



PARENT-STUDENT

HANDBOOK

**2025-2026**

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This Parent/Student Handbook is for all family members concerned with St. Michael Catholic School.  
As with any handbook, it is constantly changing, and it is constantly being developed to meet the  
needs of the students and the school.

The school maintains the right to change or withdraw any policy or matter set forth herein at any time  
and will notify school families of such changes.

Dear Parents:

Welcome to St. Michael Catholic School. St. Michael is an elementary school of the Archdiocese of Galveston/Houston. The mission, policy, and regulations of the school are consequently consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

All policies, programs, and explanations included in this handbook are designed to help facilitate the development of our students as spiritually, academically, socially, and psychologically well-rounded individuals. Through the success of our students comes the greatest reward, fulfillment, and growth for each of our school staff members.

This handbook contains our school policies and procedures. Your presence here makes you a part of the school family and signifies your agreement to observe school policy. Success comes from working together. We thank you for your cooperation and efforts in working with us to make your child's Catholic school experience a positive one. With the Lord's guidance, we will find success for each of our students. Please keep this handbook available for reference.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathleen Cox". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Dr. Kathleen Cox  
Principal

**St. Michael Catholic School  
2025-2026**

**Wednesday, August 13: Meet the Teacher**  
**Thursday, August 14: First Day of School**  
**Friday, August 29: Early Dismissal at 1:15/1:30 pm (Kidventure Available)**  
**Monday, September 1: Labor Day Holiday**  
**Friday, September 19: 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Progress Reports**  
**Friday, September 26: Early Dismissal at 1:15/1:30 pm (Kidventure Available)**  
**Thursday, October 9: End of 1st Quarter**  
**Friday, October 10: Staff Development Day / Student Holiday**  
**Friday, October 17: 1st Quarter Report Cards**  
**Friday, October 24: Early Dismissal at 1:15/1:30 pm (No Kidventure)**  
**Friday, October 31: Parent/Teacher Conference Day / Student Holiday**  
**Friday, November 7: 2nd Quarter Progress Reports**  
**Friday, November 21: Grandparents' Day / Student Holiday**  
**Monday, November 24-Friday, November 28: Thanksgiving Break**  
**Thursday, December 18: Early Dismissal at 1:15/1:30 pm (No Kidventure), End of 2nd Quarter**  
**Friday, December 19-Friday, January 2: Christmas Break**  
**Monday, January 5: Staff Development Day/ Student Holiday**  
**Friday, January 9: 2nd Quarter Report Cards**  
**Monday, January 19: Martin Luther King Holiday**  
**Friday, February 6: 3rd Quarter Progress Reports**  
**Friday, February 13: Early Dismissal at 1:15/1:30 pm (Kidventure Available)**  
**Monday, February 16: Staff Development Day / Student Holiday**  
**Friday, March 6: Early Dismissal at 1:15/1:30 pm (Kidventure Available)**  
**Monday, March 9-Friday, March 13: Spring Break**  
**Friday, March 20: 3rd Quarter Report Cards**  
**Thursday, April 2: Early Dismissal at 1:15/1:30 pm (Kidventure Available)**  
**Friday, April 3-Monday, April 6: Easter Break**  
**Friday, April 17: Progress Reports**  
**Friday, May 1: Early Dismissal at 1:15/1:30 pm (Kidventure Available)**  
**Thursday, May 21: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation**  
**Friday, May 22: Last Day of School/ Early Dismissal at 10:00 am No Kidventure**

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# **1 SCHOOL OVERVIEW & GENERAL INFORMATION**

## **1.1 MISSION STATEMENT OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF GALVESTON-HOUSTON**

Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston - Houston call young people to holiness and prepare them to live and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In collaboration with families, we teach the values of our faith and tradition, serve our community, and ensure academic excellence. Our schools are committed to the evangelizing mission of the church to educate and form witnesses who transform the world.

## **1.2 MISSION STATEMENT OF ST. MICHAEL CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

The mission of St. Michael Catholic School is to form disciples of Christ through an education focused on faith, conscience, scholarship, and service.

## **1.3 PHILOSOPHY OF ST. MICHAEL CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

St. Michael Catholic School Community:

- Is committed to providing students a balance between spiritual growth and academic excellence.
- Believes faith is the manifestation of all virtue and integrity and the guiding principle for our school community.
- Believes that students should be held accountable for what is good, right, and just.
- Is dedicated to developing students with a strong moral conscience.
- Believes in scholarship focused on lifelong learning and high expectations that lead to academic excellence.
- Believes that our students should be aware of the needs of others and take responsibility in serving others to build a Christian community.

## **1.4 CATHOLIC EDUCATION – A SHARED EXPERIENCE**

When you enroll your child at St. Michael Catholic School, you enter a partnership of the Church, School, yourself, and your child. This partnership is dedicated to the development of your child as an individual with an awareness of his/her role within the Christian community. The success of the partnership depends on the cooperation of all involved.

Education is one of the most important ways in which the Church fulfills its commitment to the dignity of the person and the building of community. Recognizing the importance of this ministry, the Parish, the Pastor, the Parish staff, and the Pastoral Council strongly support the school with their spiritual, emotional, financial, and physical resources.

The faculty and staff of St. Michael Catholic School share with you the responsibility of guiding your child's growth in all areas of his/her life: spiritual, intellectual, physical, psychological, and social. In accepting your child as a member of the St. Michael Catholic School family, we pledge our time and talents to his/her growth and development.

As the parent/legal guardian in this partnership, you bring your support, your time, and your talents to our joint effort. You, as parents, are the primary educators of your children in the values and responsibilities of Christian community.

Your child accepts the responsibility to become the best person he/she can be in all areas of life and to prepare him/herself as a leader in both a Christian and a secular world. Parents who decide that the direction of the school is no longer acceptable for their child(ren), have the ultimate right to choose another school. If, in the opinion of the administration, the partnership is no longer viable the school reserves the right to require the parent/legal guardian to withdraw the student from the school. The success of this experience in Christian community requires the best efforts of all involved.

### **Code of Ethics**

“Jesus said to His disciples, “I give you a new commandment: Love one another.” (John 13:34) St. Michael Catholic School is committed to providing excellence in education within a Catholic environment. An essential component of this mission is to ensure that the faith and moral teachings of the Catholic Church are lived-out by all members of the school community: staff, students, families and visitors.

At the foundation of the moral life is the teaching of Jesus Christ. Virtues such as integrity, prudence and respect are to be practiced by all members of the SMCS community. As such, language, actions or attire which demonstrate a violation of moral values, or disrespect or disregard for members of the SMCS community cannot be tolerated. The school administration must hold students and parents (including families/visitors) accountable when their words or actions violate common courtesy, respect, modesty and the like. In the extreme, vulgar language, comments that are prejudicial or degrading to a staff member or student, heckling at sports activities (on campus or elsewhere) or any language that is perceived as demeaning or threatening will not be tolerated. Conduct that creates an atmosphere of fear or harm will not be tolerated.

Depending on the situation, violations will be addressed by the principal (or present school official if the principal is not available) either immediately (e.g. removal of the person from the premises) or after investigation. All violations will be addressed according to internal incidents and the circumstances surrounding the violation. Unless otherwise restricted by Archdiocesan policy or school procedures, all school administration decisions regarding a disciplinary response are considered final.

As a Catholic educational institution located on the campus of our parish church, SMCS is on holy ground. All persons who are on the school campus are to respect this blessed truth and act in accordance with due regard for the precepts of the Catholic Church in faith and morals.

### **1.5 NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY**

St. Michael Catholic School follows a policy of non-discrimination with regard to race, color, or ethnic origin within its Christian philosophy. The policy of non-discrimination refers directly to, but is not limited to, the employment of all school personnel, the acceptance and participation of all students, and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts and donations.

## **1.6 STRATEGIC PLAN & SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOALS**

The Strategic Plan for St. Michael Catholic School can be found on our school website and includes both our short and long term goals for school improvement. Our strategic plan is aligned to the National Standards and Benchmarks for Catholic Schools and addresses the following areas:

Mission and Catholic Identity, Governance and Leadership, Academic Excellence, and Operational Vitality.

## **2 ADMINISTRATION**

## **2.1 ROLE OF ARCHBISHOP**

The Archbishop, as the Ordinary of the Archdiocese, possesses full and complete authority in the Archdiocese and therefore is the head of all Catholic schools and all parish religious education programs in the Archdiocese. He has the ecclesiastical authority to oversee and inspect educational programs within the Archdiocese, including the right to issue directives concerning the general regulation of such programs. The Archbishop has primary responsibility for the educational ministry of the Church. He has full authority to regulate all that pertains to religious instruction and matters pertaining to faith and morals in the Archdiocese.

The Archbishop has sole ecclesiastical authority to recognize and designate a school as “Catholic” within the Archdiocese. Written approval shall be obtained from the Archbishop before a school may be designated as a Catholic school.

The Archbishop, as the chief representative of the Church’s teaching authority, is the head of the schools in the Archdiocese. The Secretariat Superintendent of Catholic Schools carries out the administration of the schools. Religious education in the Catholic schools is guided by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools with the assistance of the Director of the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis as a consultant.

## **2.2 ROLE OF SUPERINTENDENT**

The Superintendent of Catholic Schools is appointed by and responsible to the Archbishop and represents him in the administration and supervision of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese. The superintendent is a member of the Cardinal’s Cabinet.

The Superintendent of Catholic Schools, under the authority of the Archbishop, shall be responsible for the establishment and implementation of Archdiocesan policies governing Catholic schools and for the direction of the Catholic Schools Office in providing guidance and support services to Catholic schools in the Archdiocese.

## **2.3 ROLE OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE**

The Catholic Schools Office is the office charged with the general administration and support of the formal Church-sponsored educational ministry in the Archdiocese. <http://www.choosecatholicschools.org/>.

## **2.4 ROLE OF PASTOR**

The school is a religious and spiritual ministry of the parish. The Archbishop, therefore, has ultimate authority for matters of faith at the school. The Pastor of the parish, however, has ultimate responsibility for the operation and administration of the school.

The pastor is the ex-officio head of the school. As such, he is responsible, with the school advisory/consultative body, for determining the policies of the school according to the needs of the parish, but always in harmony with the policies and regulations of TCCBED, the Catholic Schools Office and The Archdiocese of Galveston - Houston. The role of the pastor in the successful mission of the parish school is of

vital importance. In union with the liturgical and sacramental life of the parish, the formation of faith and intellectual development illumined by Gospel message to children, youth, and adults, is central to the life of the parish.

The pastor delegates the direction of the school program and the ordinary administration of the school to the principal. The pastor with the principal shall establish the terms of such delegation and the means of regular and formal communication on school matters. In the inner city Catholic schools, financial oversight is a collaboration between the pastor, principal, Archdiocesan Finance Office, and the Catholic Schools Office.

The pastor is an ex-officio member of the school advisory board.

In order to remain accredited under the TCCBED a pastor shall consult with the Superintendent of Catholic Schools with regard to hiring, supervising, and evaluating the principal.

The pastor supports the principal in conflict resolution of school issues, according to the principle of subsidiarity, by referring individuals or groups back to the teacher or principal.

## **2.5 ROLE OF PRINCIPAL**

In elementary schools the principal is the chief administrative officer of the school and is the spiritual, educational, and managerial leader subject to the ultimate canonical responsibility entrusted to the pastor. In these schools, the principal is responsible not only for the educational program but is also responsible for the school's religious and spiritual mission. The principal is also in charge of the financial administration of all school funds. (See 3111 and Archdiocesan Parish-School Control Manual)

The principal builds a Catholic, Christian community of faith in which the Catholic message and experiences of community, worship, service, and social concern are integrated in all areas of the school and throughout the curriculum. Additionally, a paramount responsibility is to promote and facilitate student learning of the highest quality in accordance with Canon Law #806.

The principal has the following major responsibilities.

- a) Administers the total school program, including extracurricular activities and before and after school programs.
- b) Supervises and evaluates the teachers, the students, and the instructional program.
- c) Oversees the operation of the facility.
- d) Supervises all support staff members.
- e) Interacts with the parent, parish(es), and general public communities.
- f) Collaborates with and seeks counsel from the Catholic Schools Office.
- g) Executes school policy.
- h) Fulfills accreditation criteria articulated by Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department and other accrediting agencies.
- i) Ensures that there is a person named as second-in-command when the principal is off campus; this should be communicated to faculty, staff, parents, and students.

- j) Ensures that both the instruction and the teachers are grounded on the principles of Catholic doctrine.
- k) Ensures that there is a person named as second-in-command when the Principal is off campus; this should be communicated to faculty, staff, parents, and students.
- l) Ensures that employees follow the terms of their employment contract or letter of employment.
- m) Utilizes Archdiocesan offices in collaboration with the CSO liaison to support their work in specific areas where departments can offer expertise (call CSO Liaison first).
- n) After informing their CSO Liaison, consults with the Legal Services Department of the Archdiocese regarding legal issues that arise at the School.
- o) Consults with the Legal Services Department and Office of Risk Management of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston to review contracts and to better understand legal documents related to school business.

*Designated Person Responsible*

If the principal is off campus the assistant principal will be the designated person responsible for the continued operation of the school.

## **2.6 ROLE OF ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOL COUNCIL**

The Archdiocesan School Council exists to provide support to School Advisory Boards in their work to advise the pastor and principal in the work of fulfilling the campus strategic plan.

## **2.7 ROLE OF ADVISORY SCHOOL COUNCIL**

The Advisory School Council consists of seven to nine people who are appointed by the Pastor. The purpose of this group is to cooperate with the Pastor and the Principal in developing the philosophy, goals, and objectives of the school and formulating policies enabling the attainment of these goals. Some of the duties of the Advisory School Council are as follows:

- Be a positive and vocal supporter of the school and school policies to the community;
- Participate in and support school activities and events;
- Attend monthly Advisory School Council meetings;
- Assist the Principal in the development of long and short-range planning;
- Assist the Principal in setting tuition rates;
- Assist in monitoring the overall physical plant of the school;
- Serve on Advisory School Council committees; and
- Other activities at the request of the Principal or Pastor.

## **2.8 ROLE OF PARENTS LENDING USEFUL SUPPORT (P.L.U.S.)**

P.L.U.S. is the service organization that coordinates volunteer participation at St. Michael Catholic School. P.L.U.S. committee volunteers work with the school faculty and administration to provide support for enrichment activities and to promote parental involvement.

## **2.9 SCHOOL OWNERSHIP OF SERVER**

The School Server is property of the school and is intended for business purposes. Personal use should be kept to a minimum and should in no event interfere with an employee's normal job duties or responsiveness. The school owns the rights to all data and files stored in or on the School Server. All messages (e-mail, instant messages, and voicemail) composed, sent, received or stored on the School Systems are and remain the property of the School. They are not the property of any employee and are subject to viewing, downloading, inspection, release and archiving by the School always. Employees have no expectation of privacy on any information, message, data, or information on or transmitted by any of the School Systems.

## **2.10 ASBESTOS**

The asbestos report is on file in the maintenance office. You may review it at any time.

## **2.11 DEVELOPMENT/ADVANCEMENT**

Development is the strategic processes and activities used to identify, cultivate, invite and recognize donors. These activities create a culture of support and philanthropy that advance the mission of and build a foundation for future success of the school.

SMCS has a Director of Development that works with the principal to plan and organize all of our development activities including but not limited to Annual Fund, Golf and Tennis Tournaments, Parent Parties, etc.

## **2.12 FACILITIES**

St. Michael Church and Parish School occupy approximately nine acres of land in the 1800 block of Sage Road in the Galleria area of Houston. The school includes the following: administrative offices, 26 homeroom/classrooms, science labs, computer rooms, reading resource center (lab), library media center, art and music studios, two gym-auditoriums, sports/activities field, RN staffed clinic, and cafeteria/kitchen. St. Michael Catholic School is a smoke-free campus. St. Michael Catholic School continues to be in compliance with all federal and state asbestos regulations and information pertaining to this can be found in the Business Office.

## **2.13 HOURS OF OPERATION**

School Hours: 7:50 a.m. – 3:25 p.m.

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

After Care Extended Day Hours: 3:25 p.m. - 6 p.m.

More detailed information can be found in "Arrival/Dismissal Information, Section II."

## **2.14 INSURANCE**

Students are ordinarily included in their family's insurance program. Parents must complete an Insurance

Verification Information Form each year. St. Michael Catholic School, including all staff, assumes neither responsibility nor liability obligations that result from injuries related to participating in curricular, extra-curricular, or other school-related programs provided by the school.

## **2.15 STUDENT INSURANCE**

### **1. Student Accident Insurance**

All students are enrolled in the student accident insurance program with the insurance carrier chosen by The Archdiocese of Galveston - Houston. This program reimburses limited medical costs due to accidental bodily injury to a student while engaging in the activities outlined in the policy. Information concerning claims, premiums and supplementary coverage can be obtained from the Office of Risk Management by calling (713) 652-8225.

### **2. Insurance Premiums**

The premiums for this policy are paid by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. Supplemental coverage, if obtained by the parents, is paid by the parents.

### **3. Student Accident Reports**

Regardless of any medical claims filed, administrators shall forward Incident or Accident forms to the Cluster Liaison and the Director of Student Support Services concerning accidents of a serious nature occurring during the school day, on school premises, or under direct school supervision. Injuries involving hospitalization shall be reported immediately; other reports will be made within three days of the injury. Responsibility for reporting rests with the Principal/designee of the school where the student is enrolled or the school where the accident/incident occurred.

### **3 SCHOOL POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

### **3.1 ADMISSION POLICIES & GUIDELINES**

#### **1. Archdiocesan Policies & Guidelines**

The Superintendent of Catholic Schools has established general policies and guidelines to be incorporated in local admissions policies.

##### **1. Nondiscrimination Policy**

The Catholic schools of The Archdiocese of Galveston - Houston admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

They do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic and other school- administered programs.

The schools shall annually publish the nondiscriminatory policy in the student/parent handbook and may publish the policy elsewhere at their discretion.

##### **2. Age of Admission: Pre-K**

A student entering pre-kindergarten (3 and 4 year olds) must be 3 or 4 years old, respectively, by September 1. The date of birth should be verified by an official copy of a birth certificate from the Bureau of Vital Statistics or appropriate governmental agency if born outside of the state of Texas.

##### **3. Age of Admission: Kindergarten**

A student entering kindergarten must be at least 5 years of age by September 1. The date of birth should be verified by an official copy of a birth certificate from the Bureau of Vital Statistics or appropriate governmental agency if born outside of the state of Texas.

##### **4. Age of admission: First Grade**

A student entering 1<sup>st</sup> grade must be 6 years old by September 1. The date of birth should be verified by an official copy of a birth certificate from the Bureau of Vital Statistics or appropriate governmental agency if born outside of the state of Texas.

##### **5. Age of admission: After First Grade**

Age of admission after 1<sup>st</sup> grade will be based on successful completion and achievement in an accredited school. The date of birth should be verified by an official copy of a birth certificate from the Bureau of Vital Statistics or appropriate governmental agency if born outside of the state of Texas.

##### **6. Conditions of Admission**

In order for a student to be enrolled or re-enrolled in any Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, the student must be in good financial standing. The Principal will

make every effort to collect all tuition, fees, and any other outstanding financial obligations prior to re-enrollment. Principals shall also contact the student's previous Catholic School to ensure there are no outstanding financial obligations at that school. A family owing money to another Catholic School should not be admitted.

Additionally, there shall be no expectation that a current student will be automatically re-admitted to or re-enrolled in the school. Each year, students will be invited to re-enroll at the discretion of the Principal. Students who are not invited to re-enroll may not grieve this decision.

## **7. Toilet Training**

All children entering school must be fully toilet-trained before coming to school. This includes participation in the Before and After School Program. Children will not be allowed to wear diapers or pull-ups while at school.

A toilet trained child can do the following:

- be able to tell the teacher they need to go to the restroom in sufficient time to avoid accidents,
- be able to pull their underwear and pants down and up without assistance,
- be able to get on and off the toilet by themselves,
- be able to wipe themselves after using the toilet,
- be able to wash and dry hands, and
- be able to postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom or if they are outside, or away from the classroom.

## **8. Application Priorities**

Since the schools of The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston are established by the Archdiocese or one of its parishes as religious schools, priority for admission shall be at the discretion of the Pastor and Principal.

## **9. Admission Policies**

St. Michael Catholic School reserves the right to screen all students. The final decision for admission is the responsibility of the Principal or designee.

### **3.2 AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

Kidventure provides the after school program for St. Michael Students and families. More information about the after school program is available on the school website.

### 3.3 ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL INFORMATION

#### 1. Carpool Guidelines

Rationale: In order to provide safety for the students and to improve traffic flow, St. Michael Catholic School expects to limit pedestrian crossing in the parking lot during the time of arrival and dismissal. It is imperative that the school have the cooperation of all parents and students.

- Parents must work in cooperation with the school and act as a model to the students of the need to follow safety rules.
- Every school family must have a car tag number registered in the school office. This includes students who walk to and from school, families who only have one student in their carpool, etc.
- Every driver must hang their car tag number from their rear view mirror so that it may be seen by the teachers on traffic duty.
- For everyone's safety, traffic parking patterns must be observed by all. Please observe the 5mph speed limit and do not pass other vehicles.
- Students are required to wait in the school gym or cafeteria in the afternoon.
- Parents should not devise shortcuts--all students are expected to be picked up in the carpool line.
- Students may not cross in between the exiting cars in the carpool line unless accompanied by a faculty member.
- Parents should instruct their child(ren) to always walk in front of their own car when loading or unloading.
- During morning drop-off, parents should stay in their vehicle and students should exit the vehicle in a prompt and organized manner.
- No student is allowed to walk through the parking area to a parked car unless accompanied by an adult.
- Students are not allowed to run, play ball, etc. in the carpool loading area.
- The use of cell phones when operating a vehicle on the church/school grounds is prohibited. (See "Cell Phones/Electronic Devices/Telephone Use", this section)
- Parents must handle exceptions or emergencies before or after the regular pick-up, i.e. (before 2:45 p.m. or after 3:30 p.m.) If assistance is needed, the parent should call the school office.
- Group transportation (athletic games, scouts, etc.) will be coordinated so as to limit interference with the regular pick-up procedure. (See "Special Dismissal Circumstances", this section)
- Parent offenders of any statement in this policy are subject to a conference with the Principal and to further consequences at the Principal's discretion.

## 2. Morning Drop-off/Arrival Procedure

During morning drop-off, cars may enter the campus through the main entrance from both Westheimer and San Felipe at the direction of the police officer. Drive straight towards the school and turn right or left to unload. By turning right, you will be exiting in the direction of Westheimer and by turning left, you will be exiting in the direction of San Felipe. Please make sure children are sitting on the side of the car closest to the building to exit the car. Students will not be allowed to walk between cars during drop off.

**At 7:30 a.m., morning carpool begins and students in PK4-8th will go to the school gym for morning assembly. PK3 students will go directly to their classrooms.**

Please do not park and walk your children to the doors. It is dangerous to have pedestrian traffic moving between the carpool lines. It slows down the drop off and places our children at risk. Thank you for helping us make this process as safe as possible.

### *PK3 Drop-off Procedure*

Parents of PK 3 students are asked to drop off their students on the San Felipe side of morning carpool which is closer to their classroom door. A staff member will walk PK 3 students to their classrooms.

## 3. Afternoon Carpool/Dismissal

Everyone must use the carpool system to pick up students from 3-3:45 p.m. Any student who has not been picked up by 3:45 will be taken to Kidventure. The first time your child goes to Kidventure will be free and you will receive a letter explaining the charges for future visits to Kidventure.

Parents must not walk up to retrieve their child(ren) from the gym or the cafeteria. Afternoon Carpool: There are two dismissal times.

**First dismissal carpool** (students in grades **PK3-K** without an older sibling) will be identified with tags 1- 99. **First dismissal carpool is at 3:00 p.m.** Cars may begin lining up for first dismissal no earlier than 2:30 p.m.

- Enter from the Westheimer side and use only the right lane along the curb, leaving the left lane open for other campus visitors to enter the property.

### **Second Dismissal (3:25 p.m.)**

Second dismissal is for the remainder of the students. The Westheimer side will be identified with car tags 100-250. The San Felipe side will be identified with car tags 251-400.

**Second dismissal carpool will begin at 3:25 p.m..** Second dismissal cars may begin lining up no earlier than 3:10 p.m. or as soon as the first carpool ends. Cars that arrive early for second dismissal should park in a parking space until the plant manager or security officer begins lining up the cars for second dismissal. This process will ensure the safety of all students and staff in the first carpool as well as

prevent the carpool line from blocking traffic on Sage for an extended period of time.

- When entering the campus, both the right and left entrance lanes will be used during afternoon carpool.
- Westheimer carpools (car tags 100-250) must turn right off Sage into the right entrance lane and stay right along the sidewalk curb.
- San Felipe carpools (car tags 251-400) must turn left off Sage into the left entrance lane and stay in the left lane. Continue driving straight to the entrance of the school and turn left along the curb.
- Arrive no earlier than 3:10 p.m.
- Dismissal will begin at 3:25 p.m.

### **Early Dismissal**

On the designated Fridays each month, students are dismissed at 1:15/1:30 pm. Kidventure is available on these early dismissal days.

**PLEASE BE ON TIME TO PICK UP YOUR CHILDREN TO ENSURE THAT ALL STAFF MEMBERS MAY ATTEND THE FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MEETINGS.**

If you arrive after 1:50 p.m., it will be necessary for you to sign your child out in the cafeteria through Kidventure which will result in a late fee. Please make every effort to schedule routine medical, dental or other appointments on this early release day to minimize disruption to students' academic schedules.

### **Carpool/Dismissal Changes must be made by noon**

If a student must leave school early, [the parent must email the teacher and the office to notify them about an early pickup for their child. The email must state the time of dismissal and the designated person picking up the child\(ren\).](#) Early dismissal pick-up must be before **3:00 p.m.** It is the student's responsibility to be in the school office at the early dismissal time. (Younger students are walked to the office by a teacher). Classes will not be interrupted to call students to the office.

A parent/guardian or designated person must come to the office to sign the student out of school. If a student returns to school the same day, he/she must check in through the school office to obtain an admit slip before proceeding to class. A teacher will not admit a student to their class without an admit slip.

**PK Early Dismissal:** If a PK student will not be staying for the full day, the school allows for dismissal after lunch at 11:30 a.m. If a parent/guardian wishes to pick up a PK student(s) at 11:30 a.m., a note from the parent/guardian must be sent to the teacher in the morning.

When a parent/guardian comes to pick up a PK3 or PK4 student(s) at 11:30 a.m., he/she must park in one line at the curb alongside the academic building (or under the canopy if it is raining) and remain in the car.

## **Special Dismissal Circumstances**

### *Volunteer/Attending (Meetings before 3:20)*

If a volunteer arrives early for meetings he/she must park in a parking space. Walking up to retrieve students in the carpool waiting area or making requests to pick up additional carpool students early is strictly prohibited.

### *Walkers*

**All walkers must be approved in writing by the principal.** Approval will be granted only to students who actually walk to their home in the neighborhood. Directions will be given to these students upon approval.

### *Forgotten Items*

If a student has forgotten an item at school after he/she has been picked up in carpool, the driver should park and the student should cross at the crosswalk with supervised assistance.

### *Choir, Scouts, Sports, Play Practice, etc.*

Students should go directly to the designated room/location for their activity.

### *Groups picked up by a parent (B-day parties, etc.)*

Call the office to make special arrangements. Students will wait with parental supervision in a pre-arranged designated area. After 3:30 p.m., the supervised students may be walked to parked cars.

## **After-school activities**

All students must be picked up in carpool unless they are participating in after school sports or a school sponsored activity immediately after school.

All students attending games or events as spectators must be supervised by a parent (or an adult appointed by the parent if the child's parent is not attending). Students in violation of this rule will be sent to the office to phone for pick-up. Parents are responsible for the supervision of students who attend games or events. Students are not to leave the gym or go outside. This includes younger siblings who must not be unsupervised at any time. The behavior of any student attending a game or event must comply with the rules and regulations of the school. ***Students who misbehave at games or events are subject to disciplinary action by the school.***

### **3.4 ATTENDANCE (ABSENCES & TARDIES)**

#### **1. Absence from School**

The State of Texas provides by law for compulsory school attendance by all children from the age of six until their nineteenth birthday unless subject to a stated exemption. TCCB ED has adopted the State of Texas compulsory attendance policy. Each school will be in session according to the number of days or minutes required by TCCBED standards.

The responsibility for compliance with this law belongs to the parents, but the school is obliged to keep and maintain an accurate record of daily attendance for each student.

Parents are responsible for notifying the school of any absences. Each school shall establish the local procedures and policies necessary to monitor school attendance and to assure the health and safety of the students. A school may require parents of absent students to call the school on the morning of the student's absence.

##### **1. Medical Absences**

Verification of medical and dental appointments is required from the medical or dental office on letterhead with physician's signature. Medical absences that require extended time off campus requires a medical waiver for a home study plan to be put in place.

##### **2. Excused Absences**

In addition to medical absence, students may be absent due to illness, accident, quarantine, or attendance at the funeral services of a member of the student's family. In such cases of short-term absence, the school staff should assist the student to make up the schoolwork missed according to the school's local policy.

##### **3. Absence for Other Reasons**

When parents wish to take their child out of school for three or more consecutive days for personal reasons, they must notify the Principal well in advance. The Principal or designee is advised to keep on file a record of the recommendation made to the parents at the time the request was submitted. The final decision, however, is the responsibility of the parents.

The school is not under obligation to provide tutoring, make-up work, or special testing schedules for this period of absence. The Principal/designee has discretion to determine the conditions and terms governing such absences.

##### **4. Student Attendance**

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, each student will attend classes for a minimum of 90% of the attendance days or minutes in a given school year in order to be promoted to the following grade level. The 90% rule applies to all absences, including excused absences.

A student who does not attend 90% of the attendance days or minutes of a given school

year may be required to repeat the grade, or may not receive credit. Students who do not attend classes for a minimum of 90% of the attendance days or minutes in a semester are subject to administrative withdrawal. The Principal will make the final decision.

**Full Day Attendance:** To be counted as present for a full day of school, a student must be in attendance for a minimum of four instructional hours (240 minutes) of the instructional day.

**Half Day Attendance:** To be counted present for a half day of school, a student must be in attendance for a minimum of two instructional hours (120 minutes) of the instructional day.

TCCBED guidelines allow for a student who is in attendance for at least 75%, but less than 90%, of the days/minutes a class is offered to be given credit for a final grade if the student completes a plan approved by the Principal that provides for the student to meet the instructional requirements of the class.

## 2. Tardiness

A student is tardy if he/she arrives after the time scheduled by the school for the beginning of the instructional day. If he/she arrives 2 hours after the start of the school day, he/she is marked absent half a day. A record of all tardiness shall be maintained. In each case, a written excuse from the parent shall be required by the beginning of the next school day.

### 3.5 BIRTHDAYS, PARTY INVITATIONS, GIFTS, SNACKS, ETC.

The school invites parents/guardians to join their child for lunch on their child's birthday. If your child's birthday falls on a weekend or holiday, you may choose another day on which to join your child. If your child has a summer birthday, you may celebrate the birthday on your child's half birthday or another day that is arranged with the teacher.

Parents are invited to bring a birthday treat for their student and the grade level. Because classes eat together, snacks need to be provided for the entire grade.

Some key notes:

- **Treats must be brought for the entire grade level**
- Birthday treats can **also** be pencils, stickers, erasers, etc.
- Treats **MUST** be SMALL (mini cupcake, brownie bite, cookie, donut holes, and in individual baggies)
- No colored icing (please stick to white)
- No nuts of any kind
- All treats must be pre-cut and ready to serve

Each homeroom teacher or grade level will have an electronic calendar for parents to sign up to bring birthday treats in order to make sure that no more than one birthday treat is brought in per grade level per day.

No other celebration is permitted, i.e. balloons/flowers/posters/locker decorating.

Party invitations may NOT be distributed at school unless all students in the class or all students of the same gender in the class are included.

Students will have free dress on their birthday or on the day that they choose to celebrate their birthday at school. All student birthdays will be recognized during morning assembly. Birthdays that fall on a weekend or holiday will be recognized on the day before the weekend or holiday. Summer birthdays will be recognized in May (For example, June 1, July 1, and August 1 would be recognized on May 1.)

### **3.6 CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

**Students are not permitted to have or use electronic devices (cell phones, iPods/iPads, smart watches, fitness trackers) on campus.**

**Students are not permitted to bring cell phones on campus.**

**Students are not permitted to have cell phones during school sponsored after school activities unless they are under the supervision of their own parents.**

**Cell phones are not permitted on any class trips or retreats.**

On overnight trips, pictures will be shared on Instagram and two trip chaperones will have a cell phone number that is shared for emergencies.

The school office phone may be used for emergencies. Calling parents for forgotten homework, projects, or making social plans, etc. does not constitute an emergency.

Middle School students are not permitted to email parents during the day from their Chromebooks without teacher permission with approval from the Assistant Principal.

Consequences for Violating the Cell Phone and Electronic Device Policy

- For the first offense (all grades), confiscated cell phones and electronic devices will be held and returned to the student at the end of the school day. The student will receive a citation if in 5th-8th grade.
- For the second offense, the confiscated electronic device will be held by the Assistant Principal until picked up by the PARENT at the end of the school day. The student will also have a morning detention.
- For the third offense, the confiscated electronic device will be held by the Assistant Principal and returned to the parent after a \$25 fine has been paid. The third offense will be recorded on the student's discipline record.

Should any further offenses occur, the student will be placed on probation and will lose the right to participate in extracurricular activities.

The school is *not* responsible for any confiscated items.

### **Parents/Legal Guardians:**

**Emailing students during school hours (7:15 a.m.–3:45 p.m.) is strictly prohibited.** Messages of an emergency nature will be relayed to students if you call the school office. We ask that you please respect this policy so as not to place your child in a disciplinary situation.

Parent cell phones must be turned off or put on vibrate while on the school campus or while attending school activities. All cell phone use must occur outside the building.

***For the safety of our students, the use of cell phones by drivers during carpool is prohibited.***

Specifically:

- During morning carpool, cell phone use is prohibited from when a vehicle enters the campus until the vehicle exits the campus.
- During afternoon carpool, cell phone use is prohibited from when the line begins to move until the last car exits the campus.

Offenders of this policy are subject to a conference with the Principal and to further consequences at the Principal's discretion.

### **3.7 CHILD ABUSE POLICY**

In order to protect the students, St. Michael Catholic School, the Archdiocese, and the Church, the school has a child abuse policy which addresses: (1) identification and reporting of child abuse and (2) training school personnel and volunteers to identify child abuse. School personnel in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston have a moral and legal obligation to report child abuse or neglect. The school personnel will document all observations and conversations and report to the Principal immediately, and to the Child Protective Services within twenty-four (24) hours. The Principal will determine the need to follow up with the child and/or the parents.

### **3.8 DELIVERIES DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

An important part of building responsibility in children is allowing them to experience logical and natural consequences. When a student has to leave class to call home for forgotten items, he/she is losing valuable instructional time.

Classes will not be interrupted to deliver books, and homework, etc. Students will not be allowed to use the school phone to call home for forgotten items.

### **3.9 EMERGENCY POLICY/PROCEDURES**

A crisis management plan is designed to provide immediate assistance in case of an emergency. The crisis management plan addresses concerns regarding safety, receiving accurate information and a long-term plan to minimize the effects of the crisis. Every Archdiocesan school has a crisis management plan. Teachers know procedures to shut down classrooms and contact administrative officials in the school in case of an outside

threat and are also trained in case of an inside threat (i.e. fire, gas leak, etc.) which would result in an evacuation of the school. St. Michael Catholic School follows the guidelines of the Archdiocesan School Office for bomb threats, fire drills and tornado drill procedures.

St. Michael Catholic School follows the guidelines of the Archdiocesan School Office and Houston Independent School District regarding weather-related school closings. During periods of severe inclement weather, the local radio/TV stations carry frequent bulletins of the Catholic Schools and/or H.I.S.D. school closings. Please note that SMCS does NOT always follow H.I.S.D. for school closings. The decision to close the school is made by the Principal in consultation with the Pastor.

St. Michael Catholic School uses email blasts and text messages to notify parents/guardians of these and other situations. It is of vital importance that SMCS has updated email addresses and phone numbers for all of our families. St. Michael Catholic School will also use FACTS Alert system to send text messages for inclement weather and other school closings. School closing information will also be posted on our website.

Because of the wide area from which our students come, conditions near each home may require special consideration; therefore, parents/guardians are expected to exercise their own judgment regarding their child's safety and security.

### **3.10 EXTENDED DAY / AFTER SCHOOL CARE**

The After School Care Program provided by Kidventure is offered for students who are enrolled at St. Michael Catholic School. This is an extension of the school day and as such, will follow the official school calendar and rules in the Parent-Student Handbook. Extended Care/Kidventure hours are 3-6 p.m. This program is ordinarily not scheduled on school holidays. *Information about Kidventure is available on the school website under the Parents tab.*

### **3.11 FIELD TRIPS**

Class visits to places of cultural and/or educational significance enrich classroom instruction. Teachers shall coordinate field trip plans. Permission slips must be signed and returned so that students can participate. Sample permission slips are included in the appendix of this handbook. Permission cannot be given over the telephone. All field trips are part of the regular school curriculum and are considered regular school days. If a student does not participate in a field trip, he/she may not come to school on that day.

When a parent/guardian is asked to chaperone a field trip, he/she is responsible for students who must receive chaperones' undivided attention. This makes it *impossible* to bring young siblings along. Please note this when volunteering to chaperone. **All parent chaperones must have completed Safe Haven Training and must be up-to-date with their certificate of completion. All parent chaperones must also have a signed volunteer code of conduct on file with the school office.**

Students must leave from school and return to school with their class on field trip days. They may not be dropped off or picked up at the site of the field trips.

## 3.12 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

### Financial Account Responsibilities

Parents are expected to keep all financial accounts current at St. Michael Catholic School. Report cards, transcripts and school records are not released if an outstanding debt exists. All past financial obligations to the school must be fulfilled, including any assessed late fees, for the school to consider re-registration or admission to a new school year.

It is assumed that all checks payable to St. Michael Catholic School have sufficient funds for their deposit. Checks are ordinarily not held for any period of time and post-dated checks are not accepted. Any returned check is subject to a \$25.00 charge.

### Tuition

St. Michael Catholic School is an integral part of St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church and exists primarily to serve children of active and supportive parishioners. The annual tuition rate is established upon the recommendation of the [Advisory School Council](#) following a review of the annual operating budget.

Tuition is collected on an annual basis at St. Michael on a designated date in June. Parents who wish to make periodic payments for tuition may do so with a bank loan through the school. Failure to pay tuition in full on a designated date in June may result in loss of enrollment.

### Parishioner Tuition Discount

St. Michael Catholic School offers to families that are parishioners at St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church the possibility of a reduced tuition rate. To be eligible for in-parish tuition, the head of the household must be a registered member of the parish, contributing time, talent, and treasure for the well-being of the parish. In other words, the in-parish tuition is available to any registered parishioner who regularly attends Sunday Mass, actively participates in the communal life of the parish, and has consistently shown a pattern or history of contributing to the financial well-being of our parish.

*\*Please keep in mind that families who would like the parishioner tuition discount will be required to complete the parishioner tuition rate application in the spring of each year for the following school year.*

### Financial Aid

Applications for tuition assistance for students in grades K-8 may be found through this link <http://www.choosecatholicschools.org/tuition-assistance-program/> during re-enrollment and must be completed and submitted to PSAS for any consideration. Families are notified by the school administration of available assistance in April and again in July. Qualifying students must maintain satisfactory academic progress and a record of good conduct and attendance. Participants are expected to keep the school apprised of changing financial needs following acceptance of assistance.

## **Athletic Fees**

Students who participate in interscholastic athletic activities are assessed a fee per athlete for each sport. The fee enables the school to help provide uniforms, officials, transportation, entrance, and participation fees. The Athletic Director coordinates fees for student/athlete participation with the administration.

## **Financial Delinquency Policy** *(This policy applies to families who participate in the tuition bank loan.)*

### 30 Days Past Due:

1. Report Cards/Progress Reports will not be released
2. Transcripts and school records will not be released

### 60 Days Past Due:

1. All of the above
2. Parents will not be allowed to attend extracurricular activities such as sporting events, parent presentations, etc.
3. The school reserves the right not to allow students to take final exams if tuition or other fees are delinquent past 60 days.
4. If a family becomes 60 days past due more than 3 times during a school year, they forfeit their right to participate in the bank loan program for the following school year.

St. Michael Catholic School will not release records, including records of student performance (i.e. report cards, progress reports, etc.) and will not certify students for advancement or transfer until the delinquent account is paid in full. If there are recurrent problems in tuition collection, this could affect acceptance of registration for the next school year.

## **3.13 HOMEWORK REQUESTS**

If a student is unable to come to school due to illness, the parent/guardian is expected to notify the school office by 9:00 a.m. It is the student's responsibility in grades 5-8 to obtain notes for missed class time. Parents/legal guardians are to send a written note upon the student's return to school.

## **3.14 IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

Every student enrolled in a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston shall be immunized against vaccine preventable diseases caused by infectious agents in accordance with the immunization schedule adopted by the Texas Department of State Health, commonly known as the Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Texas School Entrance/Attendance (See Appendix # for the chart of the current immunization requirements or visit <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/school/school-requirements.aspx> ). Each year, every student must present evidence of the required immunizations from a physician or health care provider authorized to administer immunizations to the school before the first day of school. The immunizations must be current. It is now acceptable to receive an immunization record from a pharmacy for a student; the record must come directly to the school from the pharmacy itself. A student who fails to present the required evidence shall not be accepted for enrollment.

### **Exceptions**

There are no exceptions to the foregoing requirement unless the student presents a written statement signed by the student's physician (M.D. or D.O.) who is authorized to practice in the State of Texas. Please see the School Health Manual published by TCCB ED for details regarding immunization exemptions.

### **Provisional Enrollment**

All immunizations should be completed by the first date of attendance. The law requires that students be fully vaccinated against the specified diseases. A student may be enrolled provisionally if the student has an immunization record that indicates the student has received at least one dose of each specified age-appropriate vaccine required by this rule. To remain enrolled, the student must complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule and as rapidly as is medically feasible and provide acceptable evidence of vaccination to the school.

A school nurse or school administrator shall review the immunization status of a provisionally enrolled student every 30 days to ensure continued compliance in completing the required doses of vaccination. If, at the end of the 30-day period, a student has not received a subsequent dose of vaccine, the student is not in compliance and the school shall exclude the student from school attendance until the required dose is administered. A Principal is not authorized to grant any exemptions for any reason without consultation with the Catholic Schools Office.

### **No Conscientious Objections**

All Catholic schools within the boundaries of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston only accept students in compliance with Texas state immunization requirements and TCCB ED mandates.

## **3.15 LITURGY AND WORSHIP**

SMCS students will attend all school Mass on Tuesday of each week. If a Holy Day of Obligation falls during the week, the students will attend Mass on Tuesday and the Holy Day of Obligation.

## **3.16 LUNCH**

### **Lunch Options**

Students have the option of bringing their lunch from home each day or purchasing a lunch from the contracted catering company. No soft drinks may be consumed by students during school hours with the exception of brown bag lunch days. Estimated cost is \$6.00 for regular lunch. Hot lunches are prepared and served each day. Lunch menus are available on the website where lunches are ordered. <https://mymealorder.com/>

**Students must either bring their lunch or purchase their lunch in the cafeteria. Forgotten lunches will be accepted until 9:00 am in the school office. If it is not possible to deliver your child's forgotten lunch by 9:00 am, we will be sure that he/she is provided lunch from the cafeteria.**

★ *Please do not have your child's lunch delivered to the school office, and please do not bring*

*fast food, except on birthdays.*

- ★ *Please do not send lunch or birthday treats to your child through a third party delivery service such as door dash or uber eats. All deliveries must be brought to school by a parent with the child's name and grade level to ensure delivery to the child during their designated lunch time.*

Students are expected to follow all school rules and cafeteria rules throughout the lunch periods. They are expected to clean up after themselves and refrain from any activity such as throwing food, running, shouting or any other disruptive behavior while at lunch.

### **Parent Lunch Days**

On designated days during the year, parents are invited to have lunch with their child(ren) during a designated time. These dates are listed on the school activities calendar which is available on the school website. The students and parents look forward to this special day.

### **Water Bottles**

Students are allowed to have water bottles with them in the classroom. All water bottles must have sports tops. Water bottles must be used for **water** only. Any student who does not comply with this policy will lose the privilege to have a water bottle in the classroom. *Students are not allowed to carry tumbler cups; this includes but is not limited to Stanley Cups, Yeti Cups, etc.*

## **3.17 MEDICATION/CLINIC**

St. Michael Catholic School has a school clinic staffed by a registered nurse. A student will be taken to the clinic if illness or injury occur. No student is to be left at the school clinic once ill or injured. The clinic is a temporary place for an ill or injured student to wait as comfortably as possible until a parent/guardian or designee can pick up the student and best provide for the student's welfare.

Texas State Law forbids the dispensation of medications by school employees without the written request of the parents or legal guardians.

Schools of the Galveston-Houston Archdiocese follow a standard policy regarding the dispensing of medicines.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule the administration of student medication in such a manner that medicine brought to school will be kept to a minimum. For example, the physician may be able to prescribe medication before/after school and at bedtime.

Medicine (prescription AND non-prescription) may be administered to students only upon the written request of the parent AND a physician. This means the school cannot dispense aspirin/acetaminophen without a physician's signed request. A copy of the physician's request for administration of medication by school personnel is at the end of this handbook. This form is also available in the school office and clinic. The form which will be used by every school in the Archdiocese contains a liability release which must be signed by a

parent/guardian before a medicine is dispensed.

Students are not allowed to transport medicine back and forth to school. Parents, guardians, or a designated adult must deliver and pick up medicine to be administered. The school will keep the medicine as long as requested by the physician or until the end of the current school year. After such time, an adult will be responsible for picking up unused medicine or it will be discarded.

Texas State Law also requires that the medicine be sent in the **ORIGINAL PHARMACY CONTAINER** (prescription or non-prescription) labeled with the student's name. **Only original pharmacy bottles will be accepted by the school nurse.**

All medicines will be kept in the clinic and be dispensed by the clinic staff. It is the student's responsibility to come to the clinic when it is time to receive his/her medication. If a student requires medication that needs to be given on a long-term basis (i.e. six weeks or longer), a permission form must be completed by the physician prescribing the medication. These forms may be obtained from the school clinic. If deemed necessary, students may carry and self-administer asthma medication with physician's orders and St. Michael administration staff approval. Special forms for these students will be kept on file in the clinic. (See Section VIII for examples of forms).

No student should be sent to school with a fever (temperature of 100 degrees or above) or vomiting. The student should remain at home until fever free or no vomiting for 24-48 hours.\* *If a student is sent home from school during a school day for fever or vomiting, they may not return to school the next school day. Also, if your child has a fever or vomits while at home during the day, please do not send them to school the following day.* This requirement is for the safety of the student and his/her classmates.

### **3.18 PARENT/GUARDIAN GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this process is to provide parents/guardians of students enrolled in any parish or regional school within the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston with an orderly procedure for the equitable and prompt resolution of complaints. This process is intended to resolve disputes through subsidiarity, at the lowest possible level, in a cooperative, conciliatory Christian atmosphere.

#### **Scope**

No person shall be discriminated against because of filing or participating in this grievance process, and no reprisals of any kind shall be taken against any person because of participation in this complaint process.

The process is not intended to be adversarial in nature and neither party to the grievance shall be represented by legal counsel during any phase of the process.

This process replaces all previous processes and statements regarding the institution and processing of complaints at both the local and Archdiocesan levels.

#### **Exclusions**

A parent who has withdrawn their student from the school may not avail themselves of this grievance process.

During an investigation by local, state, or federal officials, a student will be placed on Student Extended Leave.

These absences will be excused, and the student will have an opportunity to complete assignments without reduced credit during the leave. A parent/guardian may not avail themselves of the grievance process when a student is placed on Student Extended Leave.

### **Level One- Informal Resolution/Conciliation (Campus)**

It is the intent of this policy to resolve parent/guardian complaints at the lowest possible administrative level and in a cooperative Christian atmosphere through subsidiarity. This process is not intended to be adversarial in nature. Prior to using the steps set forth below, the parent or guardian shall meet with the person with whom he/she is having a dispute. If the concern is not resolved, he/she should move to the person's direct supervisor in an effort to find resolution. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved with the person's direct supervisor, the parent/guardian should request a meeting with the principal. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved with the principal, the parent/guardian should request a meeting with the pastor. If the pastor agrees with the principal's decision, the pastor may decline to meet. If the pastor agrees to meet, but the matter is not then settled satisfactorily, the parent/guardian may appeal the decision to Level Two after the parent/guardian has informed the pastor and principal of their intent to do so.

### **Level Two - Grievance Committee (Catholic Schools Office)**

If a satisfactory resolution is not reached at Level One and after notification to the principal and pastor, the parent/guardian may appeal, in writing, to the Level Two Grievance Committee. The Catholic Schools Office for the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston has established a Parent/Guardian Grievance Committee for the purpose of hearing complaint appeals from Level One of the Parent/Guardian Grievance Process. The committee reviewing the complaint will consist of an assistant Superintendent from the Catholic Schools Office and two Archdiocesan principals. The following procedure shall then be utilized:

- 1) The parent shall contact the Catholic Schools Office at 713-741-8704 to request the Level Two Appeal/Grievance Form within seven (7) working days of the Level One decision.
- 2) The written appeal shall be submitted to the Level Two Grievance Committee within seven (7) working days following the parent's receipt of the Level Two Appeal/Grievance Form. The grievance is submitted in writing (using the form provided) to the Catholic Schools Office via email addressed to [csogrievance@archgh.org](mailto:csogrievance@archgh.org) along with any additional materials or documentation the parent would like reviewed by the committee. *All submitted documents must be accessible and not password protected.*
- 3) The Principal and Pastor will receive a copy of the Level Two Appeal/Grievance Form and other attachments filed with the Catholic Schools Office. The Principal and Pastor will forward their response to the Level Two Grievance Committee within seven (7) working days of their receipt of the Level Two Appeal/Grievance form submitted by the parent.
- 4) The record for the Level Two Grievance Committee's consideration shall consist of all materials submitted by the parent and the written response provided by the Pastor and Principal. The committee has the discretion to accept or deny an appeal based on the evidence presented. If the appeal is denied, the decision rendered at Level One of the Parent Grievance Process will be final and no further appeals may be made to the school, the Catholic Schools Office, or any other Archdiocesan ministry or entity.
- 5) If the appeal is accepted for review, the Level Two Grievance Committee shall then schedule a

conference with the parent and/or school administration, if necessary, within fifteen (15) working days from the date the written appeal is received. The committee will make a reasonable effort to schedule a conference at a time agreeable to all parties. At this conference, the committee shall hear the appeal and review the materials presented, as well as any other information the committee deems relevant.

6) In an Archdiocesan parish school, the Level Two Grievance Committee shall make a recommendation for decision to the Pastor within seven (7) working days after the scheduled conference has been held and a copy of the recommendation will be sent to the Archdiocesan Superintendent. The Pastor may accept, reject, or modify the Level Two Grievance Committee's recommendation. The Pastor's decision will be communicated to the Principal, parent, and Superintendent of Catholic Schools within seven (7) working days upon receiving the Level Two Grievance Committee's recommendation.

7) If the Pastor does not issue a written decision within the seven (7) working day limit, that will be deemed as an acceptance of the committee's recommendation who will then communicate the decision to the parent, Principal, Pastor, and Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

8) In an Archdiocesan regional school, the Level Two Grievance Committee shall make a recommendation to the Archdiocesan Superintendent. The Archdiocesan Superintendent may accept, reject, or modify the committee's recommendation. The Archdiocesan Superintendent's decision will be communicated to the Principal and parent within seven (7) working days upon receiving the Level Two Grievance Committee's recommendation. If the Archdiocesan Superintendent does not issue a written decision within the seven (7) working days limit, that will be deemed an acceptance of the committee's recommendation. The Level Two Grievance Committee will then communicate the decision to parent and Principal.

9) Decisions at Level Two reached by the Pastor (parish schools) and Superintendent of Catholic Schools (regional schools) are final and no further appeals may be made to the school, the Catholic Schools Office, or any other Archdiocesan ministry or entity.

### **Appeal and Review of Expulsions and Extended Suspensions (Archdiocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools)**

A parent/guardian may appeal directly to the Archdiocesan Superintendent when the issue is concerning an expulsion or a discipline issue involving suspension (in or out of school) of a student from classes lasting five (5) or more consecutive school days. In such cases, the following procedure shall be utilized:

a. A written appeal shall be submitted to the Archdiocesan Superintendent within five (5) working days following the parent/guardian's notification of expulsion or suspension lasting five (5) or more consecutive school days.

b. The record for the appeal to the Archdiocesan Superintendent shall consist of a written statement setting forth with specificity the reason(s) for the parent/guardian's dissatisfaction with the decision to expel or suspend the student lasting five (5) or more consecutive days. It will also consist of information provided by the principal including, but not limited to the student's probationary status, disciplinary record, and/or behavior plan.

c. In consultation with the Chancellor and Moderator of the Curia for the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, the Archdiocesan Superintendent has the discretion to accept or deny any appeal based on the evidence presented. If the appeal is denied, the decision rendered by the principal and pastor will be final and no further appeals may be made to the school, the Catholic Schools Office, or any other Archdiocesan ministry or entity.

d. If the Archdiocesan Superintendent accepts the appeal for review, he/she shall then schedule a conference with the parent/guardian within ten (10) working days from the date the written appeal is received. The Superintendent will make a reasonable effort to schedule a conference at a time agreeable to all parties. At this conference, the Superintendent will hear the appeal and review the materials presented as a matter of record.

e. The Archdiocesan Superintendent shall make a recommendation for decision to the Chancellor and Moderator of the Curia within five (5) working days after the scheduled conference has been held, and a copy of the recommendation shall be forwarded to the parent/guardian.

f. The Chancellor and Moderator of the Curia, in consultation with the Archbishop, may accept, reject, or modify the Archdiocesan Superintendent's recommendation, or take any other action he deems appropriate. The Chancellor and Moderator of the Curia's decision will be communicated in writing to the parent/guardian within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of the Archdiocesan Superintendent's recommendation, and shall be final for all purposes.

g. No provision of this process shall be understood to limit the ecclesial authority of the Chancellor and Moderator of the Curia and/or Archbishop. The Chancellor and Moderator of the Curia and/or Archbishop may, in their sole discretion, choose to intervene in this process at any stage if they deem it necessary.

### **Procedural Issues**

While the grievance process is designed to accommodate all parent/student disputes that may arise within the Archdiocese, it is understood that some situations require flexibility. Any issues regarding the use of Level One or Two, or the appropriate administrator at those levels, shall be resolved by the Archdiocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

### **Computation of Time**

The time limits of the complaint process shall be based on working days, i.e., Monday through Friday. If any of the timeline falls on school holidays or breaks; the timeline shall be extended to add the corresponding number of working days to the timeline. Time limits may require flexibility and, if necessary, may be modified at the discretion of the Catholic Schools Office.

### **3.19 RELEASE OF STUDENT TO AN IMPAIRED PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN**

No student will be released to a parent, guardian, or parent designee if the school personnel believes the person to be impaired (i.e. inebriated) and, therefore, unable to care for the student. Another person from the student's emergency contact list will be called.

### 3.20 RE-REGISTRATION

Re-registration packets inviting students to return to St. Michael Catholic School for the following school year are sent to parents electronically in January/February. Following recommendation by the Advisory School Council, the school announces approved tuition and registration fees for the coming year at this time.

### 3.21 SACRAMENT PREPARATION AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR 2025-2026

- Enrolled in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade or above
- Completed one (1) year of faith formation during the 2024-2025 academic year. (Enrollment in a St. Michael Children Faith Formation program or in a Catholic School fulfills this requirement).

**and**

- Enrolled in St. Michael Children Faith Formation program or Catholic school during the 2024-2025 academic year.

**and**

- Baptized in the Catholic Faith.

It is a requirement that your child be enrolled in the Sacrament Preparation program in addition to attending St. Michael Catholic School. Registration for sacrament preparation is on the parish website at [www.stmichaelchurch.net](http://www.stmichaelchurch.net).

***\*\*Attendance at a Catholic School does not guarantee eligibility for reception of the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist.***

#### Parental Responsibilities in Sacrament Preparation

- Provide a copy of your child's baptism certificate if your child was baptized at St. Michael Catholic Church, on or before the FIRST parent meeting in **September 2025**. (These will be provided by the school for school families.)
- Provide a copy of the baptism certificate if your child was **not** baptized at St. Michael Catholic Church, on or before the FIRST parent meeting in **September 2025**. (These will be provided by the school for school families.)
- Attend introductory parent meeting for Sacrament Preparation in September
  - 2025.
- Attend one First Reconciliation Retreat with your child in **December 2025**. It is preferable that both parents attend, however, only one parent is required to attend.
- Attend one parent meeting for First Eucharist in **January 2026**. It is preferable that both parents attend, however, only one parent is required to attend.
- Attend one First Eucharist Retreat in **April 2026**. Each retreat is generally no longer than two (2) hours.

It is preferred that both parents attend although only one parent is required to attend.

- Teach your child the content in the student books according to the schedule of lessons distributed at the parent meetings.
- Read and comply with the mandatory dress code for First Penance & Reconciliation,
  - and First Eucharist.

## **Celebration of the Sacrament of First Eucharist at St. Michael the Archangel**

- First Eucharist will take place on **Saturday, May 9, at 11 am.**
- St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church provides a photographer for each First Eucharist Mass planned by the Children Faith Formation office.
- All photographs are taken by the parish photographer after the conclusion of the Mass.
- The parish photographer takes one group photo, and one photo of each First Communicant with the Celebrant.
- Photos and First Eucharist certificates will be available for pick-up in the parish office by mid-June.

### **Sacrament Dress Guidelines**

#### **First Penance and Reconciliation “Sunday Best”**

##### **Girls**

- \*A nice dress of appropriate length (no shorter than the top of the knee, no longer than the ankle) or nice slacks and a blouse/sweater.
- \*No jeans, shorts, or leggings.
- \*Top of shoulders and back of shoulders must be covered. It is recommended that the girls wear a sweater to stay warm in the church.
- \*No sleeveless dresses.
- \*Dress shoes or sandals with a back. No backless shoes.
- \*No flip flops, high heels, Toms, or any type of sneaker.

##### **Boys**

- \*Dress slacks in traditional colors: navy, black, gray, khaki, or white.
- \*White or ivory dress shirt, tucked in.
- \*Nice sweater or blazer.
- \*Tie (traditional, understated color; not bright, loud or neon).
- \*Black or brown belt.
- \*Socks.
- \*Black or brown **LEATHER** dress shoes.
- \*No sneakers, Vans, Converse, or flip flops. No neon colored Sperry topsiders.
- \*No shorts, sport jerseys, sport uniform or sport attire, or jeans.

### **First Eucharist Dress Guidelines**

## Girls

\*A white, ivory, or crème colored short sleeve dress of appropriate length (no shorter than the top of the knee, no longer than the ankle). Sleeveless dresses, dresses with spaghetti straps or halter top dresses are not permitted.

\*Top of shoulders and back of shoulders must be covered. It is recommended that the girls wear a light white sweater to stay warm in the church.

\*Girls must wear a veil. ***Veils are not optional*** and must be pinned securely. A veil will be provided by the parish if a child arrives at the church without one.

\*White or crème colored dress shoes or sandals with a back. No backless shoes.

\*No flip flops, high heels, Toms, or any type of sneaker.

\*No shawls, gloves or purses.

\*Rosaries, prayer books, and candles may be presented after the Mass if a family wants them blessed.

## Boys

\*A suit, or coat and tie ensemble.

\*Dress slacks in traditional color: navy, black, gray, khaki, or white.

\*White or ivory dress shirt. No other colors are permitted.

\*Tie (traditional, understated color; nothing bright, loud or neon).

\*Black or brown belt.

\*Socks

\*Black or brown ***LEATHER*** dress shoes.

\*No sneakers, Vans, Converse, or flip flops. No neon colored Sperry topsiders.

\*Rosaries, prayer books, and candles may be presented after the Mass if a family wants them blessed.

Children enrolled at St. Michael the Archangel Catholic School are **not** required to attend *Sunday Faith Formation* classes since they receive faith formation at school. **However, they are required to enroll and participate in the parish *Sacrament Preparation* program which requires submission of sacramental records, attendance at parent meetings, parent retreats and rehearsals, and completion of all reading and writing assignments.**

**Fulfilling all policies, guidelines and expectations, attendance at all meetings and retreats, and completion of the textbook & worksheets are required for a child to be considered eligible to receive the Sacraments at St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church. *Failure to comply with all requirements and expectations will result in a child's ineligibility to receive the sacraments during the current academic year.***

## 3.22 SECURITY

St. Michael Catholic School teachers, Extended Care staff, and the night cleaning company have been instructed to keep the gates locked at all times. The cleaning crew has been instructed NOT to open the gates or doors for anyone; please refrain from asking. An armed Police officer will be on campus during regular school hours. All parents and visitors will be required to show identification at the front desk and be processed by the RAPTOR system before entering the building.

During the summer of 2022, additional security measures were added to the school. Additional security cameras were installed to outside doorways. A security buzzer was added to the front door and a security gate

was added at the door by the PK3 classroom and the door to the PK3 classroom.

Starting in the fall of 2022, there will also be an additional officer on the property to stand in the back of the church when students attend daily Mass.

During the summer of 2023, wire mesh was added to the front fence of the PK3 playground and to the fence along the teacher parking lot. A security gate was also installed to the back cafeteria doors.

### **3.23 SUBPOENA FOR RECORDS IN CHILD CUSTODY MATTERS**

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston attempt to conform to appropriate court orders governing rights and duties of parents/guardians in regard to their child(ren). If there are Court orders regarding their children, parents/guardians must provide certified copies of such orders with the School. Parents/guardians are to ensure that the school has a complete and unaltered set of certified copies of the applicable court orders. Failure to follow this policy may result in the involuntary withdrawal of the child(ren) from the school. When parents/guardians choose to litigate their disputes in Court, both the Catholic Schools Office and the Archdiocesan Legal Department will attempt to minimize the involvement of the school, its teachers and personnel. School administrators should inform the Legal Department immediately in the event the school or any of its employees are served with subpoenas. School administrators should contact the Archdiocesan Legal Department with questions regarding interpretations of the court orders and other questions that arise.

The school will endeavor not to take sides in disputes between parents/guardians, in recognition of the crucial role of both parents in the lives of their children. Continued strife between the parents/guardians is harmful to the children and does not set a good example for them. It is expected that parents and guardians will treat one another with Christian charity. Ongoing parental disputes can be counterproductive to the mission of the school and when appropriate, the Pastor will be contacted to discuss whether continued enrollment of the child(ren) is a viable option.

The parent/guardian initiating the subpoena must reimburse the school for reasonable costs of production. The school shall charge the parent initiating a subpoena a fee for the time and resources spent on obtaining and copying records. Photocopy costs will be billed at a rate of \$1.00 per page. An additional fee will be charged to the parent/guardians issuing a subpoena for a personal appearance by a school employee. The parent/guardian will be charged for the cost of hiring a substitute or the daily rate for the subpoenaed employee. Accordingly, each person who acknowledges his or her agreement to the contents of this Handbook, either by written or electronic signature or by enrolling a student in the school, agrees that he or she shall pay a fee to the school.

### **3.24 SUPPLIES/BOOKS**

Annual tuition includes the use of school-owned textbooks and the annual purchase of consumable books. Students are responsible for the care of the books issued to them. If a student loses a book, he/she is responsible for notifying the teacher. The student will be charged the price to replace the book so that a new book can be purchased. Consumable workbooks/materials are also issued to the students. If a workbook is lost, the student must pay the full price for a second workbook.

At the end of the school year, the books are returned to the school. Students will be fined for books that are damaged while in their possession. Fines will be assessed according to the amount of damage and/or misuse

during a given school year.

### 3.25 TERMINATION OF STUDENT ENROLLMENT

#### 1. Inability to serve the student

At any time, upon review of the student's academic, behavioral, emotional, and social progress, if it is determined that the student's needs are not being met through minor accommodations, St. Michael Catholic School will determine the appropriate procedures to take regarding the educational program of the student which may include termination of enrollment.

#### 2. Withdrawal of student for parent, other family members or guest's behavior

Misconduct committed by a member of the school community other than a student (including parents, other family members, and guests) can significantly hinder a school's ability to perform its essential task of educating students. As a result, misconduct committed by a person connected to the school through a student (including parents, other family members, or guests) may result in the expulsion or an administrative withdrawal of the student from the school.

All members of the school community, including parents, family members or guests, are expected to comply with all school rules and policies while on campus and in communications with the school. All community members should be respectful, cooperate with the school with respect to all decisions affecting the student, and avoid behavior which disrupts the orderly administration of the school.

*If any SMCS Community Member engages in behavior, communications, or interactions on or off campus, that is disruptive, intimidating, overly aggressive, or reflects a loss of confidence in or disagreement with the School's policies, methods of instruction, discipline, including on social media or in public or private texts or chat groups, the school reserves the right to place restrictions on the community member's involvement or activity at school, on school property, and/or at school-related events.*

A community member's failure to meet these expectations jeopardizes school administration, requires the school to expend resources to address inappropriate and unnecessary behavior, and detracts from the school's core mission and, as a result, may jeopardize a student's continued participation in the school community. The failure of a student's parents, other family members, or guests to comply with these expectations, separate and apart from the student's conduct, may result in restricted access to the campus or administrative withdrawal of the student.

### 3.26 UNIFORMS & DRESS CODE

St. Michael students wear uniforms in grades PK-8. In an effort to teach our children that it is not the clothing nor the possessions that make each person special, St. Michael Catholic School requires all students to wear the uniform prescribed for their grade level. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to see that students conform to the uniform regulations. Failure to cooperate with the school in this area will be addressed.

All uniform items, except the P.E. uniforms for grades 6-8, are available through **FlynnO'Hara** Uniforms.

All clothing must be in good condition and clearly marked on the inside with the student's name. All students are required to have the current logo on their clothes.

**The SMCS School logo is copyrighted and should not be used by any vendor except FlynnO'Hara.**

### **Required Dress Uniform**

The following dress uniform will be required whenever students attend school liturgies and at any other time as directed by the administration. If a student is not dressed appropriately when the dress uniform is required, he/she is at risk of participation in the activity.

### **GIRLS:**

#### **Girls PK-4th grade: Required Dress Uniform**

- Plaid jumper with **black or navy** modesty shorts, **and hem to fall no shorter than the top of the knee.**
- Blouse: Peter Pan collar style long- or short-sleeved, with SMCS monogram on collar
- Socks: White knee socks
- Shoes: Flat navy/black dress shoes or navy/black/tan topsiders must be worn (no athletic/sports shoes)
- Navy cardigan, with SMCS monogram, may be worn for warmth

*Optional items that may be worn on days other than dress uniform days:*

- **Skorts:** Plaid
- **Shorts:** Plaid
- **Shirt:** White/Navy knit **or performance style** polo shirt, long- or short-sleeved, with SMCS monogram
- **Pants:** Long khaki (cold weather)

#### **Girls 5th-8th grade: Required Dress Uniform**

- Skirt: Plaid with **black or navy** modesty shorts, **and hem to fall no shorter than the top of the knee. \* Students will be given one warning and have five school days to make sure that their skirt is the proper length. After 5 school days from their first warning, they will be given a different skirt from the uniform closet if available and a citation.**
- Shirt: White oxford shirt long- or short-sleeved, with SMCS monogram
- Vest: Lightweight navy sweater vest with SMCS monogram
- Shoes: Flat navy/black dress shoes or navy/black/tan topsiders must be worn (no athletic/sports shoes)
- Socks: Thin white knee socks

*Optional items that may be worn on days other than dress uniform days:*

- Shirt: White/Navy **cotton knit or performance style** polo shirt long- or short-sleeved, with SMCS monogram

## **BOYS:**

### **Boys PK-8: Required Dress Uniform**

- Pants: Khaki
- Shirt: White oxford shirt, long- or short-sleeved, with SMCS monogram
- Vest: Lightweight navy sweater vest with SMCS monogram
- Belt
- Shoes: Black, brown, navy loafers, topsiders, or dress shoes (no athletic/sports shoes)
- Socks: White only

### **Grades PK-5: *Optional items that may be worn on days other than dress uniform days:***

- Shorts: Khaki
- Shirt: White/Navy **cotton knit or performance style** polo, long- or short-sleeved, with SMCS monogram

### **Grades 6-8th grade:**

#### ***Optional items that may be worn on days other than dress uniform days:***

- Shorts: Khaki
- Shirt: White/Navy **cotton knit or performance style** polo, long- or short-sleeved, with SMCS monogram

#### **Belt**

- A belt must be worn with shorts and slacks that have belt loops. (Exceptions are made for PK3 and PK4 students).

#### **Socks**

- White socks (available at Target, Academy, etc.) are to be worn daily and visible above the shoe.
- Students in grades 6-8 have the option of black socks, with the exception of dress uniform days.
- On dress uniform days, all girls will wear thin white knee-high socks (available at **FlynnO'Hara** Uniforms) and all the boys will wear white socks.

#### **Shoes**

##### **All Grades**

- Athletic type shoes are preferred for comfort and safety.
  - ***PK and Kindergarten students are asked to wear velcro athletic shoes.***
- Dress shoes are required for all students on Mass Days. (More information about dress shoes is given above in the required dress uniform section.)
- ***Dress shoes are also required for any student who performs a task on the altar.***
- All shoes must have white or light colored soles as the black soled shoes are damaging to our gym and building floors.
- Rubber soled shoes must be worn daily.
- Slip-on athletic/sport shoes are not permitted for safety reasons.
- No boots, sandals, open-back, open-toed, or high tops may be worn.
- ***No shoes that make sound effects.***

**Tights/Leggings**

- Girls may wear white, black or navy tights under their uniforms on cold days.
- Girls may also wear white, black, or navy leggings under their uniforms on cold days. (Leggings may not have mesh or cut-outs.)

**Turtlenecks**

- White turtlenecks may be worn under the uniform shirt for added warmth on cold days.
- Turtlenecks or mock turtlenecks may not be worn alone with shorts, slacks, jumpers, or skirts.

**T-Shirts**

- Short sleeved plain white t-shirt may be worn UNDER the uniform shirt. T-shirts worn under the uniform shirt must not be turned inside/out or have anything printed on it.

**Bows/Headbands**

- Girls may wear small hair bows or headbands.

**P.E. Uniforms**

- For the 2025-2026 school year, middle school students will not change for PE classes. Middle school students who participate in after school sports will be required to wear the PE uniform for sports practices.
- Middle school PE uniforms will be available for purchase before school starts and during school from the Athletic Department.

**School Sweatshirts/Jackets**

- Only the monogrammed solid navy school sweatshirt or solid navy school fleece jacket (purchased from FlynnO'Hara Uniforms) may be worn during school hours. For added warmth, any jacket or coat may be worn to and from school and when going outside.

**Non-Uniform Days**

- During the school year, special days may be designated as non-uniform days (Halloween, Rodeo/Go Texan). Students will be instructed as to what constitutes appropriate attire for these occasions. Failure to dress appropriately will result in the student being given a school uniform from lost and found, or sent home, or excluded from the special activity/event.

**Free Dress Reminders**

- Free Dress attire may include jeans of appropriate fit which contain all of the original material (i.e., no "hip" rips/tears) or shorts of appropriate length (no more than 2 inches from the top of the knee); shirts should be of appropriate length (i.e., no skin showing) and fit (i.e., not too tight), the material of the shirt should be opaque, all shirts must have sleeves (no tank tops or spaghetti straps), and if shirts have a theme it must be appropriate for a Catholic School student.
- **Girls MAY NOT wear leggings/jeggings/yoga pants on free dress days or with free dress passes.**

- Girls MAY NOT wear athleisure skirts or shorts (this includes all Lululemon or Lululemon-like skirts and shorts). All skirts and shorts must reach no more than 2 inches from the top of the knee.
- **Students may not wear any costumes or any pajama bottoms or pajama tops on free dress days or with free dress passes.**

### **Spirit T-Shirt Day**

- **Fridays throughout the school year are designated as Spirit Days.**
  - *When Friday is a holiday or a Mass day for students, students may spirit shirts to school on Thursdays with their uniform bottoms.*
  - Students may purchase Spirit t-shirts to wear on these days with uniform shorts, pants, skirts, or jumpers. Students may wear any St. Michael school spirit shirt on these days.
  - Lower school students may wear Art a la Carte shirts to school with their uniform bottoms on Art a la Carte days. Art a la Carte shirts will be available for purchase from PLUS.

### **Jewelry**

- Jewelry is not part of the school uniform and should be kept to a minimum.
- Small necklaces and bracelets may be worn as long as they are not a distraction.
- Small stud earrings and small hoop earrings/huggies (girls only) are allowed.
- Wireless-enabled wearable technology devices are not allowed in school (Fitbit, Apple watches, etc.).

*The school will not be responsible for the loss, breakage, or theft of jewelry and/or other personal items.*

### **Fingernail Polish/Make-up**

- For girls in PK-8th grade: Only solid color fingernail polish is allowed. No make-up should be worn to school.

### **Hairstyles and Hair Length**

- Hair color and styles which are deemed distracting are not acceptable for any student. **Hair must be in the student's natural hair color.**
- **Boys' hair must be a modest length. It must not extend below the top of the shirt collar, below the eyebrows, or below the middle of the ear. Boys are not permitted to shave or cut lines, designs, letters, numbers, etc., into their hair.**
  - A parent/guardian will be notified by the Principal to remedy distracting appearance deemed not suitable for continued enrollment. It is the responsibility of the parents to address these concerns within a week of being notified.

## **3.27 VISITORS AND GUESTS**

### **Visiting Procedures**

For the protection of every student in attendance at St. Michael Catholic School, no one is allowed

on the school premises without first receiving clearance from the school office. State law prohibits the interruption of a teacher during class time or while performing any official duties.

**All parent volunteers, visitors, and guests are required to check in at the desk in the foyer of the school. All visitors must provide identification and be processed by the RAPTOR system before entering the school. All visitors must obtain a visitor/volunteer badge to be worn while he/she is on the school campus.**

Student visitors to St. Michael, such as family members and graduates, are expected to make arrangements in advance with the Principal. Our expectations are that all visitors will remain well-mannered and be well-dressed while on campus. All visitors are expected to check in and out of the school office. Volunteers are asked to sign in and designate where they are assisting. This will enable the office staff to locate them if they receive an emergency call at school or need to be reached.

### **Volunteers**

*In order to volunteer, all parents are required to have Safe Haven training and be up-to-date with the compliance requirements. If you are not sure if you meet the Safe Haven requirements, please contact the school office.*

**All parent volunteers are required to check in at the desk in the foyer of the school. All volunteers must provide identification and be processed by the RAPTOR system before entering the school. All volunteers must obtain a visitor/volunteer badge to be worn while he/she is on the school campus.** Upon completion of work, volunteers must sign out in the office and return their volunteer badge. Please refrain from visiting classrooms. Volunteers are encouraged to ask for assistance as needed. Please make other arrangements for younger siblings as they may not be brought to school during volunteer hours. Volunteers represent the church and school. They should show support for the school and governing policies at all times. Archdiocesan ethical and moral conduct policies hold all volunteers bound by confidentiality. Administration may terminate service of any volunteer who fails to uphold the policies and procedures of the school. All comments and concerns should be addressed with school administration.

If you are at school as a room parent or by teacher request during school hours, you are considered a chaperone which means you need to devote full attention to the supervision of students. Younger siblings cannot accompany parents to classrooms during school hours.

### **Safe Haven (Required for all volunteers)**

All volunteers are required to follow specific guidelines. The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston requires that volunteers in the Catholic school system complete the Application for Volunteer Service, Volunteer Code of Conduct, Criminal Background Check, and take the **Safe Haven** training class. A criminal background check will be conducted on each volunteer.

**Safe Haven** is a child sexual abuse awareness program adopted by the National Council of Catholic Bishops. Everyone who takes the training will be registered with the archdiocesan database and will be added to the SMCS Approved Volunteer List.

## Volunteer Code of Conduct

- As a community of faith we are committed to safeguard our children and youth, the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. The following rules and regulations reflect that commitment and are a condition of volunteer ministry.
  
- As a volunteer, I will:
  - Safeguard children and youth entrusted to my care at all times.
  - Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
  - Avoid situations where I am alone with a child or youth at church/school activities.
  - Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children or youth.
  - Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children or youth or their parents without prior written approval from the pastor or administrator.
  - Refrain from giving inappropriate, personal gifts to children or youth.
  - Report suspected abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services (800.252.5400) or local police department. I understand that failure to report suspected child abuse is a violation of Texas law.
  - Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse or neglect of children and/or youth.
  - Obey all traffic laws when driving children and youth.
  
- As a volunteer, I will not:
  - Espouse any view contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church during my volunteer ministry.
  - Smoke or use tobacco products on parish property and/or in the presence of children or youth.
  - Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while volunteering.
  - Spank, shake, or slap children, youth or any person.
  - Humiliate, ridicule, threaten or degrade children, youth or any person.
  - Strike or touch a child, youth or any person in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
  - Engage in any conduct that frightens or humiliates children, youth or any person.
  - Commit an illegal or immoral act in the presence of children and/or youth.
  - Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth.
  - Sexually harass any person, e.g., requests for sexual favors, sexually explicit statements, etc.
  - Drive a vehicle not in compliance with regulations and/or inspections while Driving Children.
  
- *All SMCS Volunteers will be required to sign a volunteer code of conduct before volunteering.*

## Volunteer Dress Code

- Volunteers should dress appropriately for a Catholic school campus. Overly casual attire, exercise clothing, sports attire, or shorts/skirts of an inappropriate length should not be worn.

## **Volunteer Responsibilities**

As a volunteer, you are responsible for:

- Arriving on time and staying for the agreed upon time;
- Notifying the appropriate persons if you are going to be absent or tardy;
- Performing your tasks to the best of your ability;
- Understanding that the administrator values your service, but may not always be able to honor your preferences for days, times and places of service;
- Supporting the authority of staff and administrators;
- Upholding parish and program rules;
- Keeping confidential information that you have gained during your volunteer service that is private to young persons and/or their families;
- Promptly making known the confidences of young persons that involve issues of health, life and/or safety;
- Keeping young people under your supervision safe and appropriately occupied;
- Notifying your supervisor or the administration about unsafe conditions or issues causing you concern;
- Supporting the teachings of the Catholic Church and living in accordance with those teachings;
- Enjoying being part of our ministry team; and
- Praying for our community and the youth we serve.

Volunteers in Catholic Education by Mary Angela Shaughnessy, SCN (NCEA, 2007)

### **3.28 WITHDRAWALS**

- To officially withdraw a student, notice in writing must be given to the school office prior to the date of withdrawal. Any family who withdraws must wait one (1) full calendar year before reapplying.

## **4 STANDARD OF CONDUCT**

## **4.1 PHILOSOPHY**

The true goal of any discipline program is to assist the student in achieving self-discipline which will manifest itself in clear and logical reasoning and in action which is consistent with good moral principles. Clearly a program of discipline is based on the premise that a school operating within defined limits will provide an effective learning environment for all students. The plan consists of well-defined regulations and logical consequences for student behavior.

## **4.2 DISCIPLINARY POLICY**

The school's discipline policy is based on the assumption that children have the capacity to make choices in their behavior that will either help or hinder their own growth and development. Parents/legal guardians and educators are called to work together to provide an atmosphere that will enable children to accept their decision making ability and understand both the positive and negative consequences of their behavior.

Students who misbehave and/or infringe on the academic process will be disciplined. Parents/guardians will be notified whenever a child has seriously misbehaved within the classroom or during extracurricular activities. Prior to a telephone call or email, parents/legal guardians can be assured that the student has been spoken to regarding the misconduct and subsequent consequences. The phone call or email serves to alert parents/legal guardians to the situation and to request their assistance in disciplining their child.

Specific breaches of discipline in the classroom are under the authority of the supervising teacher. However, all teachers have jurisdiction over all students, regardless of age or grade. Students are expected to adhere to the principles of self-discipline, respect of others and their property, and the use of good judgment in the area of academics and behavior. School rules are designed to establish clear guidelines for student behavior. The expectation is that all students choose behavior that is appropriate at school. If students choose to break rules, they must accept the consequences related to their behavior.

The Principal reserves the right to place a student on probation or home study or to suspend or expel a student as deemed appropriate to the circumstances. The Principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary matters and can waive any disciplinary action for just cause.

## **4.3 BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

Teachers, parents, and students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner befitting the reputation of St. Michael Catholic School, both on campus and at school sponsored activities. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. The Administration reserves the right to amend, suspend, or add new rules or guidelines to school disciplinary policies. Furthermore, the Administration reserves the right to enforce standards of conduct and behavior not mentioned in this document.

## Acceptable Behavior

All students are expected to:

- Be respectful to the Principal, teachers, staff, and one another;
- Be respectful to any adult on our campus;
- Be courteous and considerate of others;
- Obey classroom rules;
- Maintain quiet in the hall when classes are in session;
- Treat school property with respect;
- Be honest and trustworthy;
- Obey school-wide rules.

## Unacceptable Behavior

### Academic Dishonesty

- Students are expected to collaborate but are to conduct themselves honestly and with integrity in their work. All forms of test procedure violation, cheating, and plagiarism are prohibited.
- Academic behavior that is unacceptable includes, but is not limited to:
  - Copying another student's homework;
  - Working with others on projects that are meant to be done individually;
  - Looking at or copying another student's test or quiz answers;
  - Allowing another student to look at or copy homework or answers from one's test or quiz;
  - Using any other method to get or give test or quiz answers;
  - Taking a test or quiz in part or in whole to use or to give to others;
  - *Using ChatGPT/AI to write any assignment that is to be turned in as an assignment to St. Michael Catholic School;*
  - Copying information from a source without proper references or attribution; and
  - Misrepresenting as one's own, either in whole or in part, papers from other students, publications, or the Internet.
- Violators of this policy will be disciplined on a case-by-case basis depending on the severity of the violation, prior violations, and other factors, as determined by the Assistant Principal and the teacher(s) involved.
  - Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to, receiving a zero on a particular assignment, redoing an assignment or retaking a test, receiving a failing grade on the assignment, project or test; receiving a lower overall grade in the class; sport or extracurricular activities ineligibility, detention, suspension, or expulsion.

### Bullying/Harassment/Sexual Harassment

- St. Michael Catholic School endeavors that all students enjoy a safe and healthy school environment. As a matter of both school policy and religious moral teaching, students engaging in bullying, harassment, and other such behavior, seriously or in jest, whether verbal, written, or

online, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and/or expulsion.

- The Principal and/or other designated administrator will explore all complaints of bullying, harassment, or any other types of threatening behavior, whether verbal, written, or online according to the guidelines listed in this policy. All allegations of bullying, harassment, and/or other threatening behavior shall be taken seriously and addressed in a timely manner.

### **Bullying**

- Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in ongoing written, verbal expression, or physical conduct that:
  - Will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or damage to the student's property, or
  - Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.
  - Examples: Bullying of a student may include, but is not limited to, hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, ostracism, and cyber bullying.

### **Harassment**

Harassment is conduct:

- based on one's race, color, religion, sex, national and ethnic origin, age, or disability when the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct affects one's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with one's academic performance; or otherwise adversely affects one's educational opportunities.
- that threatens to cause harm or bodily injury; is sexually intimidating; causes physical damage to the property of a student; subjects a student to physical confinement or restraint; or maliciously and substantially harms a student's physical or emotional health or safety. • that is punishable as the crime of harassment under Penal Code 42.07.

The types of harassment include conduct as follows:

- Verbal Harassment includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate, derogatory, threatening, obscene, or sexually suggestive comments, letters, notes, invitation, or jokes, communicated verbally or in written form, including those sent or shared through electronic means.
- Physical Harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement.

- Visual Harassment includes, but is not limited to, derogatory, demeaning or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, gestures, clothing, or suggestive looks, leering, gesturing, or staring at another's body.
- Sexual Harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual advances or favors, or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment may require the school to notify local law enforcement authorities.

### **Reports of Bullying, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, or other Threatening Behavior**

Any member of the school community who witnesses, or becomes aware of, an instance of bullying behaviors directed against a member of the school community shall report such bullying behaviors to the Principal/designee. All reports shall be kept confidential to the extent possible. Any questions regarding bullying behaviors or making complaints should be directed to the Principal/designee.

When reports of bullying, harassment, abuse, or other threatening behavior are made, the Principal/designee shall follow best practices in dealing with this type of behavior including:

- Communicating the expectation that every individual engaged in the school program should be mindful of the behavior between and among students taking corrective action, when necessary;
- Addressing allegations rather than brushing them off as “just teasing,”;
- Enforcing the school's discipline policies and procedures justly and consistently;
- Reviewing discipline policies and procedures with school employees, and complying with policies and procedures related to reports of bullying, harassment, or other threatening behavior in the Family Handbook to inform parents and students.

Failure to promptly report may impair the principal/staff member's ability to explore and address the prohibited conduct. CPS and the police authorities may need to be notified as bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, and behaviors such as this can result or lead to a matter that needs to be reported. This is true even when the behavior is between students.

### **Consequences of Bullying or Harassment**

Any student who engages in bullying or harassment of another individual is subject to disciplinary action up to and including verbal and/or written warnings and reprimands, counseling, suspension, and expulsion.

Note: Should substantiated conduct outside of the school environment come to the attention of the school, this may serve as grounds for discipline, as students of this school are expected to align their lives to Christian principles at all times. Off-campus or off-network incidents that cause a substantial disruption to the operation of the school may be treated as if they had occurred on-campus.

A charge of bullying or harassment shall not, in and of itself, create the presumption of wrongdoing. However, substantiated acts of bullying will result in disciplinary action up to, and including, expulsion. Depending on the nature and extent of the charge, if reasonable suspicion of misconduct is determined, the alleged bully or harasser may be sent home pending the conclusion of the investigation from the school.

All St. Michael Students in grades 2-8 are required to sign the St. Michael Bullying Policy included at the end of this handbook.

#### 4.4 STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

- It is the student's responsibility to behave in a manner that contributes to a positive school environment. Students will not commit acts that tend to injure, degrade, disgrace, or threaten the safety, privacy, and/or respect of other students, teachers, or staff members.
- Rudeness and talking back are not tolerated.
- Gum chewing is not permitted on campus at any time. This includes after school hours and extra-curricular activities.
- No food, nor candy, nor drinks, are to be consumed on the campus anywhere other than the cafeteria unless approved by the Principal or teacher. Grade levels may have specified exceptions for water bottles and designated snack times.
- No selling of items or products on campus except those explicitly sponsored by St. Michael Catholic School.
- No electronic devices or cell phones are allowed on campus. They will be confiscated and kept by the administrator until a parent comes to retrieve them.
- No toys, dolls, stuffed animals, or games may be brought to school without the approval of the Administration. If not approved, these items will be kept by the administration until a parent comes to the school to collect the item.
- No magazines or Internet materials may be brought to school, except those requested by the teacher.
- Students may not draw or write on themselves or others.
- Glass containers are not to be brought to school.

#### 4.5 CAMPUS RULES

- Treat all members of the school community with Christian respect.
- Follow directions the first time they are given.
- Lights out, bells rung, or whistle blown means immediate silence.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- Comply with uniform policy.

##### 1. Specialized Area Rules

**In the HALLWAYS, students are to:**

- Keep to the right.
- Walk (not run) at all times.

- Be silent when requested.

**In the CAFETERIA, students are to:**

- Follow cafeteria directions.
- Refrain from throwing food or any object.
- Remain seated.
- Clean area before leaving.
- Talk only to people at their table.

**On the PLAYGROUND, students are to:**

- Remain in assigned areas.
- Use playground equipment properly.
- Refrain from throwing any object.

**In the RESTROOMS, students are to:**

- Use the restroom during assigned times.
- Refrain from loitering, yelling, playing, or vandalizing.

**During CARPOOL, students are to:**

- Remain quietly seated in the assigned area.
- Follow directions of teachers.
- Enter the parking lot only with an adult.

**In the CHURCH, students will:**

- Be dressed appropriately in the required dress uniform on Mass days.
- Be silent when entering and leaving.
- Actively participate in a reverent manner.
- Sit, kneel, and stand straight.
- Keep feet off kneelers.
- Move song books and kneelers quietly.

**In HOMEROOM, students will:**

- Be attentive to announcements and opening/closing exercises.
- Follow the teacher's directions.
- Be respectful of one's own property, the property of others, and school property.

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

All buildings, equipment, supplies, materials, and books are considered to be the property of St. Michael Catholic School. Students who cause willful damage to such property will be assessed all costs to cover repair and/or replacement. Students may also be subject to disciplinary action.

## 4.7 CONSEQUENCES

For students in Pre-Kindergarten through fourth grade, teachers address rule infractions in their classroom. Weekly conduct reports are sent in Wednesday folders with each student.

For students in fifth through eighth grade, CITATIONS are given for infractions of campus or specialized areas rules. They are a written notification to the student that he/she has broken a campus rule. Accumulation of several citations indicates a lack of self and school respect and will require further action. MORNING DETENTIONS may be assigned in these grades for serious rule infractions as well as for disregarding a teacher's warning that a classroom rule has been broken. The accumulation of citations and detentions may lead to ineligibility for activities, suspensions, or expulsion. The assistant principal has the option to assign lunch detention to students whose inappropriate behavior warrants this consequence.

### CITATION

Citations may be issued in grades 5-8.

ACCUMULATION OF CITATIONS in grades 5-8

After a student receives 3 citations, they will have a morning detention.

### MORNING DETENTION

The Assistant Principal for 5th-8th grade holds morning detentions on a **designated day** of the week 7:00-7:45 a.m. The assistant principal will give the family notice of an assigned detention. Students should report to the assigned room by no later than 7:05 a.m. If a student arrives after 7:10 a.m., they will have morning detention again the following week.

If a student misses their first detention assignment, they will have a second detention assigned by the Assistant Principal, but all those missed thereafter will result in additional disciplinary consequences up to and including in-school suspension.

### IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES

Bullying, retaliation, fighting, inappropriate computer use, threatening, or illegal behavior warrants an office referral. If a conflict is involved, or bullying is suspected, students are immediately referred to the Assistant Principal.

Students who exhibit unkind or disruptive behavior on a regular basis will be asked to sign a behavior agreement\*. A copy of the signed agreement will be emailed to the parent(s) of the student. (A sample behavior agreement is included in the appendices.)

The use of defiant rudeness, vulgarity, and or obscenity in language or actions is considered a severe infraction, and the student is immediately sent to the Assistant Principal with the required note.

**Note:** Should substantiated conduct outside of the school environment come to the attention of the school, this may serve as grounds for discipline, as students of this school are expected to align their

lives to Christian principles at all times. Off-campus or off-network incidents that cause a substantial disruption to the operation of the school may be treated as if they had occurred on-campus.

A charge of bullying or harassment shall not, in and of itself, create the presumption of wrongdoing. However, substantiated acts of bullying will result in disciplinary action up to, and including, expulsion. Depending on the nature and extent of the charge, if reasonable suspicion of misconduct is determined, the alleged bully or harasser may be sent home pending the conclusion of the investigation from the school.

All St. Michael Students in grades 2-8 are required to sign the St. Michael Bullying Policy included at the end of this handbook.

## 4.8 DRUGS AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

The use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful.

A student on school property or attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity is subject to removal from class, suspension, expulsion and/or referred for prosecution if he/she:

- Uses a chemical substance, possessing for consumption, sale or dispensing of illegal drugs and narcotics (hard or soft drugs; alcohol, inhalers, marijuana, or a controlled substance);
- Acts under the influence of an illegal drug-alcohol, narcotic, marijuana, or a controlled substance;
- Misuses or overdoses on prescription or over-the-counter medication.

Upon discovery of a drug-related situation stated above, the Principal reports the incident to the superintendent, and notifies the parent/legal guardian immediately, and requests a conference. After a conference with the parent/legal guardian and student, the student is subject to removal from class, suspension, expulsion, or referral for prosecution. A recommendation to the parents/or legal guardians is made for evaluation and possible treatment for the student. (Archdiocesan policy)

## 4.9 EXPULSION

### General Grounds for Expulsion

The grounds for expulsion listed below need not be applied without consideration of individual mitigating factors. Certain actions are so severe that expulsion is appropriate to deter future misconduct and maintain orderly school administration. Examples of such severe misconduct include *but are not limited to*:

- actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare to self or other students,
- assault, battery, or any threat of force or violence—whether intended in jest or not—directed toward any school personnel, students, member of the school community, or other person on school property or during school- related activities,
- habitual or persistent violation of school regulations,
- use, sale, distribution or possession of narcotics, controlled substances, tobacco or nicotine

- delivery systems, alcoholic beverages,
- on-campus use, sale, distribution, or possession of a substance intended or commonly used to mimic a narcotic, controlled substance, or alcoholic beverage, tobacco, or nicotine delivery systems,
- use or possession of firearms or other potentially harmful objects or weapons,
- gang-related conduct or activity including but not limited to, symbols, graffiti, apparel, colors, hazing/initiations, and hand signals commonly associated with gangs,
- theft, extortion, arson,
- malicious damage or destruction of real or personal property at school,
- bullying and/or harassment, including sexual harassment,
- conduct which may damage the reputation of the school or its employees or parish,
- threats to transmit or the actual transmittal of nude or otherwise inappropriate images of any person,
- use of social media in such a manner as constitutes bullying or online harassment, blackmail, or extortion, or which causes another student or member of the school community to fear for the safety of any member of the school community,
- risk taking or other inappropriate behaviors associated with the use of digital devices, social media, and the internet, and
- incorrigible or disruptive behavior which impedes the progress of the rest of the class.

#### **Grounds for Expulsion related to Drug and Alcohol Abuse**

The promotion and the safeguarding of student health (physically, mentally, and emotionally) are a concern to our schools. The use, misuse, and/or abuse of alcohol, drugs, and hazardous substances cause grave problems in the areas of student health and student stability. Many incidents of scholastic failure, school dropout, violence, tension, and suicide can be traced to alcohol and drug abuse. Therefore, possessing, selling, giving away, using, or being under the influence of alcohol and drugs and/or hazardous substances on campus, at school functions, or at a time and place that directly involves the school or the welfare of members of the school community constitute grounds for expulsion.

#### **4.10 IN SCHOOL AND OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION**

It is the philosophy of this school that every child should be privileged to attend classes every day of the school year in order to receive thorough instruction in all subject areas. Under certain circumstances, however, it may become necessary to place a student in in-school or out of school suspension. When a student is suspended, he/she will be allowed to make up tests and quizzes.

A student who has received a suspension may not participate in any school or extra-curricular activities during his/her suspension.

A student **MAY** be suspended for the following reasons:

- Vandalizing or defacing school property;
- Involvement in a physical altercation;
- Persistent disobedience or violation of school regulations;
- Forging names of parents or guardians;

- Abusive or vulgar language and/or actions;
- Stealing;
- Possession of pornographic materials;
- Bringing to school items that threaten the safety of the students and or school;
- Making threats of any kind to harm the students, the staff, and or the school;
- Violation of any part of the harassment policy.

A student **WILL** be suspended for the following reasons:

- Smoking or possession of tobacco including vapor cigarettes;
- Use of or possession of harmful substances;
- Possession of fireworks;
- Possession of pocket knives or weapons.

#### **4.11 SEARCH OF LOCKERS AND SEARCH AND CONFISCATION OF STUDENT BELONGINGS**

School officials have the right to protect the health, welfare, and safety of students against alcohol and drugs, weapons, and other contraband materials.

School officials may conduct searches at any time even when the student is not present with their belongings. This includes requesting students to empty book bags, backpacks, pockets, sport bags, or pencil bags. Personal belongings, including cell phones and digital devices on school property or at school events can be confiscated if they are deemed illegal, unsafe, material to an investigation, or disruptive to the operation of the school.

#### **4.12 STUDENT EXTENDED LEAVE**

During an investigation by local, state, or federal officials, a student will be placed on Student Extended Leave.

These absences will be excused, and the student will have an opportunity to complete assignments without reduced credit during the leave.

**A parent/guardian may not avail themselves of the grievance process when a student is placed on Student Extended Leave.**

#### **4.13 WEAPONS AND FIREARMS**

The unlawful possession, use or concealment of a weapon/firearm is prohibited. A weapon is any instrument which may produce serious bodily harm or death. A student on school property or attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity may be subject to removal from class, suspension, expulsion, and/or referred for prosecution if he or she possesses, uses, or conceals a weapon/firearm.

Upon discovery of a weapon/firearm, the Principal will immediately confiscate the weapon/firearm and notify the parent/guardian and the proper authorities as warranted.

## **5 INSTRUCTION, GRADING & COMMUNICATION**

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston are an extension of the Church's call to teach and form souls, operating according to the applicable norms of Canon Law:

Can. 794

§1. The duty and right of educating belongs in a special way to the Church, to which has been divinely entrusted the mission of assisting persons so that they are able to reach the fullness of the Christian life.

§2. Pastors of souls have the duty of arranging everything so that all the faithful have a Catholic education.

Can. 795

Since true education must strive for complete formation of the human person that looks to his or her final end as well as to the common good of societies, children and youth are to be nurtured in such a way that they are able to develop their physical, moral, and intellectual talents harmoniously, acquire a more perfect sense of responsibility and right use of freedom, and are formed to participate actively in social life.

The educational mission of the Church and the reasonable expectations of the schools' clients therefore require that the Catholic school be distinguished by an atmosphere and a formal program which relate religious belief and practice, constructively and integrally, with the normal development and education of children.

For these reasons, the mission, vision, philosophy of teaching, and learning that underlie the education offered by the schools of The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston reflects a balance and priority among the diverse goals of the Catholic school: religious, moral, intellectual, social, cultural, personal, and physical.

The core curriculum of St. Michael Catholic School complies with time allotment and subject requirements of the Texas Education Agency (TEA), Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department (TCCBED), and the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. Various education and athletic opportunities are available to our students as extracurricular activities.

## 5.2 ACCREDITATION

Every seven years, schools undergo the self-evaluation process for accreditation from the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops' Education Department (TCCB ED). *Our last accreditation visit was in the Fall of 2023. SMCS is fully accredited.*

## 5.3 COMMUNICATION AND CONFERENCES

All available school resources shall be utilized to promote student success. Lines of communication will be kept open to inform parents of student progress in all areas. Concerns about a student will be addressed initially by the classroom teacher and parent. In the event concerns continue, referrals for additional assistance and resources may be pursued through the school learning specialist or administration.

Appointments with the administration and/or with teachers need to be scheduled in advance. A teacher attempts to return phone calls and emails within 24 hours during the school week. Please note that messages left for teachers may not be retrieved until the close of the school day.

**WEDNESDAY FOLDERS** – Students in Grades K-4 will bring home a folder each Wednesday. The folder will contain communication from the office, weekly reports on progress and behavior, and student’s work. Please review this with your child. Parents are required to provide a signature as acknowledgement and return the folder on Thursday.

**PARENT CONFERENCES** – Your child’s progress is important to us. Teachers are available to discuss issues during the regular school day by appointment only. Contact the school office, send a note with your child or email the teacher to request a phone call or a conference. Teachers will attempt to return calls or emails within 24 hours of receipt of the message during the school week. Formal parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. Students in grades 5-8 may be asked to attend these conferences with parents.

**INTERVENTION CONFERENCES** – Parents of students who are experiencing academic, social, and/or behavioral problems may be asked to conference with the team of teachers and administrators who work with students daily. The student may be asked to attend the conference when appropriate.

**PROGRESS REPORTS** – Formal progress reports for grades 1-8 will be made available electronically at the midpoint of each quarter for each class. Progress report dates are indicated on the school calendar.

Student success can only be attained through cooperation between parents and educators. If it is determined that the school’s resources cannot meet the needs of a student or if parent(s)/guardian(s) fail to act on the school’s recommendations for remediation or diagnostic evaluation, the Principal may request withdrawal of the student or deny admission for the following year.

## **5.4 COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE**

### **COUNSELING:**

The Catholic school counselor supports students seeking strategies to support their educational programming. The Catholic school counselor may offer individual and group counseling when needed on topics such as self-awareness, self-regulation, relationship building, executive functions, and many others. Referral requests to the Catholic school counselor may be initiated by the student, teacher, or parent through the school’s referral system. The Catholic school counselor provides only short-term counseling services to a student, if further counseling is required the parents are provided an external referral list to seek individualized support.

### **GUIDANCE PROGRAM:**

Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department (TCCBED) defines a guidance program as lessons/activities conducted throughout all grade levels and taught separately or integrated into other curriculum areas. Content addressed by classroom teachers includes the student’s spiritual, social, emotional, academic, and physical development. Weekly guidance lessons are taught in grades PK-8.

The purpose of the guidance program is to foster a student’s spiritual, social, emotional, academic, and physical growth. It provides opportunities for all to learn and live creatively, and to relate to God, self, family, peers, and others in responsible ways. Through this program, students will learn to manage their emotions, build self-awareness, maintain positive relationships, show empathy and understanding for others, and make decisions based on their faith.

The foundation of the guidance program is designed to include 4 core elements:

- *Guidance Curriculum* with integrated Catholic identity and 7 Human Virtues to support students’ educational program.
- *Response Support* component to provide intervention for any concerns to a student’s academic, social, and emotional learning.
- *Individual Planning Support* to guide student academic planning, monitoring, and social-emotional learning.
- *System Support* supports a Catholic school to plan, organize, implement, manage, and evaluate its guidance program to increase the efficiency and efficacy of direct services provided.

## 5.5 CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

### Curriculum Development

The Archdiocese of Galveston – Houston has unique curriculum standards, based on the TEKS and the Catholic Curriculum Standards, developed by the Cardinal Newman Society, that have been approved by TCCB ED. St. Michael Catholic School maintains a balanced curriculum that includes Religion, Language Arts (English-grammar and composition, reading, vocabulary, spelling, and handwriting), science (including inquiry-based investigations), social studies, fine arts, health, guidance, physical education, technology application, and foreign language.

### Curriculum - Standards and Instructional Resources

St. Michael Catholic School uses the Archdiocesan Guidebooks specific to content areas which promote Archdiocesan Catholicity, raise the bar through rigor, and incorporate critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity skills in our classrooms. The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston has identified the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as the academic standards that serve as the foundation for curriculum development. Where applicable, national standards for content areas are also used to support instruction and increase the level of rigor. Catholic identity is integrated into the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) through the use of the [Curriculum Standards provided by the Cardinal Newman Society](#). We are committed to providing a curriculum that is coherent, guaranteed, and viable so that our students are prepared for heaven, college, and career.

Content-area [guidebooks](#) include best practice and research-based instructional strategies. Links to other curriculum documents are embedded within the guidebooks, as well as videos and online resources to support teachers in their content area instruction. Curriculum documents include:

a) Scopes are content area standards that are vertically aligned across all strands and grade levels (K-8) and used for planning instruction. Alignment coordinates what is written, taught, and tested. The goal of alignment is to make curriculum, instruction, and assessment work toward the same ends.

b) Snapshots are the written curriculum. They include simple listings of standards guaranteed to be taught in a school year for each grade level and content area. Snapshots support sustained student growth through a plan of challenging and supportive resources that integrates a Catholic worldview in subject areas.

c) Unit Maps are the taught curriculum. Standards in a content area/grade level are grouped by topic and sorted into bundles of related applied, supporting, learning process, and Catholic Identity standards to present a full year of instruction. They are used by teachers for planning instruction through units over the course of the year.

d) Learning Guides are content area tools that build teacher expertise with explanations, visuals, and essential vocabulary. They enhance Catholic Identity integration through use of Catholic Social Teaching themes. Learning Guides support instruction through best practices, troubleshooting, and scaffolding.

## 5.6 GRADING AND REPORT CARDS

### Grading Scale

For all students in grades 1-8, the following grading designations are used:

Outstanding	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Failing	Letter Grade
<b>A +</b> 99 -100	<b>B +</b> 91- 92	<b>C +</b> 84 - 85	<b>D +</b> 76 - 77	<b>F</b> Below 70	<b>E</b> Excellent
<b>A</b> 95 - 98	<b>B</b> 88 - 90	<b>C</b> 80 - 83	<b>D</b> 72 - 75		<b>S</b> Satisfactory
<b>A -</b> 93 - 94	<b>B -</b> 86 - 87	<b>C -</b> 78 - 79	<b>D -</b> 70 - 71		<b>N</b> Needs Improvement
					<b>U</b> Unsatisfactory

### Grading System

The school year is divided into four nine-week grading quarters. As much as possible, every grade given, both academic and conduct, will be the result of an honest, careful evaluation of all phases of the student’s work and effort.

## **FACTS Family Parent Portal**

Teachers will use FACTS family portal to communicate classroom news and information with parents along with Google Classroom. Teachers will also post grades in their gradebooks which are available for parents to view through the FACTS family portal.

## **Conduct Grades**

The following criteria have been defined to assist in interpreting conduct grades earned by students.

- **EXCELLENT** – Exhibits outstanding behavioral traits.
- **SATISFACTORY** – Ordinarily, usually and generally conforms to behavioral traits.
- **NEEDS IMPROVEMENT** – Progress is clearly needed in behavioral traits.
- **UNSATISFACTORY** – There is evidence that the student is clearly lacking in conduct behavioral traits.

## **5.7 HOMEWORK POLICY**

*If a student is unable to come to school due to illness, the parent/legal guardian is expected to notify the school office and request homework assignments from the homeroom teacher by 9 a.m. for grades 1-4.*

It is the student's responsibility in grades 5-8 to obtain notes and assignments for missed class time. Homework assignments for upper school should be accessed on RenWeb.

Absences of more than three days should be communicated to the Assistant Principal.

St. Michael Catholic School policy does require homework which includes both written assignments and review/study of material presented in class. There is no absolute minimum or maximum length of time per evening, as each student's needs and ability will dictate the amount of time needed to complete home assignments or study projects and maintain or master basic skills. Assignments may be given which are due over a period of time. It is the student's responsibility to plan for adequate progress on a continual basis thus avoiding last minute completion.

Each student in grades 2-8 is given an assignment book to record his/her daily assignments, tests, and long-range projects. Many parents verify completion of homework by initialing the assignment book.

All students are expected to have homework completed and turned in on time.

Frequent failure to complete homework assignments will seriously affect the student's grade and a parent-teacher-student conference may be requested.

## 5.8 PRIVATE TUTORING

Parents of St. Michael Catholic School students may engage members of the professional staff as private tutors in an academic area. However, certain guidelines should be followed when any faculty/staff member accepts tutorial responsibility.

By contract, all faculty members are to be available before and after the regularly scheduled school day to help students who may request or need tutorial help. Teachers may not charge for tutoring a student in a subject area of present participation. **Contract Employees may not be paid for tutoring between the hours of 7:30 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.**

**Any teacher or staff member who tutors on SMCS property must have liability insurance on file with the learning specialist.**

Private tutoring is to be done outside regularly contracted teaching time and should never interfere with the responsibilities assigned to the teacher.

Teacher-tutors are responsible for the student(s) during the tutorial periods and after the session until the student is picked up. If this situation involves a carpool, the teacher-tutor accepts responsibility for all students involved in early arrival or late pickup to accommodate the student being tutored.

The faculty members have the use of the school facility without any charge during the school year. All others who use the school/parish facilities for paid services are assessed a fee for building use and utilities.

St. Michael Catholic School staff members must submit to the administration a list of students they are tutoring and the frequency of the session.

In all circumstances, the best interest of the student is to be considered. If a student is experiencing difficulty in a particular teacher's class, it may indicate the need for an alternative approach to the subject matter or specialized help that the classroom teacher is not able to give.

## 5.9 PROMOTION AND RETENTION

### Promotion

Annual promotion indicates attainment of minimum grade level expectations. The dates of advancement and grades must be clearly indicated on each student's cumulative achievement record. Social promotions and skipping of grade levels are prohibited by TCCB ED.

### Retention

A student may not be retained more than twice from grades K-8 and no more than once in the same grade. Every effort should be made by the school administrator to provide alternative programs or adjust the regular program for children with special needs. If a student receives a cumulative grade below 70, the student fails the subject. If two core subjects are failed, the student may be recommended for retention. Parents must be informed of the likelihood of a student's academic failure and possible retention before the end of the school year. If all avenues have been explored,

and the school is unable to meet the needs of the student, or the parent(s) have not acted on the school's recommendations regarding diagnostic evaluation and/or treatment, the Principal has the right to request withdrawal of the student (if currently enrolled) or to refuse re-admittance.

### **Credit Recovery – Middle School**

Middle school students must complete the minimum of 8 credits per year for each year 6-7-8 to graduate. Should a student fail a course, SMCS will allow a student to earn credit for a course based on credit by examination (CBE). CBEs will be administered by the school or a test provider of an assessment. Once credit is earned, the student's grade for the course should be reported as "CE" for credit earned by examination.

## **5.10 RECORD REQUESTS**

Parents/Legal guardians who wish to send records to another school or to a physician's office must sign a records' release form in the front office. Report cards, transcripts and school records are not released if an outstanding debt exists. All records requests must go through the front office.

## **5.11 RECORD VIEWING**

Parents/legal guardians wishing to view student records must make the request in writing twenty-four hours in advance.

Records will always be reviewed in the presence of school personnel appointed by the Principal. Parents or legal guardians should sign and date the Viewing of Records form. The school is not required to provide copies of records unless it is impossible for parents to review the records in person. If the school provides copies, it may charge a reasonable fee. Parents or legal guardians may not scan, photograph, or otherwise digitally capture student records using a mobile device while viewing them on campus.

In the event a court order is in place which governs the parents' rights regarding custody (or "conservatorship") of the student, parents must provide a certified copy of the order signed by the judge from one or both parents. A specific court order signed by a judge overrides the general rule that both parents have a right to access student records.

## **5.12 STANDARDIZED TESTING**

St. Michael Catholic School participates in the Archdiocesan standardized testing program. Teachers receive access to the test results as soon as they are available. This information is confidential and is used by the staff for curriculum evaluation, student grouping, enrichment and remedial purposes. Standardized test information is not to be used as a basis for promotion or retention.

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Time of Year</b>
<b>PK</b>	No Requirements	
<b>Kinder</b>	NWEA MAP GROWTH-Reading, Math	Middle and End of Year
<b>1st Grade</b>	NWEA MAP GROWTH-Reading, Math	Beginning, Middle, and End of Year
<b>2nd-3rd Grade</b>	NWEA MAP GROWTH-Reading, Math, Language	Beginning, Middle, and End of Year
<b>4th-8th Grade</b>	NWEA MAP GROWTH-Reading, Math, Language  Science	Beginning, Middle, and End of Year  Beginning and End of Year
<b>Grades 2,3,5,8 (24/25)</b> <b>Grades 2,3,4,5,8 (25/26)</b> <b>Grades 2,3,4,5,6,8 (26/27)</b> <b>Grades 2,3,4,5,6,7,8 (27/28)</b>	Standardized Religious Assessment approved by the Archdiocese	End of Year

### **5.13 STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFERENCES**

Consistent with the Church Document, To Teach as Jesus Did, and the Pastoral Statement of the U.S. Bishops, Persons with Disabilities, the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston seeks to include students with exceptional learning needs in our schools to the extent that the needs of such students can be met within the scope of the programs and available resources. Catholic Schools understand that admission of students with exceptional learning needs must be considered and reviewed on an individual basis.

#### **1. Legal References to Services**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that local school districts (where the Catholic school is located) locate, identify, and evaluate all private school students suspected of having a disability. The “Child Find” process must be conducted in consultation with private schools’ representatives to ensure equitable access for private school students. In IDEA, these children are often referred to as “parentally placed private school children with disabilities,” and the benefits available to them differ significantly from the benefits for children with disabilities enrolled in public schools.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 educational section provides that no otherwise qualified individuals with a disability shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the

participation in any program receiving federal assistance. Catholic educators are committed to recognizing and addressing the needs of all those who seek a Catholic education. Within the resources of each Catholic school, Catholic schools will offer services to eligible students with special needs, when possible.

Private schools are not required to significantly alter their programs, lower or substantially modify their standards to accommodate a child with special needs. Private educational institutions are only required to make minor adjustments to accommodate eligible students.

## **2. Special Services Records**

All psychological/diagnostic evaluations and/or reports regarding testing of students with special needs, received from local school districts and/or private agencies are forwarded to the requesting Catholic school. These records are kept on file at the school for a period of seven (7) years after the exit of the student.

These records are kept in a secure file and in an area accessible only to the principal and the appropriate personnel working with the student. Parents may view their child's record any time. Each student's secure file shall have a Viewing of Records Form attached. These records may not be forwarded to any other individual or agency. The Catholic Schools Office reserves the right to access these records as appropriate.

## **3. Criteria for Acceptance**

In making a determination regarding the admittance of a particular applicant, the school will review the child's ability to meet the school's academic, behavioral, social and physical qualifications. Each school determines its ability to meet the needs of the student applicant. Consideration should be given to the following:

- The student's demonstrated ability to meet grade level requirements;
- The record of student's ability to follow school rules and regulations;
- The student's ability to meet socially acceptable behaviors; and
- The student's ability to meet the physical requirements of attendance.

## **4. Admissions for Students with Special Needs - New Students**

Parents must complete a Special Needs Information Disclosure Form and an Authorization for Release of Confidential Information/Records Form.

Principals and other appropriate school personnel review current academic, social, medical, and psychological/diagnostic evaluations to determine if the applicant is qualified to enroll, with or without his or her disability. If the applicant is qualified for enrollment, the principal will then determine if reasonable adjustments can be made to the educational program which will accommodate the student's needs. If eligibility for admission is determined, the school will begin the procedures with parents to discuss a Catholic School Accommodation Plan.

## **5. Student Identification for Referral – Currently Enrolled Students**

If a student is identified by the teacher or parent as having difficulty with school tasks, academics, behaviors, and/or emotions he or she will discuss concerns with the parent and principal.

The principal appoints an educational team to review the child's classroom observations and academic progress to determine if additional interventions are required or a psychological/diagnostic evaluation referral is recommended. The team may include the principal, classroom teacher, designated intervention specialist and any other school personnel that work with the student. If a psychological/diagnostic evaluation is recommended, then the principal and educational team will provide parents with referral information to the local school district and/or private agency.

Documentation for all referrals must be kept in the student's file.

The principal and the educational team will be responsible for gathering the following data and documentation:

1. The student's current educational status including attendance records, grades, assessment data, and classroom observations;
2. Previous educational interventions and strategies provided for the student and results;
3. Documentation of recent vision and hearing screening;
4. Updated general health history inventory; and
5. Other information provided by the parents or teachers.

After all evaluations are completed by the local school district and/or private agency parents will be expected to disclose any pertinent information that may assist the Catholic School in determining the appropriate educational program for the child.

Principals and other appropriate school personnel will review the evaluation and determine if reasonable adjustments can be made to the educational program which will accommodate the student's needs. When accommodations are determined the school will begin the procedures with parents to discuss a Catholic School Accommodation Plan.

## **6. Accommodations**

The purpose of an accommodation is to provide the appropriate instruction according to the individual student's special needs. Accommodations are changes that enable a student to fully access the subject matter. An accommodation does not alter the content, expectations, or standards, but rather adjusts instructional methods. When using accommodations, students are expected to meet the grade level standards set for all students. Accommodations do not alter grading of student progress and work.

As a result of a psychological/diagnostic evaluation, a student meets certain criteria to qualify for accommodations to his or her educational program. Any student diagnosed with a disability and has received a thorough psychological/diagnostic evaluation from the local school district and/or a private agency may be eligible for an accommodated educational program.

However, private schools are not required to significantly alter their programs, lower or substantially modify their standards to accommodate a child with exceptional learning needs. Catholic Schools are

only required to make minor adjustments to accommodate the delivery of instruction for success in the classroom. When accommodations are determined the school will begin the procedures with parents to discuss a Catholic School Accommodation Plan. The Catholic School Accommodation Plan must be on file at the school and updated annually.

The Catholic Schools Office reserves the right to access any student file as appropriate. Accommodations for a student are noted on the progress report and report card but not on the permanent school record.

## **7. Re-Evaluation for Students with Accommodations**

It is required that psychological/diagnostic evaluations are updated at least every three years by the local school district and/or private agency. It may be conducted more often if the parent or school request a more thorough comprehensive evaluation. The three-year time frame is an IDEA and Archdiocesan requisite in order to assess current accommodations and identify any further changes to meet the student's needs. If the child is not meeting the academic objectives and/or exhibiting new challenging behaviors in their educational setting, then a re-evaluation is required to reassess specific areas of concern. If a parent refuses to have a re-evaluation completed for their student, the school is not required to accommodate for the student and the school will meet with the parents to decide on the appropriate procedures to take regarding the educational program of the student. In order to have formal accommodations in place, an updated evaluation is required. A re-evaluation may be in areas of demonstrated need or concern. Re-evaluations are also required to be up to date if a student is scheduled to take College Board exams (SAT, SAT subject tests, PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, or AP Exams) and requesting accommodations.

## **8. Waiver of Accommodations**

If a student is exhibiting success in their educational program and the parents, principal and educational team decide that accommodations are no longer necessary this must be documented on a Waiver of Accommodations form.

After the waiver is signed, the student will then continue his/her educational program without any accommodations. Documentation of the release must be on file at the school and parents, principals, and the educational team will meet after each grading period to determine the student's academic, behavioral, emotional and social progress without accommodations.

If the student is successful without accommodations after two full school years, then no further waiver reviews are required.

If the student is not successful without accommodations, then the Catholic School will meet with the parents to decide on the appropriate procedures to take regarding the educational program of the student.

## **9. Standardized Assessment for Students with Exceptional Learning Needs**

Standardized assessments are one of several means of evaluating student performance.

All students participate in the Archdiocesan standardized assessment. Accommodations are provided to students who are diagnosed with a disability and have provided the school with a psychological/diagnostic evaluation. A student must have a Catholic School Accommodation Plan on file with documented testing recommendations from the local school district or private agency to receive testing accommodations. Students identified through a language proficiency assessment as an English Language Learner qualify for a two-year exemption from the Archdiocesan standardized assessment. A principal will make the final decision if a school will test an English Language Learner during the two-year exemption. Any adjustments made on the standardized assessment must be requested and approved from the Catholic Schools Office via special request on the appropriate form.

#### **10. Request for teacher input for educational diagnostic evaluation**

If a parent is having their student evaluated by an educational diagnostician or through the local school district, all teacher forms must first be submitted to the Learning Specialist. The Learning Specialist will coordinate the completion and submission of these forms to the appropriate professional entity. Completed forms will not be returned to parents.

## **6 PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

## 6.1 EXPECTATIONS OF PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN

The education of your child is a collaborative effort between you, your child and the faculty and staff of St. Michael Catholic School. Our teachers are dedicated professionals who have the education, training and skills to provide an education which is centered on Catholic values, moral character, and academic development.

In order to demonstrate your commitment, full support and cooperation with the faculty and staff of St. Michael Catholic School in this partnership, we request that you meet the following expectations:

- Be a supportive partner with the Parish, the school and the teachers and provide assistance and support to your child/children as needed for academic and social success, and hold your child/children responsible for his/her own choices and behavior.
- Understand and support the spiritual mission and identity of the school.
- Read all communication from the school and request clarification when necessary.
- Observe parent-teacher conference dates and special requests for meetings.
- Obey all classroom rules, guidelines, and procedures.
- Discuss concerns or problems with the appropriate personnel instead of resorting to or listening to gossip or **group texts**.
- Address concerns and problems with the person(s) most directly involved, within the appropriate time frame, before contacting higher authorities. Contact with teachers and administrators should be during school hours and not at home on their personal time or at any school sponsored event, social, athletic, or otherwise.
- Demonstrate thoughtful stewardship by being actively involved with the life of the school and the parish and volunteer assistance to the best of your ability.
  - Attend school family weekends at Mass to the best of your ability.
- Understand that all students and parents are responsible for the good name of both the school and the parish, knowing that behavior outside of school that is non-exemplary or harmful to the school or others is not acceptable.
  - **If any SMCS parent engages in behavior, communications, or interactions on or off campus, that is disruptive, intimidating, overly aggressive, or reflects a loss of confidence in or disagreement with the School's policies, methods of instruction, discipline, including on social media or in public or private texts or chat groups, the school reserves the right to place restrictions on the parent's involvement or activity at school, on school property, and/or at school-related events.**
- Honor your financial obligations to the school through timely tuition payments and support of the St. Michael Annual Fund and other fundraising efforts.
- Arrive on time each day for morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up and adhere to the carpool guidelines in the handbook.
  - **Please drive slowly and carefully when you are on the property and be mindful of children and pedestrians.**
  - **Talking on your cell phone while driving is not permitted on the school property.**
- Monitor your student's use of TV, computers, video games, social networking sites and other media.
- Sign in at the front desk using the RAPTOR system, check in with the front office, and wear a visitor's badge while on campus during school hours.
- Turn phones off or set to vibrate while on campus or at school functions.
- Refrain from bringing any device on campus that would threaten school and student safety, such as a firearm or knife.

- Refrain from emailing students during school hours.
- Use of the school name, logo or motto on any type of social media or in any other way, e.g. putting the name on t-shirts, is strictly prohibited unless specifically approved by the Principal.
- All parents are asked to be Safe Haven certified. All parents who volunteer in any capacity, i.e., Read-A-Story, Room Parent, Chaperone, etc. must be Safe Haven certified.
- Trust that the school faculty, staff and administration are doing everything in their power to facilitate your child/children reach their potential.

We acknowledge that we are not the school for all families and we will exercise the right to ask families to leave if any of the above expectations are seriously breached.

## **6.2 ANNUAL TIGER FUND DRIVE**

The Annual Fund is a yearly fundraising drive that is chaired by a committee of St. Michael parents. The Annual Fund is vital to the daily operations at St. Michael Catholic School, providing essential, unrestricted income to support the school's current-year operating budget for items not covered by tuition. The Annual Fund is made up of annual gifts from alumni, parents, parents of alumnae, parishioners, faculty & staff, grandparents, foundations, vendors, and friends of St. Michael Catholic School. The fund enhances the quality of unparalleled resources and opportunities for our students. It is the goal of St. Michael Catholic School to achieve 100% school family participation in the Annual Fund Drive representing our community's dedication to the mission of the school.

## **6.3 FAMILY COVENANT AGREEMENT**

Each year during re-enrollment/enrollment, families are asked to sign the Family Covenant Agreement. A copy of the Family Covenant Agreement is in the appendix of this handbook.

## **7 TECHNOLOGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS & ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)**

## **7.1 TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (TAUP) FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

### **Introduction**

St. Michael Catholic School is pleased to offer students access to technology resources for educational purposes, which may include computer hardware and software licensed to the school. To gain access to the technology resources, all students must obtain parental permission as verified by the signatures on this agreement.

### **What is expected?**

- Whether occurring within or outside of school, when a student's use of technology jeopardizes the safe environment of the school, staff or students or is contrary to Gospel values the student can be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences including the expulsion of the student. Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network just as they are in a classroom or on a school playground. The use of technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the school's technology resources. The students are expected never to access, keep, or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see.
- Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply.
- All activity over the network or when using school technologies may be monitored and retained.
- Users of the school network or other technologies are required to alert Administrator, Technology staff or teacher immediately of any concerns for safety or security.
- St. Michael Catholic School may provide Internet access, desktop computers, mobile computers or devices, videoconferencing capabilities, online collaboration capabilities, message boards, email, and more.
- The policies outlined in this document are intended to cover all available technologies, not just those specifically listed.

### **Web Access**

St. Michael Catholic School provides its students with access to the Internet, including web sites, resources, content, and online tools. That access will be restricted in compliance with Archdiocesan Social Media Policy, CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act) regulations and school policies. Web browsing may be monitored, and web activity records may be retained indefinitely. Students are expected to respect that the web filter is a safety precaution and should not try to circumvent it when browsing the Web. If a site is blocked and a student believes it should not be, the student should follow school protocol to alert Technology staff or submit the site for review.

*FAMILIES SHOULD BE AWARE THAT SOME MATERIAL ACCESSIBLE VIA THE INTERNET MAY CONTAIN ITEMS THAT ARE ILLEGAL, DEFAMATORY, INACCURATE, OR POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE.*

While the purpose of the school is to use Internet resources for constructive educational goals, students may find ways to access other materials. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet outweigh the disadvantages. Ultimately, however, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. Therefore, we support and respect each family's right to decide whether or not to allow access to the Internet.

## **Email**

St. Michael Catholic School may provide students with email accounts for the purpose of school-related communication. Availability and use may be restricted based on school policies. If students are provided with email accounts, they should be used with care. Students should not send personal information; should not attempt to open files or follow links from unknown or untrusted origin; should use appropriate language; and should only communicate with other people as allowed by the school policy or the teacher.

Students are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Students may not use email in a way that jeopardizes the safe environment of the school, staff, or students or is contrary to Gospel values. This policy applies to all forms of electronic communications or depictions whether they occur through the school's equipment or connectivity resources or through private communication. Email usage may be monitored and archived.

## **Social Networking /Web 2.0 / Collaborative Content**

Recognizing the educational benefits of collaboration, St. Michael Catholic School may provide students with access to websites and tools that facilitate communication, collaboration, sharing, and messaging among users. Students are expected to maintain the same standards of appropriate, safe, and courteous behavior online as they do in person. Posts, chats, and messages will be monitored by teachers, and the platforms will be secured from outside viewers. Students should be cautious not to share personally identifiable information online.

The use of personal social media sites for leisure is prohibited on campus during instructional hours. Students must also refrain from taking and posting pictures or videos of themselves, other students, or teachers during these times.

## **Mobile Devices Chromebooks Policy**

St. Michael Catholic School may provide students with mobile computers or other devices to enhance learning outside the classroom. Students are expected to follow the same responsible use policies when using school devices off the school network as they do on campus.

Students should handle these devices with great care, as they are expensive and entrusted to them by the school. Any loss, damage, or malfunction must be reported to the Technology staff immediately. Students may be held financially responsible for any damage caused by negligence or misuse.

*Please note that the use of school-issued mobile devices off the school network may be monitored.*

## **Security**

Students are expected to take reasonable precautions to prevent security threats on the school network. This includes not opening or distributing infected files or programs, as well as avoiding files or programs from unknown or untrusted sources.

If a student suspects that a computer or mobile device they are using may be infected with a virus, they must notify IT immediately. Students should not attempt to remove the virus or download any programs for that

purpose.

## **Downloads**

Students should not download, attempt to download, or run .exe files or any other executable programs (including commercial software, shareware, or freeware) on the school network or school resources without explicit permission from the Technology staff.

Students may download other file types, such as images or videos, but for the security of our network, they should only do so from reputable sites and solely for educational purposes, while complying with copyright laws.

## **Netiquette**

Students should always use the Internet, network resources, and online platforms in a courteous and respectful manner. They should be aware that while there is valuable content online, there is also unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate material. It's important to rely on trusted sources when conducting research and to adhere to copyright laws.

Additionally, students should think carefully before posting anything online that they wouldn't want parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see. Once something is posted online, it can spread in ways that may be unintended.

## **Plagiarism**

Students must not plagiarize or use content—such as words or images—from the Internet as their own without proper citation. Taking credit for work created by others or misrepresenting oneself as the author of online content is not allowed. Research conducted online should always be appropriately cited to acknowledge the original creator. Students should never copy others' work or access files without permission. Downloading or uploading any material that violates U.S. law, state law, school policy, or Archdiocesan guidelines is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or violent content, obscene material, and trade secret-protected information.

## **Personal Safety**

Students should never share personal information online, such as phone numbers, addresses, social security numbers, birthdays, or financial details, without permission from a parent or legal guardian. It's important to understand that online communication can offer anonymity but also carries risks. Students should take care to protect their own personal information and that of others. Additionally, they should never agree to meet someone in person whom they encountered online without parental or legal guardian approval.

If you come across a message, comment, image, or anything else online that raises concerns about your safety, please inform an adult right away—whether it's a teacher or staff member at school, or a parent or guardian if you're at home.

## **Cyber Bullying**

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Actions such as harassment, insults, flaming, denigration, impersonation, outing, deception, exclusion, and cyberstalking are all forms of cyberbullying. Be kind and refrain from sending emails or posting comments intended to scare, hurt, or intimidate others.

Participating in these behaviors, or any online activities aimed at harming someone physically or emotionally, will lead to serious disciplinary consequences and loss of privileges. In some instances, cyberbullying may even be considered a criminal offense. Please remember that your online activities are monitored and recorded.

## **Sexting**

Any student involved in taking, sharing, transferring, or possessing obscene, sexually explicit, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or content—commonly known as “sexting”—will face disciplinary action in line with the Student Code of Conduct. This includes, but is not limited to, images of themselves or others inappropriately dressed or in compromising positions. Students may be required to participate in an educational program about the risks associated with such behavior and, in some cases, the matter may be referred to law enforcement. It is essential to immediately inform the parent or guardian, and if other students are involved, the incident should be reported to a teacher or principal.

## **Examples of Responsible Use**

The student will:

- Use school technologies for school-related activities.
- Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behavior online that they are expected to follow offline.
- Treat school resources carefully, and alert staff if there is any problem with their operation.
- Encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technologies.
- Alert a teacher or other staff member if they see threatening, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, posts) online.
- Use school technologies at appropriate times, in approved places, for educational pursuits.
- Cite sources when using online sites and resources for research.
- Recognize that use of school technologies is a privilege and treat it as such.
- Be cautious to protect the safety of others and themselves.
- Help to protect the security of school resources.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Students should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

## Examples of Irresponsible Use

The student will NOT:

- Use school technologies in a way that could be personally or physically harmful.
- Attempt to find inappropriate images or content.
- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others.
- Try to find ways to circumvent the school's safety measures and filtering tools.
- Use school technologies to send spam or chain mail.
- Plagiarize content he/she finds online.
- Post personally identifying information, about others or myself.
- Agree to meet someone he/she meets online in real life.
- Send or distribute obscene, lewd or sexually explicit images.
- Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.
- Use school technologies for illegal activities or to pursue information on such activities.
- Attempt to hack or access sites, servers, or content that is not intended for my use.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Students should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

## Internet Safety Plan

- St. Michael Catholic School implements an effective internet filtering and reporting solution Go Guardian, that monitors internet activity and uses current technologies to detect inappropriate usage and block and/or filter visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic or in any way harmful to minors as defined in CIPA.
- The internet filtering solution is in place to control access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and the World Wide Web and restrict access to materials that may be harmful to minors.
- Policies and procedures are in place that covers category blocking, automated weekly reports on internet activity, and identification of emerging threats
- Faculty provides internet safety instruction integrated in their curriculum or as part of a technology class that covers appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms and cyber bullying
- Technology Acceptable Use Policy and Internet Safety Plan will be published in the parent/student handbook and St. Michael Catholic School will hold an informational meeting to address the policy.

## Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions at the discretion of St. Michael Catholic School, according to the Code of Conduct, and including but not limited to:

- Suspension of network, technology, or computer privileges
- Notification to parents
- Detention or suspension from school and school-related activities

## **Parent/Guardian Responsibilities Parents and guardians are encouraged to:**

- Support the school in guiding their child’s use of technology.
- Discuss online safety and responsible behavior with their children.
- Monitor and supervise their child’s use of school-provided devices, especially outside of school hours.

## **7.2 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) POLICY**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines for the appropriate and ethical use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies within our Catholic elementary school community. This policy ensures that AI tools are used in ways that uphold our mission, values, and commitment to faith, academic excellence, and the dignity of every person.

### **Alignment with Catholic Teaching**

This policy reflects the guidance of the Catholic Church regarding the ethical use of technology. AI must always serve the common good, respect the human person, and never replace the essential role of the human teacher, parent, or caregiver.

### **Guiding Principles**

- **Human Dignity:** All use of AI must respect the God-given dignity of each person. AI should never replace human relationships or diminish the value of human work and creativity.
- **Ethical Responsibility:** Students, staff, and families are expected to use AI in a way that reflects honesty, integrity, and accountability.
- **Catholic Identity:** AI tools and content must align with Catholic teachings and support the moral and spiritual development of students.
- **Privacy and Safety:** AI must be used in a way that protects the privacy, safety, and well-being of all members of our school community.

### **Scope**

#### **This policy applies to:**

- Students at St. Michael Catholic School
- School-provided technology and all devices used on campus or for schoolwork
- Any AI-powered software, apps, or tools used in the classroom or for school-related purposes

## **Approved Uses of AI**

AI may be used for educational purposes that support:

- Differentiated instruction and personalized learning
- Creative expression and idea generation (e.g., story starters, image creation)
- Age-appropriate research assistance

*AI should only supplement—not replace—student learning.*

## **Prohibited Uses of AI**

- Submitting AI-generated content as original student work without teacher permission
- Using AI to cheat on assignments, tests, or assessments
- Generating inappropriate, violent, discriminatory, or anti-Catholic content
- Using AI tools that collect or share personal data without consent

## **Student Use Guidelines**

- Students must have teacher or parent/guardian permission to use AI tools.
- Students should understand that AI responses are not always accurate or morally appropriate.
- AI must be used with adult supervision for ALL students.

## **Parent/Guardian Involvement**

- Parents are encouraged to engage in conversations with their children about responsible AI use at home.
- The school will provide resources and information sessions as needed to help families understand emerging AI technologies.

## **Review and Enforcement**

- Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the school's code of conduct.

## **8 APPENDICES**



## **TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (TAUP)**

### **2025-2026**

St. Michael Catholic School is pleased to offer students access to technology resources for educational purposes, which may include computer hardware and software licensed to the school. To gain access to the technology resources, all students must obtain parental permission as verified by the signatures on this agreement.

#### **What is expected?**

- Whether occurring within or outside of school, when a student's use of technology jeopardizes the safe environment of the school, staff or students or is contrary to Gospel values the student can be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences including the expulsion of the student. Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network just as they are in a classroom or on a school playground. The use of technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the school's technology resources. The students are expected never to access, keep, or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see.
- Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply.
- All activity over the network or when using school technologies may be monitored and retained.
- Users of the school network or other technologies are required to alert Administrator, Technology staff or teacher immediately of any concerns for safety or security.
- St. Michael Catholic School may provide Internet access, desktop computers, mobile computers or devices, videoconferencing capabilities, online collaboration capabilities, message boards, email, and more.
- The policies outlined in this document are intended to cover all available technologies, not just those specifically listed.

#### **Web Access**

St. Michael Catholic School provides its students with access to the Internet, including web sites, resources, content, and online tools. That access will be restricted in compliance with Archdiocesan Social Media Policy, CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act) regulations and school policies. Web browsing may be monitored, and web activity records may be retained indefinitely. Students are expected to respect that the web filter is a safety precaution and should not try to circumvent it when browsing the Web. If a site is blocked and a student believes it should not be, the student should follow school protocol to alert Technology staff or submit the site for review.

*FAMILIES SHOULD BE AWARE THAT SOME MATERIAL ACCESSIBLE VIA THE INTERNET MAY CONTAIN ITEMS THAT ARE ILLEGAL, DEFAMATORY, INACCURATE, OR POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE.*

While the purpose of the school is to use Internet resources for constructive educational goals, students may find ways to access other materials. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet

outweigh the disadvantages. Ultimately, however, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. Therefore, we support and respect each family's right to decide whether or not to allow access to the Internet.

## **Email**

St. Michael Catholic School may provide students with email accounts for the purpose of school-related communication. Availability and use may be restricted based on school policies. If students are provided with email accounts, they should be used with care. Students should not send personal information; should not attempt to open files or follow links from unknown or untrusted origin; should use appropriate language; and should only communicate with other people as allowed by the school policy or the teacher.

Students are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Students may not use email in a way that jeopardizes the safe environment of the school, staff, or students or is contrary to Gospel values. This policy applies to all forms of electronic communications or depictions whether they occur through the school's equipment or connectivity resources or through private communication. Email usage may be monitored and archived.

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The use of personal social media sites for leisure is prohibited on campus during instructional hours. Students must also refrain from taking and posting pictures or videos of themselves, other students, or teachers during these times.

## **Mobile Devices / Chromebooks Policy**

St. Michael Catholic School may provide students with mobile computers or other devices to enhance learning outside the classroom. Students are expected to follow the same responsible use policies when using school devices off the school network as they do on campus.

Students should handle these devices with great care, as they are expensive and entrusted to them by the school. Any loss, damage, or malfunction must be reported to the Technology staff immediately. Students may be held financially responsible for any damage caused by negligence or misuse.

*Please note that the use of school-issued mobile devices off the school network may be monitored.*

## **Security**

Students are expected to take reasonable precautions to prevent security threats on the school network. This includes not opening or distributing infected files or programs, as well as avoiding files or programs from unknown or untrusted sources.

If a student suspects that a computer or mobile device they are using may be infected with a virus, they must notify IT immediately. Students should not attempt to remove the virus or download any programs for that purpose.

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Students should not download, attempt to download, or run .exe files or any other executable programs (including commercial software, shareware, or freeware) on the school network or school resources without explicit permission from the Technology staff.

Students may download other file types, such as images or videos, but for the security of our network, they should only do so from reputable sites and solely for educational purposes, while complying with copyright laws.

### **Netiquette**

Students should always use the Internet, network resources, and online platforms in a courteous and respectful manner. They should be aware that while there is valuable content online, there is also unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate material. It's important to rely on trusted sources when conducting research and to adhere to copyright laws.

Additionally, students should think carefully before posting anything online that they wouldn't want parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see. Once something is posted online, it can spread in ways that may be unintended.

### **Plagiarism**

Students must not plagiarize or use content—such as words or images—from the Internet as their own without proper citation. Taking credit for work created by others or misrepresenting oneself as the author of online content is not allowed. Research conducted online should always be appropriately cited to acknowledge the original creator. Students should never copy others' work or access files without permission. Downloading or uploading any material that violates U.S. law, state law, school policy, or Archdiocesan guidelines is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or violent content, obscene material, and trade secret-protected information.

### **Personal Safety**

Students should never share personal information online, such as phone numbers, addresses, social security numbers, birthdays, or financial details, without permission from a parent or legal guardian. It's important to understand that online communication can offer anonymity but also carries risks. Students should take care to protect their own personal information and that of others. Additionally, they should never agree to meet someone in person whom they encountered online without parental or legal guardian approval.

If you come across a message, comment, image, or anything else online that raises concerns about your safety, please inform an adult right away—whether it's a teacher or staff member at school, or a parent or guardian if you're at home.

### **Cyber Bullying**

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Actions such as harassment, insults, flaming, denigration, impersonation, outing, deception, exclusion, and cyberstalking are all forms of cyberbullying. Be kind and refrain from sending emails or posting comments intended to scare, hurt, or intimidate others.

Participating in these behaviors, or any online activities aimed at harming someone physically or emotionally, will lead to serious disciplinary consequences and loss of privileges. In some instances, cyberbullying may even be considered a criminal offense. Please remember that your online activities are monitored and recorded.

### **Sexting**

Any student involved in taking, sharing, transferring, or possessing obscene, sexually explicit, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or content—commonly known as “sexting”—will face disciplinary action in line with the Student Code of Conduct. This includes, but is not limited to, images of themselves or others inappropriately dressed or in compromising positions. Students may be required to participate in an educational program about the risks associated with such behavior and, in some cases, the matter may be referred to law enforcement. It is essential to immediately inform the parent or guardian, and if other students are involved, the incident should be reported to a teacher or principal.

### **Examples of Responsible Use**

The student will:

- Use school technologies for school-related activities.
- Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behavior online that they are expected to follow offline.
- Treat school resources carefully, and alert staff if there is any problem with their operation.
- Encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technologies.
- Alert a teacher or other staff member if they see threatening, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, posts) online.
- Use school technologies at appropriate times, in approved places, for educational pursuits.
- Cite sources when using online sites and resources for research.
- Recognize that use of school technologies is a privilege and treat it as such.
- Be cautious to protect the safety of others and themselves.
- Help to protect the security of school resources.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Students should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

### **Examples of Irresponsible Use**

The student will NOT:

- Use school technologies in a way that could be personally or physically harmful.
- Attempt to find inappropriate images or content.
- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others.
- Try to find ways to circumvent the school’s safety measures and filtering tools.
- Use school technologies to send spam or chain mail.
- Plagiarize content he/she finds online.

- Post personally identifying information, about others or myself.
- Agree to meet someone he/she meets online in real life.
- Send or distribute obscene, lewd or sexually explicit images.
- Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.
- Use school technologies for illegal activities or to pursue information on such activities.
- Attempt to hack or access sites, servers, or content that is not intended for my use.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Students should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

### **Internet Safety Plan**

- St. Michael Catholic School implements an effective internet filtering and reporting solution Go Guardian, that monitors internet activity and uses current technologies to detect inappropriate usage and block and/or filter visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic or in any way harmful to minors as defined in CIPA.
- The internet filtering solution is in place to control access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and the World Wide Web and restrict access to materials that may be harmful to minors.
- Policies and procedures are in place that covers category blocking, automated weekly reports on internet activity, and identification of emerging threats
- Faculty provides internet safety instruction integrated in their curriculum or as part of a technology class that covers appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms and cyber bullying
- Technology Acceptable Use Policy and Internet Safety Plan will be published in the parent/student handbook and St. Michael Catholic School will hold an informational meeting to address the policy.

### **Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy**

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions at the discretion of St. Michael Catholic School, according to the Code of Conduct, and including but not limited to:

- Suspension of network, technology, or computer privileges
- Notification to parents
- Detention or suspension from school and school-related activities

### **Parent/Guardian Responsibilities Parents and guardians are encouraged to:**

- Support the school in guiding their child's use of technology.
- Discuss online safety and responsible behavior with their children.
- Monitor and supervise their child's use of school-provided devices, especially outside of school hours.

Dear Parents:

Your child has the opportunity to access technology resources at St. Michael Catholic School. With this educational opportunity also comes responsibility. It is important that you and your child read the enclosed Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP) and Permission Form and discuss it together.

When your child is given an account and password to use on the computer, it is extremely important that the rules be followed. Failure to follow the rules will result in the loss of the privilege to use this educational tool. Remember that you are legally responsible for your child's actions. Please stress to your child the importance of using only his or her own account and password, and the importance of keeping it a secret from other students. Under NO circumstances should your child let anyone else use his or her account and password! Please refer to your school's parent/student handbook for policies regarding cell phones/I phones and handheld devices.

Although we have established acceptable use policies, please be aware that there may be unacceptable material, images, or communication on the Internet that your child can access.

After you have read and discussed this with your child, please check the appropriate boxes, have both you and your child/children sign the agreement, and return it to the school office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen Cox".

Dr. Kathleen Cox  
Principal



**USER AGREEMENT and PARENT PERMISSION FORM  
2025-2026**

As a parent/guardian and student/s of *St. Michael Catholic School*, we have read the above information on the appropriate use of technology at school and the appropriate use of electronic communication, and we understand this agreement will be kept on file. (*Questions should be directed to the principal for clarification.*)

Whether occurring within or outside of school, when a student’s use of technology jeopardizes the safe environment of the school, students, or staff or is contrary to Gospel values, the student can be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences including expulsion.

This policy applies to all electronic communications or depictions whether they occur through the school’s equipment or connectivity resources or through personal electronic devices.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## St Michael Student Chromebook Agreement, 2025-2026

The use of school-supplied Chromebooks at St. Michael Catholic School is a privilege that comes with responsibility. Remember, the device is at all times the property of St. Michael Catholic School, not a student's personal device. If students notice that something is wrong with the device, they are expected to report to a teacher immediately. Failure to abide by the following guidelines may result in revoking the privilege, or further consequences.

1. Students must bring their Chromebook to school every day and make sure it is fully charged. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
2. Students must treat their device with care and never leave it in an unsecured location. Chromebooks are to be in a case or computer bag when transported.
3. Students will not take photos or record video of any persons unless they have the specific consent of a teacher and all persons in the photo or video.
4. Students will only use a school appropriate picture of themselves or abstract art as their school profile picture on Google. Students may not use a picture of another student or teacher.
5. Families will be financially responsible for the repair or replacement of stolen or abused hardware or materials.
6. Students must keep their device clean and must not touch the screen with anything (e.g., finger, pen, pencil, etc.) other than approved computer screen cleaners. No food or drinks allowed around the devices. Water damage is not covered by the warranty and will be the responsibility of the parent to pay for repair or replacement.
7. Do not place books or other items on top of the device. Make sure nothing is between the screen and keyboard when the Chromebook is closed.
8. Only use the device for school work. You must sign into your school issued Google education account. No other accounts (Google or otherwise) may be accessed on the school-issued Chromebooks at any time.
9. Students should never share their account passwords with others, unless requested by an administrator.
10. Student email is provided by the school and St. Michael Catholic School reserves the right to archive, monitor, and/or review all use of its email system, and users should not have any expectation of privacy in any electronic message created, sent, or received on the "stmichaelcs.org" email system. School email is for school purposes only and should not be used to sign up for subscriptions or any social media sites.
11. At school, students are to use the school-safe email accounts provided. All communication using email and comments on another's work is expected to be business professional. Students should maintain high integrity with regard to e-mail content such as using appropriate language that is not abusive, offensive, or profane. Do not send mass emails, chain letters, or spam.
12. Students should not delete the history of sites visited on their Chromebooks. St. Michael Catholic School reserves the right to do periodic checks and/or review of Internet site visits.
13. Technology, including but not limited to the Chromebook itself and any ancillary tools such as earbuds, are not to be shared among students.
14. Students should not personalize their devices in any way. This includes backgrounds, name icons, decals, screensavers, and downloading any software, application or short cuts that have not been explicitly allowed by the teacher.
15. Students are NOT to update Chrome OS without permission.

16. Access to the Chrome Web Store is prohibited. Apps, therefore, cannot be added without permission.
17. Students are required to follow all copyright laws around all media including text, images, programs, music, and video. Downloading, sharing, and posting online illegally obtained media is against the St. Michael Catholic School's Use of Technology policy.
18. *Students may not use ChatGPT/AI to write any assignment that is to be turned in as an assignment to St. Michael Catholic School.*
19. The use of the Chromebook device will not breach the Technology and Acceptable Use Policy found in the St. Michael Catholic School Parent-Student Handbook.

Students must follow the following six conditions of being a good digital citizen:

- **Respect Yourself.** *I will show respect for myself through my actions. I will select online names that are appropriate, I will consider the information and images that I post online. I will consider what personal information about my life, experiences, experimentation, or relationships I post. I will not be obscene.*
- **Protect Yourself.** *I will ensure that the information, images and materials I post online will not put me at risk. I will not publish my personal details, contact details or a schedule of my activities. I will report any attacks or inappropriate behavior directed at me. I will protect passwords, accounts and resources.*
- **Respect Others.** *I will show respect to others. I will not use electronic mediums to antagonize, bully, harass or stalk other people. I will show respect for other people in my choice of websites, I will not visit sites that are degrading, pornographic, racist or inappropriate. I will not abuse my rights of access and I will not enter other people's private spaces or areas.*
- **Protect Others.** *I will protect others by reporting abuse, not forwarding inappropriate materials or communications; I will moderate unacceptable materials and conversations, and will not visit sites that are degrading, pornographic, racist or inappropriate.*
- **Respect Intellectual Property.** *I will request permission to use resources. I will suitably cite any and all use of websites, books, media etc. I will acknowledge all primary sources. I will validate information. I will use and abide by the fair use rules.*
- **Protect Intellectual Property.** *I will request to use the software and media others produce. I will use free and open source alternatives rather than pirating software. I will purchase, license and register all software. I will purchase my music and media, and refrain from distributing these in a manner that violates their licenses. I will act with integrity.*



## St. Michael Catholic School Bullying Policy for Students in Grades 2-8 2025-2026

Dear St. Michael Catholic School Family:

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in ongoing written, verbal expression, or physical conduct that:

- Will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or damage to the student's property, or
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.
  - Examples: Bullying of a student may include, but is not limited to, hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, ostracism, and cyber bullying.
    - Cyberbullying includes transmission of communication, posting harassing messages, direct threats, social cruelty, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images on the Internet or using any other technology.

Here at St. Michael Catholic School, we desire to prevent bullying by establishing a positive, collaborative school climate, and clear rules for student conduct. Too often students are put in a position where they believe taking action and saying something might be more harmful than keeping quiet.

In fact, every student has the responsibility to help stop any type of bullying by 1) stopping rumors whenever possible, 2) telling an adult/supervisor when you see someone being bullied, or 3) telling an adult or campus supervisor when you hear of plans to bully someone or start a fight. ***We all have a responsibility to uphold the rights of the students here at the school.***

### **All students, parents, and staff at St. Michael Catholic School have a right to the following:**

- A safe, secure, and peaceful school environment where you are free from bullying, threats, and harassment, either physical or emotional.
- To submit a verbal or written complaint of conduct you feel might be considered bullying to a teacher or an assistant principal.
- To make the above complaints anonymously and without fear that your name will be divulged.

Students or family members who violate school rules and regulations regarding bullying may be subject to

discipline including, but not limited to, suspension, or expulsion.

**The discipline procedure for bullying is as follows:**

- **1<sup>st</sup> Offense:** Investigation by assistant principal/principal, counseling, verbal warning, parent conference.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:** Possible suspension (1 to 5 days depending on severity); Parent conference with administration and student, Parent and Students required to sign behavior agreement.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Offense:** Automatic suspension; Possible forfeiture of continued enrollment at St. Michael Catholic School.

*Please note that all students or family members in a group are equally at fault for bullying.* If you have friends who are bullying a person, you must immediately remove yourself from the situation and report it.



**St. Michael Catholic School Bullying Policy for Students in Grades 2-8  
2025-2026**

*By signing this agreement, you are acknowledging that you have read and understand*

- 1) what bullying and cyberbullying is;*
- 2) your rights regarding bullying; and,*
- 3) the possible consequences associated with bullying others.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## **Unkind and Disruptive Behavior Discussion & Agreement**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Administrator:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Unkind and disruptive behavior can prevent students from feeling comfortable in their learning environment. These behaviors include physical acts and verbal or written communication.*

\_\_\_\_ I have been made aware that my behavior made another student feel uncomfortable in their learning environment.

\_\_\_\_ I have been instructed about the possible consequences of unkind and disruptive behavior at school.

\_\_\_\_ I understand if this behavior continues there will be a disciplinary consequence.

I have read and understand the above information about unkind and disruptive behavior.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Administrator Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*(This document is a template and may be amended.)*



## **St. Michael Catholic School Family Covenant Agreement 2025-2026**

### **Our School Mission Statement**

*"The mission of St. Michael Catholic School is to form Disciples of Christ through an education focused on faith, conscience, scholarship and service."*

I understand the education of my child is a collaborative effort involving my child, myself, the faculty and administration of St. Michael Catholic School and the community of St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church. I further understand that my child's teachers, school leadership, parish priests, religious and lay leaders are dedicated professionals who make sacrifices in service to the St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church faith community.

I can expect from the school and parish:

- To collaborate and communicate with parents while providing a comprehensive educational experience for my child.
- To uphold the teachings of the Catholic Church, share the faith with enthusiasm and pastoral care, and be worthy role models.
- To teach students Christ-like behavior to prevent the harmful consequences of bullying, teasing and intimidating behavior towards others.
- To communicate honestly and respectfully to students and parents, even when upset, to resolve disputes or relay concern in a timely manner.
- To respond to concerns in a professional and timely manner, while protecting the child and family's confidentiality.
- To provide an excellent academic program and a safe, positive environment.
- To provide all students with the assistance and support needed for academic and social success, and hold all students accountable for their own choices and behavior.
- To trust that the parent community will do everything in their power to facilitate their children reaching their full potential in Spirit, Mind, and Body.
- To understand that all school and parish staff are responsible for the good name of the school and the parish.
- To be good stewards of the resources provided by the school and parish.
- To pray for the well-being of the school, people of our parish, and the students and families in the school community.

In order to demonstrate my commitment, full support and cooperation with St. Michael Catholic School and St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church I/we will:

- Ensure that our family prays regularly and attends Sunday Mass weekly as well as on Holy Days.
- Honor financial obligations to the school through timely tuition payments.
- Demonstrate thoughtful stewardship by responding within my means to requests for contributions of time, talent and treasure to St. Michael Catholic School as well our parish

community of St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church and the Diocesan Services Fund.

- Personally pray for the well-being of the school, the faculty and staff, the priests, religious and lay people of our parish and the students and families as I am able.
- Agree to the school's expectations concerning dress, behavior, attendance, respect for others, and use of technology as outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook and monitor my student's use of TV, computers, games, telephones, social networking sites and other media.
- Continue to teach my child Christ-like behavior to prevent the harmful consequences of bullying, teasing and intimidating behavior towards others.
- Expect my child to use respectful verbal and body language, and model respect by refusing to start rumors or listen to gossip.
- Understand that all students and parents are responsible for the good name of the school and our parish community knowing that behavior outside of our school and parish that is non exemplary or harmful to the school's good reputation may lead to disciplinary action at school.
- Provide my student with assistance and support needed for academic and social success, and hold my student responsible for his/her own choices and behavior.
- Understand that, as a parent, I am a member of the Parents Lending Useful Support (P.L.U.S.) Organization, and will support the P.L.U.S. activities to the best of my ability.
- Understand that, as a school parent, I am a member of the greater St. Michael the Archangel Church community and will support parish faith enrichment programming and volunteer needs to the best of my ability.
- Communicate honestly and respectfully to school and parish personnel, even when upset, to resolve disputes or relay concern in a timely manner.
- Trust that the school and parish leadership will do everything in their power to facilitate my child reaching his/her full potential in Spirit, Mind, and Body.

***My/our signature(s) below signifies an endorsement of the school and parish's policies as outlined in the Family Covenant Agreement, and a pledge to uphold and encourage my child's compliance.***

***I have read the 2025-2026 St. Michael Catholic School Family Covenant Agreement and hereby agree to enter into a covenant with our school and parish and to work hand-in-hand with them to provide the best possible environment for all students.***

***(This agreement was signed by every family during enrollment/re-enrollment.)***



## St. Michael Catholic School Volunteer Code of Conduct

As a community of faith we are committed to safeguard our children and youth, the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. The following rules and regulations reflect that commitment and are a condition of volunteer ministry.

As a volunteer, I will:

- Safeguard children and youth entrusted to my care at all times.
- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Avoid situations where I am alone with a child or youth at church/school activities.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children or youth.
- Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children or youth or their parents without prior written approval from the pastor or administrator.
- Refrain from giving inappropriate, personal gifts to children or youth.
- Report suspected abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services (800.252.5400) or local police department. I understand that failure to report suspected child abuse is a violation of Texas law.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse or neglect of children and/or youth.
- Obey all traffic laws when driving children and youth.

As a volunteer, I will not:

- Espouse any view contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church during my volunteer ministry.
- Smoke or use tobacco products on parish property and/or in the presence of children or youth.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while volunteering.
- Spank, shake, or slap children, youth or any person.
- Humiliate, ridicule, threaten or degrade children, youth or any person.
- Strike or touch a child, youth or any person in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Engage in any conduct that frightens or humiliates children, youth or any person.
- Commit an illegal or immoral act in the presence of children and/or youth.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth.
- Sexually harass any person, e.g., requests for sexual favors, sexually explicit statements, etc.
- Drive a vehicle not in compliance with regulations and/or inspections while Driving Children.

As a volunteer, I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this Code of Conduct. I understand that as a volunteer working with children and/or youth, I am subject to a thorough background check including criminal history.

I agree to notify the Archdiocesan Safe Environment Coordinator within 30 days if I have been charged with, convicted of, granted deferred adjudication or plead nolo contendere to any felony or any misdemeanor involving moral turpitude. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in my removal as a volunteer.

***\*Must be signed annually by all volunteers.***



**St. Michael Catholic School Parent/Student Handbook Acknowledgment  
2025-2026**

All enrolled families have access to a copy of the Parent/Student Handbook for the school year on the school website.

Initial each line below:

\_\_\_\_\_ We have access to a copy of the Parent/Student Handbook on the school website.

\_\_\_\_\_ We will read and refer to the Parent/Student Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_ We will follow the policies and procedures in the Parent/Student Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_ We will seek clarification from the Principal for any policies and procedures if unclear.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Family Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child/ren Name/s

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date