company with whom the School has contracted to provide a service (e.g., attorney); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities or duties to the School.
- To other schools to which a student is transferring.
- In connection with financial aid under certain circumstances.
- To specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes.
- To organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school.
- To accrediting organizations.
- In order to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- To appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies.

FERPA law requires that SFA, with certain exceptions, obtain written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a child's education records. However, SFA may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless a parent/guardian has advised SFA in writing to the contrary. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow SFA to include this type of data in certain school publications, such as:

- A playbill, showing a student's role in a drama production;
- Annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs, and
- The SFA Directory for Families

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent.

Parents have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by St. Francis of Assisi School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-8520.

If a parent/guardian does not want SFA to disclose directory information from a child's education records without prior written consent, he or she must notify the Principal in writing by September 30th. SFA has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name, address, date/place of birth, telephone listing, and email address
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Degree, honors, and awards received; and most recent institution attended
- Dates of attendance and Grade level during attendance
- Photograph

CHANGE IN NAME OR FAMILY STATUS

If there a change in the family status and/or the legal change of a child's legal name, it is important that the school be informed promptly of the change. In case of a change of custody, a copy of the portion of the court order that names the custodial parent must be on file with the school.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT

Emergency card information for each child is to be kept current. Children will only be released to the person(s) designated on the emergency card, unless otherwise instructed by the custodial parent/guardian.

Non-custodial parents are welcome to review their child's records unless there is a court order or legal agreement prohibiting such access. The school may notify the custodial parent of a request to review records.

St. Francis of Assisi School does not allow a non-custodial parent physical access to his/her child during school hours or on school premises unless the custodial parent has consented or the school has a court order permitting access.

SUPERVISION BEFORE & AFTER THE SCHOOL DAY

The school is not responsible for supervision of students before or after the arrival and dismissal times stated above. The school is not liable for any injuries or accidents which may occur before or after the times stated above. Parents/guardians are required, therefore, to follow the times stipulated when dropping off or picking up students. If the student is participating in a scheduled, supervised activity before or after the hours noted above, specific arrangements must be made for drop-off and/or pickup at the designated times. If children are participating in before or after school care, parents/guardians must comply with the rules established by the program for drop-off or pickup.

STAFF PRIVACY

Staff members of SFA are very dedicated and work long hours. We ask that you respect their home time and do not call their home or cell phones for school business. **Please note: Staff members are not permitted to drive students in personal vehicles.**

§ III – Health & Safety

HEALTH RECORDS & PROCEDURES

Completed health records and immunization reports are kept on file in the school office. A public health representative reviews the health/immunization records yearly. A complete, updated record must be in the school office. If a child is absent because of a contagious disease, he/she must bring a doctor's certificate to the school office upon return. (Please review the regulations under Attendance.)

ALLERGIES & MEDICAL ISSUES

Parents must notify the school of their child's allergies, including food allergies. Likewise parents must notify the school of other chronic conditions impacting the student's learning environment, safety, and overall well-being. School medication orders must be renewed each year by the physician and the order must be signed on or after July 1. If the student carries an EpiPen, the physician's order must state this requirement.

EMERGENCY FORMS

Emergency information for each child is to be kept current. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE HAVE AN EMERGENCY FORM FOR EACH CHILD AND THAT THE SCHOOL IS INFORMED IMMEDIATELY OF ANY CHANGE IN ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER. Children will only be released to the person(s) designated on the emergency form, unless otherwise instructed by the custodial parent/guardian. The school may ask for identification from individuals picking up a child.

HEAD INJURY

If any injury to the head or any other serious injury occurs to a student, then nurse will call the parent and send home a report. The report is to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school. If the parent/guardian or alternative contact person cannot be reached in an emergency, the school will contact police/ambulance for assistance.

INSURANCE

The school provides the option for parents to purchase health insurance for their children.

STATE HEALTH REQUIREMENTS & IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

A child may not enter school unless he/she has submitted an official immunization record or other appropriate documentation of immunization status. The immunization record must have the month, day, and year of each vaccination. It must be signed by a physician or health department official, and be approved by the school. A parent/guardian

must show a medical contraindication signed by a doctor for his/her child to be excused. In the case of religious objection or medical contra-indication, form DHMH 89, must be submitted and kept on file and be approved by the school. Exempted students are to be excluded from school if there is an outbreak of the disease for which they are not immunized.

All students in Catholic schools, grades K-8 are immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella, poliomyelitis, hepatitis B, and varicella. For pre-school, Hib and prevnar (PCV7) are required. If no immunization documentation is received by the first date of school, the child is not in compliance with the law regarding immunization, therefore the child will be excluded from school. For missing doses or incomplete information, the child has 20 calendar days from the first date of school, before exclusion begins.

The school follows the directives of the Baltimore City Health Department and responds to parents'/guardians' requests for individual vision and hearing screening. The testing is usually done for all students in Pre-K, any K not previously screened, 1st, 4th, and 8th as well as for new students in all other grades.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Parents must call the school if their child is diagnosed with a communicable disease. The school must notify the Health Department. All reports are confidential.

The following communicable diseases/conditions need to be reported: measles (regular or German variety [rubella]), meningitis, hepatitis, food poisoning, pediculosis (head lice), pertussis or adverse reactions to pertussis vaccine, Lyme disease, chicken pox (varicella), tuberculosis (T.B.), whooping cough, MRSA, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, human immune deficiency virus infection (HIV/AIDS and all other symptomatic infections), mononucleosis, flu, and impetigo. Any student with drainage from the eyes associated with conjunctivitis (pinkeye) must be kept at home until under treatment from a doctor and has received three doses of the prescribed medication.

Students who have chicken pox are excluded from school until all lesions are scabbed over. Students are excluded from school for head lice. A child may return to school when he/she is free from lice and nits. A child must be examined by the school's delegating nurse before he/she can return to class.

SUDDEN ILLNESS

Parents/guardians may not send a child to school if he/she has vomited, had diarrhea, or a fever (100.0F) within the past 24 hours. If a child has been sent home from school for any of the above reasons, he/she should not return to school for at least 24 hours or has been symptom free for 24 hours. Parents/guardians should not send a child to school until his/her temperature has remained normal for a full 24 hours without medication. Students should not be dropped off to school if they are exhibiting any signs of illness or problems.

MEDICATION PROCEDURES

The administration of medication in school is discouraged. However, if a student's physician recommends that the student receive prescription or over-the-counter

medication during the school day, a written order from the physician is required. St. Francis of Assisi School does not have a nurse on-duty during the school day. We do however have multiple Certified Medication Technicians (CMT) who are authorized by a delegating nurse to distribute medication under certain procedures.

Medication can only be dispensed with a written order from the student's physician, specifying start and stop date. No medication will be administered in school without parent/guardian authorization and physician's written orders. This includes over-the-counter meds such as Tylenol or cough drops. The original medication container or box for inhalers must be brought to the school. These containers or boxes should include the following: name of medication, directions for use, time for dispensing, name of doctor ordering the medication, date of prescription, expiration date as stated by the pharmacist, strength of medication/dosage, and student's name and grade.

Students may not possess, dispense or distribute medication on their own. All medication must be delivered to school by a parent/guardian. Calamine lotion and cough drops may be administered with a note from parents. Cough drops should be brought to school in the original package in a sealed plastic bag with the student's name on it. The package should be given to the student's teacher. Cough drops that contain an anesthetic will be kept in the office.

Regarding medication and prescriptions, parents are asked to please also note the following procedures:

1. The medication, properly labeled by a pharmacist, must be hand-delivered to the school by the parent/guardian in the original container. The Health Department or school personnel will not administer medication brought to school by the student.
2. THE FIRST DOSE OF ANY NEW PRESCRIPTION MUST BE STARTED OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL.
3. The parent is responsible for submitting to the school in writing from the physician any change in dosage or time of giving medication.
4. The school/health personnel will not administer nor be responsible for any medication not prescribed by a physician.
5. Medications must be distributed per doctor's orders. The school cannot provide increased or reduced dosages based on parent request without additional documentation by a physician.
6. THE PARENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TEACHING THEIR CHILD THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION REGARDING THE MEDICATION: Name, Color, Amount to take, Time to be taken
7. For pre-school students, over the counter medication may only be administered 1 time per illness with written consent from the parents and physician.

COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

St. Francis of Assisi School maintains compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws/regulations, as well as Archdiocesan and parish policies.

ASBESTOS PLAN

In October 1986, the U.S. Congress enacted the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). Under this law, comprehensive regulations were developed to

address asbestos problems in public and private schools. These regulations require most schools to inspect for friable and non-friable asbestos, develop asbestos management plans that address asbestos hazards in school buildings and implement response actions in a timely manner. Our program for fulfilling these responsibilities is outlined in our asbestos management plan. This plan contains information on inspections, re-inspections, response actions and post-response action activities, including periodic surveillance activities that are planned or in progress. The plan is kept in the principal's office and may be viewed on request during normal business hours.

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS PLAN

A complete Bloodborne Pathogens Standard Exposure Control Plan has been established by the school and staff trained accordingly. The plan is on file in the office.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SFA School is committed to providing the safest learning environment possible for all children. Maryland law requires that all educators and other school employees, including volunteers, report suspected abuse or neglect to the proper authorities in order that children may be protected from harm and the family may be helped. Our school policy supports Maryland laws in this regard and requires that all school staff report suspected abuse and neglect to the Department of Social Services, Protective Services Division, and/or the local police department, as well as to the Principal.

CRISIS INTERVENTION PLAN

In the event that St. Francis of Assisi School is faced with a crisis, such as a bomb or gun threat, environmental hazard, or public safety issue, a crisis intervention plan has been formulated and is on file in the Principal's office.

DRUG-FREE SCHOOL ZONE

SFA complies with the Drug Free School Zone & Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988.

EMERGENCY DISMISSALS

Early dismissals, including those for inclement weather, will be announced via the emergency system for email and phones. Though SFA follows Baltimore County for snow, we do not close for heat.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Drills for all emergency circumstances are conducted during according to city and state guidelines. These include fire, intruder, severe weather, and building evacuation.

VISITORS

In order to provide a safe environment for your child, all school doors will remain locked during the school day. All visitors must report to the office and may not visit other parts of the school building without an escort and/or a visitor's pass. We are a smoke-free environment campus-wide.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are needed and appreciated as playground supervisors, room parents, classroom helpers, office assistants and various school program helpers.

Under Archdiocesan requirements, **ALL VOLUNTEERS MUST COMPLETE requirements for “Shield the Vulnerable” training**, including completion of the Archdiocese of Baltimore Volunteer Application and review a copy of the “Statement of Policies for the Protection of Children & Youth” of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. If a volunteer will have substantial contact with children, then the volunteers must undergo a background check in addition to providing references and also complete a video training session online. Materials for certificates are available online. It is important to know that until the above requirements are met any volunteer activity for which you are interested will be delayed.

§ V – Academics

ACADEMIC COURSE OF STUDY

Detailed and up-to-date information on our Course of Study and special programs can be found on the school’s web site: www.sfa-school.org. We follow the Archdiocesan Course of Study with enhancements where appropriate. Spanish classes are offered to all grades from PreK 4’s through Grade 8.

HOMEWORK

Homework is assigned to support full scholastic development; not only to reinforce what has been taught, but also to teach the student a sense of responsibility. Students should spend appropriate time depending on their grade level and teacher expectations. Homework includes study/review as well as written assignments. In addition, students are expected to read nightly. Students are also expected to drill math facts on a regular basis. Each student in grades 2 to 8 uses a special Homework Book in which assignments are copied so that parents may see the nightly requirements. In addition, homework is posted on the school’s web site. Suggested time allotments for homework per day range from 30 minutes at the primary level to 2 hours in the middle school. This allotment includes time for written work, study, review work and long-range projects or papers. Parents/guardians are expected to see that their children fulfill their homework responsibilities.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education is required for each year a student attends St. Francis of Assisi School. All students enrolled must attend physical education classes twice per week in addition to daily recess. Gross motor play for our preschoolers is incorporated into lessons and daily schedules and children go outside to play for a minimum of 30 minutes per day.

PROGRAM FOR FAMILY LIFE

SFA participates in the Archdiocesan program on human sexuality. The program provides age-appropriate instruction in family life topics from a Catholic perspective. Materials for the program are specified between those written for a parent audience and

those for the age group being taught. Student materials are distributed during class time. Parent materials are made available through the Main Office to inform families of the content of these lessons. Parents may opt-out of the program after review of the materials by presenting notice to the administration in writing.

RELIGION CLASS

Religion class is required for each year a student attends St. Francis of Assisi School, regardless of the student's personal faith affiliation. All students enrolled must attend religion classes and services.

TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS

Consumable workbooks and materials and educational technology services are paid for through the annual Materials Fee. Most hardcover and online textbooks are purchased with funds from the State of Maryland and are the property of the State of Maryland. Lost or damaged textbooks must be replaced by the family.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

ABILITY GROUPING

Students of all ability levels are welcome at SFA. Most classes are heterogeneous, although as students begin to diverge in their demonstrated classroom proficiencies, an effort is made to tailor the curriculum accordingly. This ensures that all students receive engaging instruction with opportunities to learn from good models and interact with all ability levels. Small, flexible groups are encouraged to provide opportunities for enrichment, remediation, or special interests.

ACADEMIC REMEDIATION – When possible and appropriate, SFA offers academic support for students through pull-out groups. Students will be invited to participate in this program based on four criteria:

- A standardized testing subject test score of 50% or less
- Below-average classroom performance
- Teacher recommendations
- Parent-provided documentation/reports through the local public school district

COMMON EXPECTATIONS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

To promote consistency in the Middle School experience, the following set of common expectations has been developed:

Titling Documents - Students should write:

Subject Name and Grade: Assignment Name - First Name Last Name

For example,

Religion 8: Pope Francis Essay - John Doe

All assignments should include the school heading.

Due Dates - Electronic assignments are due by 8:15 on the due date, unless otherwise specified by the teacher. Paper assignments are due by the start of class.

Pencils

1. Math work should be done in pencil.
2. Students are expected to have **at least two** sharpened pencils on hand at all times.

Electronic Devices - It is required that MS students charge their electronic devices at home each night. This is a regular homework assignment. It is expected that MS students check their email during morning and afternoon homeroom periods.

Bring to Every Class

1. Binder, with journal in the front pocket
2. Take-home folder
3. Pencil Case
4. DEAR book
5. Electronic device
6. HW Agenda

EXAMS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

At the end of the year, students in grades 6-8 will take their final exams. Exams are to be emailed to the IB Coordinator for review/critique the week prior to administration. A special schedule will be distributed with the order of the exam administration.

Students have graded exams reviewed with them in class; however, they are not sent home. Parents can review the exams by setting up a time to view them at school.

HONOR ROLL FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

Students in grades 6-8 who demonstrate high academic achievement and who positively impact the learning environment are placed on Honor Roll based on the following criteria:

- Principal's Honor Roll – All A's and Satisfactory or better in all special classes, standards, effort, and conduct including unstructured time
- Second Honors – all A's and B's (more A's than B's) and Satisfactory or better in all special classes, standards, effort, and conduct including unstructured time

PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAM

Pre-School uses the Creative Curriculum in addition to thematic play-based learning. The Creative Curriculum is an approved curriculum by the Maryland State Department of Education for pre-school programs. The Creative Curriculum is broken up into several learning themes which will be used throughout the school year. For more information, parents can refer to the following website: www.teachingstrategies.com.

SPECIAL STATEMENT ON "SCREEN TIME" FOR PRESCHOOL

Screen time, including television, computers, tablets, or other media devices for preschool students will be limited to use only in facilitated learning experiences. Screen

time will be limited to less than once per day in PreK2’s classroom and will be interactive (touch screen, dancing with music, etc.)

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports are issued three times a year, at the end of each academic trimester. Averages are determined by tests, quizzes, projects, homework, class work (which includes notebooks) and participation. Throughout each trimester, parents may view grades in PowerSchool by way of the online “Parent Access” tool.

Marking system as determined by the Archdiocese of Baltimore:

A+	97-100	C+	80-84		P – Demonstrates proficiency
A	93-96	C	75-79		G – Very good progress
B+	89-92	D	70-74		S - Satisfactory
B	85-88	E	60-69		I - Improvement needed
					N – Not yet demonstrating

- Number grades are rounded off to find the letter grade. Examples: 96.5 rounds up to 97 and equals an A+, while 96.4 rounds down to 96 and equals an A.
- Letter grades are used for Religion/Liturgy, Language Arts, Math/Algebra, Science and Social Studies in grades 3 to 8 and for Foreign Language in grades 6 - 8. P, G, S, I, N (see chart above) are used for Art, Computer, Music and Physical Education.
- **For PK through 2nd Grade**, I (independent), P (progressing), E(emerging), N/A (not assessed at this time) are used for all subjects.
- **Middle School** uses the International Baccalaureate program for determining proficiency for curriculum standards.

Graded work is sent home weekly in a “White Envelope” which is signed by the parents. A minimum of three major assessments are given for each report trimester. Quizzes, projects, homework and class participation are included in the report card grade.

Interim reports are issued at the halfway point in each trimester. If a student is failing or in danger of failing, the teacher will send home an interim report, which must be signed and returned.

PROMOTION & RETENTION

Students are promoted to the next grade upon successful completion of all subjects in a given year. Students who do not successfully complete required educational program may be retained at the current grade level. This decision is made by the principal in consultation with the parents.

Students at any grade who are absent from school frequently with an inconsistent pattern of attendance (absence of 20 days or more or 10 days in any one trimester) may be required to attend summer school or repeat the grade. Students who receive multiple suspension may be disallowed from repeating a grade.

- PRESCHOOL PROMOTION

Successful completion of a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment administered in the Spring as well as readiness and maturity, as evaluated by the classroom teachers and the Preschool Director, are the primary indicators for moving to the next level classroom.

- KINDERGARTEN PROMOTION

Successful completion of the Kindergarten program including a demonstration of social and emotional readiness.

- GRADES 1, 2, 3 PROMOTION

Promotion in these early grades is based mainly on attainment in the Language Arts and Math areas, as well as on maturity level. The classroom teacher and the principal, in consultation with parents and other involved teachers, make the final decision.

- GRADES 4, 5, 6, 7 PROMOTION

If a student fails two major subjects, or if three teachers recommend retention due to lack of readiness for the next grade, the school recommendation of retention will be enforced if the child is to remain at SFA. Summer School or approved tutoring is required if there is a failure in one major subject.

- GRADUATION - PROMOTION - RETENTION

Students in Grade 8 must pass the following subjects in order to graduate: Religion, Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies. A student with a failing grade in any one of these areas will be expected to attend summer school or be tutored by persons approved by the administration. A certificate of successful completion must be presented to the principal of the high school and the principal of St. Francis before school reopens. Although the student may attend the formal graduation ceremony, the official St. Francis of Assisi School Diploma will be held until all of the above has been accomplished. Diplomas will be issued to those students who have successfully completed eighth grade requirements. The 8th Grade may not be repeated at SFA.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS

SFA attempts to meet the educational needs of all students. If a student appears to have special educational needs, the parent is obliged to have professional educational assessments completed and to supply the documents as a condition of continued enrollment. SFA will attempt to provide the modification of services that are recommended, dependent upon our personnel and facility restrictions.

If a child has an academic services plan (IFSP, IEP, or 504), parents are to notify the school during the admissions process or for current students, as soon as the evaluation process begins so that the school can work closely to provide accommodations suggested by the plan to support the student's learning. The school staff who will work with the family who will work with the family to develop a formal SFA Accommodations Plan for student support to be implemented by the student's teachers. A copy of all plans will be kept in the Principal's office for privacy.

Documentation Required for Accommodations: In order to be considered for receiving accommodations, a student is required to have a formal testing completed by a licensed professional that meets the following guidelines.

Guidelines for Documentation of Learning Needs: Documentation to support the need for requested accommodations must:

- State the specific disability as diagnosed, using the most recent DSM classification.
- Be current (in most cases the psycho-educational evaluation, IEP or 504 Plan should be no older than three years).
- Provide a complete educational, developmental, and relevant medical history.
- Describe the comprehensive testing and techniques used to arrive at the diagnosis.
- Provide the professional credentials of the evaluator(s).
- Describe the functional limitations supported by the test results and how these limitations affect learning and testing.
- Describe the specific accommodations recommended.

If accommodations are required due to a medically-treated issue [e.g. injury, vision impairment, deafness, paralysis, ADD/ADHD (treated with prescriptions), a psychological condition or a physical disability], a letter from a medical doctor may be submitted.

ACADEMIC REVIEW PROCESS

If a child is not progressing academically, the school may ask the parents to initiate, or the parents may initiate on their own, the process to request professional assistance from their local public school system, typically through their zoned public school. The educational evaluation process is available to children who may need further academic assistance. This process begins with the collection of screening information to determine if there is a reason to suspect a disability under special education laws. An initial meeting with the committee from the child's home school (the private school must be invited to participate in this meeting) will determine whether or not an evaluation is necessary. However, if an evaluation occurs and the test results determine that there is a need for implementation of a specialized learning plan, St. Francis of Assisi School administrators will consult with the parents to determine the most appropriate academic placement for the child. Throughout the process to determine if the child is eligible for special education services, every effort will be made by the St. Francis of Assisi School staff to complete the required paperwork, to attend the required meetings, to support the parents, and to incorporate accommodations where possible.

TESTING PROGRAM

SFA follows the Archdiocese elementary school testing program. Aptitude and achievement tests (The Iowa Test of Basic Skills & CogAT) are administered each year to students in grades 2-8. SFA uses the results of these tests to analyze pupil progress, develop the curriculum, and determine effective teaching strategies. Results of the tests will be communicated to parents/guardians and results will be affixed to each child's cumulative records. Copies of test results are sent home and should be kept for high school admissions.

Parents/guardians will be informed of the testing dates and are asked to not schedule any outside appointments during this week of testing.

Students in grades 5 and 8 complete the Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education (ACRE) exam annually.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

Our IB Middle Years Program informs the overall SFA approach to teaching and learning by emphasizing an inquiry-based approach. Rather than isolating subject areas from one another in the curriculum, instructors are to guide students to apply the content and skills taught by engaging students in inquiry-driven learning activities that allow them to investigate real-world issues and solutions to problems. (For example: the connection between the role of government and the natural world; the use of math and art skills in engineering design projects; the science behind changes in Earth's landforms. Genuine connections exist between social studies and science when it comes to environmental issues concerning laws and civic responsibility.) It is necessary to keep fresh the awareness and use of the many connections evident across all the subjects in the curriculum.

IB-MYP ASSESSMENT POLICY

PHILOSOPHY OF ASSESSMENT - The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program is guided by three core principles: holistic learning, intercultural awareness, and communication. In essence, assessment is simply a form of communication. The word itself is derived from the Latin *ad sedere*, meaning "to sit beside." Effective assessment is a tool that promotes learning by providing guidance to the learner.

During the process of learning, the feedback which students receive is called formative assessment. It answers the question "How am I doing so far?" The teacher takes on the role of a coach, providing quick, direct, and useful information to the student about his or her learning and growth. In addition, peers can respond and give feedback, and the learner will reflect upon his or her learning in journals or discussions. This information can be used by the student to get better at the task and to deepen and refine his or her understanding of a concept. The IB-MYP places great value on formative assessment, which could also be termed "assessment for learning."

Summative assessment refers to a judgment that is made about a significant, culminating demonstration of learning. A summative assessment looks to see whether a student can show growth in understanding, awareness, and application of skills. Extending the sports analogy, if formative assessment is like coaching, then summative assessment is the game itself. It could also be termed "assessment of learning." Both types of assessment are important in IB instruction.

COMMON PRACTICES IN ASSESSMENT - In designing MYP units of study, teachers "begin with the end in mind." In other words, they determine what it is that students should know and be able to do at the end of the unit. Then they design activities and create rubrics to guide students in understanding the qualities necessary for a successful demonstration of their learning. Teachers refer to these rubrics throughout the unit. **A final project may take the form of a presentation, an essay, a design project, a research paper, or other significant activities that allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the essential concepts and content of the unit.**

Formative assessment throughout the unit will help students understand what needs to be improved so that they can demonstrate their understanding successfully. Knowledge of content (such as vocabulary) and skills (such as math calculations) will be assessed by the teacher through tasks such as quizzes, tests, and short writing assignments throughout the unit of study. Students will also monitor their own progress through activities such as journal reflections and peer critiques. The most significant assessment will be a rubric-based summative judgment regarding the major project that completes each unit. Researching, designing, creating, and reflecting on major projects are distinguishing elements of the IB. Through guidance in development of IB approaches to learning (ATL), teachers help students develop the skills necessary to become independent learners, such as organizing/completing tasks, demonstrating knowledge, and using task-related techniques.

RECORDING AND REPORTING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT - There are several audiences to whom assessment information should be communicated. First of all, assessment should serve the student: it is a tool to help students understand their own learning so that they can assume greater responsibility and become more independent. Secondly, assessment must serve parents and other teachers: their role as caring adults is to support student learning, and in order to do so, they need to understand where strengths and weaknesses lie. Third, assessment must communicate clearly and efficiently to outside entities, such as the school district and high schools, about levels of achievement.

Assessment structure is consistent across subjects. Each area has four main objectives. Subject groups must address all strands of all four objectives at least twice in each year of the MYP. In all IB subject areas, an 8-point scale is used to make judgments about the level of a student’s achievement on a particular task, in light of the specific criteria for that subject area. The scale is separated into four bands. Generally, they are as follows:

0	The student does not meet a standard described by any of the descriptors below.
1-2	The student shows a limited or partial understanding.
3-4	The student shows adequate or satisfactory understanding.
5-6	The student shows solid understanding.
7-8	The student’s work is successful at the highest levels of challenge.

The Archdiocese of Baltimore requires that grades be reported on a traditional scale. When assignments are graded at St. Francis, the 8-point IB scale translates as follows:

8 = 100%	4 = 80%
7 = 95%	3 = 75%
6 = 90%	2 = 70%
5 = 85%	1 = 65%

In the form of rubrics, this grading scale will be used frequently, on both minor and major tasks in all subject areas, so that students, parents, and teachers become very familiar with its meaning and purpose. The percentages will be recorded in PowerSchool for those assignments that are graded. Summative assessments will be weighted more heavily than formative assessments. Some formative assessments are simply communication tools and will not be included in PowerSchool.

Three times a year, midway through each trimester, the students and teachers will assess student progress towards independent use of skills and self-management strategies. These narrative reports will supplement the traditional Archdiocesan report card. The reports will be organized around the five broad categories of the Approaches to Learning: Communication Skills, Social Skills, Self-Management Skills, Research Skills, and Thinking Skills. Student self-reflection can play a role in these reports, with increasing prominence as the students progress through the grades. For example, sixth graders' reports will be written by the teachers. Seventh graders' reports will be written by the teachers but will draw upon the students' own reflections. In eighth grade, students will initiate the reflection narrative and teachers will build upon their statements.

IB grades are incorporated into the Archdiocesan Report Card. Summative assessments for each IB unit are scored according to the eight point rubric for one or more criteria for that subject. The scores, ranging from 0-8, are recorded as Standards on the report card. The final grade for each standard is assigned by the teacher at the end of each trimester. The teacher considers progress throughout the trimester to determine a "best fit", not an exact average. In addition, the score for each summative assessment is converted to points and entered as an assessment that is linked to the traditional final grade.

Other formative assessments, such as homework, drills, and quizzes, are also entered into Powerschool and linked to the final grade. Formative assessments are given less weight than the summative assessments. The final grade for the trimester will be in the traditional format of A+ to E.

The IB has a specific procedure to determine year-end assessments. At St. Francis, students will receive both a traditional report card and an IB report card at the end of the year. Teachers will determine a final score in each of the four objectives for each subject area. This score reflects a "best fit", not an exact average. It will be reported in a special document that is separate from the Archdiocesan report card. The final score ranges for year-end reports are placed on a scale. SFA will interpret the bands of the scale as follows:

- Level 1 (Sum of criteria scores ranges from 1 to 5)
Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills.
- Level 2 (Sum of criteria scores ranges from 6 to 9)
Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills.
- Level 3 (Sum of criteria scores ranges from 10-14)
Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding

of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations.

- Level 4 (Sum of criteria scores ranges from 15-18)
Produces good-quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but requires support in unfamiliar situations.
- Level 5 (Sum of criteria scores ranges from 19-23)
Produces generally high-quality work. Communicates secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situations, and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations.
- Level 6 (Sum of criteria scores ranges from 24-27)
Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situations, often with independence.
- Level 7 (Sum of criteria scores ranges from 28-32)
Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real world situations.

CONCLUSION - The content of courses is informed by the curriculum of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. The design of the units of study, including the formative tasks and the summative projects, is the responsibility of the teachers in collaboration with the IB Coordinator. Teachers will meet regularly to share assessment strategies so as to achieve consistency of expectations across disciplines.

Assessment in the Middle School at SFA aims to conform to IB Standards while also meeting the assessment expectations of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. To be successful in the IB program, students must be able to “recall, adapt, and apply knowledge and skills to new questions and contexts” (*From Principles Into Practice, 2014*). Hence, according to IB expectations, assessment in the MYP aims to:

- Support/encourage student learning by providing feedback on the learning process.
- Inform, enhance, and improve the teaching process
- Provide opportunities for students to exhibit transfer of skills across disciplines, such as in the community project and interdisciplinary unit assessments
- Promote positive student attitudes towards learning

- Promote a deep understanding of subject content by supporting students in their inquiries set in real-world contexts
- Promote the development of critical and creative thinking skills
- Reflect the international-mindedness of the program by allowing for assessments to be set in a variety of cultural and linguistic contexts
- Support the holistic nature of the program by including in its model principles that take account of the development of the whole student.

(From *Principles Into Practice*, 2014)

IB-MYP LANGUAGE POLICY

LANGUAGE PHILOSOPHY - “Crucial for the success of the programmes is a rich development of language and literacy for all learners. The ability to communicate in a variety of modes in more than one language is essential to the concept of an international education that promotes intercultural understanding”(*Learning in a Language Other than Mother Tongue in IB Programmes*, 2008.)

St. Francis of Assisi School provides language instruction along a continuum. Initially the child learns basic literacy skills. The child learns to read and use language as a communicative tool. The child is then able to transfer some of these understandings and concepts when learning another language (*Learning in a Language Other than Mother Tongue in IB Programmes*, 2008).

The second stage of language instruction is using language to learn. Language is used to develop new meanings and to construct knowledge about the world. Literacy becomes increasingly important in doing this as more abstract learning takes place through dense academic texts in school. The ability to access the language of these texts is referred to as a cognitive academic language proficiency or CALP by Cummins (1979, as quoted in *Learning in a Language Other than Mother Tongue in IB Programmes*, 2008).

Third, the student’s instruction culminates in learning about language. The student gains insights into the various genres used by writers to communicate in a purposeful way. The student also makes effective choices in choosing the best genre for the writing task.

LANGUAGE PROFILE - Approximately 97% of the population of St. Francis of Assisi School speaks the English language as the “mother tongue.” The school has a culturally diverse population, with about 20% of our student and faculty community either immigrants themselves, or the children of immigrants. Among the countries of origin are Argentina, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, China, India, Pakistan, The Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, France, and Ukraine. Several students are bilingual, but none are bilingual in Spanish, which is our second language of instruction.

All students from Pre-K through grade 8 are offered Spanish as a second language. Students in the IB MYP receive a minimum of 50 hours of Spanish instruction per year.

LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION (ENGLISH) - Since language is central to learning, all teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication. The teachers meet regularly in their departmental groups (primary and middle) to create a dynamic framework to ensure the articulation of language acquisition

skills across subject areas and grades. This includes phonetic and structural analysis skills; vocabulary development; factual, inferential, and critical comprehension skills ; and language expression.

The school follows the Archdiocesan Course of Study. At the middle school level this curriculum is integrated with the IB MYP units of study.

“All IB programmes value language as central to developing critical thinking, which is essential for the cultivation of intercultural understanding, as well as for becoming internationally minded and responsible members of local, national and global communities. Language is integral to exploring and sustaining personal development and cultural identity, and provides an intellectual framework to support conceptual development. The six skill areas in the MYP language and literature subject group—listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting—develop as both independent and interdependent skills. They are centred within an inquiry-based learning environment. Inquiry is at the heart of MYP language learning, and aims to support students’ understanding by providing them with opportunities to independently and collaboratively investigate, take action and reflect” (*Language and Literature Guide, IBO, 2014*)

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS NOT PROFICIENT IN ENGLISH - St. Francis of Assisi School offers an inclusive program where possible. Students with mild learning differences are able to progress with the support of Title 1 government services as well as through the scaffolding of lessons and provision of accommodations and modifications of lessons within the classroom. Instructional adjustments may include the following:

- the use of a pocket translator, translation software
- allowing more thinking time to plan a response
- elaborated input - the provision of more explanation in simpler language
- modelling and reinforcing language
- recasts - restating a response with correct language
- questioning to guide students’ thinking and expression
- increased use of student to student verbalization to allow the student the opportunity to practice language skills
- assessment accommodations - reducing the breadth of material to be learned or the length of the response

SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (SPANISH) - The IB MYP requires the study of at least two languages to support students in understanding their own cultures and those of others. The study of a second language is essential for the cultivation of intercultural awareness and the student’s identity as a member of local, national, and global communities. The acquisition of a second language greatly contributes to the holistic development of students and to the strengthening of lifelong learning skills.

At SFA the second language of instruction is Spanish. In addition to developing proficiency in Spanish, the students gain an understanding of cultural heritage. The instructor encourages an awareness and understanding of the perspectives of people from one’s own and other cultures, leading to involvement or service in one’s own and other communities. A final instructional goal is to foster curiosity and an interest in lifelong learning.

Pre-school and primary students receive Spanish instruction once a week. Upper elementary and middle school students receive instruction twice per week.

MISSING/LATE ASSIGNMENTS – On major, graded assignments, students may lose 5% (approximately one letter grade) each day for four days. Deductions will not take the final score below a 50%. All missing work must be completed. On IB assignments, they will get their earned IB score, but the percentage that is put into the gradebook will reflect the penalty. Late HW will earn a homework management placement and will be reflected in the overall Effort grade. At the teacher’s discretion, a small percentage may be deducted from a minor graded HW assignment if it is late or poorly formatted. Students with accommodations will complete their missing work with accordance to their plan. Teachers will notify parents if their child is missing assignments.

If a student is absent from school, it will be HIS or HER responsibility to follow-up with the teacher or another student for the missed assignments. The due date will be extended by the number of days the student was absent with no penalty.

STANDARDS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. **Organization of materials:** In the elementary grades, teachers set organizational systems for their class according to the system of their preference. In the middle school, teachers have a common system for organizing materials for all grades (See appendix).
2. **Writing:** In the third grade and above, teachers are asked to reinforce the instruction students received in cursive writing by making it an expectation for some or most handwritten assignments. (Students with dysgraphia can be exempted, as can students new to the school who did not receive instruction in cursive prior to coming to SFA.)
3. **Headings:** All assignments should have a heading, as follows:

	(Leave the top margin empty)
O	<i>Name:</i> _____
	<i>Date:</i> _____
	<i>Subject:</i> _____
	<i>Skip a line</i>
	<u>Title (including page #s if it is from a text)</u>
O	

§ V – Student Life

DRESS CODE & SCHOOL UNIFORMS

St. Francis maintains a dress code because we believe it fosters school identity and pride in one's self; it minimizes fashion competition and distractions; it teaches the value of appropriate dress; and it is an economical solution to expensive clothes.

Students are to be in full uniform when school is in session. Uniforms are to be worn to and from school. A student who is out of uniform for a legitimate reason must bring a note from a parent or guardian. Students who do not abide by the dress code will receive a uniform slip, and repeated offenses may result in disciplinary action. When students are attending field trips they will be expected to wear their uniforms unless otherwise instructed.

Pre-school students do not wear uniforms. They should wear comfortable play clothes that do not interfere with full participation. Low-heeled shoes that fully enclose the heel and toes are required.

- **K - 5th Girls** - Uniform Jumper (knee-length) with a white Peter Pan collared blouse.
- **K - 5th Boys** - Navy blue pants from Flynn & O'Hara or Lands End with a white buttoned down collared shirt. (School Logo is not required on the white shirt, but no other logos are acceptable.) Black or brown belt. Shirt must remain tucked into the pants. Navy blue ties are required (except for Kindergarten).
- **6th - 8th Girls** - Uniform skirts (knee-length) with a white buttoned down collared blouse
- **6th - 8th Boys** - Navy blue pants from Flynn & O'Hara or Lands End with a white buttoned down collared shirt. (School Logo is not required but no other logos are acceptable.) Black or Brown Belt. Shirt must remain tucked into the pants. Navy blue ties are required.
 - **NOTE:** A class tie, approved by the school, may be included for both boys and girls in 8th grade.

All Students:

- Navy Blue or White Socks which must cover the ankles.
- Brown Tie Buck Shoes (We prefer the light bucks but will allow the darker suede)
- Navy Blue sweaters with the school's logo, which must be purchased from Flynn & O'Hara or Lands End only. Student has three (3) options to choose from.

Summer Option (April 1 to October 31):

- Khaki walking shorts, purchased from Flynn & O'Hara or Lands End, may be worn in place of the dress uniform by both boys and girls with a white, short-sleeved polo shirt (School logos are not required but no other logos are permitted.) Shorts must fit properly and come to the top of the knee or longer.

Winter Option for Girls (November 1 to March 31)

- Girls may substitute long khaki dress slacks for their jumper or skirt. Khaki slacks must be purchased from either Flynn & O'Hara or Lands End. A brown or black belt must be worn. All other pieces of the uniform remain unchanged.

General:

- Uniforms should be neat and clean and shirts are to be tucked in at all times.
- Tee shirts worn underneath must be plain white, short sleeved in length and tucked into slacks or skirts.
- Clothing must not be tight or revealing.
- Hats are not to be worn in the building.
- Colored and artificial nails are not permitted. Only clear nail polish is acceptable.
- Tattoos, makeup, and body piercings are not permitted.
- Bandanas, hats and similar hair decorations are not permitted. Simple headbands may be worn.
- Because our dress code seeks to minimize fashion competition and distractions, we discourage elaborate hairstyles:
 - Boys' hairstyles should be simple, not touch the collar of their shirt and may not impede vision. No trends such as Mohawks, coloring, or designs shaved into the head will be permitted.
 - Girls' hairstyles should be simple rather than extravagant and should be the student's own natural hair color.
 - Hair accessories should be functional, and should not interfere with learning. Simple headbands, such as uniform plaid or plain dark colors, are preferred.

Jewelry:

- Girls may wear one stud earring on each ear. Dangling earrings/hoops are not allowed.
- Boys may not wear earrings.
- Bracelets and necklaces are not permitted. A small religious symbol may be worn around the neck but must be worn underneath the shirt.
- One simple ring is permitted.
- A simple watch is permitted.

Shoes:

- Tie "buck" shoes are the only uniform shoe permitted.
- Tennis shoes must be worn with the gym uniform.

Physical Education Uniform - Worn all day of assigned gym day:

- Green tee-shirt with SFA logo
- Green gym shorts with the SFA logo
- Solid green sweatpants and sweatshirt with the SFA logo
- White socks and tennis (athletic) shoes

BOOK BAGS

All students must carry their books to and from school in a book bag. Preschoolers will be provided with a tote bag for carrying their things to and from school. Parents are responsible to replace lost or damaged book bags or tote bags. Middle school students with iPads are expected to keep them in a protective case at all times.

GUIDELINES FOR OUT-OF-UNIFORM OCCASIONS

Occasionally, students are permitted to attend school or school events in casual, attire. Even when out of uniform, clothing must reflect the values of SFA.

Casual Clothing:

- No undergarments should be visible.
- Students may wear jeans, pants, sweats, or capri pants. Skirts, dresses, shorts must go to the knee. Leggings must be covered by a skirt or dress that goes to the knee.
- Shirts must have sleeves and cover the stomach and chest areas.
- Clothing should not be snug-fitting or revealing. No tank tops, spaghetti straps, or bare midribs are permitted. Leggings and tight jeans/pants are not permitted unless layered under other clothing, in which case, the top layer must reach the knee.
- Clothing should not have holes or tears, even if that is part of the design.
- If there is writing or a logo on the clothing, it must be in good taste. No pants or skirts that have writing on the back are permitted.
- No writing or drawing on the skin is permitted.

Shoes:

- Shoes worn for dress-down must be close-toed with a heel of no more than one inch.

Hair and Accessories for dress-down days:

- Students may wear jewelry or hair accessories but they must not impede learning.
- Teachers reserve the right to tell a child to take off accessories that are a distraction.
- Earrings must be post earrings. Hoop and dangle earrings are not permitted.
- No hats or other head-coverings are permitted in the building.
- No makeup is permitted. Only clear nail polish is permitted. (However, during the week after Fun Day, nail polish will be allowed.)

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are considered an integral part of the school's educational program and a valuable learning experience for students. Field trips are scheduled at various times during the school year. Field trips which are educational in nature are offered to the children during the year.

When a child's class is planning an educational field trip, a permission slip is sent home which the parents are required to sign. In advance of the trip, a permission form, required by the Archdiocesan Department of Catholic Schools, is sent home. A student will be permitted to attend the trip **only** if the permission form is signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the teacher by the specific date with any necessary fees.

All students are expected to participate in field trips as they are planned as part of the instructional program. If, for some extraordinary reason, a student is unable to participate in the class activities of the day, the student will be considered absent with parental permission. Ordinarily, if a student is absent on the day of the trip, the cost will not be refunded, because the arrangements usually require a guaranteed number of students. If the fees for the trip are a concern for any family, please call the principal's office.

Because of our concern about insurance, all field trip travel is by public transportation or rented bus. This increases the cost of the trips, so we require that all lunches to be 'brown bagged'. Since the trips are educational in nature, the students are to wear their uniforms unless the principal and teacher in consultation with each other make a different decision.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to participate as chaperones on field trips as the need arises. Field trip chaperones are required to complete the procedures established by

the Archdiocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection. This training can be found on www.shieldthevulnerable.com. The required forms can be found on our web site and through the school secretary. There are no exceptions to this rule. If parents will be driving students, an additional driving clearance must be completed at least two weeks prior to the field trip. However, because of safety and liability factors, the “tagging along” of pre-school siblings and other school-age siblings are not allowed.

PLAYGROUND RULES

We are happy to be able to provide our primary students with access to a playground facility built on the school property. Children in PreK to grade 2 will be able to play on the playground or on the white top during their regularly scheduled recess period. Older children may play on the whitetop or blacktop. When the children are outside on the playground or the white top they are expected to adhere to very specific playground rules. The playground equipment may only be used by students being supervised by teachers during school activities. It is not to be used after school, even by school families. A public playground is available for that purpose at 3400 Norman Avenue.

ROOM PARENTS

Room parents are a very essential segment of our school life. Ordinarily, each class has two parents who take special responsibility for aiding the teacher in any way possible. This assistance may take the form of helping in the organization of class trips, planning small in-room parties, assisting in receptions for school functions, or other needs that may arise. All activities are cleared with the principal/classroom teacher before planning. Two parents take the responsibility for coordinating special receptions and maintaining contact among the parents who have assumed these responsibilities. There is a handbook, which is distributed by the Class Parent Coordinator to help any parent who assumes this important role in our school.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council has the responsibility of helping to encourage school spirit by sponsoring projects and helping with school activities. Students exhibiting exemplary behavior in grades 5, 6, 7 & 8 may apply to be members of the Student Council. From among these members the student body (grades 5-8) elects a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. All members attend meetings during which projects are presented and discussed. Students are guided by moderator/s.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE & CHRIST-CENTERED BEHAVIOR

SFA strives to develop responsible, courteous, self-disciplined boys and girls whose pride in themselves, their parents, their school, and their community is reflected in their behavior. The development of such young people requires a consistent practice of thoughtful, responsible behavior during these formative years. Students are made aware

that they are an integral part of the faith community and that their actions affect themselves as well as the entire community. The ultimate purpose is to develop true Christian character and a sense of responsibility to establish an atmosphere conducive to academic excellence and to protect the welfare of the individual, as well as the school community.

In Catholic education, the student is readied to take his or her place in society in view of the gospel message of Jesus Christ. Each child is an integral part of the school community that fosters the growth of Christian character. Therefore, school regulations must be followed by students in order to foster a sound educational climate. Discipline is administered in a manner consistent with Christian principles. Catholic schools' personnel do not use corporal punishment. All disciplinary policies are corrective in nature rather than punitive.

The policies of Saint Francis of Assisi School aim to help students assume responsibility for their actions as members of a community. When all individuals freely accept this responsibility, discipline exists. Good discipline, administered equitably, is not an end in itself. Its ultimate purpose is to:

- Develop in students a strong character and a sense of responsibility based on Christian ideals
- Establish an atmosphere that will enhance all aspects of growth and learning in the child
- Provide a supportive climate that will promote the welfare of the individual and the school community.

CONFLICT SITUATIONS

Conflicts are a normal and healthy part of living and growing. We encourage students to handle conflicts and not to avoid them. The goal is reconciliation. Should a conflict escalate beyond the capabilities of the students to resolve, St. Francis of Assisi School will implement acceptable conflict resolution techniques to work towards a solution.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION & SUPPORTS (PBIS)

In keeping with the above philosophy, SFA has joined a network of schools that are exponents of the Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS) approach to student behavior.

Known internationally for achieving data-driven results relative to bullying prevention and behavioral facilitation, PBIS is a form of applied behavior analysis (ABA) that uses a system to understand what maintains an individual's challenging behavior. Inappropriate behaviors are difficult to change because they are functional; they serve a purpose for them. These behaviors are supported by reinforcement in the environment.

In the case of students and children, often adults in a child's environment will reinforce his or her undesired behaviors because the child will receive objects and/or attention because of his behavior. Functional behavior assessments (FBAs) clearly describe behaviors, identifies the contexts (events, times, and situation) that predict when behavior will and will not occur, and identifies consequences that maintain the behavior. It also summarizes and creates a hypothesis about the behavior, and directly observes the behavior and takes data to get a baseline.

The PBIS process involves goal identification, information gathering, hypothesis

development, support plan design, implementation and monitoring. In order for techniques to work in decreasing undesired behavior, they should include: feasibility, desirability, and effectiveness. Strategies are needed that teachers and parents are able and willing to use and that have an impact on the child's ability to participate in community and school activities.

Positive behavior support is increasingly being recognized as a strategy that meets these criteria. By changing stimulus and reinforcement in the environment and teaching the child to strengthen deficit skill areas the student's behavior changes in ways that allow him/her to be included in the general education setting. The three areas of deficit most directly affected by this approach are: (1) communication skills, (2) social skills, and (3) self-management skills. Positive behavior support is successful in the school setting because it is primarily a teaching method.

All teachers actively participate in and support the incentive-based program developed by the PBIS Team at SFA. Students are awarded public recognition by staff members for achievement in 4 value areas:

- **S**afe - Promote safety and responsibility in our thoughts, words and actions.
- **O**wnership - Take pride of ownership in our campus, our work, and our mission
- **A**ctively engaged - Stay actively engaged in academics, faith, family, and community life.
- **R**espectful - Encourage and model respect, peace, and kindness for all.

SFA Students are encouraged always to "Let your spirit **SOAR!**" Incentives are provided for varying levels of achievement and key benchmarks for behavior.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

It is expected that students act with respect and courtesy toward teachers and fellow students at all times. Conduct, whether inside or outside school, which is detrimental to the school, is prohibited. Each student is to assume responsibility for complying with the school regulations and for caring for school property. Conflicts are a normal and healthy part of living and growing. SFA encourages students to handle conflicts in a non-aggressive, verbal manner and not to avoid them. The goal is reconciliation. The administration will implement acceptable conflict resolution techniques to work toward a solution as needed.

Saint Francis of Assisi School asks that each student accept the responsibility for conduct rightfully expected of a student attending a Catholic school. When that does not occur, formal consequences may follow as appropriate:

SCHOOL REGULATIONS

To maintain a positive learning environment and standards that are consistent with a Christian philosophy, it is essential that students exhibit a sense of responsibility and respect for themselves as well as others. Listed below are behaviors that are acceptable and not acceptable in school, in class, on the playground, or when representing the school on field trips, sports gatherings, assemblies, etc.

SFA Students Will:

- Show respect for teachers, staff, and volunteers;
- Show respect for self and peers;

- Attend with respect all religious liturgies and activities as agreed upon during the registration process;
- Wear the proper uniform and comply with the dress code;
- Remain in designated areas at all times;
- Travel to all classes in an orderly manner;
- Promptly return materials requiring a signature.
- Comply with school policy on possession of electronic devices.

The following regulations fall into four categories. Each student has a responsibility to adhere to these regulations at all times. The violations outlined should not be viewed as a total list since it is impossible to predict all possible rule infractions. The school reserves the right to discipline students for infractions not specifically identified in this section but which the school feels creates a safety concern, disruption to the learning process, a hostile environment for other students, or that violate the spirit of the stated rules.

CATEGORY 1: Will be addressed by the teacher and may result in written documentation

1. Students are to follow regulations the teacher has established for his/her classroom.
2. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous manner, and are expected to comply with regulations established for the good order of the entire community.
3. Students are to focus on class material and are not to distract one another by writing notes, texting or email.
4. Students are not to chew gum on school property or eat food at inappropriate times.
5. Students are not to be dishonest on tests, homework, or in any conversation. Students in middle school are expected to follow the Academic Honesty policy of the International Baccalaureate program.
6. Students are to be on time for school, and for all classes, and to report to teachers after class when requested to do so.
7. Students are to follow the dress code.
8. Students may not use inappropriate or vulgar language.

CATEGORY 2: Will result in written documentation and may require parent conference.

1. Repeated violation of anything in Category One.
2. Students must report when someone engages in dangerous activities or possesses any inappropriate object that could cause harm.
3. Students may not engage in fighting or antagonistic behavior.
4. Students may not forge another's name.
5. Students may not possess or distribute indecent literature, language or pictures either on paper or electronically.

CATEGORY 3: Will Result in written documentation and mandatory parent conference. May result in suspension at the discretion of the Administration.

All violations of these regulations will be referred immediately to the Administration and may subject the student to suspension. More than one suspension may subject the student to expulsion or other action at the discretion of the administration.

1. A second violation of any item in Category Two.
2. Students may not threaten, bully or harass other students
3. Students may not smoke on parish property or vandalize parish or private property.
4. Students must not steal.
5. Students must not show disrespect to a teacher or other adult working in school, yard or hall.
6. Students may not leave the school property without permission.
7. Students must not cut class or remain at home without the knowledge and consent of a parent. This is considered truancy.
8. Students may be disciplined for conduct which by its very nature brings dishonor to our school.

CATEGORY 4: Will Result in written documentation and mandatory parent conference. May result in suspension or more serious consequences at the discretion of Administration, in consultation with the Pastor and the Department of Catholic Schools.

This section includes regulations, the violation of which will subject the student to suspension and/or expulsion.

1. Continued Category 3 violations.
2. Students may not possess or use any illegal drugs or alcohol in any form on the school premises or at any school-related activity. (All medication is kept in the Main Office and dispensed from there.)
3. Students may not bring dangerous objects to school. The school reserves the right to designate whether or not an object is dangerous.
4. Students who break the law may be subjected to disciplinary consequences at school as well.

The involvement of parents in the disciplinary process is a means of having the school work closely with the home in an effort to place emphasis on corrective measures so as to develop, within the students, responsibility for their conduct. Parental indifference to any conference that is deemed necessary may be construed as a lack of concern for the child's education, and may affect the continuance of the child's enrollment at Saint Francis of Assisi School.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

The following are standard classroom policies. Teachers may have other regulations not listed here. Students are bound by both the following rules and by the teacher's rules.

- Students are to be in their seats when class begins.
- They are not to leave their places in the classroom without explicit permission.
- Each student is to have all the necessary materials for the class.
- Students are to be attentive to the teachers and to participate actively in all class activities assigned by the teachers. They are not to do work for another class or read other-than-class-materials, unless given explicit permission to do so by the teacher. Materials for another class or for non-class activities should not be on the desk.
- Each student is to refrain from talking without permission and from talking to others while instruction is going on or study periods or tests are underway.
- Students are to avoid any action that is distracting to the learning procedure

underway in the classroom, especially harassing other students.

- Students are responsible for the cleanliness around their chairs, in their desks, etc. Students should dispose of any trash around their desks at the end of the day.
- Students are to refrain from insulting expressions, overt demonstrations of disapproval, and all other behavior disruptive to the classroom situation; they are not to argue about tests, grades and punishments during the class, but rather they should see the teacher after the school day in order to resolve such difficulties.
- The location of desks, the condition of windows, blinds, and lights, etc. are the teacher's responsibility; students are not to regulate these unless directed to do so by the teacher.
- Students should always enter and leave a classroom quietly.
- Eating or drinking must take place in the cafeteria only unless permission is granted by the teacher.
- Chewing gum is prohibited throughout the school at all times.
- Any other types of behavior, not specifically stated in this handbook, but which the administration considers to be acts of serious disruptive behavior will be addressed.

BEHAVIOR FACILITATION IN GENERAL

Any infraction of a school regulation including, but not limited to, those listed above is reason for disciplinary action as outlined below. Teachers in grades PK through 3 retain the right to impose alternative disciplinary actions deemed to be developmentally appropriate for students involved. Parents who have questions regarding a discipline issue are to begin with the teacher who issued the violation to initiate a respectful conversation concerning the incident. Administration may issue consequences or confiscate inappropriate attire that must be picked up by parents and not worn to school.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

SFA students are to foster and maintain honesty, trust, responsibility, and academic excellence. All members of the school community, including students, parents, and faculty, must be dedicated to this vision. This policy is established to create a positive learning environment and help build students' moral character. The community of St. Francis of Assisi School expects a commitment of academic integrity from all students. Students should produce and submit their own work and refuse to allow or ignore when they are aware that others do not produce and submit their own work. If a student believes an act of cheating or plagiarism has occurred, the student is encouraged to talk to the teacher directly and promptly.

The following actions are considered examples of academic dishonesty:

- Discussing test questions or answers with someone who has yet to take the test
- Using unauthorized aids such as notes or a "cheat sheet" on a test or quiz
- Giving assistance to another student during a test or quiz
- Copying another student's work or allowing another student to copy your work
- "Recycling" work from another course
- Copying information from a source without giving proper citation
- Paraphrasing information from a source without giving proper citation

Every effort should be made to ensure that testing situations are set up in such a way that dishonesty is less of an option. (For example, through the use of desktop “offices”). On homework assignments, the teacher should make it clear to parents what the expectations are regarding parental involvement. Increasingly, there are assignments that emphasize collaboration rather than isolated individual performances. It is important to help students distinguish between times when they must work alone, and times when their work involves contributions from others.

We do not give academic penalties (such as lost points) for cheating or other misbehavior during tests. Instead, the incident should be handled as a discipline infraction and referred to the administration. The teacher may remove the questionable assignment and require that it be taken again.

RESTRICTED AREAS

When school is in session, students may not be outside the school building unless they are involved in a class or recess and are accompanied by a faculty member. The faculty rooms, offices, copy room, library, and empty classrooms are restricted areas for students. Corridors are to be generally clear of traffic except for movements at the change of class. For the safety of students, no child is permitted to return to the classroom or lockers after school hours unless accompanied by a staff member.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

School reserves the right to search school property (e.g., lockers, desks), a student’s belongings, and areas under the student’s control in order to enforce school policies, rules and regulations or otherwise to preserve a safe and orderly learning environment. Desks are the property of the school and can be searched at any time. The principal, or designee, shall request the student’s consent for search of personal belongings. Failure of the student to give consent may result in disciplinary measures from the school.

SUSPENSION

Suspension at SFA means that a child will not be able to attend classes for a period of one to three days. Suspensions will be noted on a student’s attendance record in his/her permanent file. At the discretion of the administration, suspensions will be served either in school or out of school.

While on suspension, the student is responsible for missed work. After the specified amount of time for suspension, the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) will meet with the administration for reinstatement. Administration reserves the right to determine the conditions for reinstatement. During a suspension, he/she will forfeit the right to go on field trips with the class. Multiple suspensions from class may result in disallowing re-registration for the following year or expulsion.

EXPULSION/INVOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL

The school reserves the right to expel or require the involuntary withdrawal of any student at any time when his/her conduct warrants it. Any expelled student forfeits all privileges of the St. Francis of Assisi School student. The expulsion will be noted in the

permanent records retained at SFA. The administration reserves the right not to re-admit an expelled student at a later date. In addition, any student found guilty of violating a public law (i.e., shoplifting, cyberbullying) may be suspended or expelled. This includes activity online or via electronic devices.

The disciplinary policy of St. Francis of Assisi School is cognizant of the overall philosophy and goals of the school. The policy is meant to serve the Christian community and stems from a loving, accepting attitude toward the child as a person of dignity. The following objectives constitute guidelines for implementing the policy:

- The school is obligated to maintain a safe and acceptable learning atmosphere for all students.
- Parental involvement will be sought early in disciplinary procedures.
- Disciplinary action will emphasize developing the student's responsibility for his/her own conduct.
- The establishment of disciplinary rules and regulations is the responsibility of the school administration consistent with the policies established by the school.

The Principal will make any decisions regarding suspension or expulsion, in consultation with the Pastor and the Department of Catholic Schools. The decision to expel or suspend will be communicated to the parent/guardian of the student immediately. If a parent/guardian chooses to appeal a decision to expel, he/she must contact the appropriate Associate Superintendent and submit all relevant written documentation.

HARASSMENT/BULLYING POLICY

HARASSMENT POLICY

Harassment or abuse of any kind is not acceptable behavior at SFA and will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension/expulsion. It is the policy of the Archdiocese to prohibit discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, or protected activity (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the complaint process) in its education programs and activities. Each Catholic school shall adhere to the policy with respect to students. (Employees are similarly protected from harassment by a separate Archdiocesan policy.)

This policy applies to all students in Archdiocesan elementary, middle and secondary schools. The Archdiocese neither condones nor tolerates harassment of students at school, at school-related activities or functions, or in any school-related setting. Harassment of students, whether engaged in by other students, teachers, administrators, or others, is prohibited. Violation of this Policy is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or suspension or expulsion from school, depending on the nature and severity of the offense and the individual's disciplinary record.

SFA maintains a ZERO Tolerance Policy for children who tease, bring physical /social injury, or harass other students in the community. As a Catholic school, SFA will instill Gospel values. The goal is to respect every person, his/her property, and his/her feelings as God has commanded.

DEFINITIONS/PROHIBITED CONDUCT

- **Teasing/Exclusion** – To annoy or provoke personal harm to another person in such ways as name calling; mocking; mimicking; taking things and refusing to return them; gossiping; intimidating; making fun of clothing, possessions, or appearance; exclusion from games or activities.
- **Physical/Social Injury** – To bring injury to someone by pushing, shoving, tripping, punching, pinching, kicking, hitting, spitting; acts that are demeaning and humiliating; threatening physical harm or inflicting any bodily harm; making verbal threats of violence; social exclusion or rejection; and the destruction of others' property.
- **Harassment** – For purposes of this Policy, “harassment” means verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his or her race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, or protected activity, that:
 - Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment;
 - Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance; or
 - Otherwise adversely affects an individual's educational opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, handicap or disability. “Sexual” harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for educational decisions or has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

BULLYING POLICY

Bullying, harassment, or intimidation of any student on school property or at school-sponsored functions or by the use of electronic technology is prohibited in all Archdiocese of Baltimore Schools. Such behaviors are contrary to school life in a Christ-centered community, which respects the dignity and uniqueness of all of God's children. To foster a school environment where all students are educated in a safe and caring atmosphere, all Archdiocesan schools will follow established procedures for prevention and intervention.

Bullying, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation against anyone who has reported these behaviors is prohibited. Students engaging in these behaviors on school property, at school-related activities, off school property or after school hours when the behavior threatens or is likely to substantially disrupt or adversely affect the school-related environment for students or significantly impacts the interest of students or the school community are subject to disciplinary and/or legal action.

Students, parents, employees, and service providers are responsible for reporting incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation. A standardized reporting form is available on the school website and from the School Office. School principals will ensure that all illegal behaviors are reported to the appropriate local authorities and the Superintendent of Catholic Schools immediately.

As used in this policy, "bullying, harassment, or intimidation" means intentional conduct, including verbal, physical, or written conduct or an intentional electronic communication that creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with a student's physical or psychological well-being and is:

- motivated by an actual or a perceived personal characteristic including race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, familial status, or physical or mental ability or disability; or,
- threatening or seriously intimidating; and,
- occurs on school property, at a school activity or event, or on a school bus; or, substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school.

BULLYING/HARASSMENT INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

1. Any person who believes that a student is being subjected to harassment must immediately report the harassment to any of the following individuals: the student's teacher, the principal of the school, the Superintendent of Catholic Schools. Staff members must immediately report information to the administration.
2. Individuals are encouraged to report harassment early, before it becomes severe or pervasive, so that preventive action can be taken. All complaints will be investigated promptly, thoroughly, and impartially, and will remain confidential to the extent possible.
3. Any retaliation, reprisals, or intimidation, whether by the alleged harasser or from another source, directed toward the complaining party or anyone else as a result of the filing or investigation of a harassment complaint is considered a serious violation of this Policy and should be reported immediately.
4. Once the investigation is complete, the school will take immediate and appropriate corrective action when it determines that this policy has been violated. The complaining party and the complained-of party will be advised. A report of the findings may be forwarded to the Department of Catholic Schools.
5. **Should a child express himself/herself either verbally or in another form something that could be construed as violent or dangerous, the bullying procedures of the Archdiocese should be followed.**

MANDATED REPORTING

In today's social climate, students who are the victims of harassment or bullying have been known to react emotionally or with retaliation to situations they encounter with their peers. Should a child express himself/herself either verbally or in another manner that could be construed as violent or dangerous, the school's obligations as mandatory reporters

will be observed. Any time a student presents a threat to him-/herself or others SFA is obligated to report it to local authorities.

Appropriate consequences will be absolutely given to anyone involved in bullying or harassing another student. However, we must also report behavior that presents a danger to anyone.

Bullying/harassment victims who express threats in any form (verbal, online, etc.) need our love and support, but also likely need counseling and licensed professional support from outside the school. When warranted, the school may require documentation from a licensed mental health professional indicating the student is not a danger to him-/herself or others. This absence will be recorded as a Medical leave unless circumstances dictate otherwise. The Pastor and the Department of Catholic Schools will also be informed of the circumstances.

TECHNOLOGY - ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP)

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Electronic games are not permitted for students' use during regular school hours. iPads and computers are to be used ONLY for academic purposes during class time. Students enrolled in Aftercare may use these devices at the discretion of the Aftercare staff. During school hours, all personal, non-academic electronic devices must be turned off and stored in the student's book bag.

Students may bring cell phones with them to school, but only for the purpose of emergency use after school. Every classroom in our school has a phone and there will never be a need for students to access their cell phone during school hours. If you feel your child requires a cell phone, you must send a letter to the office "registering" the phone. The child must keep the phone in his/her backpack during the day, and the phone must be turned off. If any of these policies are broken, the child's phone will be confiscated and only returned to the parent. The school reserves the right to confiscate any electronic devices in use at inappropriate times.

INTERNET & TECH. TOOLS ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP)

Technology skills are necessary to ready our students for their future. Access to the Internet and technology tools (including software tools, web-based applications and services, computer equipment, I-Pads, and other personal electronic devices) allow students to conduct research, produce digital content, and communicate with classmates and teachers. The Internet and technology tools put enormous power at the fingertips of users. As such, they also place a great deal of responsibility on users.

It is imperative that technology resources be used to build community, encourage critical reflection, and foster readiness for future learning. Developments in technology at the School are to be used ethically, legally, and responsibly. As in other areas, our students are expected to make good choices with regard to their behavior.

Individual users are responsible for their activity on the Internet and technology tools, including the material stored and information shared. In order to protect private and personal information, unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal

information is prohibited. The School reserves the right to edit Internet accounts for child-only configurations, and to run filtering software for students' protection.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student users (and their parents) recognize the limitations the School imposes on the use of the Internet and technology tools and that they understand the standards of behavior the School expects of users.

All users of the SFA network and technology tools, **whether on a SFA-owned or personal device**, are responsible for adhering to the following guidelines for acceptable use. Acceptable uses of the Internet and technology tools are for authorized academic and school-related activities that support learning and teaching and:

- Respect the privacy and property rights of others and the well-being of the School
- Are consistent with Roman Catholic values and morals
- Treat technology tools and computer equipment with respect.

Unacceptable uses of the Internet and technology tools include but are not limited to:

- Violating the rights or privacy of others, including by photographing or filming an individual without consent
- Posting or distributing videos or photographs without consent of the persons depicted and the School
- Using technology to send profanity, obscenity, or other offensive or harmful language
- Unauthorized copying, downloading, or installation of content, software or applications (including plagiarism or "pirating" music)
- Sending false information or sending messages to the School community that fail to identify the sender (including anonymous messages or messages using a pseudonym)
- Using any program designed to disrupt network performance or breach network security, such as software designed to capture passwords or break encryption protocols
- Revealing personal information beyond what is required for login while using Internet or web-based resources
- Responding to inappropriate messages from others (which should be reported to the School)
- Downloading or copying information onto disks or hard drives without prior teacher approval
- Accessing, downloading, storing, or printing files or messages that are inappropriate or may be offensive to others (including pornography and other inappropriate images)
- Sharing of passwords or attempting to discover another's password (passwords should be changed frequently)
- Using or accessing another's account (network accounts are to be used only by those for whom the account has been established)
- Intentionally writing, producing, generating, copying or introducing dangerous codes or programs designed to cause harm, including, but not limited to viruses, bugs, 'worms', etc.
- Intentionally damaging, altering, or tampering with any hardware, software, printers, keyboards, speakers, etc.

- Accessing or searching files, directories, or folders for which the user does not have authorization
- Intentionally erasing, renaming, or disabling of anyone else's files or programs
- Accessing social media, email, or other off-task websites or apps during School without explicit permission of a teacher or adult supervisor
- Violating School conduct rules or the law.

Harassment/cyber-bullying of others online, whether against a student, non-student, or employee, is serious, is prohibited, and is contrary to the School's policy and values. Harassment/cyber-bullying **whether it is initiated on campus or off campus, online or in person**, should be reported immediately to a faculty member, and may lead to disciplinary action and possible criminal prosecution under Maryland's law prohibiting the Misuse of Interactive Computer Service ("Grace's Law").

Parents are responsible for:

- Reviewing and discussing this policy with their child as well as supporting the School in its enforcement
- Partnering with the School in monitoring their child's technology use
- Modeling appropriate Internet behaviors for their child
- Reporting any concerns regarding this policy or their child's use of the Internet or technology tools to School personnel.

Failure to adhere to the policy guidelines may result in a revocation of Internet access and other technology privileges and disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion for students, or possible disciplinary action up to and including termination for employees.

SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

SFA students are provided the best technological equipment available. It is expected that staff members will treat all SFA equipment with the care and responsibility it is due. SFA reserves the right to suspend privileges to staff equipment for chronic misuse, and/or to replace leading-edge technology with lower grade equipment when it is determined a staff member has failed to demonstrate the proper care the equipment requires.

The following guidelines must be followed regarding SFA equipment:

- Always get permission before installing, attempting to install or storing programs of any type on the computers.
- Damaging, disabling, or otherwise harming the operation of computers, or intentionally wasting resources puts work at risk, and will cut time with equipment.
- Only use the computers for educational purposes. Use of equipment by anyone other than the student of the school is not appropriate.
- Always check files brought in on removable media (such as storage devices) with antivirus software and only use them if they are found to be clean of viruses.
- Always check mobile equipment (e.g. laptops, tablet PCs) with antivirus software and ensure they are clean of viruses before connecting them to the network.
- Protect computers from spillages by eating or drinking well away from equipment.

NETWORK

St. Francis of Assisi has a very active computer network. Email use, file storage, and Internet access are all privileges offered to students to empower them in providing a top-notch educational program to them.

SECURITY & PRIVACY

- Protect your work by keeping your password to yourself; never use someone else's logon name or password.
- Never use your SFA email address or network password when signing up for Internet Resources. Use a public email address, like Yahoo or Gmail, and a different password. This helps to protect the integrity of our network resources and limits unwanted junk mail and spam from coming into your SFA email account.
- If you walk away from your computer, lock the screen. This prohibits others from accessing your account and files.
- Always be wary about revealing your home address, telephone number, school name, or picture to people you meet on the Internet.
- Other computer users should be respected and should not be harassed, harmed, offended or insulted.
- To protect yourself and the systems, you should respect the security on computers; attempting to bypass or alter the settings may put you or your work at risk.
- With due cause, the school has the ability to review your files and communications to ensure that you are using the system responsibly.

INTERNET

- You should access the Internet only for school activities.
- Only access suitable material; using the Internet to obtain, download, send, print, display or otherwise transmit or gain access to materials which are unlawful, obscene or abusive is not permitted.
- Practice safe Internet surfing by entering **ONLY** trusted websites. Do not enter unknown sites.
- Respect the work and ownership rights of people outside the school, as well as other students or staff. This includes abiding by copyright laws.
- Due to bandwidth constraints, downloading of streaming media should be limited to content that is necessary and pertinent to the curriculum. When possible, video media should be downloaded to the computer first and then played.

EMAIL

- Only open attachments to emails if they come from someone you already know and trust. Attachments can contain viruses or other programs that could destroy all the files and software on your computer.
- If you receive an email containing material of a violent, dangerous, racist, or inappropriate content, always report such messages to administration. The sending or receiving of an email containing content likely to be unsuitable for schools is strictly forbidden.
- Keep your email box clean by deleting unwanted and unnecessary email on a daily basis.

WEB-BASED SERVICES

The School uses Google Suite for Education as well as other web-based education tools, sites, and services (“web-based services”) to provide students with important web-based educational experiences and enhanced opportunities to communicate and share collaboratively with one another. As part of students’ use of web-based services, certain educational records may be created, collected, or stored. Directory information, such as a child’s name, email address, grade/age, and enrollment status, may also be shared with web-based services. The School may access, monitor, and review children’s use of web-based services and Internet use and children shall not have any expectation of privacy with respect to any communications or activities through such services. Use of web-based services is for educational purposes only and subject to the conduct and acceptable use guidelines set forth in this Handbook. A list of the School’s web-based services and corresponding privacy policies are available upon request. By enrolling a child in the School, the parent consents to the child’s participation in the School’s academic activities and programs, including the child’s use of and access to web-based services as described in this paragraph. In order to withhold or withdraw consent for the use of web-based services, parents must contact the School principal in writing.

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI SCHOOL
STUDENT HANDBOOK

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Print Student Name

Having read the SFA Student Handbook, and sought clarification where necessary, I agree to accept responsibility and act in accordance with all the information included in this handbook.

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

DISCLAIMER: This handbook does not constitute an express or implied contract of any kind. St. Francis of Assisi School reserves the right to amend, withdraw, or modify the policies, procedures, and benefits described at any time. The handbook provides general information on a number of topics but is not intended to be all-inclusive. Any questions regarding this handbook and/or the policies in the handbook should be directed to the school administration.

Please sign this agreement and return it to the office by the last Friday in September.