



2026-2027

Student & Family **Handbook**

Principals: Mrs. Deborah Mulhall & Mrs. Rebecca Goddard

Please note that policies referenced are from the Archdiocese of Hartford Handbook of Policies and Procedures of Catholic Schools. While this handbook strives to include as comprehensive a look as possible at such policies, there are considerably more policies than are referenced here. They are available at all times in the Principal's office.

A NOTE FROM OUR PRINCIPALS

Dear Holy Disciples Families,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! We are highly committed to working with all of you to make our Catholic educational experience one that helps develop the whole child.

In this publication, you will find a number of important guidelines that are made for the overall safety, wellness, and organization of our school family. Please read it carefully, and reference it often. As we embark on a new school year, let us always remember that we are a family! Do not hesitate to reach out to us at any time.

God Bless You!

Mrs. Deborah Mulhall Mrs. Rebecca Goddard
Principal, Elementary School Campus Principal, Middle School Campus

Holy Disciples Catholic School Mission Statement

**Holy Disciples Catholic School is a community that
empowers students to be learners and
leaders who grow as disciples of Christ and possess the
knowledge, skills and faith to face the
challenges of the future. Students pose questions, solve
problems, think critically and care
deeply while serving God and others.**

PARENT/GUARDIAN ROLE IN EDUCATION (1.214)

The education of the child is a partnership between the parent and the school. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to cooperate with school staff for the welfare of students. If, in the opinion of the school administration, parental/guardian behavior seriously interferes with teaching, learning, the orderly operation of the school, and/or the partnership is irrevocably broken, the school may require parents/guardians to withdraw their children and sever their relationship with the school.

Instances that may result in an irrevocable parent/school relationship include: a parent requires an inordinate amount of the teacher's or administrator's time; a parent refuses to accept the discipline meted out to his/her child; or a parent or child refuses to follow school rules/code of conduct.

If a parent/guardian disagrees with school corrective action or discipline and responds by directing the child not to speak with administration or appropriate school staff without their consent, this would constitute an irrevocable breach of trust and result in the school administration requiring the parent to withdraw their child from the school.

Parents/Guardians of students in Catholic schools serve as the primary educators and faith formation leaders for their children, and are encouraged to participate actively in the life of their parish or faith community.

Faculty and Staff

Fr. Glen Dmytryszn – Pastor
Mrs. Deborah Mulhall – Elementary Principal
Mrs. Rebecca Goddard – Middle School Principal
Mrs. Mari Adanosky – Lead Teacher, Kindergarten
Mrs. Kim Bendtsen- Pre K 3
Mrs. Holly Paolino- Pre K 4-A
Mrs. Kristin Guerrero- Pre K 4-B
Mrs. Katherine Parrott – Kindergarten
Mrs. Diana Robert- Grade 1- A
Ms. Julie Wise- Grade 1- B
Ms. Rachel Bohusky – Grade 2
Ms. Stephanie Baldelli – Grade 3
Mrs. Megan Elliott – Grade 4-A
Mrs. Shannon Denihan – Grade 4B
Mr. Richard Cesarello – Art
Mrs. Patricia Fenwick- Art
Mrs. Sara Freiheit – Music, PE
Mrs. S.J. Caballero- World language
Ms. Gina Harriss- Intervention

Mrs. Angela Barbieri – Social Worker
Mrs. Mary Ellen Chechoski – Extension Care
Ms. Brianna Desouza – Aide Pre K
Mrs. Moira McSweeney – Aide Pre K
Ms. Jillian Bendtsen – Aide Pre K
Mrs. Ashley Nosenzo – Aide Pre K
Mrs. Amanda Graham – Aide Pre K
Mrs. Lori Dvorak – Aide Kindergarten
Mrs. Christina Frinton – Aide Kindergarten
Mrs. Jamie Pronovost – Aide Primary
Mrs. Amanda Forbes – Aide Elementary
Mrs. Amy Banach – Lead Teacher, Grade 8
Mr. John Velleca- Grade 8
Mrs. Daniel Tome -Grade 7
Mr. Kevin Hurley- Grade 7
Mrs. Palma Salcito- Grade 6
Mr. Jared Montini – Grade 6
Mrs. Kelly Shaffer- Grade 5
Mrs. Allison Carey – Grade 5
Mrs. Leslie Biggins - Intervention
Mrs. Heather Miller - Art
Mr. Jesse Lanci - PE
Mr. Bill Hively- Music
Mrs. Jackie Pillis- Administrative Assistant Elementary School
Mrs. Ellen Perugini- Office Manager Middle School
Mrs. Jackie Cipriano – Administrative Assistant Middle School
Mr. Keith Breiner – Facilities Manager

Portrait of our Graduates

Upon graduation, the students will:

1. Demonstrate the confidence and responsibility of a critical thinker who is empowered to be a lifelong learner.
2. Use effective study habits and strategies to successfully balance academics and extracurricular activities.
3. Utilize innovative technology and resources necessary for the future.
4. Communicate effectively in written, oral, and/or artistic forms.
5. Develop a lifelong relationship with God through prayer, worship and service.
6. Respect and appreciate people of all cultures and values that each individual is unique and should be treated with dignity.
7. Recognize the importance of sharing one's gifts with others and is committed to help others locally and globally.
8. Respect all of creation and consider the impact of their actions on others to make positive and sustainable choices.

Academic Information

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE

All students must meet the academic standards and expectations of Holy Disciples Catholic School. Students are expected to work to their full potential. Parents are expected to see that their children complete all assignments on time. Failure to complete homework assignments on time will result in consequences from the respective teacher. It is important to note that promotion to the next grade is not automatic. The Pastor, administration, and faculty, in order to determine the school's decision on these matters, evaluate a student's academic performance, attitude, and conduct.

ACADEMICS (Policy 4.100)

Holy Disciples Catholic School offers a total curriculum, striving to educate the whole child: spiritually, morally, academically, physically, and socially. The curriculum standards and minimum time allotments per subject area are set forth by the Archdiocese of Hartford Center for Education, and they are the pivotal foundation by which all

teachers plan their academic year. The religion that is taught is not the religion of the teacher or the administrator, but that of the Catholic Church. All academic subjects are infused naturally with Catholic Social Teachings and Christian Catholic values.

COURSE OFFERINGS

Religion, Reading/Literature, Mathematics (through Grade 6), Pre-Algebra (Grade 7), Algebra (Grade 8), History (Grades 7 & 8), Social Studies (through Grade 6), Geography (Grades 7 & 8), Health Education, Spanish (Grades PreK-8), Physical Education, Art & Music, English/Language Arts (Oral, Written, Handwriting, Spelling, Phonics, Vocabulary).

CURRICULUM (4.101, 4.102)

Curriculum design shall be understood to include every learning experience (academic and co-curricular) sponsored by the school. The subjects included in the curriculum shall meet and/or exceed the requirements of Connecticut state law, as applicable to private schools, and Archdiocesan Policies and Procedures. Curriculum standards are formulated by the Center for Catholic Education and Formation in consultation with a committee of educators of that subject area and approved by the Superintendent. Religion curriculum standards are formulated by the Center for Catholic Education and Formation in consultation with a committee of educators and the Superintendent, and approved by the Archbishop.

GRADING POLICY (4.134)

The primary purpose of grades is to provide meaningful communication of student achievement to students and parents.

EARLY CHILDHOOD REPORTING OF PROGRESS (Grades PreK 3, PreK 4, and Kindergarten)

Students in these early grades are collaborating with their teachers and parents to identify and establish daily routines, early literacy skills, and mathematical thought processes. Progress reports are much different than those distributed in grades 1 through 8, as they illustrate more fundamental aspects of early learning. Their measures are established by the Center for Catholic Education and Formation. Reports are given to students in PreK twice each year, and one to Kindergarten each trimester. Ongoing communication between teachers and families is vital to the overall success of the early learner at the Holy Disciples Elementary School Campus.

PRIMARY REPORT CARD (GRADES 1, 2, 3)

Since the goal of this primary grade report is to highlight progress, the use of percentages or five-point scale letter (A, B, C, D, F) is inappropriate. Outcome based grades (5, 4, 3, 2, 1) reflect the philosophy of assessment and grading practices appropriate for this early developmental level:

- 5 – Consistently exceeds grade level expectations
- 4 – Consistent performance at achieving grade level mastery
- 3 – Indicates growth and significant progress toward consistent grade level mastery
- 2 – Demonstrates proficient achievement of many grade level skills/concepts
- 1 – Difficulty meeting appropriate skills and or expectations for the term – student needs intensive support at school and home – support and intervention strategies required
- I - Incomplete work for the term

Teachers will use the measurement codes indicated on the primary grade report card for all subjects that meet more than 40 minutes per week. Subjects that meet once a week {i.e., Art, Music, Physical Education, World Language (PK-5)} will use Outstanding, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory to indicate student performance. Below the graded subject titles are sub-skills that lend to the development of the specific content area. An “*” will be placed beside any sub-skill that requires improvement to further enrich or to reach proficiency in the content area. No asterisk indicates that the student is progressing at a satisfactory rate. Social Development and Work Skills “*” in a specific skill area indicates improvement is needed. No mark/symbol indicates satisfactory performance.

INTERMEDIATE/MIDDLE SCHOOL REPORT CARD (GRADES 4-8)

This report card is used in grades 4-8. The intermediate & middle school report card uses a five-point-scale (A, B, C, D, F) grading system. On this level, letter grades are awarded to document student progress made toward learning objectives. All Archdiocesan elementary schools adhere to the following Archdiocesan marking code:

A+ = 100-98	B = 86-83 C- = 72-70
A = 97-94	B- = 82-80 D = 69-65
A- = 93-90	C+ = 79-77 F = Below 65 (Failing Grade)

B+ = 89-87	C = 76-73
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Any subject that meets only once a week (i.e., Art, Music, Physical Education, World Language in grades K-5) will use O, S, or U (Outstanding, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory) to indicate student performance.

Academic Progress in Religion, Mathematics, Literature, Language Arts (includes oral/written/visual communication, grammar/mechanics/usage, and directed instruction in the writing process), Science/Health, Social Studies, History, Geography (grades 7, 8 only), and World Language (grades 6-8) will receive a letter grade of A through F. Numeric

percentages may be used to show specific progress on various assessments for electronic progress reports and parent portals, however, numeric percentages will not appear on report cards.

HONOR ROLL (GRADES 5-8)

Honor roll students will be published at the end of each trimester in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8. Major subject areas will be factored into honor roll status. Major subjects include: Religion, Math, Reading/Literature, Language Arts, Social Studies (5th-6th), Science, History (7th-8th), Geography (7th-8th), and Spanish (grades 6-8). **Any grade lower than a B- in a major academic area or lower than an S in a “special” will negate honor roll status.** Student conduct and academic responsibility will be a consideration when determining honor roll status at the discretion of the principal and faculty.

Honors	High Honors
Trimester Average of all Major Subjects: 85-89 All Specials Classes: O or S	Trimester Average of all Major Subjects: 90- 100 All Specials Classes: O or S All Specials Classes: O or S

HOMEWORK POLICY 4.105

Homework is designed to serve a positive purpose, shall be assigned on a regular basis, and is an important part of the child’s education. Time guidelines for written and study homework are as follows:

- Grades 1, 2, 3 - 30 Minutes
- Grades 4, 5 - 60 Minutes
- Grades 6, 7, 8 - 90-120 Minutes

These time allotments are based on the performance of the average student working consistently through that time period. Advanced students may take less time to complete his/her assignments while others may find that the assignments take longer. Homework assignments are intended to develop a sense of responsibility and self-reliance. Homework gives students practice in subject areas and helps develop study skills. While the teacher has the responsibility to make appropriate assignments, students and parents also carry responsibility for making sure that homework is completed.

SUMMER ASSIGNMENTS

Every summer, students entering grades 4 through 8 will have summer assignments to sharpen their skills in math and literacy over the vacation. The content of these assignments is devised by the classroom teacher or in collaboration between the teacher and Principal. The content and instructions for these assignments are subject to the approval of the Principals, and all will be published for families by the last day of the concluding academic year in preparation for the summer.

SPORTS & EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES' IMPACT ON ACADEMICS

Students must maintain a 73 or higher in each major subject area in order to remain in good standing on the team or club in question. Teachers will report students' grades on a bi-weekly basis to the Principal or Lead Teachers for administrative review. Athletes must also maintain a minimum of an S in all special classes, as well as proper conduct and effort. Should a student become academically ineligible, he or she may be administratively reinstated once his/her content area grade(s) reach a minimum of 73. These determinations will be made with administrative discretion and communicated with the Athletic Director.

PROMOTION & RETENTION POLICY (5.302)

Students are promoted once a year based on the student's satisfactory completion of grade requirements. The school may retain a student in a grade for a second year if the administration, faculty, and parent/guardians agree that it would contribute positively toward personal development and academic progress of the student. Additionally, no child will "skip" a grade at any time for the same reason.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to graduate from Holy Disciples Catholic School, the student must successfully complete the eighth grade curriculum and fulfill 10 hours of community service. These service hours are tracked by the 8th grade teacher in a form provided by him or her.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY 4.106

The religious education in the schools of the Archdiocese must conform to the Religion Curriculum Standards provided by the Center for Catholic Education and Formation. All Religion classes at Holy Disciples Catholic School follow the curriculum standards as mandated by the Center for Catholic Education and Formation. Two fundamental sacraments are prepared for and received by Catholic students in third grade: First Penance and First Holy Communion.

FAMILY LIFE

Education in Family Life will be offered in grades 3-8 and will conform to the teachings and spirit of the Catholic Church. Parents will be made aware in advance of this instruction and will be provided with opt-out choices for films or discussions of a sensitive nature.

EMPOWERING GOD'S CHILDREN PROGRAM

Holy Disciples Catholic School will present the Empowering God's Children Program annually in grades 1-8, as mandated by the Archdiocese of Hartford, Office of Safe Environment. Parents will be notified in advance of the instruction and will be offered an opt-out alternative.

REPORT CARDS & PROGRESS REPORTS POLICY 4.134

Report cards are issued three times a year, at the conclusion of each trimester, according to a schedule set by the Center for Catholic Education and Formation, and using the forms approved by that office. Progress reports for grades K-8 will be issued midway through each trimester. The use of progress reports is intended to let parents and students know in a general way the student's current standing. Report card distribution dates are typically 7 to 10 days after the end of the trimester, which are noted on the yearly calendar.

PARENT / TEACHER CONFERENCES

Grades K-8 hold yearly parent conferences in the Fall and Spring. PreK conferences are held once in the Spring. At this time, all parents have the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher. However, the need may arise where a parent requests a conference or a phone call from the teacher. The teacher should make every effort to contact the parent within 24 hours to schedule this conference. Ordinarily, conferences should be scheduled before or after school hours.

TESTING POLICY 4.135

Holy Disciples Catholic School administers standardized testing according to the guidelines established by the Office of Catholic Schools. Students in grades 7 and 8 may be required to take summative exams in designated subjects at the midterm of the school year. Final exams may also be given in May/June in designated subjects. These exams will help the students in the middle school program to study comprehensively and will ultimately prepare them for such tests in high school.

All students in Grades 2 through 8 will participate in NWEA MAP testing designed to see if students have reached specific performance levels on a specific body of knowledge taught within the school curriculum. These tests are used to pinpoint learning opportunities and to identify areas where support may be needed or acceleration is appropriate. It is important to note that these test scores, while informative, are not in any way a complete picture of a student's academic achievement or ability.

Acceptable Use of Technology (4.203)

The school's connection to the Internet/Intranet shall provide access to local, national, and international sources of information. On a global information network such as the Internet/Intranet, however, it is impossible to restrict access to all controversial or potentially inappropriate materials or to predict with certainty what information the user might locate. The availability of such electronic information does not imply endorsement of the content by the school or the Center for Catholic Education and Formation, nor of the use of such information by students and staff.

INTERNET USAGE POLICY (4.202)

The use of technology is an important and useful tool within our curriculum. It is a resource and therefore is subject to the rules and policies as other school resources. Students are expected to respect the school's policy, the instructor's directions, as well as fellow classmates' rights. Students must be responsible for accessing only appropriate websites and applications and reporting any accidental "hits" of inappropriate sites. Each school year the students receive a responsible use agreement that the student and parent must sign before the student is allowed to use our technology. The use of any electronic device during a test or quiz shall be considered and treated as cheating, unless it is pre-authorized by the teacher. Students may only access specific electronic devices for assignments, as well as specific applications and websites, only with the permission of the classroom teacher.

INTERNET ENGAGEMENT POLICY (5.510)

Engagement in online blogs or postings, such as, but not limited to, SnapChat®, Twitter®, Instagram®, Facebook®, YouTube®, etc., shall result in disciplinary actions, including expulsion, if the content of the student's blogs or postings includes defamatory comments regarding the school, a person's dignity, bullying, harassment, threats, or other inappropriate comments that are contradictory to Catholic teaching.

INSTRUCTING FOR DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

Knowing the importance of educating the children to meaningfully and appropriately utilize technology in the 21st century, all teachers will instruct for a minimum of 10 minutes on digital citizenship as part of any core or special class each week. Content and support for this instruction will be gathered and shared among the faculty in age-appropriate manners.

USE OF STUDENT INFORMATION/ PICTURE POLICY

The school reserves the right to use student pictures in publications and the school's website, Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook accounts if parents authorize such use via the Photo/Media Release form at the end of this handbook. Any parent who does not wish his/her child's picture used must indicate as such on the form at the end of this handbook.

Accreditation (1.213)

Holy Disciples Catholic School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Every ten years, the school undergoes a comprehensive process to ensure that the quality of our programs is meeting the requirements of this nationally recognized organization. Information about the standards for accreditation can be found here: <https://cis.neasc.org/>

Admission (5.101)

Holy Disciples Catholic School admits students of any race, ethnicity, and/or national origin. Always mindful of our mission, we proudly educate students from Pre-Kindergarten through Eighth Grade in a God-centered, academic setting. We welcome siblings of currently enrolled students, registered parishioners of Catholic parishes, as well as non parishioners and non-Catholics. The Holy Disciples Catholic School employs a non-discrimination policy for admission of students in adherence with the Archdiocese of Hartford.

Students with special needs will be given the same consideration as all applicants, however prior to admitting a student with diagnosed special needs, a school shall make a determination as to whether or not it believes it can provide an appropriate education for that child. Each child must be considered on an individual basis (5.103).

ADMISSION POLICIES

- All new students will be admitted to The Holy Disciples Catholic School for a probationary period of 90 days.
- Screenings, new family interviews, and appropriateness of the student for the school is at the Principal's discretion; acceptance is not assumed or guaranteed.
- Initial admission carries with it no guarantee of continuing enrollment. Enrollment may be terminated by the decision of the administration for failure to cooperate with school regulations, or by either party should the school prove not to meet the needs of the child in a satisfactory way. If it is determined that the placement is not beneficial, or that the resources available to the school are not complementary for the student to meet with success, parents will withdraw the student. Tuition will be refunded on a prorated basis. Non-refundable fees are not considered tuition and thereby will not be refunded.

ADMISSION FOR PRE-KINDERGARTEN 3-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM

- Applicant must be 3 years of age by September 1.
- Applicant must be fully toilet-trained, including being able to handle all bathroom needs without assistance.
- All students will be required to have a second set of clothing at school at all times.
- A student application must be completed with all required materials as indicated on the application.
- A family interview with the Principal prior to acceptance is required.
- A Pre-K3 orientation for parents will take place before the official first day of school. • Applicants may choose from the following attendance options: 3 half days or 5 full days – any change in attendance is at the discretion of the principal.

ADMISSION FOR PRE-KINDERGARTEN 4-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM

- Applicant must be 4 years of age by September 1.
- Applicant must be fully toilet-trained, including being able to handle all bathroom needs without assistance.
- All students will be required to have a second set of clothing at school at all times.
- A student application must be completed with all required materials as indicated on the application.
- A family interview with the Principal prior to acceptance is required.
- A PreK-4 orientation for parents will take place before the official first day of school. • Applicants may choose from the following attendance options: 3 half days or 5 full days – any change in attendance

is at the discretion of the principal.

ADMISSION FOR FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

- Applicants must be 5 years of age by September 1.
- A student application must be completed with all required materials as indicated on the application. • A family interview with the Principal prior to acceptance is required.
- All prospective Kindergarten students will be required to attend a Kindergarten screening prior to acceptance into our program. The screening is used to determine if a child is developmentally ready to start kindergarten and if any classroom supports are necessary. The screening is also a positive opportunity for your child to become more familiar with kindergarten.
- A Kindergarten orientation for parents will take place before the official first day of school. 9

ADMISSION FOR GRADES 1-8

- A student application must be completed with all required materials as indicated on the application. • A family interview with the Principal prior to acceptance is required.
- Release of records/proof of attendance from previous school is required.
- Prospective students will be subject to an academic screening prior to acceptance.
- A student shadow day is strongly encouraged, so that the prospective student gains a sense of a typical day.

Financial Obligations

TUITION (2.403)

The tuition rates will be established each academic year by the pastor, finance board, business manager, and principal of the school. Tuition Assistance is available, and amounts vary each year depending on the generosity of donors. All families who wish to be considered for tuition assistance or for scholarships must adhere to the protocols set forth by the school.

Financial need cases must apply for assistance through FACTS Tuition Management. All determinations are made objectively by School Administration. It should be understood that any assistance assigned in an academic year is not guaranteed to continue past that year. All matters are determined on a year-by-year basis. Tuition assistance is not available for PreK students.

Tuition is paid through the FACTS tuition management company. Payments can be made in one, two, ten, eleven, or twelve payments directly from the account of your choice, or via invoicing. Failure to meet financial obligations may result in termination of enrollment of the student.

Families whose balance is not paid for a prior academic year will not be permitted to attend in the new academic year until the entire past balance is paid.

TUITION REFUNDS

Parents are responsible for the full month's tuition of a child's attendance. Refunds will only be given if the tuition has been prepaid for the year and only for those months that the student is not in attendance. Tuition assistance/scholarships are only effective for the amount of time a student is enrolled during the school year. Should a student leave the school mid-year, the tuition assistance WILL NOT be factored into any refund that the school may owe the family. Tuition assistance is spread over the course of the 10 academic months of the year, so should a student withdraw prior to the close of the academic year, the days impacted by that withdrawal will be calculated in terms of awarded tuition assistance, and that amount will be deducted from any prepaid refund owed to the family.

FEES

A non-refundable \$250 registration fee per child is expected in the early spring of the current school in order to guarantee the student a seat for the following academic year. The same registration fee is expected from new families upon their notification of acceptance in order to secure the child's seat. This fee is in addition to the total tuition balance.

For 8th grade students only, a graduation fee is required to be paid by December 1st of the student's graduation year. This fee helps to defray the costs associated with:

- Caps and Gowns
- Diplomas
- Class Night
- 8th grade T-shirts

If this fee is not paid, graduating student can not participate in activities.

FINANCIAL OFFICE RECORDS (2.111)

Holy Disciples Catholic School shall preserve student and family financial records in a safe place for the amount of time allotted by the Archdiocese. Parents can request to view their financial records through the Main Office.

LUNCH

Bag lunches may be brought to school or lunch can be ordered through the hot lunch program online. Both campuses use <https://www.ezschoollapps.com/> for lunch ordering. The app is free and the parent/guardian can pre-select lunch for a day, a week, or month (month only at the Middle School Campus).

At the Elementary School Campus, milk may be ordered through the school. Milk orders are accepted for 1/2 the year only. At the Middle School Campus, milk can be ordered on the lunch app. Students on the elementary campus eat their lunch in their classrooms. Students on the middle school campus eat their lunch in the gymnasium. Lunch at our middle school campus is cooked in our onsite kitchen by *Johnny's Kitchen* and is nut-free.

Past due balances will result in a family not being able to order hot lunch until the balance is paid.

School Hours

Middle School Campus (Grades 5-8) School Day: 8:00 AM - 2:15 PM. Half-Day and Early Dismissal are at 12:15 PM
Elementary Campus (Grades K-4) School Day: 8:15 A.M. – 2:30 P.M. Half-Day and Early Dismissal are at 12:30 P.M.
Pre K-3 - Pre K-4: Full day 8:30 A.M. – 2:20 P.M. Half day 8:30 A.M. – 11:35 A.M.

Students registered for the Before School Extension Program will be admitted at 7AM. All other students will be allowed into the Middle School Campus building at 7:30 AM and the Elementary School Campus building at 7:45 AM.

Tardiness and Early Dismissals: Late arrivals and early dismissals are very disruptive to the educational process for all students. **The Middle School Campus begins promptly at 8:00am and ends at 2:15pm. The Elementary School Campus begins at 8:15am and ends at 2:30pm.** All children are expected to remain until the day is over. Therefore,

this policy states that any child arriving after the start time and leaving before the official dismissal time will not be considered 'in school' for the full day. Children who are late arriving at school MUST go directly to the office to sign in. Parents must accompany their student to the front door and sign them in. Parents are asked to write a note regarding their child's tardiness. Middle school students will receive a tardy slip and three tardy slips is an automatic detention. Requests for early dismissal must be made in writing.

Elementary School Campus

- The school does not assume responsibility for children arriving on school property before 7:45 a.m., unless they are registered in the Extended Day Program or have a scheduled help session with a teacher. • School begins promptly at 8:10, with morning prayer by 8:15.
- The school understands that bus arrival times are outside of the parents' control. Students arriving via bus after 8:15 will not be marked tardy.
- Students arriving via private transportation after 8:05 must enter via the main office and receive a tardy slip before going to class. Parents transporting their children by car are asked to be on time and to notify the office if a delay is expected.

Middle School Campus

- The school does not assume responsibility for children arriving on school property before 7:30 a.m., unless they are registered in the Extended Day Program or have a scheduled help session with a teacher.
- **School begins promptly at 8:00**, with morning prayer by 8:05.
- The school understands that bus arrival times are outside of the parents' control. Students arriving via bus after 8:10 will not be marked tardy.
- Students arriving via private transportation after 8:00 must enter via the main office and receive a tardy slip before going to class. Parents transporting their children by car are asked to be on time and to notify the office if a delay is expected.

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM

Before school care begins at 7:00 A.M. (when there is a delayed opening, before care will also be delayed by the same amount of time) and is available to all students for a fee. After school care is also provided for a fee for all students (PreK - 8) who require this service. The after school program begins at the end of the school day and extends to 6:00 P.M. Payment is based on the amount of care needed - before, and/or after school. This is a structured program to include time for homework, playtime, arts and crafts, story time and a variety of activities. It is not a baby-sitting service. Light snacks are provided in the after school program. Students should bring their own water bottle.

It is in the best interest of parents to consider registering their child for the program (no cost to register) just in case the program is ever needed. No child will be accepted without the proper registration forms being completed. A separate handbook is issued for the Extended Day Program and all policies are strictly enforced. For more information on the Extended Day Program, contact the schools.

Late Pick-Up

The After Care Program ends promptly at 5:30 p.m. Anyone who is picked up past 5:30 p.m. will be charged an accumulating late fee of \$5 per every 10 minutes late. If late pick up occurs continuously, the family will no longer be able to use the program.

SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS

At the Middle School Campus, office hours are Monday through Friday from 7:30AM to 2:30 PM; at the Elementary School campus, office hours are Monday through Friday from 7:45 to 2:45. During the summer months (beginning the first Monday of no classes and concluding on August 15th), school office hours will be reduced to no fewer than 20 hours each week. The specific hours will be published each year on the school website and social media platforms, as well as noted on school entry doors.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar is published yearly on our school website. The Holy Disciples Catholic School cooperates with the City of Watertown in planning vacations and early dismissal days. The school calendar is submitted to the Office of Education, Evangelization, and Catechesis for approval, prior to being published to the school community.

Attendance (5.200)

ABSENTEE POLICY (5.2011)

When a child is absent, the parent/guardian must call the school office by 8:00 a.m. each day of the absence. Parents may also send a note in advance or report the absence in person on the day of the absence. If a child is absent due to illness, school work will be sent home only at the parent's request. Please call the office to make these provisions. Students are responsible for all school work missed during their absence. All missed work must be completed within the same number of days they are absent (i.e., if a student is absent 3 days, he/she will have 3 days to complete the missed school work). Any student who is not in school for four consecutive hours of a school day will be marked absent. Students who are out sick are not permitted to participate in extracurricular activities that day. Students arriving after 11:00 a.m. will be marked absent. If a child is leaving early on Monday-Friday, he/she must be in school until 1:00 p.m. in order to have the day counted.

Holy Disciples Catholic School adheres to the statutes established by the Connecticut Department of Education regarding school attendance. The responsibility for compliance with this law belongs to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child. Students must attend school punctually and regularly and conform to the attendance policies and procedures established in this handbook. A student not physically present at school, excused or unexcused, is marked absent.

Level 1 Absences: The first 9 absences will be excused with a note, in person notification or phone call from the parent/guardian.

Level 2 Absences: Absences of 10 or more will be excused, with a note from the parent/guardian (and in some cases will require additional documentation), in the following instances:

- Student illness, with a note from an appropriately licensed medical professional who can verify all student illness absences, within 10 days of absence.
- Student's observance of a religious holiday.
- Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family.
- Mandated court appearances, to include additional documentation such as a police summons, a subpoena, a notice to appear or a signed note from a court official.
- The lack of bus transportation that is normally provided by the Town.
- Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by school administrators.

It is important to note that while the first 9 absences in a school year can be deemed excused for any reason by the parent or guardian, the 10th and subsequent absences establish a more stringent and specific set of reasons to qualify as excused.

In cases where a student's extended absence crosses levels, the rules should be applied as if there were two separate absences, one under Level 1 and the other under Level 2. (For example, if a student is absent for 5 days on a family vacation and those absences represent days 7 through 11, absences 7, 8 and 9 would fall under Level 1 and can be accepted as excused; absences 10 and 11 would fall under Level 2 rules and would not be considered excused.)

For absences due to student illness, Level 2 students must either provide a signed note from a medical professional (within 10 days of the absence) who has evaluated the student, can confirm the absence and provide an expected return date, or have the school nurse verify the student's absence with the medical professional treating the student.

If a student is absent for 5 consecutive days or more due to illness, a doctor's note for the absence is required upon the child's return.

Any child exhibiting symptoms of severe cold, fever, flu, diarrhea, or vomiting should be kept at home until the symptoms have been gone for 24 hours. **Parents must follow health protocol guidelines with regard to illness and travel.**

Excessive absences can cause a student to be retained in the current grade for another year. Holy Disciples Catholic School will make every effort to work with parents to address chronic absences and tardiness. If improvement in attendance does not occur, chronic absences or tardiness may be viewed as educational neglect and, as such, result in a report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF).

If a truancy problem cannot be solved by the Catholic school authorities, DCF shall be notified. Excessive or chronic tardiness and absences may also be reported to DCF.

Students may not participate in any school-sponsored event if they are not in school on the day of the event without express permission of the principal or chief administrator.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM, TARDINESS and TRUANCY

Holy Disciples Catholic School adheres to the statutes established by the Connecticut Department of Education regarding chronic absenteeism, tardiness and truancy.

Chronic absence is defined as missing 10 percent or greater of the total number of days enrolled during the school year for any reason. It includes both excused, unexcused, out-of-school suspensions, and in-school suspensions that last more than one-half of the school day.

Truancy is a term that generally refers to four unexcused absences in one month or 10 unexcused absences in a school year. Responses to truancy are usually about school rule compliance and can lead to court intervention. Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-198a (b)(1) and (2).

A student is considered to be "in attendance" if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip), for at least half of the regular school day. Students are absent when serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion.

Excused Absences

A student's absence from school shall be considered excused if written documentation of the reason for the absence has been submitted within ten school days of the student's return to school and meets the following criteria:

A. For absences one through nine, a student's absences from school are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation; and B. For the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons:

1. student illness (Note: all student illness absences must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional to be deemed excused, regardless of the length of absence)

2. student's observance of a religious holiday
3. death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family
4. mandated court appearances (additional documentation required)
5. the lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (no parental documentation is required for this reason) or
6. extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by school administrators.

Unexcused Absences

A student's absence from school shall be considered unexcused unless they meet one of the above criteria for excused absences or meets the definition of a disciplinary absence.

Chronic attendance could result in a student being retained in a grade level and/or not offered or rescinded registration for the following year, at the discretion of the Principal/Chief Administrator in consultation with the Superintendent.

VACATIONS

Advance written notice must be given concerning all absences other than illness. The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times, so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process. Missed assignments are the student's responsibility.

If a family does decide to take additional days of vacation outside of the school's scheduled calendar, the faculty and administration will not be held responsible for class work, homework, and tests missed by the student. Teachers are not obligated to provide tutorial help for time missed or work the student will miss while away, and teachers are not obligated to provide school work in advance of a family's vacation. Upon return, the teacher will provide the student with all missed work. All work and tests must be made up within one week after the child returns to school. Please make every effort to schedule family vacations during school vacations.

EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS (weather-related or any emergency)

Early dismissals, delayed openings and no school announcements are made through **FACTS Parent Alert system via text, TV stations (WFSB Channel 3, NBC Connecticut, WTNH 8)** and school email. If you do not see the school name, know that **we follow the Watertown public school system. If weather conditions worsen while school is in session, please check for a message from the FACTS Parent Alert system via your cell phone** or visit our website since children will be dismissed if there is an early release. There will be no Aftercare on weather related early dismissal days.

LATE OPENINGS

In the event that school has a delayed opening, parents will be notified via **email and/or text message**, and local stations will also broadcast this information. Our Before School Program will open at 9 a.m. on these days. Students arriving prior to 9:30 a.m. on a delayed opening day must go to the Before School Program, and parents are responsible for payment on these days. Students may not wait in the school office.

TARDY

Students arriving after 8:05 a.m. on our Middle School Campus or 8:15 a.m. on our Elementary Campus are considered tardy and are required to go to the Main Office to obtain a tardy slip before going to class. Tardy days will be recorded on the student's report card. Students who are tardy on a bus will not be considered tardy. Excessive tardies will result in discipline actions including detention.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER DISMISSAL

Students or parents may not return to the school/classroom after dismissal without permission from the Principal or classroom teacher. Retrieval of forgotten items (books, homework material, or personal property) may prevent students from developing responsible study skills and work habits. Students also may not leave the After School Program to enter classrooms to retrieve materials.

EARLY REQUESTED DISMISSAL

If a student is to leave school before the day is over, a written note stating the time for dismissal should be signed by the parent and brought to the Main Office. At the time of dismissal, the parent must enter the Main Office area and sign the student out of the building. **Students should not regularly be picked up before the end of the school day. This impacts academic scheduling, the consistency of the student experience, and staffing and may be subject to accumulated days resulting in a marked absence.** A student who is not in school for a minimum of four hours per school day will be marked absent.

CHANGES TO REGULAR DISMISSAL DIRECTIVE

Communication regarding a change to a student's dismissal directive must come from the responsible adult through the main office and/or classroom teacher. **Students' cell phones or e-mail are not appropriate channels of communication for the school day and should therefore not be used.**

Health and Allergies (5.609)

Nursing services are available during school hours for illness/injuries that occur on school grounds. The school nurse functions under the auspices of the Watertown School District and follows the standing orders of the town's medical advisor. Students who feel ill or are injured in school should report to the nurse after obtaining permission from their teacher.

- Emergency contact information must be kept updated by parents/guardians. Notify the school promptly of any changes in phone/address.
- Report the reason for absences via call to the nurse's office. Voice mail is available 24 hours, 7 days a week.

ACCIDENTS/ILLNESS

If there is any question of your child not feeling well in the morning, please keep him/her at home. If a child has an elevated temperature, he or she should remain home until the temperature has returned to normal and is maintained at normal for 24 hours without the use of fever reducers such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen or others. Children who are sent home by the nurse for illness and/or elevated temperature should remain at home an additional 24 hours to complete their recovery. Parents must sign their child out from the Health Office when picking up their child due to accident or illness.

The school nurse will administer first aid if a child becomes ill or injured. No medications will be given without a physician's order. The parent will be contacted by the school nurse or office when necessary. If your child tells you that he or she received an injury at school and that it was not reported to the nurse, please inform the nurse as soon as possible.

Students in casts, or who require crutches or wheelchairs, must have a physician's written authorization to attend school and to participate in the full program, including recess and gym. Parents requesting an indoor recess or any excuse from P.E. classes for their child must have a physician's note. All injuries and surgery should be reported to the school nurse. After an injury or surgery, a child will be able to resume physical education classes ONLY after a WRITTEN RELEASE

from his/her doctor has been received by the school. Any child with any durable medical equipment orthopedic appliances (splints, braces, and crutches) requires a physician's note. A parent's note will not be sufficient. A parent's note is acceptable for one P.E. class/physical activity exemption due to a medical reason. A physician's note is required for missing any subsequent physical activity. A doctor's note is required for the student's return to P.E.

EMERGENCY FORMS

It is important that the Emergency Contacts be updated yearly on the Family Registration Form or directly on FACTS Management. Two adult emergency contacts should be listed other than the parents/guardians. These contacts should be easily accessible in the parents/guardians absence. The parent/guardian is responsible for informing the school if there are any changes to emergency contact information.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION AND TRANSPORTATION

If a severe accident or acute illness occurs, a parent/guardian or person listed on the student's emergency record will be notified. The pick-up person must provide a valid photo I.D.

HEALTH RECORDS

A cumulative and current Health Record for each student will be maintained in a secure location in the Nurse's Office. Access to these records is limited to the school nurse. The nurse will relay pertinent information to appropriate school personnel.

INSURANCE

HUSKY Health Insurance Policy – The State of Connecticut sponsors a health insurance program for children that covers basic health and welfare needs. The cost of this program is determined on a sliding scale tied to income guidelines. If your child is not covered by any type of health insurance coverage, you might be interested in looking into the details of the HUSKY Program. Please see the school nurse for further information or call 1-800 CT Husky. <https://portal.ct.gov/husky>

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Student medical appointments should be made outside of school hours whenever possible, so as to avoid taking a child out of school. Health forms are available on Forms and Publications on the Connecticut State Department of Education website: www.sde.ct.gov

PHYSICAL ASSESSMENT/IMMUNIZATIONS

Physical assessments shall be completed for those students entering preschool, kindergarten, Grade 7, and for school sports. The required physical assessments and immunizations shall be recorded on the State of Connecticut form and filed with the nurse. Failure to meet the requirements will cause the student to be excluded from school. Sports physicals are required annually before try-outs. Please note, sports physicals do not take the place of state mandated physicals.

Prior to enrollment, new students to the Watertown School District must present the written results of a physical

examination that is less than one-year old on the day of entrance. Immunizations must be completed to meet the State of Connecticut requirements for school enrollment.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

The school nurse conducts screenings of vision, hearing and posture according to the following schedule. Referral letters will be sent to parents/guardians of students who fail the screening according to state guidelines.

Annual Vision screenings: Grades K, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Audiometric screenings: Grades 1, 2, 3, and 5.

Postural screenings: Females Grades 5, 7

Color Vision screenings: Grade K and if not done previously upon entering Watertown Schools

RECESS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Children are expected to come to school properly clothed for weather conditions. Hat, coat, gloves, snow pants, boots are required in cold weather. For an excused absence from physical education due to injury or illness for more than one class, a doctor's excuse in writing is necessary. If the doctor's written excuse states "until further notice," a second written note is required to return to physical education. The doctor's note should state the nature and duration of restriction.

POLICY ON MEDICATIONS IN SCHOOL

The Holy Disciples Catholic School follows the Watertown School District policy for medications in school. The Watertown School District's policy complies with the State of Connecticut's health regulations.

1. Medications may only be administered in school with the written order of a qualified practitioner, and written authorization of the parent/guardian.
2. Written orders are needed for all medications, including Tylenol or Advil, and all other over-the-counter medications. A form can be obtained from the nurse if medication is required during school hours.
3. Students may only self-medicate with certain emergency medications only with a doctor's order.
4. Medications must be brought to the school nurse by a parent or other responsible adult and must be in the original container. Students are not permitted to transport medication unless they have an order to self-administer the medication. At the end of the school year, medications must be picked up by a parent/guardian or a responsible adult at the close of the academic day/school dismissal. Any remaining medication will be disposed of within two days.
5. New medication orders must be written for every school year and must be on file with the school nurse.
6. The use of cough drops/sore throat lozenges is allowed with a note from the parent and cough drops will be kept in the nurse's office.

Important Notes from the Nurse

Please follow the guidelines listed below to determine when children should return to school or attend school:

STAY HOME

1. Fever 100 degrees or over – A student must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen before returning to school, and 48 hours if diagnosed with flu.
2. Vomiting and/or Diarrhea – no further incidence for 24 hours.
3. Strep Throat – 24 hours after the first dose of an antibiotic, fever free for 24 hours and feeling well enough to participate in school.

4. Conjunctivitis – Once any indicated therapy has been implemented, a student may return to school **RETURN TO SCHOOL**

1. Students who have been ill must have a note from a physician to return to school if they have been absent more than 1 school day.

INJURIES

Any time a child receives an abrasion, bruise, or bump during school or extracurricular hours, responsible adult (nurse, coach, teacher) will call to notify the parent.

PHYSICALS/IMMUNIZATIONS (5.601)

Connecticut law mandates that all students be protected by adequate immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, rubella, haemophilus influenzae type B, and any other vaccine required by the schedule for active immunization adopted pursuant to state law (e.g., varicella).

Connecticut law eliminated the religious exemption for childhood immunizations as of April 28, 2021, and grandfathered in individuals enrolled in grades kindergarten or higher who submitted a religious exemption prior to April 28, 2021. The law continues to grandfather these students if they transfer to another public or private school in the state (i.e., a primary or secondary school).

Students who have not been adequately immunized will not be admitted to school except in cases where the parent/guardian has provided a certificate from a physician stating that such immunization is medically contraindicated or the parent/guardian presents a statement that such immunization would be contrary to the religious beliefs of the child.

FOOD ALLERGY POLICY

It is important to notify the school nurse and staff if your child has an allergy such as bee stings, insect bites, foods, medication, or environmental substances. If emergency medication (ordered by a physician) is necessary, the nurse will store it.

We ask that all parents be sensitive to common childhood allergies. Many children have food sensitivities or allergies. The kitchen at the Middle School Campus is nut free because food is prepared and cooked in that kitchen.

At the beginning of the school year, the school nurse will advise families whose child may be in a classroom where there is an allergy sensitivity. It is imperative that families follow the directive from the school nurse and not bring products with nuts or specified allergens into school for classroom snack.

Be advised that **under no circumstances is a student allowed to eat on a school bus** unless a medical condition substantiated with a physician's order warrants such activity.

Note: Due to latex allergies in school buildings, latex balloons, gloves, and other products are prohibited.

COMMUNICATION DISEASES

If you suspect that your child has a communicable disease, please do not bring him/her to school to see the school nurse. Please schedule an appointment with your physician. All student communicable diseases should be reported to the nurse.

Bullying and Cyberbullying

BULLYING POLICY (5.504)

Bullying is prohibited in all Catholic schools of the Archdiocese. It will not be tolerated during the school day nor during any school sponsored activities on or of the school grounds. Bullying and intimidation are actions that are contrary to the

teachings of Jesus Christ. This behavior is against the fundamental tenet of “Love your neighbor as yourself”, and destroys respect for the dignity of the student, undermines the Christian atmosphere of the school, and deprives the student of a safe and caring learning environment.

The spirit of the school calls each student to a life of prayer, love, service, courtesy, and hospitality. At Holy Disciples Catholic School, Jesus is the Center and Mary, the Model. All students deserve a positive, safe learning environment in which everyone behaves responsibly and respectfully toward others. All children are entitled to learn in a physically and emotionally safe environment that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior.

SCOPE OF BULLYING POLICY

This bullying policy is to be applied to Kindergarten through Grade Eight at Holy Disciples Catholic School. It addresses bullying and does not replace any policies that deal with individual student misconduct or behavior. Student behavior is already addressed in the disciplinary section of this policy. This policy will not apply to the Pre-Kindergarten programs. It is recognized that these children are very young and are learning social skills. The child’s teacher will handle unkind acts that occur at the Pre-School level. The teacher will work with the student, family, and school Administration (as needed) to address these situations.

Updated BULLYING POLICY (5.504)...

DEFINITION OF BULLYING (5.510)

"Bullying" is defined as any overt act by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate, or intimidate the other student while on school grounds, at a school sponsored activity, or on a school bus, of which acts are repeated against the same student over time. Such policies may include provisions addressing bullying outside of the school setting if it has a direct and negative impact on a student’s academic performance or safety in school. Bullying includes but is not limited to physical intimidation or assault, extortion, oral or written threats, teasing and putdowns, name-calling, **taunting**, threatening looks, gestures or actions, cruel rumors, false accusations, and social isolation. Per this definition, the following factors should be considered before identifying conduct by a student or group of students as bullying in violation of school policy. The determination that conduct does not constitute bullying under state law and school policy, however, does not restrict the administration's right to impose appropriate disciplinary consequences for student misconduct.

TAUNTING (NEW) – Taunting includes any actions or comments by students, staff, coaches, players, or spectators that include verbal insults, mocking gestures, intimidation, or any behavior intended to provoke or humiliate, bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean other students. Included is conduct that berates, “needles”, intimidates, or threatens based on race, gender, ethnic origin or background, and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs, or any other personal matters. Examples of taunting include but are not limited to: “trash talk”, defined as verbal communication of a personal nature directed by a competitor to an opponent by ridiculing his/her skills, efforts, or lack of success that is likely to provoke an altercation or physical response. This policy is designed to prevent and address taunting behavior among students. It outlines what constitutes taunting and is part of the broader HDCS Anti-Bullying Policy. It is aimed at creating a safe and respectful learning environment. Means of

reporting taunting behavior and subsequent consequences shall align with the HDCS Anti-Bullying Policy.

CYBERBULLYING POLICY (5.513)

Engagement in social networking, online blogs or postings shall result in disciplinary actions, including expulsion, if the content of the student's blogs or postings includes defamatory comments regarding the school, a person's dignity, bullying, harassment, threats, or other inappropriate comments that are contradictory to Catholic teaching.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, while at school, on the school bus, at any school function, or in connection to or with any school sponsored activity or event are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspensions, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials. All bullying incidents will be handled according to the protocols established in the Bullying Policy adopted by the school board.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING (5.510)

"Bullying" is defined as any overt acts by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate, or intimidate the other student while on school grounds, at a school sponsored activity, or on a school bus, of which acts are repeated against the same student over time. Such policies may include provisions addressing bullying outside of the school setting if it has a direct and negative impact on a student's academic performance or safety in school. Bullying includes but is not limited to physical intimidation or assault, extortion, oral or written threats, teasing and putdowns, name calling, threatening looks, gestures or actions, cruel rumors, false accusations, and social isolation. In accordance with this definition, the following factors should be considered before identifying conduct by a student or group of students as bullying in violation of school policy. The determination that conduct does not constitute bullying under state law and school policy, however, does not restrict the right of the administration to impose appropriate disciplinary consequences for student misconduct.

LOCATION

Bullying in violation of school policy must occur on school grounds, or at a school sponsored activity (which includes transportation services). Conduct that occurs off campus, e.g., harassment over the Internet, physical intimidation in the community, is not bullying under this policy unless it has a direct and negative impact on a student's academic performance or safety in school.

REPEATED INCIDENCE OF BULLYING

Bullying in violation of school policy must be "repeated against the same student over time." An isolated incident, however egregious, is not "bullying" under state law and school policy. Similarly, numerous acts of misconduct against different students do not constitute "bullying" under state law and school policy. While serious, both isolated incidences of bullying behavior and numerous acts of misconduct against different students will be appropriately addressed under the school's discipline policy and will be entered in a log to ensure a pattern of bullying behavior does not develop. In evaluating whether conduct constitutes bullying, special attention should be paid to the words chosen or actions taken, whether such conduct occurred in front of others or was communicated to others, how the student accused of bullying interacted with the victim, and the motivation, either admitted or appropriately inferred, of the alleged violator.

CULTURE OF INCLUSION

Holy Disciples Catholic School is committed to embracing the God-given uniqueness of every individual who works, learns, or encounters our school. As such, harassment, nagging, bullying, or detraction of another's character for the sake of being different is strictly prohibited at The Holy Disciples Catholic School. There is a zero tolerance policy for racial, religious, or other targeted prejudicial comments or actions. Such actions result in severe disciplinary actions by the school's Administration, and they may include in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion.

Cell Phones (5.509)

During normal school hours, all cell phones and personal devices shall be turned off and placed in a container on or near the teacher's desk. The cell phone is to be used in case of emergencies with permission and only in the

presence of a teacher or staff member. If a student does not comply with the cell phone policy, the phone will be confiscated and only a parent/guardian may retrieve the cell phone from the principal. If a second infraction occurs, the phone will be confiscated and the student will not be allowed to bring the phone to school. The same policy will apply to other personal communication devices with internet connectivity including I-watches and tablets not provided or sanctioned by the school. Similarly, if a student is on a field trip, and he or she chooses to bring his or her cell phone or other device, the school shall remain free of any responsibility for the device. When participating in an off-site school-related activity, the phone should be kept in the vibrate position in the backpack unless otherwise authorized by the supervising teacher.

The use of camera features on any electronic/digital or communication device to take unauthorized pictures and/or videos at any time is prohibited.

The use of any electronic/digital communication device during a test shall be considered and treated as cheating.

Cheating (5.509)

Cheating is contradictory to the teachings of the importance of Truth in the Catholic faith. Therefore, any instances of students cheating on academic work shall result in moderate to major disciplinary action as appropriate to the child's age, as well as a conference between the student and school Administration. Parents of the students will be notified, and further action may need to be taken, depending on the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Child Abuse Laws (5.605)

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The identification and prevention of child abuse and neglect is of the utmost priority in our school. All school personnel must abide by state law and Archdiocesan policy in regard to this subject. All school personnel and especially the school Administration shall keep informed of their legal obligations under the law. Whenever there is a concern over legal requirements and obligations, the Office of Education, Evangelization, and Catechesis must be contacted. Whenever a report is made by a mandated reporter to the appropriate civil authorities, such mandated reporter shall also inform the school's Administration, who shall report said instance to the OEEC, and shall ensure that a report, as required by statute, is made to the legitimate civil authorities as per the administrative procedures to this policy. In an instance of sexual misconduct by a school employee, the more restrictive norms of the Archdiocesan policy on this subject shall also be in effect.

As of 2019, all newly hired school personnel must submit to a Department of Children and Families background check in addition to the Archdiocesan required fingerprinting/background check and Virtus training. The results of said background checks are reviewed by the Archdiocesan Office of Safe Environment, and school Administration is informed and directed as to what action must be taken should a background check result in unfavorable findings.

Conduct (5.501)

In enrolling a child at a Catholic school, parents acknowledge that the administration may engage in discussion with their child about matters pertaining to behavior and/or academics without prior parental notification.

Parents are not entitled to knowledge of or access to academic, disciplinary, health, financial or other records of another student enrolled in the school.

In registering and enrolling in the Catholic school, parents/guardians agree to comply with and support

disciplinary decisions as outlined in the school's discipline policies and abide by the published Code of Conduct.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Student conduct whether inside or outside of school that is detrimental to the reputation of the school, or of another school student, employee, or volunteer, including social media, may result in disciplinary actions including suspension, expulsion, or withdrawal from school.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

Slime, wrist-watches that double as cell phones or messaging devices, drugs and drug paraphernalia (including but not limited to cigarettes, lighters, matches, vaping paraphernalia), weapons, and fidget spinners are considered prohibited items for students to have in their possession at The Holy Disciples Catholic School during the academic day as well as at extracurricular activities. Additionally, shoes or sneakers with light-up features and roller bottoms are also prohibited. Headphones are not allowed at the middle school. Meta glasses or any other device that records others are not allowed on either campus.

Any item that resembles or may act as a weapon is strictly prohibited. Other examples of prohibited items are toy guns, Beyblades, and handcuffs.

REVERENCE

Students of all faiths are welcome. Regardless of belief, all students and families are expected to afford the reverence and respect that is due to our Lord, His Blessed Mother, and the saints whom we honor as a Catholic school. Any act of irreverence or desecration of religious items or environments will be grounds for disciplinary action as determined by school Administration.

ADULT GOSSIP

Negativity and gossip about the school are damaging to our faith, our children, and our school. Should any school staff or enrolled families be found perpetuating such destructive commentary, they will be addressed by the Principal and/or Pastor. This includes social media postings. Detracting from the good name of the school could be grounds for an invitation to leave the school community for perhaps a better fit elsewhere.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL (5.502, 5.503)

No student shall possess, use, or attempt to possess, or be under the influence of a prohibited substance on school premises during any school term or off school premises at a school-related activity, function, or event. Students who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, including expulsion. Some examples of said items include: drugs and drug paraphernalia, alcohol, cigarettes, lighters, matches, and vaping paraphernalia.

DETENTIONS

Students who receive a detention must serve it on the date scheduled by the teacher/school Administration, without exceptions. **Detention is served every Wednesday after school in the middle school.** During the detention period, the student will first complete a behavior reflection diagram to fully understand the impact of his/her actions on oneself and others. Upon completion of said diagram, the student will be required to complete academic work from his/her teacher, with a priority placed on making up missing school work. K-2 detention is 30 minutes in length. Grades 4-8 detention is 40 minutes in length. Detention is held in the principal's office. A student's responsibility to serve detention overrides his or her participation in all extracurricular activities which may conflict with the detention time, including sports, music, clubs, etc. Principals may amend these times due to the circumstances of the behavior.

Saturday Detention: Students in Grades 5-8 who have 3 or more detentions in a trimester will serve Saturday detention. Saturday detention will take place from 9 A.M. to 11 A.M. in the school gym.

SUSPENSION (5.207)

A student may be suspended for behavior that is harmful to the safety of the students or in grave contradiction to school policy. Suspensions take two forms: in-school and out-of-school, and the nature of the suspension will be an Administrative decision. A parental meeting may also be requested. A student must report to school Administration upon returning from an out-of-school suspension. A second suspension in the same academic year will necessitate a conference with the school Administration, teacher(s), and parents to determine further needs of the child, and if the student should return to The Holy Disciples Catholic School. In the event of an out-of-school suspension, parents will make arrangements to pick up all schoolwork for their child. Any student who is suspended shall be required to complete any class work, including tests. Students must prepare to take any and all tests on the day they return to class, including tests scheduled for the day.

In-school suspension is given to a student whose behavior is not corrected through detention. Serious infractions of the rules will not be tolerated and may result in an in-school suspension. This means a student is excluded from class and any school activity for a specific period of time (usually 1 full day). The student will be given work to complete and will not socialize with other students at this time. In-school suspension work carries no academic credit. A student who receives an in-school suspension will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities (including sports) for a period of time determined by the principal and based upon the nature of the suspension. No in-school suspension is given without parent notification. In-school suspension, out of school suspension or expulsion will automatically result from: Smoking, drinking, drug abuse, incidents of physical assault, or possession of any weapon on school property or at school activities. Any serious misuse of technology may also result in suspension or expulsion.

EXPULSIONS (5.208)

Expulsion is a serious matter and should be invoked only as a last resort, or in cases of serious misconduct or violation of school policy. A student may be expelled from school when he/she has engaged in conduct which constitutes a serious violation of school policy; is seriously disruptive of the educational process, which endangers persons or property; or has engaged in repeated violations of school policies, rules and standards of conduct or when other means of discipline have failed. Incidents of physical assault, such as bullying or verbal abuse (threats, extortion, or violence) are not acceptable in a Catholic school or at school-sponsored activities and may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. This policy is intended to cover serious misconduct which occurs off school grounds and which does not directly involve the school but which can be harmful to the education process of the school. The principal and/or pastor may determine a suspension and/or expulsion if offenses are deemed by them to be deserved.

DISCIPLINE (5.210)

The Principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may adjust any discipline rule for just cause at her discretion. Students should understand their first obligation in a Catholic school is to respect the dignity of all members of the school community. The student is a Holy Disciples Catholic School student at all times, and may be disciplined by school officials if he/she engages in conduct that is detrimental to the reputation of the school. Student disciplinary matters will be logged in the school's student database: FACTS. HD values the upholding of high moral and behavioral standards. As such, all teachers and school Administration are permitted to enforce consequences when students make poor choices in an effort to teach them to make better choices in the future. In the event that the adult observing the misbehavior is not a teacher or administrator, he/she will consult with the child's homeroom teacher and/or school Administration for a determination on appropriate disciplinary measures. The following levels of student behavior infractions provide a sense as to the nature, severity, and consequences of misbehaviors, but should be understood as being within the rights of school Administration to discern on a case-by-case basis:

Minor Incident	● Forgotten homework or classroom materials ● Talking out of turn ● Running in hallway or classroom ● Uniform infraction	Verbal or Written Warning/Reminder , logged by supervising adult in Educonnect and sent via email to parent/guardian. Three or more uniform infractions-detention

Moderate Incident	● Irreverence in church (degree could lead to Major incident status) ● Pushing or shoving/horseplay ● Bus infractions (getting out of seat, shouting, using foul language) ● Cell phone out and/or on without explicit school adult permission ● Overly aggressive at recess ● Accumulation of 3 minor incidents (per trimester) - grades 5-8 ● Accumulation of 5 minor incidents (per trimester) - grades K-4	Detention , logged by supervising adult in FACTS and sent via email to parent/guardian.
Major Incident	● Intentional physical harm of another person - depending on age of student and degree of severity, this could result in a lesser or greater consequence. ● Possession of prohibited items (referenced in handbook) ● Prejudicial comments (racial, sexual, etc) - depending on age of student, this could result in a lesser or greater consequence. ● Defacing school property ● Administratively defined incidence of bullying	In-School-Suspension Or Out-of-School-Suspension , (determined by school Administration) logged by school Administration in FACTS and sent via email to parent/guardian. Often, a parent conference will also be requested.

	● Accumulation of 3 moderate incidents (per trimester)	
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Ultimate Incident	● Severe intentional physical harm of another person ● Accumulation of 3 major incidents (per school year)	Expulsion , (determined carefully by school Administration in conjunction with the OEEC) logged by school Administration in FACTS and in a formal letter to parent/guardian. This will always warrant a formal parent conference.
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TEXTBOOKS AND SCHOOL PROPERTY

All non-consumable textbooks must be covered with a book sock or other type of temporary cover to preserve their condition (brown paper bags work best). Fees for lost/damaged school textbooks or property will be assessed and assigned to the family in the event that a student misplaces or abuses textbooks or school property. Students whose individual academic plans necessitate a duplicate set of books may incur an additional fee if the school does not have extra books on hand.

STUDENT BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

Children's birthdays are celebrated in school; however, classroom parties in grades PK through 8 are not allowed. Also, due to the growing number of serious allergies, please do not send snacks or treats for the class unless approved in advance by the teacher and the school nurse. **NOTE:** Unless the entire class is invited, birthday party invitations will not be distributed through the school because it can hurt the feelings of those not included and lead to classroom difficulties. Please do not ask the teachers to distribute invitations unless all students are invited. Student's names, addresses, and telephone numbers can be accessed through FACTS, if a family elects to make their information public to the school community.

MIDDLE SCHOOL DANCES

Students must use appropriate behavior, reflective of school day expectations at dances. Please use modesty when choosing your child's attire for one of these events. As always, the school assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen personal items at dances.

OFF-CAMPUS CONDUCT (5.501)

Students may be disciplined for conduct off school grounds if such conduct is disruptive of the educational process, violates a policy of the school, or negatively impacts the school or members within it.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Taking the bus is one of the safest and most convenient means of getting to school for Oakville/Watertown and other students. It is strongly suggested that students who are eligible for bus transportation use it. Town school buses that bring students to Catholic schools are funded through special funds allocated by the State of Connecticut. Those funds are often at risk when fewer Catholic school students choose to use the bus. Parents who choose to send their students to school by bus ensure that these funds continue to be given by the state, and reduce the amount of car traffic on the school grounds.

The town of Watertown provides free school bus service for residents of Watertown and Oakville. Waterbury/Naugatuck residents are able to ride the Unified Bus. Other families living near the bus stops for the school's Waterbury/Naugatuck bus (yet not being a resident of Waterbury or Naugatuck) may contact the school office to utilize the school bus service.

BUS CONDUCT

In the interest of safety, all students and parents should understand the necessity for strict compliance with the following bus rules:

- Students are to remain out of the roadway while waiting for the bus.
- Getting on and off the bus should be done in an orderly manner.
- Students are to remain seated while the bus is in motion, aisles should be kept clear at all times, and no items should be thrown in or out of the bus.
- No eating or drinking permitted on the bus.
- Students may not change their assigned buses without a note from the parent to school teachers and Administration.
- The first time a student violates the bus policy, he/she may be given detention.
- The second time a student violates the bus policy, he/she may be taken off the bus for a week. Parents will have to provide their own transportation to and from school for the week.
- The third time a student violates the bus policy, he/she may totally lose bus privileges and be subject to further disciplinary action determined by school Administration.

Communication (1.201)

Keeping an open line of communication among all constituents is vital to the healthy operations of the school. Please contact the main office if there are any changes to your child's schedule. A note to the teacher should also be sent in if dismissal arrangements change.

Communication on a regular basis is an important part of our philosophy. Therefore, calendars, weekly newsletters, and other information are sent home with the children or through electronic communications, and the school website is kept as current as possible.

Parents/guardians can contact teachers via email. Teachers will respond within 24 hours and are not expected to reply during class time or during other school responsibilities. Teachers are not required to respond to email after 6pm or on weekends. Classroom issues should always be addressed with the teacher first.

APPROPRIATE CHANNELS

Please use this as a guide so we can help you as quickly and efficiently as possible!		Contact me for:
Mrs. Pillis		Start with me for the <u>Elementary School Campus!</u>
Administrative Assistant		● Primary contact for changes in dismissal
jpillis@holydiscipleschool.org		● General inquiries and school information
860-945-0621 x110		● Good news and updates
		● Admissions

Mrs. Perugini

Administrative Assistant

eperugini@holydisciplesschool.org

860-274-9208

Mrs. Jackie Cipriano jcipriano@holydisciplesschool.org

Start with us for the Middle School Campus!

- Primary contact for changes in dismissal
- General inquiries and school information
- Admissions
- Good news and updates

Your Child's Classroom Teacher using this format:

E-mail for Elementary School Campus Teacher:

Firstinitiallastname@holydisciplesschool.org

860-945-0621 - leave a message with Mrs. Pillis

E-mail for Middle School Campus Teacher:

firstinitiallastname@holydisciplesschool.org

860-274-9208 - leave a message with Mrs. Perugini or
Mrs. Cipriano

- Grades
- Homework
- First contact for all classroom concerns
- Additional contact for changes in dismissal
- Good news and updates
- Feedback

Mrs. Madlen Kurutan

Business Manager

mkurutan@holydisciplesschool.org

860-945-0621 (M, W, F); 860-274-9208 (T, Th)

- Tuition due dates, questions, and concerns
- FACTS Tuition Management questions

Mrs. Deborah Mulhall

Principal, Elementary School Campus

dmulhall@holydiscipleschool.org

860-945-0621 - leave a message with Mrs. Pillis

Mrs. Rebecca Goddard

Principal, Middle School Campus

rgoddard@holydiscipleschool.org

860-274-9208 - leave a message with Mrs. Perugini or Mrs. Cipriano

- Good news and updates/feedback
- Additional first contact for major classroom concerns
- Follow up contact for minor classroom concerns, as needed
- Staff-related concerns
- Confidential student overall wellness information

School Safety

The safety of all students, staff, and visitors is of utmost importance to us. Therefore, it is most prudent to be prepared in the event of any accidents or emergencies that might occur during the school day and/or on school property.

CRISIS PLAN (5.611, 5.618)

A comprehensive Crisis Plan is on file and well-learned by all staff and students. Regular drills are conducted, and the plan is reviewed and revised at least once yearly. It has been devised with the counsel and input of local police and fire authorities and a school-based Security Committee.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY DRILLS (5.613, 5.617)

Each classroom will review and practice all fire and emergency drills. The first two weeks of school will include several drills to acquaint classes with emergency procedures. Fire and emergency drills will be practiced school-wide at least once a month and filed with the Watertown Fire Department. The Watertown Fire Department and Police Departments visit the school buildings for regular check-ins.

SCHOOL VISITORS & VOLUNTEERS (5.618, 3.212)

We embrace the roles of families and friends in the lives of our students. In the interest of school safety, visits from family members to classrooms must be pre-approved and scheduled with the classroom teacher/and or school Administration. Visitors or volunteers at any school in the Archdiocese of Hartford must submit to a background check and Virtus training (Protecting God's Children for Adults). This information is available by calling the school office. Virtus Training can be found here: <https://www.virtusonline.org/virtus/index.cfm?>

School visitors will be required to sign in at the main office, provide his/her photo ID for copying by the Administrative Assistant, and to wear a visitor's pass while on school grounds.

Students are instructed **not to open the door** for any visitors, even if said visitors are his/her family members. Entry into the school will always be moderated by adult personnel and subject to the verification of one's identity via photo ID. Students will only be released to adults who are pre-authorized to pick up students via their Student Safety Information Sheets, which must be kept current via the main office.

LOCKERS, DESKS, AND BACKPACKS (5.502)

Upon reasonable suspicion of inappropriate activity that may subject a student to any level of discipline, or in the interests of safety of students and staff, the Principal/Chief Administrator and/or his or her designee, may search student desks, lockers, personal belongings, and anything brought onto school property including, but not limited to, handbags, briefcases, purses, backpacks, clothing, cell phones, or other electronic devices and the content within such devices such

as emails, photos, messages, or other information. The school administration may seize any such items and retain them until the end of the school day or longer. The school administration will have the prerogative to turn over any such items to the police if there is evidence of illegal activity.

The local police, using drug detecting dogs, may be invited into the school on a random basis to search lockers as a proactive, preventative measure.

CUSTODY ARRANGEMENTS

Parents/guardians shall provide complete information regarding custodial care of the child and applicable visitation rights for their children when they are at school or at school functions. Upon request, the parent shall furnish to the principal a copy of any relevant court order in order to insure the safety and welfare of the student. The parents/guardians will notify the school/principal of any changes in custodial care of the student and of the issuance of any court ordered restrictions prohibiting parental or third party contact with the child.

Extracurricular Activities (4.125, 4.126)

Extracurricular activities are an important part of educating the whole child. The goals of extracurricular activities are:

- Character Development
- Sportsmanship
- Responsibility

Our program affords our students excellent opportunities for development of individual and team skills. Extracurricular activities include, but are not limited to: Sports, Student Council, Band, Caring Kids, Garden Club, School Newspaper, Homework Club, Garden Angels Ministry, Choir, Art Club, Lego Club, Sunshine Club, Drama Club, Craft Club, and more.

Students who participate in extracurricular activities must meet the behavioral and academic standards the school sets for membership on sports teams or leagues.

The following academic standards have been devised:

- Students must maintain a 73 or higher in each major subject area in order to remain in good standing on the team or club in question. Teachers will report students' grades on a bi-weekly basis to the Principal or Lead Teacher for administrative review.
- Athletes/club members must also maintain a minimum of an S in all special classes, as well as proper conduct and effort.
- Should a student become academically ineligible, he or she may be administratively reinstated once his/her content area grade(s) reach a minimum of 73. These determinations will be made with administrative discretion and communicated with the Athletic Director.

In addition to the academic standards, students must adhere to the following behavioral standards:

- Permission slips must be signed by parent(s) before the start of any sports season.
- Students must be in school on the day of a practice or game.
- Uniforms of athletes must be properly maintained. Clean uniforms must be returned to the Coach at the end of the playing season. Parents will be billed for lost/damaged uniforms.
- Students must understand fully that they represent The Holy Disciples Catholic School, and behavior that is not acceptable – disrespect, damage to property, failure to obey directions of responsible adults – may result in dismissal from the team, activity, or school.
- It therefore goes without saying that the same above-board behavior is expected of the adults who attend these functions as well.

Field Trips (4.125)

All field trips will have an educational purpose and that will be specifically stated in the parents' notification. The mode of transportation must be stated as well as the number of adult chaperones needed. The only permission form allowed is

the official form sent home. A simple note will not suffice. Participation in a field trip is a privilege, and a student can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements. No child will be allowed to remain in school when his/her class is on a field trip and will be considered absent if he/she does not attend.

The teacher, with approval of the principal, has final authority regarding which and how many parents/guardians officially chaperone a given trip, per archdiocesan policy, and all parent/guardian volunteers and parent/guardian chaperones must be background checked as well as Virtus trained - with **no exceptions**. Unless invited to do so, a parent/guardian not designated as a chaperone should not attend a field trip. Teachers will not take more chaperones than required. Also, in fairness to all classroom parents/guardians, the assignment of chaperones will be done in an equitable manner throughout the year.

Children can never be transported by staff. Parent/guardian transportation or chartered bus services must be used at all times. All students must have a permission slip signed by their parents/guardians in order to be transported and participate in field trips. At the elementary school level, overnight field trips are not permitted. *It should be noted that siblings of students whose classes are attending a field trip are not permitted to attend, unless said siblings are of the grade level that is partaking in the field trip.* This allows for students to experience the privilege of specific field trips at their respective grade levels.

SCHOOL LIBRARY (4.116)

Each classroom has its own selection of fiction and non-fiction books for use by the students. Classroom libraries currently take the place of a formal school library, and teachers regularly stock their classrooms with updated titles, particularly with the generosity of donors.

LOST AND FOUND

Any items found in the school building or on school grounds should be given to the school Administrative Assistant to be placed in the Lost and Found basket. Items placed will remain there for 30 days only, and will then be added to the school's Uniform Swap supply or donated to charity.

Parent Organizations

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION and PARENT AMBASSADORS (1.210)

All families with children at the school automatically belong to the Home and School Association (HSA) once registered for school. The HSA is responsible for family activities, fundraisers, and community meetings and events. Subcommittees of the H&S Association include: Fundraising (with subcommittees for individual events), Family Activities, Hospitality, Athletics (Sports Association), and more.

School Board (1.209)

The School Board is a *committee-driven school board established according to the guidelines issued by the Office of Catholic Schools*. The School Board is consultative on school programs and projects, and its ex-officio members are the Pastor and Principals.

Religion & Spirituality

PRAYER (4.109)

The school day begins and ends with prayer. Traditional prayers of the Church are taught. Informal prayer is also encouraged. Catholic students are encouraged to practice their faith and to receive the Sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist often after making their First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion in Grade 3. Student retreats approved by the principal will be permitted as an integral part of the instructional program. Off-campus retreats will follow the guidelines for field trips and parental permission will be required.

MASS AND SACRAMENTS (4.112)

Attendance at Mass by the entire student body will take place on First Fridays as well as on Holy Days. Catholic

students are encouraged to practice their faith and particularly to receive the Sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist (if prepared and in an appropriate state to do so) in such a manner that they shall come to realize that spiritual growth is a matter of cooperation with divine grace.

GENDER IDENTITY (5.620)

Holy Disciples Catholic School *shall accept and relate to students and all members of the school community, for the duration of their years in attendance at their respective schools, according to their God-given, biological sex as male or female consistent with the complementary nature of each, and maintain appropriate distinctions between males and females especially in issues of facilities use, athletic teams, uniforms, and nomenclature. Catholic schools, and individuals employed with Catholic schools, shall not sponsor, facilitate, or host such organizations, events, or activities that would promote views contrary to Catholic doctrine regarding human sexuality and gender, either on or of campus, or through social media. A pastoral approach consistent with Catholic Church teachings will be used in addressing matters of gender, including transgenderism and gender dysphoria.*

Uniforms and Dress Code (5.508)

Our official school uniform supplier is Lands' End. You may purchase uniforms by visiting their website at www.landsend.com/get-started. Our school number is 900105479. Items that are underlined may be purchased elsewhere.

*The transitional period of the original SMMS and SJS uniforms has ended. All students will need to wear uniform items with the Holy Disciples Catholic School logo as detailed below. Please read this carefully with your child.

SUMMER UNIFORM

Students are permitted to wear summer uniforms from the first day of school to October 31st, and from May 1st to the close of the school year. Changes to such times may only be made by the Principal.

WINTER UNIFORM

Students must wear the winter uniform from November 1st through April 30th. Changes to such times may only be made by the Principal.

See a detailed outline for both boys and girls by grade level on the next several pages.

PRE-K3 & PRE-K4 GIRLS AND BOYS: *NOTE: PreK clothing does not need to be purchased from Lands' End or be branded with our school logo although you may do so if you wish.*

Summer (1st day—Oct. 31st & May 1st—last day) Solid navy, dark green or light blue shirt (any style) with navy or dark green elastic waist shorts or pants. Socks and sneakers. Velcro closure preferred, no lights.

Winter (Nov. 1st—Apr 30th) Solid navy, dark green or light blue shirt/sweatshirt/sweater (any style) with navy or dark green elastic waist pants. Socks and sneakers. Velcro closure preferred, no lights.

SHOES – GRADES K-8 GIRLS' AND BOYS'

Girls— Black or navy Mary Janes, brown or khaki Sperry boat shoe with 2 or 3 eyelets or Lands' End All Weather Suede Slip On Moc in navy or brown.

Boys— Brown or navy Bucks, brown or khaki Sperry boat shoe with 2 or 3 eyelets or Lands' End All Weather Suede Slip On Moc in navy or brown.

GRADES K-8 GIRLS' AND BOYS' GYM UNIFORM:

****Every student K-8 must purchase the new gym uniform from Lands End***

Summer (1st day—Oct. 31st & May 1st—last day)
Solid navy or evergreen t-shirt, gray shorts, sneakers.

Winter (Nov. 1st—Apr 30th)
Navy or evergreen t-shirt, navy or evergreen crew sweatshirt (each with school logo on chest). Quarter zip
A pullover (with school logo on chest) may be worn instead of crewneck sweatshirt, gray sweatpants, plain white socks and sneakers.

Reminder: All uniform items including school spirit wear sweatshirts MUST have our Holy Disciples school logo. Students are no longer able to wear items with original SMMS or SJS logos.

GIRLS Grades K-4

Summer (1st day—Oct. 31st & May 1st—last day)
Navy/khaki skort or shorts with evergreen or light blue short sleeve polo with unified school logo embroidered on chest. Navy or white crew socks or knee socks.
Navy, black, or brown belt.

OR

Plaid school jumper with white button down short sleeve oxford. Navy or white crew socks or knee socks.

Winter (Nov. 1st—Apr 30th)

Plaid school jumper with white button down long sleeve oxford. Navy or white crew socks or knee socks. Navy or evergreen cardigan.

OR

Navy/khaki slacks with evergreen or light blue long sleeve polo with unified school logo embroidered on chest. Navy or evergreen long sleeve quarter-zip pullover with school logo embroidered on chest. Navy, black, or brown belt. Navy or white crew socks or knee socks.

GIRLS Grades 5-8

Summer (1st day—Oct. 31st & May 1st—last day)
Navy/khaki skort or shorts with evergreen or light blue short sleeve polo with unified school logo embroidered on chest. Navy or white crew socks or knee socks.
Navy, black, or brown belt.

OR

Plaid skort with white or light blue button down short sleeve oxford. Navy or white crew socks or knee socks.

Winter (Nov. 1st—Apr 30th)

Plaid skort with white or light blue button down long sleeve oxford. Navy or evergreen long sleeve quarter-zip pullover with school logo embroidered on chest. Navy or white crew socks or knee socks. Navy or evergreen cardigan.

OR

Navy/khaki slacks with white or light blue button down long sleeve oxford. Navy or evergreen long sleeve quarter-zip pullover with school logo

embroidered on chest. Navy, black, or brown belt.
Navy or white crew socks or knee socks.

Skort Length – all skorts must not be shorter than 2-inches above the knee.

BOYS Grades K-4

Summer (1st day—Oct. 31st & May 1st—last day)

Navy/khaki shorts with evergreen or light blue short

sleeve polo with school logo embroidered on chest.

Navy, black, or brown belt. Navy or white crew socks
or knee socks.

Winter (Nov. 1st—Apr 30th)

Navy/khaki slacks with evergreen or light blue long

sleeve polo with school logo embroidered on chest.

Navy or evergreen long sleeve quarter-zip pullover with
school logo embroidered on chest.

Navy, black, or brown belt. Navy or white crew socks
or knee socks.

BOYS Grades 5-8

Summer (1st day—Oct. 31st & May 1st—last day)

Navy/khaki shorts with evergreen or light blue short

sleeve polo with school logo embroidered on chest.

Navy, black, or brown belt. Navy or white crew socks
or knee socks.

Winter (Nov. 1st—Apr 30th)

Navy/khaki slacks with white or light blue long sleeve

button-down oxford. Navy or evergreen long sleeve

quarter-zip pullover with school logo embroidered on

chest. Official school necktie in Classic
Navy/Evergreen Plaid. *Necktie exception:* 8th grade

boys may wear a tie of their choosing.

Navy, black, or brown belt. Navy or white crew socks
or knee socks.

APPEARANCE & OTHER UNIFORM GUIDELINES

Holy Disciples Catholic School has a haircut policy in place to align with the dress code policy. Overall, students are encouraged to follow a modest and distraction free approach to personal style. \

- Please avoid radical or fad haircuts (including color or highlighting).

- Girls' hair must be clean and well-groomed - no coloring or highlighting. Hair ornaments, (scrunchies, headbands, clips) must match the uniform - green, gray, white, khaki, or black and should not have distracting ornamentation.

- Boys should have conservative haircuts - short, clean-cut, and neat. Ears and eyes must be fully visible. Shaved heads, razor strips or lines are not allowed. Hair length must be neatly above the shirt collar. Pony-tails are not allowed.

- Boys who are able to shave must do so daily.

- Nail polish may not be worn in the lower school (PK-Grade 4). Upper campus girls may wear clear, or light pink nail polish. No dark colors, designs, or false nails are permitted. No make-up is permitted and students may be asked to remove makeup in school by the administration. No artificial eyelashes are allowed.
- A written excuse is to be sent to the teacher whenever it is necessary for a child to be out of uniform.

**Please label all clothing with the child's name.
This will help return lost clothes to their rightful owners.**

Belts– all pants and shorts (summer uniform) must be worn with a belt at all times – except Grade K – they may wear pull-on pants and/or shorts with no belt. (Both boys and girls)

Earrings/Jewelry

Girls may wear 1 pair of earrings, 1 watch (not an iWatch or internet/data connected watch), 1 necklace. No earrings or necklaces on gym day for student safety.

Boys may not wear earrings or bracelets. Watches (not an iWatch or internet/data connected watch) and religious necklaces worn inside the shirt are acceptable.

DRRESS-DOWN DAYS GUIDELINES

On class or school-wide casual days, all students and staff are expected to dress modestly and appropriately for a Catholic school environment. Refer to instructions given by your principal for these days. As an example, students may wear:

- Slacks or jeans should fit at the waist, no holes or frayed edges.
- Skirts, dresses, and shorts should be knee length
- Polo shirts, t-shirts (team jerseys), blouses and button downs - proper fit
- Sneakers
- Necklines should be modest
- Shirts must have sleeves
- School and school team hooded sweatshirts
- **No yoga pants, jeggings, leggings, pajamas pants, flannel pants or other related inappropriate apparel** (*the school encourages modest dress on school campuses*)
- No open toe shoes, flip flops, sandals, slippers, crocs, platforms or high heels (for safety on stairs and playgrounds)
- No revealing clothing (short shorts or mini-skirts that are shorter than 2 inches above the knee, halter tops, spaghetti strap tops, half/midriff shirts, tank tops, low cut shirts, see through shirts or other clothing that is revealing and distracting).

Parents/Guardians play a key role in guiding and supervising their child to comply with the dress code.

Parents/Guardians will be called if a student is out of dress code, and will be required to bring a change of clothing to school for their child.

Right to Amend

Holy Disciples Catholic School reserves the right to amend this Handbook at any time by the principal or pastor. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents/guardians via email communications through our FACTS email system.

COMPUTER AND INTERNET USER GUIDELINES]

(In accordance with the directives of the Office of Catholic Schools)

Please sign and return “Acceptable Use Agreement for Electronic Information Resources” at the end of the handbook.

Holy Disciples Catholic School recognizes the important role technology (computers, networks, software, multimedia equipment and the Internet) plays in our society. The schools endeavors to train students to best use technology to enhance their academic pursuits and to provide a resource to teachers to enhance their curriculum.

Internet access is available to students and teachers at the schools to support education and research that is consistent with the educational objective of the school. The Internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. It enables the student and teacher to explore thousands of libraries, databases, museums and other repositories of information and to exchange personal communication with other users around the world.

With access to computers and people all over the world, also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. The school has taken precautions to monitor and/or filter access to inappropriate materials. Students will use the Internet as directed by the teacher. Websites will be researched and approved by the teacher. The school firmly believes that the valuable information and interaction available through the use of the Internet far outweigh the possibility that users may procure inappropriate material.

The smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided here so that you are aware of the responsibilities that exist with the privilege associated with the use of the computers, network, and the Internet. Users must use the

network resources in an efficient, ethical, and legal manner. If a student violates any of these provisions, his or her account may be terminated and future access could possibly be denied.

*Network user refers to all students and employees.

Local Computer and Network Use

All network users are given a network account and must be responsible for their own password and must respect the rights of others. Obtaining another person's password is a form of theft. Taking advantage when a network user does not log off is no different than entering an unlocked house. Using someone else's password or posting a message using another person's login name or identity is a form of dishonesty. The person assigned the account is responsible for all actions under that account. Attempts to access the system as any other user will result in cancellation of user privileges.

1. The network user is personally responsible for his or her actions in accessing and utilizing the school's computer resources. The students are advised never to access, keep or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see.
2. Network users must not attempt to harm another user or their work.
3. Network users must not attempt to harm the computer or the network in any way or engage in other acts of vandalism to any products, furniture or equipment related to computer use. This includes but is not limited to modifying or removing any hardware or software on school computers, changing printer settings or desktop settings, or uploading or creating computer viruses.
4. Network users may not add software or download files to any school computer without permission from the technology department.
5. Network users must not copy software. Commercial software is copyrighted and each purchaser must abide by the licensing agreement published with the software. Users are expected to abide by the copyright laws.
6. If a network user identifies or has knowledge of a security problem on the network, the user must notify the teacher or principal. The security problem should not be shown or demonstrated to other users.
7. The Holy Disciples Catholic School reserves the right to inspect network user resources for files that may affect the operation of the network.

Internet Access

1. Network users will access the network for the purposes of education and research. Accessing material that is pornographic, violent, or otherwise inappropriate, will be regarded as a serious breach of school discipline.

and will be dealt with accordingly.

2. Network users must not disseminate Internet addresses of sites containing inappropriate material; such
3. attempts will be regarded as a serious breach of school discipline and will be dealt with accordingly. 4. Network users must not attempt to disable or bypass the filtering software installed by the school; such attempts will be regarded as a serious breach of school discipline and will be dealt with accordingly. 5. Network users will notify school officials immediately of any user who is accessing inappropriate material, disseminating inappropriate material, and attempting to disable the filtering software or using the Internet or the network in any inappropriate manner.
6. Network users must not use the network in any way that would disrupt the use of the network by others. 7. Network users must not release the school's, their own or anyone else's personal information on the Internet including name, address, phone number, and photograph.
8. The Holy Disciples Catholic School Internet access is not intended for commercial purposes.

Electronic Mail

1. Students will have email access only under their teacher's direct supervision using a classroom account.
2. Network users are expected to respect the privacy of email just as they would paper mail. Users should not share an email message with a wide audience unless the author has agreed.
3. Network users should always be polite and use appropriate language. Contents of email should be consistent with the behavioral, content, and language expectations of the classroom.
4. Network users must be aware that email is not guaranteed to be private. People who operate the system do have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to school officials.

Personal Responsibility

When you are using the school's computers, it may feel as though you can more easily break a rule and not get caught. This is not really true. Whenever you do something on a network, you leave little "electronic footprints," so the odds of getting caught are really about the same as they are in the real world. The fact that you can do something or think you can do something without being caught does not make it right to do so. Even if you don't get caught, there is always one person who will know whether you have done wrong – and that person is you. Your use of the Internet can be a mirror that will show you what kind of a person you are.

Acceptable Use Agreement for Electronic Information Resources

Each student who utilizes the school's computer system and other school electronic devices will be instructed in the proper use of the network, and the student and his/her parent or guardian must read and sign this use agreement before the student will be allowed to use the school's computer system and electronic information resources. The use of the school's computer system and electronic information resources must be in support of education and research, consistent with the educational objectives of the school. Students using the school's network or computing resources must comply with the appropriate rules for that network or resource.

I agree to follow the rules in all of my work with the Holy Disciples Catholic School computers while attending the school:

1. I will not use the computer resources for non-academic purposes. I will not waste or take supplies such as paper, printer cartridges, and discs that are provided by the school. I will keep my computer work area clean and will not eat or drink in the computer lab.
2. I will not make unauthorized copies of software, and I will not give, lend, or sell copies of software to others. I understand that I will not be allowed to bring software applications, games, or CD-ROMs from home to be used on school equipment without proof of licensure and prior approval of appropriate school personnel.
3. I will not copy, change, read, or use files from another user without prior permission from that user. I will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the school's system programs for computer equipment.
4. I will not do anything that may disrupt or damage the school's computer system or electronic resources. I will not bring in, or allow access to materials or websites that I believe may contain viruses.
5. I will not use the school's computer systems and electronic resources to disturb or harass other computer users or use inappropriate language in my communications. I will not use obscene, lewd, vulgar, inflammatory, threatening or disrespectful language when using the school's computer systems and electronic resources. I will not harass or bully other individuals. I will not use the school's systems to spread falsehoods or defamatory statements.
6. I will promptly disclose to my teacher or other school official any messages I receive or view which I feel are inappropriate or which make me feel uncomfortable.
7. I will not agree to meet anyone that I have met online without my parents' permission.
8. I will not use the school's computer system or electronic resources to engage in any illegal act.
9. I will honor my school's procedures for the storage of information. I realize that after prior notice has been given to me, files may be deleted from the system to protect the integrity of the network or because of space limitations on the computer's hard drive.
10. I will not use bulletin boards, chat rooms, or social networks for personal use when using the school's computers.
11. I will not reveal my personal information, home address, or personal phone number or those of students, teachers, or other staff members. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secrets. The use of school computers and networking resources for commercial activities is not permitted. Their use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.
12. I understand that I have no expectation of privacy in my use of school computers. I understand that school officials may search and examine my use of school computers at any time, and without notice.

Parents/guardians must accept that the school cannot control all content 100% and their child may encounter material on a network/bulletin board that the parent/guardian and the school do not consider appropriate (i.e., vulgar jokes, statements of belief that some might consider immoral, etc.) The student is responsible for not pursuing material that could be considered offensive. Teachers will terminate the internet use if they discover that a student has been accessing unapproved content.

The use of the computer is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of these privileges.

- Vandalism or intentional modification of system settings will result in cancellation of privileges and/or school disciplinary action.
- The school reserves the right to seek financial restitution for any damage caused by a student or other user.
- The system administrators will deem what is inappropriate use, and their decision is final.
- The administration, faculty, and staff of the school may request that the system administrator deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges. Violations of the rules and code of ethics described above will be dealt with seriously.

Student Name _____

Student Signature _____

Date _____ Student Grade _____

As parent/legal guardian of the student signing above, I grant permission for my child to access computer service networks such as electronic mail, Google Classroom, and the Internet.

- I have read and agree to the rules and code of ethics.
- I understand that some materials found on the Internet may be objectionable; therefore, I agree to accept responsibility for guiding my child and conveying to him/her the appropriate standards for selecting, sharing, and/or exploring information and media. I agree to hold harmless Holy Disciples Catholic School and employees of the school system for any misuse of access to the computer services networks that my child commits.
- I understand that once signed this agreement is legally binding on me.

Parent/Guardian #1 Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian 1 Name: **(Please print)** _____

Parent/Guardian #2 Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian #2 Name: **(Please print)** _____

Street Address: _____

Cell or Home Telephone: _____ Work Telephone: _____

Complete and return to the main office at your child's school campus.

Student Image Permission Form

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Holy Disciples Catholic School hosts a Website at smmsjschools.org as well as a school Facebook, Instagram and other Social Media pages, and a school video YouTube page. Occasionally we wish to post a picture of a particular school activity or student accomplishment such as a Science project, a play, artwork, sporting event, a distance learning class, or other activity. This may involve posting a picture showing a student, a group or class of students, or a sample of a student's work. We may also use these photos in brochures, posters, and in various other school publications. Videos produced by the school and/or its students and featuring the benefits and activities of the Holy Disciples Catholic School, including those filmed during a distance learning class session, may also be posted, including related audio, on our website, YouTube and Facebook/Social Media pages.

If students' images or works are used in any of these print or electronic contexts:

- Only first names shall be used if referencing student pictures or scanned classroom work.
- Personal information will not be published.
- Documents will not include information that indicates the physical location of any student at a given time other than attendance at a particular school or participation in an activity.

(NOTE: Should a photo of the student be included in a media release (print, online, TV, radio), first and last name of the student will need to be included. Your permission would cover this usage as well.)

Before posting pictures of students, samples of student work, or videos, including related audio, featuring students/classes, we require that the parent(s)/guardian(s) sign the permission form included here.

*Please be aware that images of students may also be shared with the Archdiocese of Hartford Center for Catholic Education and Formation (CCEF) for use in their electronic and print media. Your permission would cover this usage as well. We will keep this signed form on file for this school year.

Student Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name(s): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature(s): _____

☐ I grant HDCS permission to use photo or video images, including related audio, of my son/daughter or a sample of his/her work such as a poem, story, artwork, etc. on the Holy Disciples Catholic School website, Facebook/Social Media pages, YouTube page, or in other print or electronic media, including use by the Center for Catholic Education and Formation (CCEF).

☐ I grant HDCS permission to post pictures or videos, including related audio, of my son/daughter in its media and in the CCEF media.

☐ I grant HDCS permission to post samples of my son/daughter's school work in its media, and in the CCEF media.

☐ I do not grant HDCS permission to use photo or video images, including related audio, of my son/daughter or a sample of his/her work such as a poem, story, artwork, etc., on the Holy Disciples Catholic School website, Facebook/Social Media pages, YouTube page, or in other print or electronic media, including CCEF media.

Date: August 31, 2026

NOTE: This agreement will be in effect at the beginning of the month selected and may be revoked at any time by contacting your son's or daughter's school principal.

Parent/Student Signature Page 2026-2027

When enrolling your child in Holy Disciples Catholic School, you are agreeing to abide by and be governed by the school Student & Family Handbook.

I/We have read and discussed the Student & Family Handbook and agree to follow the school policies and procedures as stated.

PLEASE SIGN THIS FORM ONLY AFTER YOU HAVE READ AND REVIEWED THE ENTIRE HANDBOOK. THE HANDBOOK IS ALSO AVAILABLE VIA THE SCHOOL WEBSITE FAMILY RESOURCES PAGE.

<https://www.holydiscipleschool.org>

PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS MUST SIGN BELOW.

Please return the SIGNED FORM to the school office at your child(ren) school office no later than Tuesday, September 8th

Family Name (print) _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

1.Student Name _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

_____ Grade _____ 2.Student

Name _____ Student

Signature _____ Date _____ Grade _____

3.Student Name _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

_____ Grade _____

Amendments to this handbook may be made at any time by the principals or pastor.

Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via email.