



2020-2021

## Student/Parent Handbook

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

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Dear Parents:

Welcome to a new school year at St. Ambrose Catholic School. We are blessed to have you as part of our Catholic school family.

The faculty, staff, and I are proud to partner with you in the education of your children. Educational success for all students cannot be complete without an active partnership with all parents. You are an essential part of your children's education, and we must build a strong relationship to better serve your children's educational needs. Please know that the success of your child and our school events are highly dependent on your involvement, so we truly appreciate all your efforts to share your time and talents.

You will find in the Parent/Student Handbook some essential information regarding some of the policies and procedures established for the safety of the children and the smooth operation of the school. Please read this information carefully with your child and keep it for future reference. It is imperative that both our students and parents know what is expected from Diocesan and school policies and guidelines. Should you have questions, feel free to contact the school at (703) 698-7171.

Diocesan policy requires that each student and parent sign an acknowledgment form that they have read and understood the policies and procedures in the Parent/Student Handbook. For your convenience, the acknowledgment form for your signature will be sent home with every student. This form must be signed and returned to school by September 1, 2020. Please feel free to contact me at school regarding this information. I am always available to discuss any aspects of the Handbook or any other concerns that you may have.

We hope that the partnership you develop with us will reflect a positive feeling about education and will be a pleasurable experience for everyone.

Yours in Christ,

***Maria Teresa Tejada***

Maria Teresa Tejada

Principal

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

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

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

*Matthew 28:19-20*

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

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

### **DIOCESAN MISSION STATEMENT**

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

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

Fostering a faith-filled and academically strong environment, Saint Ambrose Catholic School works with families and the faith community to encourage the formation of the whole child through the examples and teachings of Jesus Christ.

### **STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK**

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

A committee, representative of the total school community, shall be involved in the development and periodic revision of this handbook.

All parents/guardians, along with students in middle and high school, are required to sign a form

stating they have read the rules and regulations outlined in this handbook and they agree to abide by those rules (Appendix AG-1). This signature form will be given to students when they receive a copy of the handbook and the form must be signed and returned as soon as possible, but no later than the date when first interim grades are distributed. Failure to have a signed form on file will not prevent the school from enforcing its policies but will result in disciplinary action being taken and/or prevent a student from enrolling (or continued enrollment) in the school.

Faculty and staff members shall be given copies of all school handbooks.

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

## **PARENTAL/GUARDIAN ROLE**

Since parents/guardians have given their children life, the Catholic Church recognizes parents as the primary and principal educators of their children. The Catholic parents' promise at baptism to raise their children as Catholic supports this premise. The Catholic school exists to assist parents in the Christian formation of their children.

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

The Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools respects the role of parents as the primary educators of their children. Since the school is a continuation of the education children are receiving at home, Diocesan schools should demonstrate respect and support for the parents in their important and challenging task.

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

In the event a parent desires to discuss a problem with his/her child's teacher, the parent should make an appointment for a private meeting with the child's teacher. Teachers welcome the opportunity to discuss a matter of concern with parents before it becomes an actual problem. Any parent who wishes to speak with the principal may do so, but after an initial meeting with the classroom teacher.

If a parent repeatedly or seriously violates proper school protocol, displays inappropriate or

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- a. Non-Catholic students are expected to participate in the religious formation and education programs of the school.

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

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

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

## **II. ACADEMICS**

### **CURRICULUM**

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

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

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

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

For Placement in Pre-Algebra in the sixth grade:

Students must satisfy the following criteria:

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

#### **GRADES SIX TO SEVEN**

For Placement in Algebra I in the seventh grade:

Students must satisfy the following criteria:

- a. Math Composite standardized test score National Percentile: 96 or above on the Spring Scantron Performance Series Exam.
- b. Class grade in Pre-Algebra: 93 or above.
- c. Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test results: 85 or above (Recommended time of testing – May of 6th grade year).

- d. Favorable teacher and principal recommendations.

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

#### **GRADES SEVEN TO EIGHT**

For Placement in Geometry in the eighth grade:

Students must satisfy the following criteria:

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

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

#### **GRADES SIX TO SEVEN**

For Placement in Pre-Algebra in the seventh grade:

Students must satisfy the following criteria:

- a. Math Composite standardized test score National Percentile: 93 or above on the Spring Scantron Performance Series Exam.
- b. Class grade in 6th grade math: 93 or above.
- c. End of year diocesan comprehensive grade-level test: 93 or above (Recommended time of testing – May 6th grade year).
- d. Favorable teacher and principal recommendations.

#### **GRADES SEVEN TO EIGHT**

For Placement in Algebra I in the eighth grade:

Students must satisfy the following criteria:

- a. Math Composite standardized test score National Percentile: 93 or above on the Spring Scantron Performance Series Exam.

- b. Class grade in 7th grade math: 93 or above.
- c. Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test results: 80 or above (Recommended time of testing – May of 7th grade year).
- d. Favorable teacher and principal recommendations.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Religion:	Ignatius Press (Grades 5-8), Our Sunday Visitor (Grades 2-4)
English:	McDougall Littell (Gr 6-8), Loyola (Gr K-5)
Spelling:	Zane Blosser (Gr 1-5), McDougall Littell(Gr 6-8)
Handwriting:	Universal Publishing
Reading:	McGraw-Hill Gr K-5), McDougal Littell (Gr 6-8)
Phonics:	Sadlier (K-3),
Math:	Sadlier (1-5), McDougall Littell (Gr 6-8)
Social Studies:	Houghton Mifflin (Gr 3) Harcourt (Gr 4), Prentice Hall (Gr 5), Catholic Textbook Project (Gr 6-8)
Science:	Scott-Forsman (Gr 3-5)), McGraw-Hill (Gr 6-8)

## ***TECHNOLOGY – RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY***

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

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

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

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

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

- a. When using networks or computing resources of other organizations, students must observe the rules of that organization regarding such use.
- b. Users should not reveal their personal addresses or phone number(s) and shall not reveal the personal address or phone number(s) of others without their authorization/permission.
- c. Users are reminded that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. Operators of the network/system have access to all mail. Messages relating to, or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- d. Students shall immediately notify the system administrator/school administration if they suspect that a security problem with the system and/or the Internet exists.
- e. Any attempt to log onto the Internet or the school's network/system as a systems administrator will result in a loss of user privileges at the school. Any user identified as a security risk by the school administration/systems administrator due to a history of actual or suspected unauthorized access to other computer(s), network(s), or system(s) may be denied access to the school's computers, networks, and/or systems.
- f. Users shall abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette, which include but are not limited to:
  - i. Messages to others shall be polite and shall not be abusive.
  - ii. Messages shall use appropriate language and shall not use obscenities, vulgarities, or other inappropriate language.
  - iii. Use of the network shall not disrupt the use of the network by others.
- g. The Diocese/school makes no warranty of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for Internet service. The Diocese/school will not be responsible for any damages suffered. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence, user errors, or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user's risk. The school specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.
- h. Examples of Unacceptable Uses – Users are not permitted to:
  - i. Use technology in sexting or cyber bullying: to harass, threaten, deceive, intimidate, offend, embarrass, or annoy any individual.
  - ii. Post, publish, or display any defamatory, inaccurate, violent, abusive, profane, or sexually oriented material. Users must not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, or threatening language. Users must not knowingly or recklessly post false information about persons, students, staff, or any other organization.
  - iii. Use a photograph, image, video, or likeness of any student or employee without express permission of the individual, individual's parent/guardian, and the principal.

- iv. Create any site, post any photo, image, or video of another except with express permission of that individual, an individual's parent/guardian , and the principal.
  - v. Attempt to circumvent system security.
  - vi. Deliberately visit a site known for unacceptable material or any material that is not in support of educational objectives.
  - vii. Violate license agreements, copy disks, CD-ROMs, or other protected media.
  - viii. Use technology for any illegal activity. Use of the Internet for commercial gains or profits is not allowed from an educational site.
  - ix. Breach confidentiality obligations of school or school employees.
  - x. Harm the goodwill and reputation of the school or school employees.
  - xi. Transmit any material in violation of any local, state, or federal law. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, licensed material, and threatening or obscene material.
- i. Users must immediately report damage to the appropriate school officials.
  - j. The school has the right to monitor student use of school computer, computer accessed content, and social media. Social media refers to activities that integrate technology, telecommunications, and social interaction through the use of words, images, video, or audio tools. Examples include, but are not limited to, social websites, blogs, message boards, wikis, podcasts, image and/or video-sharing sites, live webcasting, and real-time communities. Because this is a constantly evolving area, this policy applies to all new social media platforms whether or not they are specifically mentioned in this policy.
  - k. Violation of the above policy will be dealt with by the administration of the school. Violation of this policy may result in any or all of the following:
    - i. Loss of use of the school network, computers, and software including Internet access.
    - ii. Disciplinary action including, but not limited to, dismissal and/or legal action by the school, civil authorities, or other involved parties.
  - l. The school retains the right to discipline students for their actions, regardless of when or where they occur, when those actions negatively impact the school's image, reputation, and/or the safety and well-being of the school community. This covers inappropriate behavior in cyberspace including but not limited to messages, chat room commentary, comments/pictures, postings on social networking sites, blogs, wikis, gaming chats, digital transmissions, and other technology related activity.

**Students may only use the Internet when given specific permission from a teacher and as long as the teacher is present. Unsupervised use is never permitted.**

Students are to be reminded that their use of the media on school-related projects should reflect the mission of St. Ambrose Catholic School. The goals and mission of the school must be foremost in all media presentations and communications.

Students are advised that any derogatory use of the name of the parish, school or any person associated with the school, including priests, administrators, teachers, staff members, parents, students and volunteers will be considered a very serious infraction of the rules of the school. This includes both online and printed or spoken comments. Students who maintain personal websites or any social media accounts including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter are reminded to pay very careful attention to this regulation. Students should never share school issued or personal social media passwords with other St. Ambrose students or people not affiliated with the school. They will be held responsible for anything posted on their site or for a posting they make on any other site. Defamation of the Catholic Church or any church, the faith, the parish, the school, or any of its employees will be cause for suspension or expulsion without any prior disciplinary action.

## **TESTING**

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

In addition to academic tests for grading purposes, the school will administer standardized religion and achievement tests according to the diocesan testing program. All eighth-grade students take the high school placement test used in determining placement in diocesan high schools. Eighth grade teachers are encouraged to review only the format and style of the high school placement test with their students.

The following assessment tools are used:

- **PALS:**  
Administered to Kindergarten to Second grade students in early fall and early spring, this measures the student's pre-reading readiness, visual, language, and quantitative development.
- **SCANTRON:**  
Administered to students in Grades 3 through 7. A diagnostic assessment will be administered in the fall and winter. In the spring there is a standardized group achievement test administered in which parents will receive score reports.
- **HIGH SCHOOL PLACEMENT TEST:**  
Administered to all eighth-grade students in early December. This standardized group achievement test is used by the diocesan high schools to determine entrance and/or placement.
- **NCEA ASSESSMENT OF CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (ACRE):**  
Administered in April to Grades 5 and 8. This assessment is designed to evaluate, affirm goals and objectives, and identify areas needing further development in Religion.

At parent/guardian request, a student may participate in testing and/or assessments conducted by other schools for their programs.

*Any requests for paperwork and/or records for out-of-school testing/assessment that must be completed or provided by teachers or administration at Saint Ambrose Catholic School must be submitted to us at least two weeks prior to the due date. If testing/assessment will occur after our school year has ended, all requests must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the last day of school according to the Saint Ambrose Catholic School calendar.*

All information provided by Saint Ambrose Catholic School is mailed directly to the receiving school. Parents/guardians do not hand carry student records. Required documentation for gifted and talented or special education programs in other schools generated by Saint Ambrose Catholic School may not be hand-carried.

## **HOMEWORK**

In order to reinforce daily work and develop good study habits, the school promotes specific homework policies.

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

### **SUGGESTED TIME ALLOTMENT**

#### **THE FOLLOWING TIME FRAME FOR HOMEWORK IS RECOMMENDED BY THE DIOCESE:**

Grade 1     10 minutes per night

Grade 2     20 minutes per night

Grade 3     30 minutes per night

Grade 4     40 minutes per night

Grades 5-6  50-60 minutes per night

Grades 7-8  60-90 minutes per night

Homework is ordinarily assigned on a daily basis. Homework should reinforce daily work, develop good study habits, and involve parents in the child's academic work. For younger students, it should foster positive attitudes, habits and character traits. For older students, it should facilitate knowledge acquisition in specific topics. We encourage the cooperation of parents in helping to foster systematic home study habits for their children by providing adequate

study space, good lighting, and an environment free from distraction. Homework assignments are posted in each class, on the school Schoology website and assignment books are used to record their homework assignment information. Homework is not assigned on Fridays for weekend work except in advanced middle school Math and Spanish I. However, long term assignments and projects, i.e. book reports, science fair, etc. may involve weekend work. Homework is never assigned over Thanksgiving break, Christmas break, and Easter break.

## **PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

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

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

The Office of Catholic Schools requires formal conferences between parents and teachers before the close of the first trimester in November. Parents will receive an invitation from the school to sign-up electronically for these November conferences.

Parents desiring a conference with the teachers throughout the year may make this request in writing or by calling the teacher at school. Teachers will likewise notify parents by note or by phone if they deem it beneficial to have a meeting. As a general rule, teachers are not available during school hours. Arrangements may be made to see them either before or after school.

**Please do not call the teacher at home or visit the classroom without an appointment.**

**Parents wishing to meet with the principal about their child are welcome to do so after having first conferred with the child's teacher.**

## **GRADING/REPORT CARDS**

Overall evaluation of the student must be based on teacher judgment and observation of the student's daily work, class participation, effort, and performance on teacher prepared tests (to include but not be limited to projects, portfolios, and other tools of assessment).

The purpose of report cards is to alert the parents/guardians and present to them an assessment of their child's achievement in his/her academic studies.

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

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

### **Grades 1-2**

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

### **ACADEMIC PROGRESS SCALE**

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

\* (asterisk) indicates modified curriculum

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **SCHOOL COUNSELORS**

St. Ambrose School does not employ counselors.

### **III. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

#### **ADMISSIONS**

##### **DIOCESAN INITIAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

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

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

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

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

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

Children who will have reached the age of five years by September 30th may be admitted to a kindergarten program. Readiness testing, at the discretion of school officials, may be used to determine, among other things, the developmentally appropriate placement in the kindergarten program. Readiness testing (fine/gross motor, speech, and language screen) is required for kindergarten entry and within 60 days of school admission for new students in grades 1 – 3. Additional school readiness testing may be conducted at the discretion of school officials. In those cases where the school has sufficient reservations regarding the potential for success, those students may be admitted on a conditional basis with dates and criteria of evaluation established in writing; however, the decision of whether to extend or remove conditional admission status should be made by school officials at their discretion.

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

- a. Presentation of an original birth certificate (schools are expected to keep a copy of the certificate on file)
- b. Baptismal certificate for Catholic students
- c. Proof of custody where applicable
- d. Current report card and previous academic years' report card as applicable
- e. Current standardized test scores and previous years, if applicable

- f. Completed Diocesan Application Form (*Appendix J*)
- g. A non-refundable application fee
- h. A fully executed MCH-213G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form (*Appendix F-2*) or equivalent, which stipulates the following must be submitted prior to the student beginning school:
  - i. Proof of exact dates of immunization as required by the Code of Virginia
  - ii. Physical examination covering all required aspects as mandated on the MCH-213 G, within 12 months prior to entering school for the first time. Equivalent school entrance physical forms from another state may be acceptable. (Note: A preschool physical does not take the place of the required kindergarten entry physical unless it is completed within 12 months prior to kindergarten entry.)
- i. Proof of satisfying tuition requirements at any former Diocesan school if previously enrolled in a Diocesan school

#### **REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO GRADES 6 – 12**

- a. Presentation of an original birth certificate (schools are expected to keep a copy of the certificate on file)
- b. Baptismal certificate for Catholic students
- c. Proof of exact dates of immunization
- d. Records from previous school, including standardized test scores
- e. Proof of custody where applicable
- f. Completed Diocesan Elementary or High School Application Form (*Appendix J*)
- g. A non-refundable application fee
- h. Proof of satisfying tuition requirements at any former Diocesan school if previously enrolled in a Diocesan school

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

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

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

disabilities provided that information does not discriminate (automatically prohibit a student from applying).

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

1. F-1 (Nonimmigrant) students who apply for admission to a Diocese of Arlington Catholic school will be considered for admission, upon meeting the following conditions:
  - a. Meets Diocesan admission requirements as stated in Policy 601.2;
    - i. A fully executed MCH 213G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form or equivalent, which stipulates the following must be submitted prior to the student beginning school:
      1. Proof of exact dates of required immunization as required by the Code of Virginia.
      2. Physical examination covering all required aspects as mandated on the MCH 213G within 12 months prior to entering school for the first time. Equivalent school entrance physical forms from another state may be acceptable. (Note: A pre-school physical does not take the place of the required kindergarten entry physical unless it is completed within 12 months prior to kindergarten entry.)
    - ii. F-1 (Nonimmigrant) students who enroll in a school in the Diocese for the first time must provide documentation that they are free from communicable tuberculosis. (Policy 624.1.b).
  - b. Currently holds or is in the process of obtaining an F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student visa;
  - c. Resides at the same U.S. address as the guardian;
    - i. Guardian cannot house more than two international students;
  - d. Pays tuition in full upon school admission;
    - i. There is no refund given for registration, tuition or other related fees;
2. Students meeting the above criteria and accepted for admission must complete the Diocese of Arlington *I-20 Application Form* and return the form to the school the student will be attending. The school must forward the Diocese of Arlington *I-20 Application Form* to the Office of Catholic Schools with the original signature of principal or admissions director.
3. When a student is transferring *from* another school outside the Diocese, the originating school must transfer the existing I-20 in active status to the Diocese of Arlington. A Diocese of Arlington *International Student Transfer Report* must be completed by the originating school and returned to the Office of Catholic Schools along with the *I-20 Application Form*. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the originating school within 15 days of leaving that school to have the I-20 transferred;
  - a. A student must maintain status by attending classes until the transfer release date. Lack of attendance before the transfer date would be a violation of status and the student's SEVIS record should be terminated;
  - b. The student must report to the school within 15 days of the program start date and

- enroll full time in the first required session/term at the school;
- c. When a student is transferring *to* a school outside the Diocese of Arlington school system, the Diocese of Arlington must transfer the existing I-20 in active status to the new school. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the Office of Catholic Schools within 15 days of leaving the Diocesan school to have the I-20 transferred.
  4. In order for international students to maintain F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student status, the Department of Homeland Security requires ongoing accounting. In that regard, schools are responsible for ensuring the enrollment status of all F-1 (Nonimmigrant) students is reported correctly. High Schools will report via the Diocese of Arlington *Semester Report on Status of F-1 (Nonimmigrant) Students* form (Appendix AH). Reports for elementary school international students will be accessed through the Student Information System district database. Specifically, the school shall:
    - a. Submit a *Semester Report on the Status of F-1 (Nonimmigrant) Students* form for each high school international student who has been issued an I-20 regarding the enrollment status of any F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student. This form is due to the Office of Catholic Schools within 30 days of the beginning of every semester;
    - b. Create and update elementary F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student record in the Student Information System, ensuring all fields pertaining to international students are completed. All F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student records must be completed and/or updated within 30 days of the beginning of every semester;
    - c. Notify the Office of Catholic Schools via the *Semester Report on the Status of F-1 (Nonimmigrant) Students* form if an F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student has been accepted by that school and fails to report to the school within 30 days of their Program Start Date;
    - d. Notify the Office of Catholic Schools via the *Semester Report on the Status of F-1 (Nonimmigrant) Students* form within 15 days when an F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student transfers to another school or departs the United States;
    - e. Report via the *Semester Report on the Status of F-1 (Nonimmigrant) Students* form any legal change in the name, address, or guardianship of an F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student within 10 days.
  5. For students who hold a visa other than F-1, refer to Appendix AJ (*Visa Types*):
    - a. Students who are currently in B-1 or B-2 status cannot begin their studies prior to approval of their change to F-1 (Nonimmigrant) student. Obtaining a change of status is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.
    - b. Students who are currently in B-1 or B-2 status may be enrolled to audit classes at the discretion of the principal for a limited time (generally not more than two months) but must still meet Diocesan admission requirements pertaining to the MCH 213G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form and provide

documentation that they are free from communicable tuberculosis. (Policy 624.1.b).

Any student applicant whose passport, United Nations travel document or other United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) documents indicates that the student is a refugee, asylee, parolee, lawful nonimmigrant or legal permanent resident may be admitted to the schools of the Diocese of Arlington under normal requirements for admission. This policy would also include undocumented children.

## **CLASS PLACEMENT**

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

## **ATTENDANCE**

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

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

The school (K-8) is normally in session not less than 180 days per academic year or the length of time as required by the Virginia Catholic Education Association.

- a. Once a student is enrolled in the school, the principal/administration and teachers will insist on regular attendance. Neither the Diocese, the Office of Catholic Schools, the school, nor any of its employees are, however, responsible for ensuring actual attendance. This is the responsibility of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).
- b. Students in grades kindergarten through grade eight who miss ten or more days of the school year, whether excused or unexcused, and who have not satisfactorily completed the required work, may be considered for retention. Certification of absence by a physician is an exception to the ten-day limit. However, satisfactory completion of required work is still required.

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

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

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

- decision is made by the administration. Persistent absences may also result in the student being subject to appropriate disciplinary action.
- c. Except in cases of emergency as determined by the principal/administration and/or a faculty member (as applicable or necessary), a student may only (a) be released from school with the prior written authorization of the student's parent/guardian, or (b) leave the school grounds with the prior authorization from the principal/administration.

## **TARDINESS**

One privilege we have in sending our children to Catholic school is the freedom to pray in school. The school day at St. Ambrose begins with Morning Prayer. Tardiness disrupts the class, interferes with students' progress in school and is a distraction to teachers, staff members, and other students. It is a parent's responsibility to ensure that their child is at school on time. In order to preserve the sanctity of the opening prayer and to minimize disruption, the following procedures will be observed:

The tardy student will normally be subject to appropriate disciplinary action by the school administration or by the class teacher.

A student who is tardy, as determined by local policy, should report to the principal's office or attendance office.

A student who arrives late with an excused reason (i.e. doctor's note) is counted tardy.

The student who is tardy due to unexcused reasons may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Frequent cases of tardiness should be brought to the attention of the principal so that the parent/guardian may be contacted.

## **ABSENCES FOR OTHER REASONS**

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

## **ATTENDANCE/REPORTING PROCEDURES**

If a child is absent for any reason, **parents must contact the school office by 9:00 AM to report the absence or log an email in to stambroseschool.org**. A written excuse explaining the absence must be presented upon return to school. All written excuses will be kept on file for one year.

## **Tardiness**

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class, interferes with students' progress in school and is a distraction to teachers, staff members, and other students. It is a parent's responsibility to ensure that their child is at school on time. In order to preserve the sanctity of the opening prayer and to minimize disruption, the following procedures will be observed:

1. Students may enter through the front door no earlier than 7:50 a.m. unless they are in extended day and will wait in the front hallway under teacher supervision.
2. Students will be dismissed from the hallway at 8:00 a.m. to their classrooms to prepare for morning prayer and instruction.

Students arriving after 8:07 a.m. are late. The tardy student's parents and/or driver are responsible for escorting their child (ren) to the office to sign in before being admitted to class. Tardy students will be admitted to class after Morning Prayer.

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

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

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

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

**PEANUTS/TREE NUTS, PEANUT BUTTER, PEANUT BUTTER CRACKERS, PEANUT CANDY, PEANUT BUTTER CANDY OR ANY FOOD WITH OBVIOUS PEANUTS/TREE NUTS OR PEANUT BUTTER MAY NOT BE SENT IN FOR SNACK OR LUNCH IN THE CLASSROOM, EXTENDED DAY, OR ANY CLASSROOM PARTIES.**

## **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Each school should formulate a policy of traffic, pedestrian, bike, and bus safety for its students and communicate this policy to all school personnel, students, and their parents/guardians. Older students in elementary schools and secondary school students may serve as traffic/pedestrian safety patrols at the discretion of the school principal. Within the scope of this designation, the students shall work under the supervision of and in cooperation with the school principal and the local police liaison for safety issues.

We have no bus service available, and student transportation is by car, carpool, or other arrangements. It is important that you follow the established patterns of drop off and pick up procedures. Please pull your car all the way up the incline where the curb stops when dropping off your children in the morning. After children exit the vehicles all drivers will be given the sign to proceed out of the parking lot.

**FOR SAFETY REASONS PLEASE DO NOT PULL OUT AROUND CARS.** The next wave of cars will be directed to pull up and repeat the arrival procedure.

Dismissal begins right after closing announcements and prayer at 3:07. Please pull your cars into the seven marked lanes. Teachers and staff members will direct you to these lanes. Please turn off your vehicles when parked and exit your vehicle to meet your children at the sidewalk island. A whistle will blow when all children are in their vehicles and safety guards and staff members will direct you out of the parking lot beginning with lane number one. The next wave of cars will pull up and the process will be repeated. Children not picked up by 3:30 p.m. will be placed in extended day and the regular extended day charges will apply.

## **IV. GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE**

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

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

School communication with the appropriate guardian is essential. Accordingly:

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

#### **ACCESS TO RECORDS**

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

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

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

The School administration may elect to provide, at cost, photocopies of a student's educational records to parents, but documentation is to be stamped "unofficial."

#### **TRANSFER OF RECORDS**

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

counselor).

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

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

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

#### **CONFIDENTIAL ACADEMIC RECORDS**

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

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

#### **RETENTION OF RECORDS**

The following student records are to be retained indefinitely:

Permanent record card (to include transcripts, attendance record, and standardized test results)

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

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

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

- a. Application
- b. Counselor notes

- c. Discipline notes
- d. Court Documents
- e. Psychological reports

### **SCHOOL VISITORS**

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

### **SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS**

Communication to parents is through a weekly ‘yellow’ folder is sent home with the oldest and/or only students on Wednesday each week.

### **PRINCIPAL’S COMMUNICATION**

The principal may make voicemail robo calls or send home memos and letters from time to time to make parents aware of obligations, events going on in the school, and schedule changes.

### **TAKE-HOME COMMUNICATION**

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

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

At times there are appropriate reasons for students to use the school telephone. Students must seek permission both from his/her teacher and from the administrative office and state the reason prior to using the phone. Students may not call home for missing assignments.

Due to the volume of calls received in a day parents are asked to refrain from calling the school office with messages to be relayed to children unless there is an emergency.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

In addition to the traditional 180 school days, schools should add at least three extra days to the school calendar each year to accommodate days off due to inclement weather or other non-weather-related emergencies. In the event these inclement weather/emergency days are not used, schools may dismiss for summer after completing the required 180 school days. If, however, during the course of the year, the school uses more than three inclement weather/emergency days, it is not necessary for the school to extend its school year beyond the 183 budgeted days, provided the school has surpassed 1038 hours of instructional time (as defined by the Commonwealth of Virginia).

If, during the year, the school uses inclement weather/emergency days, it may be necessary to modify the published school calendar.

If school closes unexpectedly for a single day, there will be no academic requirements for that day. If, however, the school will be closed for an extended period due to weather or public health concern, the school will transition into on-line (eLearning) for the required duration and students will meet academic requirements.

Saint Ambrose School follows Fairfax County Public Schools for inclement weather, school closings and delayed openings. Cancellation of school, delayed openings or early closings due to inclement weather will be announced on all local television and radio stations.

We will also use the emergency notification system with recorded phone messages and emails being sent to the parents to announce school closings, delays, and early dismissals due to inclement weather.

#### **PHOTOS AND OTHER MEDIA**

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

#### **LIBRARY**

All books chosen for classroom reading in Diocesan schools must be appropriate for students, not only in age level and reading ability, but also for the moral development which we are working to foster. All books shall conform with Diocesan policies and guidelines regarding Catholic education.

Parents/guardians or teachers who object to reading or audio-visual/computer materials must complete an Objection to Content Form (*Appendix K*) and submit it to the school principal. A review committee (to include an Office of Catholic Schools member) will subsequently discuss the objection and decide the disposition of the challenged material. The parent or teacher initiating the review should be personally notified of the results of the review.

#### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are privileges planned by teachers and approved by the school administration with educational purposes as the primary objective and in light of financial considerations.

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

A student must give to the sponsoring teacher a permission form signed by a student's parent(s) prior to a student participating in each activity (*Appendix R*).

In the event private automobiles/vehicles of students, parents, or other authorized adults of at least 20 years of age are to be utilized to transport students on field trips, the drivers and/or the vehicle owners must have a valid driver's license and sufficient liability, medical, and uninsured motorist insurance coverage as defined by the Diocesan Risk Manager. Evidence to this effect must be presented to the principal/administration for review and approval prior to the use of such vehicles. Appendix R-1 must be used for this purpose. The principal/administration shall have the right to prohibit, for any reason, a proposed driver from transporting students on a field trip.

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

Cell calls and texting are not permitted while driving.

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

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

It should also be understood, in light of world conditions and specifically threats of terrorism against Americans, that it may be necessary to cancel school-sponsored trips due to world and national developments at any time.

School-sponsored ski trips are not permitted.

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

## **OVERNIGHT TRIPS**

Overnight trips are not permitted for elementary school children.

## **MARCH FOR LIFE POLICY**

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

Based on the principal/administration's decision, students in grades 7 and 8 may be permitted to participate in the March for Life as a school and/or parish sponsored activity.

Field trip procedures will be followed. Students in grades K through 6 will not participate as a group in the March for Life. Students with written parental/guardian permission may accompany their parents on the March for Life.

Students who accompany parents on the March for Life should not be marked as absent for that day.

#### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS/CEREMONIES**

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

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

Graduation ceremonies should be characterized by dignity and due consideration for practical and economic realities.

A celebration of the Eucharist should be held for the graduates close to the date of graduation.

#### **PARENT ORGANIZATIONS**

Parent-teacher (and/or home-school) organizations are sponsored by the school to promote a cooperative effort at meeting certain needs of the student body. The parent organization is subject in all respects to the control of the school. All parent organization activities and all materials prepared by parents must be submitted to the principal/administration for approval prior to implementation and/or distribution.

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

Persons nominated to serve as a PTO board member must receive the approval of the pastor and principal.

Every school should have an effective Parent-Teacher Organization. An effective Parent-Teacher Organization should strive to provide support and assistance to the head of school/principal regarding advancement of the school's mission and legislative issues concerning the school, as directed by school leadership.

Every school should have a representative on the Diocesan Council of PTOs.

## **FUNDRAISING**

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

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

## **TRANSPORTATION/PARKING**

We have no bus service available, and student transportation is by car, carpool or other arrangements made by parents. Please do not park in the lot in front of the school during the day. We need to leave that area available to the children at recess and PE time.

Due to fire and safety regulations, it is imperative that no cars are parked unattended in front of the church or school at any time.

## V. FINANCES

### DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

#### APPLICATION PROCESS & REQUIREMENTS

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

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

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

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

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

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

### SCHOOL TUITION POLICIES

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

FACTS Tuition Management collects tuition for the school. Payments begin on **July 5**. Ten, eleven or twelve equal monthly payments can be made through a checking, savings, or credit card account. FACTS Management Company manages tuition collections for St. Ambrose School. Parents may opt to pay tuition in full by August 1. This payment is made directly to the school.

If parents/others have been historically delinquent, then the school will withhold report cards and transcripts until they have brought their tuition account up-to-date and/or paid it in full. The school will send a letter to the responsible party to inform them as to what is needed to release the report cards and/or transcripts. If the account is not brought up to a current status, then the family will be asked to leave the school and/or next year's registration will not be accepted. The account may be turned over to a collection agency used by the Diocese of Arlington.

## **TUITION AND OTHER FEE SCHEDULES**

### **Catholic Students**

One Student	\$ 7,325
Two Students	\$13,053
Three Students	\$15,658

\*Active -duty military families qualify for the Catholic Students tuition rate

### **Students of Other Faiths**

One Student	\$9,600
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**International Students with I-20s**      \$10,515 (all fees included)

**Application Fee**                          \$120 - New Students

**Re-Registration Fee for Returning Students**      \$100

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

### ***PARTICIPATION***

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

Participation in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities is a privilege, not a right. Students who successfully meet the school's academic requirements and adhere to the code of conduct will be given the privilege of participating in co-curricular and extracurricular activities. Girls are not allowed to participate in boys' football and/or wrestling activities.

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

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

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

Students participating in a school-sponsored sport who wish to drive to and from practice and games in a privately owned vehicle must have a written permission from their parents/guardians. This approval does not permit a student to transport other passengers, under any circumstances, unless that passenger is a member of the car pool as permitted by the parents and administration.

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

## ***SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS***

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

## VII. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES & BEHAVIOR

### CODE OF CONDUCT

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

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

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

- a. will be honest and committed to integrity.
- b. will be respectful and courteous toward all teachers and adults.
- c. will refrain from harassment of any kind.
- d. will use appropriate language.
- e. will speak respectfully to and about others.
- f. will complete all assignments and participate fully in class.
- g. will respect all school and personal property (see *Care of School Property*).
- h. will refrain from any deliberate disruption in the school.
- i. will adhere to the school's cell phone policy.
- j. will comply with the Internet Responsible Use Policy.
- k. will demonstrate good sportsmanship when engaged in all school-sponsored co- and extra-curricular activities.
- l. will be present for all required activities unless officially excused by the administration.
- m. will adhere to the dress code (see *Dress Code*).
- n. will not give or receive unauthorized assistance on tests, quizzes, or assignments.
- o. will not leave school grounds during the school day for any reason without permission from the principal/administration.
- p. will not bring to school, nor possess at school, any real or toy knives, guns (or any facsimile thereof), sharp objects that may be used as a weapon, matches, lighters,

sparklers, laser devices, or any facsimile thereof. It is understood if this term is violated, suspension, or expulsion may result (see *Substance Abuse/Weapons* and *Inappropriate Materials*).

- q. will maintain, and support others who maintain, a safe and drug-free environment at, or near, school and at all school sponsored functions/activities with the understanding that possession or distribution of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or any other substance that may be harmful or dangerous and forbidden to include drug paraphernalia will result in suspension or expulsion from school (see also *Substance Abuse/Weapons*).
- r. will not engage in any physical or verbal contact with another student which could be interpreted to be an inappropriate display of affection. Such conduct is prohibited on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
- s. will, at all times, whether at school or in the community, conduct themselves in a manner which reflects the Catholic values and principles of the school.

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

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE/WEAPONS**

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

It is unlawful for any person to manufacture, sell, distribute, or possess with intent to sell, give, or distribute any controlled substance, imitation controlled substance, or marijuana while upon the property of the school; on any school bus; upon any public property or any property open to the public use within 1000 feet of the school (or any school bus stop when students are waiting to be picked up and transported to or are being dropped off from school or a school-sponsored activity.) If a student knows or suspects that any of the foregoing activities are occurring, he/she must immediately report the matter to the school administration/faculty so the appropriate law enforcement agency may be contacted.

If a student is suspected or is discovered to have (a) violated the foregoing policy with respect to any controlled substance, imitation controlled substance or marijuana or (b) used, possessed or distributed alcohol, tobacco, or e-liquids while upon the property of the school; on any school bus; upon public property or any property open to the public use within 1000 feet of the school (or any school bus stop when students are waiting to be picked up and transported to or are being dropped off from school or a school-sponsored activity), the student will be subject to

disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. In the event school officials believe that a student is under the influence of an illegal substance, the parents/guardians will be notified, and the student will be removed from class. School officials reserve the right to require that the student be taken for drug testing within 24 hours and that the results of the testing be shared with the appropriate school officials. If, however, a violation of the law has occurred, the proper law enforcement agency will be contacted (see also Policy 615).

A student shall not possess or use drug paraphernalia, including, but not limited to, e-cigarette delivery devices, e-cigarette accessories, water pipes, cigarette paper rolling machines, and miniature scales on the property of the school, on any school bus and/or at any school-sponsored activity, whether discovered in an authorized search of his or her private property (Policy 615.1) or on school property (e.g., lockers – Policy 615.2). Any student who violates this provision will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

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

## **DISCIPLINE**

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems which arise, this handbook empowers the faculty and administration to take disciplinary action for any behavior (within or outside of the school community) which violates the spirit, philosophy, and code of conduct of the school, even though not specified.

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

### **USE OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

In cases where a student is continually disruptive of others or in the case of a single serious disciplinary infraction, the teacher will apprise the principal/administration of the situation. They

will assist in the development of a course of action to be taken to correct the situation.

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

### **DISCIPLINARY MEASURES**

The following are some approved disciplinary measures:

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

### **SPECIFIC DISCIPLINARY POLICIES**

Students who violate the code of conduct explained in this handbook or that given by their teachers can expect a disciplinary consequence. Each offense will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the age of the child and the frequency of disciplinary infractions. Minor offenses of the code of conduct will ordinarily be dealt with in the following ways:

Verbal warnings and reminders

Conference between the student, teachers, and/or principal

Loss of minor privileges such as eating with friends at lunch and free dress days

Assignment of special tasks

After school detention

Conference with the parents

More serious infractions of the behavior code when they occur at school or during school activities may result in immediate detention. These include, but are not limited to, wearing an improper uniform, disrespect or disobedience to faculty, staff, or parents working in the school,

or cruelty to other students. A meeting may be held with the parents, student, principal, and middle school teachers for serious infractions. The student and parents will agree to and sign a Behavior Contract at that meeting. The following infractions will result in detention, in-school suspension, a parent or both parents being required to attend a full school day with their child and/or possible expulsion:

## **Fighting**

- Extreme disrespect to a faculty or school staff member or insubordination. Verbally threatening a student, teacher, or staff member.
- Possession of a weapon (knife, gun, or any object that can cause harm) Vandalism of school property.
- Possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, or all vaping devices including juuls
- Possession of pornographic materials.
- Disrupting the teaching and learning process in the classroom.
- Use of foul language, particularly the improper use of God's name.
- Any form of sexual harassment.
- Any form of cheating, lying, or stealing.

The following materials are not allowed on the school grounds and are subject to suspension and possible expulsion:

toy guns (especially guns that look real, pocketknives, vaping devices and paraphernalia, fireworks, laser pointers

## **SUSPENSION**

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

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

## **DISMISSAL**

Conduct which is disruptive to the learning atmosphere and/or contrary to the school's Code of Conduct is justification for a principal/administration to dismiss a student at the close of the school year.

Students who are dismissed may apply for readmission to any Diocesan school after one full year.

## **EXPULSION**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **STUDENT REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES**

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

## **STUDENTS AND STUDENT PROPERTY SEARCHES**

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

## **INTERROGATION OF STUDENTS**

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

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

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

The police officers, under unusual circumstances, may take legal actions that they deem necessary.

## **STUDENTS AND STUDENT PROPERTY**

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

## **SCHOOL LOCKERS AND DESKS**

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

## **CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY**

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

**Chewing gum is never permitted in school or at school functions. In Middle School, chewing gum will result in receiving a notice for each infraction committed.**

## **DRESS CODE**

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

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

### **Uniform Requirements & Other Pertinent Information**

**Girls K-5 Fall/Spring:** Navy walking shorts and white polo shirt with St. Ambrose logo, white or navy crew socks or quarter socks, visible above the shoes, solid white or black athletic shoes.\* (Students may wear Winter Uniform jumper and blouse as an alternative).

**Winter:** Plaid jumper or navy twill dress slacks and white Peter Pan collar blouse, cardinal St. Ambrose cardigan sweater, white or navy knee socks, visible above the shoes, white or navy tights or leggings, dress shoes or solid black or white athletic shoes. **Girls' skirts must be no shorter than two inches above the knee.**

**Girls 6-8 Fall/Spring:** Navy blue skort or solid navy blue kilt skirt and light blue polo shirts embroidered with the St. Ambrose logo, white or navy crew socks or quarter socks, visible above the shoes, solid black or white athletic shoes.\* Optional: Middle school students may purchase a banded bottom polo shirt that does not need to be tucked in.

**Winter:** Plaid kilt skirt and white oxford long sleeve or short sleeve blouse, cardinal V-neck sweater or cardinal V-neck sweater vest, white or navy knee socks visible above the shoes, or navy tights, dress shoes or solid black or white athletic shoes. **Girls' skirts must be no shorter than two inches above the knee.**

**Boys K-5 Fall/Spring:** Navy blue walking shorts or navy blue uniform pants and white polo shirt with

St. Ambrose logo, belt, white or navy crew socks or quarter socks, visible above the shoes, solid white or black athletic shoes.\* T-shirts worn under the polo shirt must be white with no logo or design.

**Winter:** Navy twill trousers and white oxford shirt, cardinal V-Neck sweater or V-neck sweater vest, belt, navy crew socks, visible above the shoes, navy tie, dress shoes or solid white or black athletic shoes.\* T-shirts worn under the oxford shirt must be white with no logo or design.

NOTE: Kindergarten boys do not need to wear belts or ties.

**Boys 6-8 Fall/Spring:** Navy blue walking shorts or navy blue uniform pants, light blue polo shirts embroidered with the St. Ambrose logo, belt, white or navy crew socks or quarter socks, visible above the shoes, solid white or black athletic shoes.\* T-shirts worn under the polo shirt must be white with no logo or design.

**Winter:** Navy twill trousers and white oxford long sleeve or short sleeve shirt, cardinal V-Neck sweater or sweater vest, striped tie, belt, navy crew socks, visible above the shoes, dress shoes or solid white or black athletic shoes. T-shirts worn under the oxford shirt must be white with no logo or design.

**Shoes Boys:** Black, brown, or navy loafers, topsiders, or tied oxford dress shoes

**Shoes Girls:** Black, brown, or navy loafers, saddle shoes, topsiders, tied oxford dress shoes, or plain "Mary Janes." Heels may be no higher than one and a half inches.

**\*Athletic Shoes: Students may wear solid black or white athletic shoes with their uniform every day. On PE days, students must wear black or white athletic shoes (laces MUST be the same color as the shoes). (Revised June 2016)**

**Gym Clothes Fall/Spring:** Ash Gym T-shirt with the St. Ambrose logo and navy-blue loose-fitting fleece or mesh nylon shorts with the school logo, sneakers/athletic shoes.

**Winter:** Navy blue sweatpants and navy blue sweatshirt with the school logo, sneakers/athletic shoes.

NOTE: All students must wear the ash gym t-shirt and navy-blue sweatshirt with the school logo. In prior years, students have worn a variety of St. Ambrose shirts.

Optional outerwear: all students may wear the polar fleece zip jacket in navy with school logo

## **UNIFORM COMPANIES**

**All jumpers, polo shirts, sweaters, sweater vests, and striped ties must be purchased from the following uniform stores:**

Flynn & O' Hara (9650 Main Street, Fairfax, VA or fando.net) Educational Outfitters – (2499 N. Harrison Street, Suite LL9, Arlington VA 22207, [www.arlington.educationaloutfitters.com](http://www.arlington.educationaloutfitters.com))

**NOTE: the following items are not required to be purchased from these stores. They are also available from Lands End:** pants, shorts, skirts, skorts, navy ties.

**DRESS-DOWN DAYS:** Modesty is a virtue that we will use as a guideline for all attire. Students are permitted to wear more casual clothing, such as jeans, khakis, Bermuda shorts, or crop pants. Parents should monitor dress-down day clothing to ensure that students do not wear low-cut, skin-tight, or other inappropriate clothing such as spandex, spaghetti straps, or halter tops. T-shirts and sweatshirts should not have inappropriate slogans or advertising.

**HAIRSTYLES:** Hair should be neat and clean, and styled in a manner appropriate to an academic environment. Hair color must be a natural color. Fad haircuts of any kind, including dyed hair, mohawks, and mullets, are not permitted. The principal may request a haircut if the length or style is determined to be inappropriate.

**Boys:** Hair should be trimmed above the collar, above the ears, and above the eyebrows.

**Girls:** Hair and bangs should be away from the eyes. Ribbons and other hair accessories should be appropriate to wear to school.

**JEWELRY:** Boys may not wear earrings. Girls may wear a single small post or small ring style earrings in ear lobes only. Only one earring per ear is permitted - no multiples.

Long, dangling, or large ornate earrings may not be worn. Jewelry may consist of a religious medal or cross and/or a watch. All watches must be set so they do not interrupt the class with beeps or alarms. I-Watches are NOT permitted.

**MAKE-UP and Nail Polish:** Make-up and nail polish may not be worn to school. Clear nail polish is acceptable for 8th grade girls. No other fingernail polish is to be worn at school.

**GENERAL NEATNESS:** Shirts and blouses are to be tucked in. Sleeves may not be rolled up. Students may not write on their skin. They will be sent to the clinic to wash off ink.

## **DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS**

If a student is not dressed according to the dress code, they will be issued a notice to be signed by their parents. A second violation will result in a demerit, followed by an email to parents, and eventually will be noted on their report card for non-compliance with the uniform regulations. If necessary, students not conforming to the above dress code will be required to call their parents to bring the appropriate uniform or article of clothing. The students will be responsible for all missed class assignments while out of class.

## **INAPPROPRIATE MATERIALS**

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

Pocket knives, Toy guns, weapons, drugs, tobacco products and paraphanalia.

Cell phones must be kept in the student's locker in the "off" position during the school day and in the "off" position while in attendance at the extended day program. Cell phones may not be used at dismissal time unless authorized by a faculty member. Violation of this rule will result in the confiscation of the cell phone and possible forfeiture of the privilege of bringing it to school. Cell phones found on or being used during the school day for texting, photos, or phone calls will be held in the office for parent pick-up. Students found violating the cell phone policy will be written up and may receive further disciplinary action. If parents have a change of carpool plans, please contact the school office by 2:45pm and we will notify the student.

Students are not permitted to log into the school wifi with personal devices, during or after school hours. Exceptions may be made by teachers or administration who must notify the school technology coordinator.

Smart Watches (ex. Apple Watch or any wrist wear with communication or gaming capabilities) should not be worn in school.

The possession (on school grounds or at any school function off grounds) of laser pointer devices, real or toy knives, real or toy guns, matches, lighters, stink bombs, aerosols or any device that causes an explosion including, but not limited to, devices requiring a fuse for ignition of any chemical, are serious offenses and could result in a suspension or expulsion.

Possession and/or distribution of inappropriate materials which would cause injury to the individual or others, or possession of printed materials, deemed objectionable in nature by school administration, is considered a serious infraction and will be handled on an individual basis.

Any items that interfere with the learning process of any student will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action. Students are discouraged from having valuable electronic devices at school such as but not limited to iPods, or tablets. These items must remain in their backpacks, in lockers, and "off" throughout the school day. Exceptions may be made by a teacher for students to use an e-reader device, for specific assignments in class. Students must get permission prior to using an e-reader (Kindle, Nook, etc.) at school. At no time may the student access the internet or use the device for non-school related activity. St. Ambrose Catholic School is not responsible for lost or damaged devices.

## **PLAYGROUND REGULATIONS**

Be polite and courteous to all.

Students must remain in their assigned areas at all times

No horseplay or rough play. No profanity or foul language

No playing in the woods or on the hill

## **LUNCHROOM REGULATIONS**

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

## **VIII. HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELFARE**

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

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

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

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

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

Any clergy, employee, or volunteer with the Diocese who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that an incident of child abuse or illegal sexual misconduct has been perpetrated by any individual, including clergy, employee, or volunteer with the Diocese,

- a. must comply with applicable reporting and other requirements of state and local law;
- b. must report the incident to the Moderator of the Curia of the Diocese of Arlington.

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

School personnel who suspect the abuse or neglect of a student must report the matter directly to Child Protective Services and to the school principal who in turn will call the Moderator of the Curia. At that point, confidentiality must be respected.

According to the *Code of Virginia*, (Section 63.2 – 1518) *Authority to Talk to a Child or Sibling*, “Any person required to make a report or conduct an investigation or family assessment, pursuant to this chapter may talk to any child suspected of being abused or neglected or to any of his siblings without consent of and outside the presence of his parent/guardian, legal custodian, or other person standing in *loco parentis* or school personnel.”

#### **WELLNESS POLICY**

The Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools Wellness Policy meets minimum federal standards and establishes goals for physical education, nutrition, and healthy environments in schools. All schools must develop, and continue to evaluate, local school wellness policies. The local policies create a framework for increased student activity, staff wellness, safe and healthy

Environments, and the elimination of foods of minimal nutritional value during the school day. All schools have wellness committees to implement, sustain, and evaluate the local wellness program.

### **ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID**

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

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

### **ILLNESS**

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

Children with fevers, contagious, or infectious diseases will be sent home promptly and excluded from school while in that condition, per Virginia Department of Health regulations. Once the student is confirmed to be free of communicable illness by a healthcare provider or is fever free/symptom free for 24 hours without taking anti-fever medications, the student may return to school, afterschool, and extracurricular activities.

Any child sent to school with either a fever or not feeling well will be sent home. If this should happen again a meeting with the Principal, the nurse, and our Pastor will be scheduled to discuss what the next steps will be, including but not limited to a withdrawal from our school.

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

## **MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION OVERVIEW**

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

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

- a When the need for administration of medicines during school hours has been confirmed by the school nurse/health assistant (or the school administration);
- b After the first dose of any medication has been given at home;
- c When the parent/guardian provides and transports the medication to and from school and the medication is given directly to the school nurse/health assistant or a senior member of the school administration;
- d When there is a health care provider's written order signed by the parent/guardian requesting the school administer the medication or to permit the student to self-administer the medication;
- e When the medication is brought to the school in its original container stating the name of the student, the dosage and method of administration prescribed by a physician. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to notify the school of any changes to the original prescription. The new prescription must also be brought to the school in the original container as stated above;
- f When the appropriate medication authorization form (*Appendix F-6*) has been completed, signed and accompanies the medication.
- g For any medication, parents must document the number of tablets or dosages to be secured for administration by authorized school personnel. If tablets are to be divided, the parent or guardian is responsible for dividing the tablets in order to achieve their child's proper dosage.
- h Herbal and homeopathic medications will not be given in Diocesan schools without written authorization by a LHCP that shall include desired and adverse effects. Protein supplements will not be administered unless directly requested by a physician with a health treatment plan.
- i Under no circumstances are medications to be shared with other students.
- j Picc Lines, Heparin/Saline Locks, and Central Venous Lines may be present in students with specialized health care needs. Dressing changes, heparin flushes, and other medication administration via these lines are to be done at home and should not be done at school.

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

- a. the parents advise the staff most directly involved with the student of the situations when an Epi-pen may need to be administered (e.g., symptoms indicating that a person is suffering from severe allergic reaction, basic procedures for administering the Epi-pen with a suitable demonstration);
- b. parents of students requiring such injections provide a doctor's letter attesting to the life-threatening allergy;
- c. parents agree to execute the release of liability/hold harmless agreement regarding the use of the Epi-pen (*Appendix F-6*).

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **TOILETING/INCONTINENCE**

Although the vast majority of school staff would assist in an emergency situation, as no child

should be left in wet or soiled clothing, it is important to note that there is no expectation that routine and predictable incidents are to be dealt with by school staff.

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

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

#### **USE OF CRUTCHES**

An order from a Licensed Healthcare Provider (LHP) is required to use crutches at school. If a student arrives at school on crutches without a doctor's order, the parent will be called to take the student home.

#### **USE OF MICROWAVE OVEN**

Given the risk of potential harm, students' access and use of microwave ovens is prohibited for preschool through grade 5.

For middle school students, the school administration can determine if middle school students may use a microwave oven.

[Insert Microwave Procedure for grades 6-8- Optional]

#### **LIFE THREATENING ALLERGY**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Classroom Food Restrictions**

All classrooms, and clinic are restricted for the following foods during any in class consumption (snack, lunch in the classroom, class parties and middle school parties)

- Peanut/Tree Nuts
- Peanut Butter
- Peanut butter crackers
- Peanut candy
- Peanut butter candy
- Any food with obvious peanuts/tree nuts or peanut butter

On days when all students must eat in the classroom, the above restrictions will remain in place. Parents and students are asked to not send the above listed items.

## ***CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES***

### **DISEASE**

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

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

- a. No daycare/preschool, elementary, middle, or secondary school student may attend class without documentary proof of adequate immunization in accordance with Virginia Department of Health's school entry requirements (or modified schedule as approved by licensed health care provider) on the Virginia School Entrance Health Form MCH-213G (*Appendix F-2*).
  - i. Parents or guardians who object to the administration of immunizing agents for their child on the grounds that this conflicts with their religious tenets or practices must produce a notarized Certificate of Religious Exemption CRE-1 form, which will be retained in the student health record.

- ii. Students who have traveled or resided in a foreign country for five months or more during the last three years are required to provide documentation of a recent tuberculosis skin test result prior to school entry.
- b. Students with fevers and/or contagious or infectious diseases will be sent home promptly and will be excluded from school while in that condition, according to the Virginia Department of Health regulations. Once the student is confirmed to be free of communicable illness by a health care provider, or is fever free/symptom free for 24 hours without taking anti-fever medications, the student may return to school.
- c. School health personnel will follow the Virginia Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart, found in the *Virginia School Health Guidelines*, when referring suspected cases of communicable disease to the local health department for excluding or readmitting a student.
- d. The Diocese of Arlington has comprehensive guidelines for school/parish based influenza vaccination clinics. The liability associated with the vaccination of children is great. The Diocese of Arlington does not promote school based vaccination clinics for children during school hours, and in the absence of the parent, with the exception of a state or federal emergency. Any school wishing to offer an onsite school influenza vaccination program must comply with all aspects of the Memorandum of Agreement (*Appendix F-18*). Vendors wishing to serve as vaccinators must be fully vetted by the Office of Risk Management prior to the consummation of any contract for services.

## LICE

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

Lice are tiny insects that survive on human blood. Head lice are about as big as a sesame seed and may live on the human scalp. Head lice usually pass from child to child through shared combs, hats, and other personal items. One of the most common symptoms of lice infestation is itching. If you notice your child repeatedly scratching, you should check for lice. Live lice can be difficult to locate because they move quickly and don't like bright light. But their nits are easier to see. Closely examine the scalp in natural light and look for eggs attached to the hair shaft. Also, inspect under the child's finger nails. Do not send your child to school if you suspect head lice. Check with your pediatrician for proper instruction on how to treat head lice.

All cases of head lice must be reported to the school office immediately. Saint Ambrose School has implemented a "NO NIT" policy. If a student is discovered to have head lice or nits while at school, he/she will be sent to the school office and the parent/guardian will be contacted to come and pick up his or her child.

## **BLOODBORNE DISEASE**

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

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

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

## **FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Fire drills are held monthly or in accordance with the policies of Fairfax County. Students are trained to leave the building quickly and quietly if the fire alarm rings. Earthquake drills will also be held periodically.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT – STUDENTS**

Sexuality affects all aspects of the person including, in a general way, the aptitude for forming bonds of communion with others. The Office of Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Arlington endeavors to provide for its students an atmosphere free from sexual harassment.

No student is to sexually harass another member of the school community. Any student who engages in sexual harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to, and including, expulsion.

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advance, unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature, or unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. "Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature" includes, but is not limited to, "the deliberate, repeated making of unsolicited gestures or comments, or the deliberate, repeated display of offensive sexually graphic materials via any media source which is not necessary for school purposes."

Any student who believes that he or she is being sexually harassed shall immediately report such information to the supervising teacher and to the school principal/administration. A student who is uncomfortable for any reason in reporting such alleged harassment to the teacher and/or school principal/administration, or is not satisfied in doing so, may report the matter directly to the Superintendent of Schools. Any information reported shall, to the extent possible, be treated as confidential. All claims of sexual harassment shall be thoroughly investigated in an appropriate manner under the supervision of the Superintendent of Schools and/or another designated Chancery official.

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

In adherence to the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, schools will offer the "Safe Environment Program" endorsed by the Office of Catholic Schools. This program will be presented annually to students in selected grades (Policy 616.5).

Parents/guardians should be afforded the opportunity to review the materials prior to presenting the program at any given grade level and reserve the right to remove their children from the classes.

## ***HAZING***

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

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

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

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

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- a. Counseling
- b. A parent conference
- c. Detention
- d. Suspension and/or Expulsion Depending on the severity of the incident(s), the principal may also report incidents of hazing to law enforcement if appropriate.

### **Removing Students from the Classroom**

In extreme circumstances, a teacher may remove a student from the room and send him/her, accompanied by another adult or student, to the Main Office. The student will wait in the office until the Principal or Assistant Principal can meet with him/her. The student should be accompanied by a Record of Disciplinary Action Form explaining the problem. At the first opportunity, the teacher should confer with the student and the Principal privately to attempt to solve the problem. Students are not to stand or work in the hall outside the classroom as a punishment for inappropriate classroom behavior, nor may be sent to another teacher's classroom.

Teacher will keep the Principal informed of chronic offenders of the Code of Conduct.

## **BULLYING**

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

Examples include, but are not limited to:

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

School personnel will not tolerate any bullying on Diocesan school grounds or at any school-

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

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

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

- a. Counseling
- b. Parent conference
- c. Detention
- d. Suspension and/or Expulsion

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

## **DISCIPLINE RECORDS**

Discipline records are not part of the student's permanent record and should be treated confidentially.

### **Students in Grades K-3**

Daily disciplinary reminders for students in K-3 are a part of learning to be a member of the school community and are not considered violations of the disciplinary code. However, frequent behaviors that interrupt the flow of learning or inappropriate behavior toward an adult or another student will be dealt with immediately and may include but are not limited to one of the following:

1. Time out in the classroom
2. Loss of points in a behavior modification program
3. Note home to the parents
4. Loss of privileges including recess
5. After school detention
6. Time out in the principal's office
7. Suspension

### **Students in Grades 4-8**

Each classroom teacher will send home for signature a list of classroom rules and expectations.

Discipline plans will be age-appropriate and outlined by the teacher along with the classroom rules. The principal will be notified of all disciplinary action taken with a student and will consult with that student or that student's parents as she deems necessary.

Demerits are given for rule infractions. Once three demerits are received by any student, they will be required to serve a detention.

Intentionally hurting another student or adult will merit in or out of school suspension depending on the circumstances.

**Harassment of any type will not be tolerated.** The principal will investigate all complaints of harassment. Students involved in harassing behavior face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

## SPECIFIC DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

Students who violate the *Code of Conduct* explained in this handbook or that given by their teachers can expect a disciplinary consequence. Each offense will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the age of the child and the frequency of disciplinary infractions. Minor offenses of the code of conduct will ordinarily be dealt with in the following ways:

- a. Verbal warnings and reminders
- b. Conference between the student, teachers, and/or principal
- c. Loss of minor privileges such as eating with friends at lunch and free dress days
- d. Assignment of special tasks
- e. After school detention

Disciplinary measures, not listed here in any order, may also include any of the following:

- a. Warning to student (verbal or written)
- b. A written note from student to parent/guardian
- c. Administrator issues a Behavior Report or Suspension Report
- d. Time-out period
- e. Denial of privileges (which may include field trips and/or school-sponsored social events)
- f. Financial restitution for damage caused to school property or belongings of another

## **Notice**

The purpose of the *Notice* is to inform the student and parents/guardians of minor violations of the rules, and to provide the student with the opportunity to correct this behavior without disciplinary action. The combined effort of parent/guardian and teacher to instruct and inform the student should correct the behavior. Warning note infractions will be reflected accordingly in the Personal Development section of the report card. Student indicators will be reduced by one assessment level.

## **Behavior Reports**

Any student in Kindergarten through Grade 8 may receive *Behavior Reports*. These are issued for, but are not limited to, violations of the *Code of Conduct*. They may be issued by an administrator. A Notice is issued by a teacher, supervisor, instructional assistant for less serious violations. *Behavior Reports* are issued for violations that are deemed very serious in nature. Violations of any kind are deemed serious in nature when they are repeated behaviors.

When the same minor violation is repeated regularly, a *Behavior Report* is issued. When a student has three violations, each different and minor in nature, a *Behavior Report* will be issued. Additionally, a *Behavior Report* can be issued when a violation is deemed more serious in nature. A *Behavior Report* necessitates direct communication with the student, teacher, and parent/guardian. When a student receives the first behavior report, the behavior is discussed and a plan of action is formulated; disciplinary consequences and the plan of action (when applicable) is communicated to the parents via email, phone call or conference. A critical part of the plan includes enlisting the support of the student's parents/guardians in promoting self-discipline in their child. Compliance and active cooperation by the parents/guardians are essential.

If the student has committed a first violation deemed very serious, he/she will receive an immediate *Behavior Report*. This will initiate a conference via phone or in-person during school hours with the student, parent/guardian, faculty member, staff member (when applicable) and administrator.

If the student receives a second *Behavior Report*, a conference via phone or in person during school hours occurs between the student, parent/guardian, teacher, staff member (when applicable), and an administrator to discuss and implement further dimensions to a behavior contract.

## **Behavior Contract**

If the student receives a third *Behavior Report*, a meeting or conference call during school hours occurs between the student, parent/guardian, teacher, staff member (when applicable), and an administrator. The seriousness of the situation is discussed, especially regarding the severity of reaching the third Behavior Report. At this level, a Behavior Contract for student improvement and self-discipline is implemented. Disciplinary consequences are communicated when applicable. A critical part of the Behavior Contract includes enlisting the support of the student's parents/guardians in promoting self-discipline in their child. Compliance and active cooperation between family and school is essential.

Since a *Behavior Contract* has preceded the *Behavior Report*, it is noted on the contract. If a repeated serious violation occurs or if the *Behavior Contract* is violated, the student is suspended and placed on disciplinary probation. If the student violates the disciplinary probation for an infraction deemed very serious by the administration, it is considered grounds for withdrawal/dismissal or expulsion.

**Notices, Behavior Reports, or Suspension Reports always require a parent/guardian signature. In Kindergarten through Grade 8, notice, reports, and suspension reports are returned to the homeroom teacher the following school day before the student is readmitted to class**

Student actions resulting in three Notices, Behavior Reports, Suspension Reports will be reflected in the Personal Development section on the report card during the academic trimester in which the notes are received. *Notice, Behavior Reports, and Suspension Reports* do not accumulate beyond the present academic year.

### **Disciplinary Detention**

When a student is assigned after school detention, the parent/guardian will be notified of the date and time by means of a detention form. The parent/guardian signs the form; the student returns the signed form the following school day. Parents/guardians are responsible for pick-up of the student. **In the case of after school detention, students will be sent to the Extended Day program, if they are not picked up within 5 minutes of the scheduled conclusion of detention.** Parents/guardians will be responsible for any Extended Day fees incurred due to late pick-up.

### **SUSPENSION**

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

The failure of the parents to execute the above referenced agreement shall preclude the student from returning to the regular instructional program.

Suspension may be imposed by the administration for a major infraction of school rules or for the accumulation of disciplinary referrals as outlined above. The principal may consult with the pastor. The number of days for suspension depends upon the severity of the offense.

**Cheating (which includes copying another student's work/homework or providing work to be copied by another student), plagiarism and or verbal/written/physical threats of violence results in suspension.** For Middle School students cheating on graded or ungraded homework assignments will result in a zero on the assignment. Cheating on tests or the plagiarism of written assignments, including but not limited to research papers, will result in a zero on the assignment and suspension. See suspension consequences above.

The administration reserves the right to evaluate the circumstances and intent to determine appropriate consequences. Students may receive an out-of-school suspension and schoolwork will be assigned. Credit is given for completed work only. Work missed during an out-of-school suspension is either completed at home or made up and credit is given for completed work only. Discipline for cheating will also result in an X in self-control on the report card.

All work is due on the day that the student returns to class, unless otherwise specified by the teacher. Upon return, the student is expected to make up all tests and quizzes. The teacher is not responsible for re-teaching material taught during the suspension period.

If, in the principal's judgment, the student's actions warrant removal from the school community for a period of time, the parents/guardians are notified by the principal or delegate immediately. Written notice of the school's actions will follow. Students who have received an out-of-school suspension cannot be readmitted until a

parent/guardian meets with the principal or delegate and agrees to cooperate with the school and possibly sign a behavioral contract.

Signed agreement of parents/guardians and a written report of the suspension are filed in the student's confidential folder, but do not become part of the student's permanent record or cumulative record.

The Pastor is apprised of circumstances involving dismissal or expulsion.

## **Dismissal**

Conduct which is disruptive to the learning atmosphere and/or contrary to the school's Code of Conduct is justification for a principal/administration to dismiss a student at the close of the school year.

## **Expulsion**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## ***RESPECT FOR LIFE***

A fundamental tenet of our Catholic faith is that human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. In the event of a student pregnancy or participation in an abortion,

the school may condition continued enrollment in the school upon the student's/family's compliance with the foregoing and other corollary tenets of the Catholic Church.

## **ASBESTOS MANDATORY YEARLY NOTIFICATION**

### **ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION (SAMPLE LETTER)**

In the past, asbestos was used extensively in building materials because of its insulating, sound absorbing, and fire retardant capabilities. Virtually any building constructed before the late 1970s contains some asbestos. Intact and undisturbed, asbestos materials generally do not pose a health risk. Asbestos materials, however, can become hazardous when, due to damage or deterioration over time, they release fibers.

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) which requires schools to be inspected to identify any asbestos containing building materials. Every three years, St. Ambrose CSchool has conducted an inspection to determine whether the condition of the known or assumed asbestos containing building materials (ACBM) has changed and to make recommendations on managing or removing the ACBM. At the last inspection, all materials listed in the Management Plan as asbestos-containing (or assumed to be asbestos-containing) were inspected and found to be in good condition.

The law further requires an asbestos management plan to be in place. The St. Ambrose Catholic School Asbestos Management Plan has several on-going requirements.

It is the intention of St. Ambrose Catholic School to comply with all federal and state regulations controlling asbestos and to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure students and employees a health and safe environment in which to learn and work. You are welcome to review a copy of the asbestos management plan at the school during regular business hours. Mr. Paul Moeller, as Director of Operations, is our designated asbestos program coordinator, and all inquiries regarding the asbestos plan and asbestos-related issues should be directed to him/her at (703) 280-4400.

## **VIDEO SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS**

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

- a. At the discretion of the principal/head of school or his/her designees, video surveillance cameras may be placed in public locations deemed appropriate. Such locations may include, without limitation, school entrances/exits, lobby areas, hallways, classrooms, cafeterias, athletic areas, gathering spaces, and outdoor grounds, as well as school buses.
- b. Restrooms, changing rooms, private offices, nurse's offices, and locker rooms are excluded from security camera use.

- c. It is recognized that it will not be possible to monitor all building areas, rooms, and grounds, or to monitor any location at all times.

Schools making use of video surveillance cameras will provide notice to staff, students, and parents/guardians, by means of inclusion of this policy in their respective handbooks, that video surveillance may occur on school property. In addition, school leadership may elect to install signs at building entrances or other locations deemed appropriate to inform visitors and invitees that video surveillance may occur.

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

Video images obtained by the school shall be viewed by authorized school and diocesan personnel as necessary. The school and the diocese may rely on the images obtained by the video surveillance cameras in connection with the enforcement of diocesan or school policies, regulations, codes of conduct, building rules, and other applicable laws or rules, including, but not limited to, use of such images in student and staff disciplinary proceedings and matters referred to local law enforcement agencies in accordance with applicable law. Video images may become part of a student's educational record or a staff member's personnel record in accordance with applicable law.

All video recordings shall be stored in a secure place. Recordings will be saved for no less than 30 days, and may be retained longer if deemed appropriate. All video recordings are the sole property of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington. Release of such videos will be made only with the permission of the diocesan Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee.

## **IX. STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

The Office of Catholic Schools recognizes the beauty and potential inherent within each student. In an effort to foster continued growth, the school embraces the challenge to provide assistance and programs to serve students with special needs according to the resources available within/to the school. Parents/guardians are considered an integral part of the process.

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

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

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

Failure of the parent to sign the Student Assistance Plan or Individualized Catholic Education Plan does not prevent the implementation of the plan.

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

## **X. EXTENDED DAY**

### **EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM**

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

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

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

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

All non-prescription drugs and over-the-counter skin products shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Non-prescription drugs and over-the-counter skin products shall not be kept or used beyond the expiration date of the product.

For all over-the-counter skin products:

- a. written parent/guardian authorization noting any known adverse reactions shall be obtained;
- b. shall be in the original container labeled with the child's name;
- c. does not need to be kept locked, but shall be inaccessible to children under five years of age;
- d. any center-kept sunscreen shall be hypo-allergenic and have a minimum SPF of 15;
- e. children nine years of age and older may administer their own sunscreen, if supervised.

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

## **LICENSING INFORMATION**

The Commonwealth of Virginia helps assure parents/guardians that child day programs that assume responsibility for the supervision, protection, and well-being of a child for any part of a 24-hour day are safe. Title 63.1, Chapter 10 of the Code of Virginia gives the Department of Social Services authority to license these programs. While there are some legislative exemptions to licensure, licensed programs include child day centers, family day homes, child day center systems, and family day systems. The state may also voluntarily register family day homes, which are not required to be licensed.

Standards for licensed child day centers address certain health precautions, adequate play space, a ratio of children per staff member, equipment, program and record keeping. Criminal record checks and specific qualifications for staff and most volunteers working directly with children are also required. Standards require the facility to meet applicable fire, health, and building codes.

Compliance with standards is determined by announced and unannounced visits to the program by licensing staff within the Department of Social Services. In addition, parents or other individuals may register a complaint about a program, which will be investigated if it violates a standard.

Three types of licensing may be issued to programs. Conditional licenses may be issued to a new program to allow up to six months for the program to demonstrate compliance with the standards. A regular license is issued when the program substantially meets the standards for licensure. A provisional license, which cannot exceed six months, is issued when the program is temporarily unable to comply with the standards. Operating without a license when required constitutes a misdemeanor which, upon conviction, can be punishable by a fine of up to \$100 or imprisonment of up to 12 months or both for each day's violation.

If you would like additional information about the licensing of child day programs or would like to register a complaint, please contact the Regional Office of Social Services closest to you.

Fairfax Licensing Office  
3701 Pender Drive, Suite 125  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
(703) 934-1505

Northern Virginia Regional Office  
320 Hospital Drive, Suite #23  
Warrenton, VA 22186  
(540) 347-6345

Central Regional Offices  
1604 Santa Rosa Road, Suite 130  
Richmond, VA 23229-5008  
(804) 662-9743

Eastern Regional Office  
Pembroke Office Park

Pembroke Four Office Building, Suite 300  
Virginia Beach, VA 23452-5496  
(757) 491-3990

Verona Licensing Office  
Post Office Box 350  
Verona, Virginia 24482-0350  
(540) 248-9345

Piedmont Regional Office  
Commonwealth of Virginia Building  
210 Church Street, S.W., Ste. 100  
Roanoke, VA 24011-1779  
(540) 857-7920

Abingdon Licensing Office  
190 Patton Street  
Abingdon, VA 24210  
(540) 676-549

## ***INSURANCE***

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

## ***TAX INFORMATION***

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

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

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

### **RIGHT TO AMEND**

St. Ambrose Catholic School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of Amendments will be sent to parents.

## **APPENDICES**

School Forms

Additional School Information

Diocesan Forms:

Permission for Emergency Care Form (*Appendix F-1*)

Confidential Health History Update (*Appendix F-1A*)

Virginia School Entrance Health Form (*Appendix F-2*)

Virginia School Entrance Health Form Instructions (*Appendix F-2A*)

Inhaler Authorization Form (*Appendix F-3*)

Asthma Action Plan (*Appendix F-3A*)

Epipen/Twinject Authorization Form (*Appendix F-4*)

Allergy Action Plan (*Appendix F-4A*)

Diabetes Reference Emergency Plan: Hyperglycemia & Hypoglycemia (*Appendix F-5*)

Diabetes Medical Management Plan (*Appendix F-5A*)

Medication Authorization Form (*Appendix F-6*)

Certification of Religious Exemption (*Appendix F-18*)

Wellness Policy (*Appendix F-23*)

Waiver Information/Right to Object Form (*Appendix N*)

Website and Social Media Policy (*Appendix P-1*)

Parent/Guardian Permission Form for School Sponsored Trip Participation (*Appendix R*)

Use of Personal Vehicle (*Appendix R-1*)

Academic Intervention Plan (*Appendix AA*)

Elementary/Middle School Handbook Agreement Form (*Appendix AG-1*)

Religion Certification Chart (*Appendix AL*)