

# **Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy**



## **Family Handbook 2023-2024**

**Administrator: Reverend Paolo Capra**

**Principal: Lora Watson**

**4550 W. Davis Street**

**Dallas, Texas 75211**

**214.333.9423**

**[www.santaclaraacademy.org](http://www.santaclaraacademy.org)**

## **Welcome**

Welcome to Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy. We are deeply honored that you have entrusted your children to us and promise that the school faculty and staff will work with you to help them fully develop the gifts that God has given them. This handbook reflects the policies of Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy for the 2023-2024 school year expecting it to be a normal school year. If necessary, notifications or an addendum will be sent that reflects necessary modifications due to the pandemic. This handbook is intended to be an initial source of information as well as communication between home and school. Please read it carefully as a family, sign, and initial the attached agreement. It is a binding contract by which you agree to follow the policies of Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy. It is part of the registration process and must be completed for the student to attend SCCA. Your family is important to us. If you have concerns or questions, please contact Ms. Watson through the school office or by email. Thank you for your support and commitment to Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy.

## **Statement of Nondiscrimination**

Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy admits students of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities of the school and provides equal opportunity and access to persons without regard to race in administration of educational policies, admissions policies, and other school-administered programs.

## **Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy's Name and Logo**

The school's name and logo are the property of Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy. All logos and images associated with Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy and its associated entities are for the sole use of the school. The logos, insignia, and images may not be reproduced, duplicated, or altered without express written consent from school administration. This includes the school logo and athletic logos, as well as images from the school website. Independent use of any of these logos and images on sports team uniforms, paper goods, clothing, decals, monogrammed or imprinted items, etc. is prohibited.

## **Handbook Organization**

This Handbook contains information needed by both students and parents during the school year. The information is organized alphabetically. The term "parent" refers to the student's parent or legal guardian. The information in the Handbook reflects the requirements, policies, and procedures that are in effect as of the printing date.

## **Right to Amend**

Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy reserves the right to make changes to policies included in this Handbook. If, during the school year, a situation arises that is not addressed in the Handbook, the Principal is empowered to implement procedures that support the common good of the school community. The Principal is also empowered to grant exceptions to any of these requirements, procedures or policies set forth in this Handbook. Changes or additions will be distributed in the weekly newsletter and will be effective immediately. If a question arises as to the meaning or interpretation of any of the provisions in this Handbook, the Principal shall determine such meaning or interpretation.

## **Academics**

- Academic Responsibilities
  - Student Responsibilities – **Academics are the student's primary responsibility.**

- Students are required to complete all assignments and submit them on the due date.
- Students are required to follow the SCCA Attendance Policy.
- It is the responsibility of the student to obtain homework and assignments after an absence.
- Students are to communicate to the teacher any mitigating circumstances that prevent timely completion of assignments.
- Textbooks and consumable workbooks are issued to students at the beginning of the school year. Students are responsible for their upkeep. Students will be held accountable for lost or damaged textbooks. Fees for damaged books will be assessed by the school administration.
- Students may be issued a laptop or iPad for the school year. These devices are the property of SCCA and must be returned to the school in acceptable condition at the end of the school year, termination of school attendance, or at the request of the school. The student is responsible for the care of the device. If it is broken or damaged, the student will be required to pay for its repair or replacement.
- Parent Responsibilities
  - Stress to students the importance of good attendance.
  - Provide a specific time and dedicated place for homework.
  - Supervise, ***but not complete***, the child's homework.
  - Communicate concerns to the teacher in a timely and effective manner.
- Teacher Responsibilities
  - Inform students of the school's guidelines as well as his/her own guidelines.
  - Assign homework that provides enrichment and reinforcement of topics introduced during class time.
  - Provide feedback on assignments and projects in a timely manner.
  - Communicate with parents and students.
- Conferences
  - Parent/Teacher Conferences are required at the end of the first quarter. The purpose of these conferences is to provide students, parents, students, and teachers the opportunity to plan and work together for the success of the student. Teachers will notify parents if students are required to attend the conference.
  - Teachers are available to parents on an individual basis as well. Either teachers or parents may request a conference and they should communicate directly with each other to set up such a conference.
- Curriculum
 

The curriculum of SCCA complies with the academic requirements as determined by the Diocese of Dallas, the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department, and the Texas Education Agency.
- Graduation
  - Students must complete Texas Catholic Conference Education Department requirements for 8<sup>th</sup> grade to receive a Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy diploma. All fees and tuition must be paid in full at least three weeks prior to graduation for the student to participate in graduation activities and ceremonies.
  - A graduation Mass is celebrated for graduating students, their families, and friends each May during which students receive diplomas and other awards.
  - **Students who do not successfully complete all graduation requirements will not participate in graduation activities nor the ceremony. Should summer school be required to pass any classes, the diploma will be held until proof of successful completion of summer school is provided.**
- Homework

- o The purpose of homework is to reinforce what is learned during the school day and to provide the opportunity for independent study. Assignments may take longer due to a student's understanding or the level of difficulty of the topic.
- o Teachers may give special projects that extend over several days or weeks. Homework may also take longer to finish if students do not begin long-term projects as soon as they are assigned.
- o If the amount of time that a student spends on homework seems excessive, parents are encouraged to contact the teacher to determine the cause.
- Progress Reports  
Student progress is continually monitored by SCCA teachers. Students receive mid-quarter progress reports via email. It is the parent's responsibility to read the progress report and contact their child's teacher directly with any questions.
- Report Cards  
Report cards report a student's progress in academics and the development of Christian values and character. A report card is issued at the end of each quarter SCCA uses the Diocese of Dallas report card template. Parents are asked to review the report card with their child to discuss strengths, areas of growth, and goal setting.
- Standardized Tests  
Students in Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grades are given nationally standardized achievement tests – Iowa Assessments and the Cognitive Abilities Test (CoGAT) in October.
- Promotion and Retention
  - o Progress through the grades is a matter of achievement of basic skills, age, and social development. Most students will move through the grade at the rate of one grade per year. Some students, however, may benefit academically if retained one grade. Consultation among the parents, teachers, and principal will be arranged prior to a decision being made. The final decision regarding a student's class placement within a grade rests with the principal.
  - o "Social promotions and skipping grade levels are prohibited in Catholic schools in Texas." *Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department Guide to Quality and Effectiveness: An Accreditation Manual for Catholic Schools of Texas*
  - o The decision to retain a student is made following a comprehensive overview of the student's performance with input from parents, teachers, and the administration. Parents will be notified in writing of the possibility of retention prior to March 31<sup>s</sup> of the current school year. The final decision regarding a student's promotion or class placement rests with the administration. In accordance with diocesan policy, retention of a student for more than one year is avoided, if possible, especially beyond 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.
    - Retention Policy for Kindergarten: A student is retained if after ongoing discussion among the parents, teacher, and the administration it is determined that the student would benefit from an additional year in kindergarten. The final decision rests with the administration.
    - Retention Policy for 1<sup>st</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> Grades: A student is retained at the end of the school year and must repeat the grade if the student has a final report card average of 69% or lower in two of the core subjects – reading, English, math, science, social studies, or religion. In some cases, it may be determined through consultation with parents, teachers, and administration that successful completion of summer school will provide the support needed for a student to proceed on to the next grade. The final decision rests with administration.
    - Retention Policy for Middle School: A student in middle school is retained at the end of the school year if the student has an average of 69% or lower in

two of the core subjects: reading, English, math, science, social studies, or religion. The student will not be readmitted to Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy, as it is not in the best interest of middle school students to remain at the same school where they have been retained

- **Evaluation and Testing for Learning Differences**  
SCCA recognizes that some students learn differently than their peers of the same age and may require accommodations to be successful in their academic career. A student must have a formal accommodation plan to be eligible for accommodations.
  - All reports, evaluations, and testing information provided by or to educational professionals are processed through the school administration.
  - If the administration of Santa Clara Catholic Academy has recommended an educational evaluation for a student and the parent refuses to have the student evaluated, the administration reserves the right to require the parents to withdraw the student from SCCA.
  - Upon receiving a copy of the testing results, the school, parents, and if appropriate, the student will meet to discuss the results and determine the best way to serve the student's needs. A formal accommodation plan will be drawn up stating the responsibilities of each party. The accommodation plan will be reviewed annually prior to the start of the school year and may be reviewed during the school year as needed.
  - Modifications will not be made to the school's curriculum or grading policies.
- **Release of Student Records and Letters of Recommendation**  
All forms or student records requested by a diagnostician or other professional will be sent by the administration directly to the diagnostician or professional upon receipt of a parent's written permission. Additionally, all letters of recommendation written by teachers will be sent from the school office. All student work is treated as confidential.

### **Admissions and Registration**

Parents who desire a Catholic education for their child are invited to seek an application for admission to Santa Clara Catholic Academy. As openings become available the following priorities determine how students will be considered for acceptance to SCCA:

1. Siblings of students currently enrolled at Santa Clara Catholic Academy
  2. Members of Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Parish.
  3. Other applicants.
- **Age Requirements**
    - The State of Texas has the following minimum age requirements for students entering school:
    - PreK3 Students must be three years old on or before September 1st of that year.
    - PreK4 Students must be four years old on or before September 1st of that year.
    - Kindergarten Students must be five years old on or before September 1st of that year.
    - 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Students must be six years old on or before September 1st of that year.
  - **Admissions Requirements for New Students**
    - A completed application form must be submitted, along with a non-refundable application fee. In addition to the completed application and fee, the following are required:
      - Birth Certificate
      - Baptismal Certificate (Catholic applicants only)

- Immunization Records (Parents must provide proof that a child entering the school has received the series of immunizations required by law and the Diocese of Dallas Catholic Schools Office.)
- Health Records
- Report Cards
- Standardized Test Results
- Record of IEP (if applicable)
- Disciplinary Record – To include alternative education placement if applicable.
- Custody Agreement (if applicable)
- Home Language Survey
- Income Survey
- Signed Handbook Agreement
- Admission Requirements for Preschool Students
  - In addition to meeting the above referenced age requirement, preschool students must be completely toilet trained
  - In some cases, prospective students may be required to perform satisfactorily on a preschool assessment.
- Conditional Admission
 

Students new to Santa Clara Catholic Academy are accepted on a probationary status for 60 calendar days. Their status will be reviewed at the end of the first quarter following their acceptance to the school and the administration will make a determination, at that time, if SCCA is an appropriate place for them. Students may be asked to withdraw prior to the end of the 60-day probationary period if the administration determines it is in the best interest of the student and/or the school for the student to do so.

## **Athletics**

- Athletic Mission Statement
 

The mission of the Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy Athletic Department is to provide an athletic program with an emphasis on Christian principles and good sportsmanship, and to govern healthy competition between teams and among student-athletes in 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades.
- Athletic Philosophy
 

Student athletes, coaches, parents, and spectators are always to keep in mind that the contests in which the student-athletes compete are games and should be fun for everyone involved. Winning is a worthwhile goal and purpose when viewed in the proper perspective. When doing one's best, enjoying intense competition, and receiving the character-building benefits of competition, winning can be a most honorable goal. Activity programs provide valuable lessons for practical situations – teamwork, sportsmanship, winning and losing, and hard work. Through participation in activity programs, students learn self-discipline, build self-confidence, and develop skills to handle competitive situations.
- Governance
 

The athletic director (AD), appointed by the Principal, supervises and directs the extracurricular athletic program in a manner consistent with the policies of the school and the Dallas Parochial League (DPL).
- Dallas Parochial League
 

Student-athletes in 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades compete in the Dallas Parochial League (DPL). Information regarding the DPL can be located on their website at [www.dallasparochialleague.com](http://www.dallasparochialleague.com). The DPL sponsors the following sports/competition: football, volleyball, cross country, basketball, golf, swimming, soccer, tennis, baseball, softball, and track & field. SCCA athletic policies conform to the rules and guidelines of the DPL. The DPL annually offers scholarships. For detailed information regarding eligibility, application, and deadlines, please visit the DPL website.

- Division/Formation of Teams
  - In 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grades, teams are formed in accordance with DPL rules. Student-athletes may be grouped by position and assigned to a team, or by other similar selection processes defined by the AD. This process will be supervised by the AD.
  - In 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades, teams are formed in accordance with DPL rules. Tryouts for the "A" team will be conducted under the supervision of the AD. Outside judges may be utilized when needed.
- Practice
  - For the purpose of this policy, "athletic event" is defined as a contest, practice, or other scheduled meeting of team members.
  - Students in 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grades may not participate in more than two (2) athletic events per sport during the school week (Monday through Thursday). Exceptions to these guidelines may be granted by the AD with the approval of the Principal.
  - Students in 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades may not participate in more than three (3) athletic events per sport during the school week (Monday through Thursday). Exceptions to these guidelines may be granted by the AD with the approval of the Principal.
  - During Achievement Testing or other crucial study/examination periods, the AD and Principal may cancel, limit, or reschedule athletic events (including practices) as appropriate.
- Participation
  - Santa Clara Catholic Academy strives for each student-athlete to have a minimum playing time of 25% per contest. Exceptions to this rule are as follows:
    - A coach may recommend that a student-athlete be held out of a contest/practice for disciplinary reasons associated with misconduct (disrespect, insubordination, etc.). The coach must inform the student-athlete, parents, and AD in writing and/or verbally regarding his/her recommendation. The AD will have the final decision and inform the Principal.
    - Student-athletes may also be withheld from contests/practices due to habitual tardiness or failure to attend practices/games, provided such situations are not the result of illness.
    - A student-athlete may be held out of a contest at the discretion of the coach, coordinator, and/or AD when safety of the student-athletes is a concern.
    - Student-athletes may ultimately be dismissed from a team with the approval of the AD and the Principal. Registration fees will not be refunded.
- Student-Athletes
  - All SCCA student-athletes in 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades with good conduct and academic standing may participate in sports.
  - Non-SCCA students may participate on SCCA teams under the following conditions:
    - It does not interfere with the opportunities for SCCA students to participate.
    - Non-SCCA students must be students of other Catholic schools within the Dallas Diocese who would not otherwise have the opportunity to participate in the sport.
  - The following are expectations for SCCA student-athletes:
    - Always know and demonstrate the fundamentals of good sportsmanship.
    - Do not applaud errors by opponents or penalties assessed against them.
    - Do not heckle, jeer, or distract the opposing team or its coaches.
    - Do not criticize other student-athletes.
    - Avoid profane language and obnoxious behavior that is contrary to Christian values and sportsmanship.
    - Censure fellow teammates whose behavior is inconsistent with the mission and philosophy described in this handbook.
    - Respect the judgment and strategy of the coaches.

- Refrain from protesting calls of game officials to the point that it reflects poorly on the school
- Coaches
 

The AD in consultation with the Principal selects coaches. Coaches have discretion to appoint an assistant with the approval of the AD. Coaches and assistant coaches of the team may be suspended, removed, or not allowed to coach for failure to comply with DPL, school, and/or Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Church policies. Such actions will be the decision of the Principal, after consultation with the AD.

Upon assignment, each coach is charged with his/her responsibilities as described, below.

- o Leadership and Sportsmanlike Conduct
  - Coaches are required to set a Christian example at all times. The coach will lead student-athletes in prayer at games and practices.
  - Coaches are to encourage sportsmanship by student-athletes and to create an environment in which students can learn meaningful life values.
  - Coaches are to demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times and refrain from protesting calls by game officials to the point that it reflects poorly on the school.
  - Coaches are never to lead a practice or game if he/she has been drinking alcoholic beverages.
  - Profanity and abusive language by coaches will not be tolerated.
  - DPL rules prohibit the use of tobacco in any form at practices or games.
  - DPL reserves the right to fine schools for violations of its rules. Coaches must be aware that such fines levied against SCCA will be passed on to the person(s) whose behavior or actions resulted in the fine.
  - At no time will disciplinary action take the form of excessive physical punishment or harassment. Coaches should seek alternative methods of discipline. Disciplinary measures, when necessary, should be fair, equitable, and used in moderation.
  - In addition to the education and training of student-athletes, coaches are responsible for the safety and security of both student-athletes and the school property entrusted to them.
  - Coaches should keep to scheduled practice times and report, in writing, to offending parent, sport coordinator, and AD of all habitual tardiness of student-athlete pick-ups.
- o Safe Environment Clearance
  - Prior to coaching, all coaches, assistant coaches, team managers, and other representatives are required to complete and maintain Safe Environment clearance.
  - All coaches, assistant coaches, team managers, and other representatives are required to attend the DPL's mandatory workshop, "Play Like a Champion" prior to coaching in the league. Workshop schedules are available on the DPL website.
  - Two adults, including the coach, are to remain on the premises at practices and games until all student athletes have been picked up by a parent or other designated individual.
- o First Aid and Injuries
  - Coaches must have a first aid kit available at all practices and games.
  - In the event an accident does occur, the coach is to submit a completed accident report form to the AD's office the next school day.



- All coaches, assistant coaches, team managers, and other representatives must annually attend the "Blood Borne Pathogens" and first aid training session provided each year by SCCA, as required by the Diocese of Dallas.
- In the case of a sprain or bruise, apply ice as soon as possible and elevate the injured area.
- In the event of a serious injury including, but not limited to, severe bleeding, broken bone, possible concussion or unconsciousness, a coach, team manager, other team representative, parent, or non-injured student-athlete is to call 911 immediately. Proper procedures should be adhered to as follows:
  - Have an adult supervise the injured student-athlete at all times.
  - Do not move the injured student-athlete until professional help arrives.
  - In the case of severe bleeding, make sure protective gloves are worn and apply pressure to the injured area.
  - All first aid material waste must be disposed of properly.
  - Notify the AD and Principal as soon as possible.
- Parents and Spectators
 

Just as SCCA has expectations for student-athletes and coaches, similar expectations also exist for parents and other spectators. These include the following guidelines:

  - Always know and demonstrate the fundamentals of good sportsmanship.
  - Do not applaud errors by opponents or penalties assessed against them.
  - Do not heckle, jeer, or distract the opposing team or its coaches.
  - Do not criticize any student-athletes.
  - Avoid profane language and obnoxious behavior that is contrary to Christian values and sportsmanship.
  - Censure fellow spectators whose behavior is inconsistent with the mission and philosophy described in this Handbook.
  - Respect the judgment and strategy of the coaches.
  - Do not challenge coaches during games or practices. Grievances may be addressed outside the game/practice environment. Unresolved issues should be reported to the AD.
  - Do not protest calls of game officials and score keepers. Direct dialogue with a referee during a game in-progress can result in expulsion or suspension from future games.
  - The DPL reserves the right to levy fines against schools whose parents/spectators fail to comply with DPL rules. Any such fines levied against SCCA will be passed on to the offending spectator or appropriate parent. Other sanctions may be imposed by the school, with or without DPL action, against parents/spectators who fail to comply with these rules.
  - Parents are responsible for picking up trash and disposing of it in area receptacles.
  - Parents should clean up school facilities and areas used by teams after each event.
  - Parents should ensure their student-athlete arrives at the appointed time for practices/games ready to participate. Parents should promptly pick up their child at the end of practices/games. Parents should notify coaches, as early as possible, if their child will miss a practice/game
  -

### **Attendance, Arrival, and Dismissal**

The SCCA calendar includes 180 days of instruction. A student is required to attend class for a minimum of 162 days (90%) of attendance days to be promoted to the next grade level. This percentage includes excused and unexcused absences. A student who does not attend 90% of a class during the school year will not pass that class and may be required to participate in a summer program, repeat the grade, or be dismissed from the school.

- Arrival

The beginning of the day has an impact on the rest of the day. At Santa Clara Catholic Academy, we work with parents to enable each child to develop as an independent learner. Parents should allow their child(ren) to enter the school building on their own each morning.

- o Morning Carline
  - Students will be dropped off at the sidewalk area in front of the church and cafeteria.
  - As a practice of safety, parents are requested to pull up to the curb and have their children exit on the passenger side
  - Parents may drop-off their children beginning at 7:15AM
- o Supervision of students begins at 7:15 AM in the cafeteria
- o Communal prayer and announcements will begin at 7:50AM
- o All students will be dismissed to their classrooms at 8:00AM – *Any student who is not on campus by this time will be considered late.*
- o Absences
  - Parents must notify the office of an absence by 8:30AM the day the student is absent
  - Excused absences include
    - Student illness or injury
    - Family emergency
    - Death of a family member
    - Doctor or dental appointment that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours.
    - The school understands that there may be rare and extenuating circumstances that prevent a student from being present. Special permission for these circumstances must be pre arranged with the Principal.
  - Unexcused absences include
    - No notification from the parent that student(s) will be absent
    - **Parents are encouraged to schedule vacations during regular school breaks. Missing several days of classes is detrimental to the student and causes hardship to the teachers. It is the teacher's discretion whether or not to give assignments in advance.**
- Assignments for Absentees

If students are absent due to an illness, it is generally better to let the student rest and recover instead of trying to do schoolwork while they do not feel well.

  - o Students are required to make-up all work missed due to absence.
  - o Typically, students have one school day to make up work for each day they are absent; a student who is absent three days will have three school days, including his or her first day back at school, to complete all missed assignments. It is at the teacher's discretion to determine if additional time should be allowed to make up any missed assignments.
  - o It is the parents' and/or students' responsibility to obtain make-up work. Parents and students should be aware of their teachers' policies about posting work on sites such as RenWeb, SeeSaw, GoogleClassroom, etc.
  - o Any make-up work not completed and turned in by the required due date will earn a grade of zero (0).
- Dismissal
  - o Dismissal times are
    - PreK – 1<sup>st</sup> Grade 3:30 PM
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grades 3:30 PM
    - 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grades 3:30 PM

- o If you have children in more than one grade level, pick up all children at the eldest students' dismissal time.
- o Students will remain in their designated locations until they are called to their designated vehicle.
- o Dismissal times are staggered to assist with traffic flow. **DO NOT ARRIVE MORE THAN 5 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR STUDENT(S) DISMISSAL TIME.**
- o Afternoon Carline
  - Students will not be released to persons other than a custodial parent/guardian unless notification is received either in writing or by telephone from the parent/guardian prior to dismissal. Identification is required of the person picking up the student.
  - Families are to plainly display their issued number card on their windshield.
  - Students enter the car from the passenger side.
  - Drivers and occupants should stay in their cars and wait for their children to exit the school.
  - **In accordance with state law, Santa Clara Catholic Academy does not permit drivers to use cell phones in school zones or in the car-pool lines. Please adhere to the law; it is for the safety of the students.**
- Tardiness and Early Pick-up
 

*Students are expected to remain in school the entire school day. It is a disruption to the learning environment for students to arrive late or leave before the end of the day.*

  - o Consequences for excessive tardiness and early release (4 times per quarter).
    - Students will not be eligible for honor roll or permitted to participate in extracurricular activities. The school will not reimburse families who have registered for these activities and then determined to be ineligible.
    - When a student graduates or transfers to another school, the new school frequently requests that SCCA complete a recommendation. Typically, there is a section on the form regarding parent cooperation. SCCA will report that parent cooperation is less than satisfactory and indicate that students are tardy or leave school early in violation of school policy.
    - Families that receive tuition assistance will be required to meet with the Principal and possibly the Pastor to develop a plan for attendance. Failure to follow the plan may result in tuition assistance for the current year being rescinded and make them ineligible for assistance the following year.
  - o If a student must be dismissed from class before the end of the academic day, they are to remain in class until they are called to the office for release.
    - Parents should call the office to notify that the student(s) will be picked up early.
    - The office will notify the teacher
    - Parents should park in front of the main entrance, call the office to notify staff of arrival, and wait in their vehicle for student(s) to be escorted out of the building.
    - Students will not be released to persons other than a custodial parent/guardian unless notification is received either in writing or by telephone from the parent/guardian prior to dismissal.
    - A register is kept requiring a signature, name of child, time of release, and time of return

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are a special time for students and SCCA wishes to acknowledge them in a manner that does not disrupt class time.

- Student birthdays are announced during morning announcements
- The birthday student receives a FREE DRESS DAY PASS

- The birthday student may distribute individual treats for their entire class during the lunch period.
  - o Please send individual easy to serve treats such as cupcakes or cookies
  - o Please send all necessary napkins and or utensils

### **Cell Phones, Calls, and other electronics**

Students are strongly discouraged from bringing cell phones and other electronics to school. They are **not** allowed to use cell phones on the school premises, during extracurricular activities, or on field trips unless under the direct supervision of a teacher or school approved chaperone. Students who bring their cell phone (or other electronics) to school must turn it off before entering the building and leave it in their backpack.

- Students are not allowed to use their cell phones while on campus. This includes during morning drop off and afternoon pick-up.
  - o All arrangements for pick-up or afternoon activities should be made between parents and children before they are dropped off for school.
  - o If there is an emergency or situation that requires a student to be notified of a change in plans, please call the school office and the message will be communicated to your student(s).
  - o Students will not be called to the office to take a phone call. Messages will be delivered to a student at an appropriate time.
- Students are not allowed to film/record/take pictures of any SCCA staff member or fellow SCCA student without explicit permission from SCCA staff.
- Students who violate policies regarding cell phones and other electronics will have their devices confiscated and placed in the Principal's office. A parent will be required to make an appointment through the school office with the Principal to retrieve the phone. Such appointments will be set at the Principal's convenience.
- If a phone or other device is confiscated a second time, the student will be required to pay a \$25 fine in addition to the parent making another appointment with the Principal to retrieve the phone or device.
- Electronics (including school issued devices) should not be used while in the cafeteria.

### **Communication**

- Change of Address of Phone Number and Emergency Contact Information  
SCCA must have current and accurate contact information in order to communicate with parents. It is the parents' responsibility to provide the school with a current phone number, email address, and mailing address. SCCA must be able to reach a parent or emergency contact within two hours or the student may be withdrawn by the school.
- School Website  
Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy's website is [www.santaclaraacademy.org](http://www.santaclaraacademy.org)
- Newsletters
  - o School newsletters are sent out weekly via email
  - o Parents and students are responsible to read and know the information distributed by the school and their child(ren)'s teacher(s) via email, newsletters, etc.
- RenWeb  
The school uses RenWeb to provide communication services to families. The Parent Alert System allows SCCA to send out text alerts informing parents of school events and emergencies. Other features require access to ParentsWeb, a private and secure portal which allows access to grades for students in 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades, surveys, and payment of incidental fees.
  - o RenWeb ParentsWeb Access
  - o Provide SCCA with a current email address.
  - o Go to [www.renweb.com](http://www.renweb.com) and click Logins.

- o Click ParentsWeb Login.
- o Enter the District Code "HT-TX."
- o Click "Create New ParentsWeb Account."
- o Enter email address for an introductory email to be sent.
- o "Click to change password" link. This link is only valid for 30 minutes. • A web browser displays Name and RenWeb ID.
- o Enter a User Name and Password. Confirm the password.
- o Click "Save Password." A message will display at the top of the browser, "User Name/Password successfully updated."
- School Phone
  - o Students are permitted to use the school phone with the permission of the Principal, a teacher, or the school office personnel.
  - o Communication with students by parents during school hours should be made through the school office. The office staff is available to help in an emergency. Please limit requests for messages to be delivered to the student in emergency situations. Changes in carpool arrangements should be made before the student arrives at school.
  - o Student/Parent communication via cell phone is not permitted without the explicit permission of SCCA staff.
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
 

Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy desires to maintain open and ongoing dialogue between the home and school. However, the school requests that parents refrain from seeking impromptu conferences with a teacher for the following reasons:

  - o The most important responsibility of the entire SCCA staff is the direct supervision of students. It is not possible to provide students safe supervision while talking with another adult.
  - o A parent's concern deserves the full attention of the teacher. It is difficult for a teacher to give that attention if distracted.
  - o Matters regarding parent concerns of their child should be handled in confidence. Parents are requested to send their child's teacher an email or call the school office to arrange a meeting.
- Grievance Procedure (Principle of Subsidiarity)
 

In keeping with the teachings of the Catholic Church, students, parents, guardians, teachers, and staff are encouraged to address a situation at the level at which the situation occurs.

  - o Persons having a concern with another individual should go directly to that person.
  - o If there is a concern with a teacher, the concern needs to be addressed with the teacher first.
  - o The Principal may become involved after other steps have been followed.

## **Conduct and Discipline**

- Discipline Policy
- Santa Clara Catholic Academy believes that every attempt should be made to maintain the dignity of all persons. Students are guided and expected to solve the problems they create without making problems for anyone else.
  - o Misbehavior is handled with natural consequences instead of punishments whenever possible. Misbehavior is viewed as an opportunity for problem solving and preparation for the real world.
  - o Parents are expected to support the decisions of faculty and staff regarding planning and executing disciplinary/academic interventions. Infractions are generally viewed in one of the following categories:

- Conduct/actions which make the school environment unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Conduct/actions which prevent the individual from doing work.
- Conduct/actions which prevent others from doing work.
- Parental Conduct
- In keeping with the Christian nature of the school, the highest standards of conduct and respect are always expected of both students and their parents. Any student who does not abide by SCCA rules, or whose conduct is such that the learning process or welfare of the other students is adversely affected, is subject to the disciplinary rules listed herein. These same standards and rules apply to parents. Parental behavior is considered separate and apart from the child's conduct and is also subject to the disciplinary rules listed herein resulting in action taken against their child.
- Bullying
  - It is imperative that every student is provided a safe environment that is free from fear, either psychological or physical.
  - Bullying involves repeated physical, verbal, non-verbal, emotional, technological (cyber-bullying), psychological attacks, or intimidation.
  - Bullying can take many forms
    - Physical
    - verbal (name calling, taunting, etc.)
    - nonverbal (racial discrimination, exclusion, etc.)
    - intimidation
    - threats
    - extortion
    - stealing
    - damage to a person's property, etc.
  - Consequences for bullying depend on the severity of the bullying incidents. The administration reserves the right to impose the most appropriate consequence, regardless of the number of incidents. All decisions of SCCA are final
- Harassment
 

Santa Clara Catholic Academy is committed to a policy of non-discrimination within all school programs and activities. Harassment of employees or students is not condoned in a Christian environment and is strictly prohibited at Santa Clara Catholic Academy. All allegations of harassment will be taken seriously and promptly investigated.

The following definition of activities and behavior constitute harassment, which is prohibited under this policy:

- Requiring an employee to submit to unwelcome advances or conduct as an expressed or implied condition of receipt or maintenance of an employment benefit.
- Requiring a student to submit to unwelcome advances or conduct as an expressed or implied condition for educational benefit.
- Subjecting an employee or student to demeaning stereotypes, innuendo, intimidation, or insult such that an offensive or hostile environment is created.
- An employee subjecting a student to any type of advance, whether or not consensual, or unwelcome advances as expressed or implied condition of receipt or maintenance of an educational benefit.
- Any amorous relationship or activity between a student and employee is prohibited, whether or not consensual.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to the following behavior:

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted advances, imitations, or comments.

- o Visual contact such as derogatory and/or sexually oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, or gestures.
- o Physical contact such as assault, unwanted touching, blocking normal movements, or interfering with work or study.
- o Threats and demands to submit to inappropriate requests as a condition of continued employment, grades, other benefits, or to avoid some other loss, and offers of benefits in return for inappropriate favors.
- o Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.

Any employee or student who believes he or she has been the subject of harassment shall report the alleged harassment in writing to the school Principal.

- o The Principal will take whatever actions he/she deems necessary to investigate the complaint, including but not limited to interviewing the accused person, the accusing person, and any witnesses.
- o The Principal will render a written decision within thirty (30) days of receiving the complaint. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, the procedures set forth above shall not abridge, limit, or in any way restrict the Conflict Management/Grievance Procedure for students and employees.
- **Property Damage**  
Anyone who intentionally or accidentally destroys or damages school property or the personal property of another must pay the cost to repair or replace the property. This includes painting or adhering signs or stickers of any kind to the painted surfaces of the school, school lockers, or storage places. Disciplinary actions, including fines, will be assessed as deemed appropriate by the administration.
- **Gum**  
SCCA is a gum free campus. Students may not possess gum. Students found to be in possession may be required to scrape gum from under tables or desks. Parents will be required to supervise their students during this time.
- **Behavior at School Functions Outside of the School Day**  
SCCA students are always representing the school. The behavior expected during the school day is also expected at other school functions or events outside of school. During school-sponsored events, students are always to remain within sight and sound range of supervising adults for safety purposes. Students who perform negative acts during school-sponsored events and non-school activities outside of the school day that reflect negatively upon SCCA may receive disciplinary action at the discretion of the Principal.
- **Disciplinary Probation**  
Students may receive disciplinary probation during which time the student attempts to rectify inappropriate behavior. Disciplinary probation may include required counseling, a responsibility contract, and/or denial of privileges such as athletics or participation in a club or organization. This is a period of conditional reenrollment and may be lifted if positive steps are taken by the student to improve behavior. A student may be placed on disciplinary probation without having been suspended. If the conduct of the student does not improve during the period of disciplinary probation, the Principal will determine if the student can continue enrollment during the current school year or re enroll for the upcoming school year.
- **In-school Suspension**  
In-school suspension is a pre-arranged period of time the student spends in school, but away from the classroom and other students, lasting for a day or more. The student may not attend any school sponsored activities during the suspension. During an in-school suspension the student must take all assigned exams and tests. The student must also turn in all school assignments before being readmitted to class.
- **Out-of-school Suspension**

While in Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) the student will not attend school or any school functions. During an OSS, the student will be expected to make up all daily work, quizzes, and or tests within one day's time upon their return. Teachers may provide work to be taken home during this period and the student is expected to complete all tasks on a timely basis. The administration will also assign work that will be due upon returning to school. While in OSS, the student is ineligible to participate in any school activity, including practice for any extra-curricular or athletic event.

Parents are required to accompany the student to school, following an OSS, for a re-admittance conference with the Principal. OSS conferences will not occur until the suspension has been served

- **Expulsion**

Orderly school administration is essential to fulfilling the core mission of Catholic schools. Even a single failure of one member of the school community to uphold the standards of behavior to which all community members agree upon can cause irreparable harm. Thus, while in many cases expulsion is reserved for very serious or persistent misconduct, SCCA may properly determine that a single instance of on or off campus misconduct requires separation of a student from the school community. Misconduct committed by a member of the school community other than a student (including, without limitation, parents and siblings) can also 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 (e.g., parents and siblings) may result in the expulsion of the student from SCCA when, in his or her sole discretion, the chief administrator determines that such action is appropriate.

#### Grounds for Expulsion

- o Any instance or course of misconduct may, at the sole discretion of the school's chief administrator, be sufficient grounds for expulsion. In many cases, it is appropriate to attempt to correct the problem behavior through less severe disciplinary measures. In other cases, however, the school's chief administrator may determine that expulsion is the appropriate sanction for misconduct that has not previously resulted in probation, suspension, or other discipline.
- o Examples of behavior that will generally result in expulsion include but are not limited to:
  - Actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of other students.
  - Incurable or disruptive behavior which impedes the progress of the rest of the class.
  - 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.
  - 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.
  - The on-campus use, sale, distribution, or possession of a substance intended or commonly used to mimic a narcotic, controlled substance, or alcoholic beverage.
  - 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.
- Habitual truancy.
- Malicious damage or destruction of real or personal property at school.
- Hazing.
- Serious bullying and/or harassment.
- Conduct which may damage the reputation of the school or parish.
- Transmission of nude or otherwise inappropriate images of any student or person who appears to be a minor child.
- Use of social media in such a manner as constitutes bullying or online harassment or which causes another student or member of the school community to fear for the safety of any member of the school community.
- Additionally, off-campus misconduct may result in expulsion, especially when it is related in some way to the school community because it is directed towards a member of the school community, directly or indirectly, involves multiple members of the school community, or may negatively impact the school's reputation in the community.

#### Procedure for Expulsion

Circumstances giving rise to expulsion can arise and unfold quickly. The chief administrator's primary duty in such situations is to protect the school community. No student or family has any right to the application of a particular procedure before or in connection with the expulsion of a student. Nevertheless, the following process can serve as a general guideline when, in the chief administrator's discretion, circumstances warrant:

- When practical, the pastor of a parochial elementary school and the president of a diocesan high school should be apprised of the circumstances of a potential expulsion before the decision to expel is implemented.
- When circumstances permit, before the decision to expel is implemented, the student's parents should be advised of the potential for expulsion and a summary of the grounds for expulsion.
- The student and his or her parents should be invited to a conference with the school's chief administrator. In parish schools, the local pastor should be advised of the scheduled conference. In high schools, the president should be advised of the scheduled conference. At the chief administrator's discretion, this conference may be held before or after the decision to expel is implemented.
- The final decision to expel a student rests with the school's chief administrator and will not be reviewed except to ensure compliance with any applicable pre-expulsion procedures. In parochial elementary schools, the pastor should be consulted. In diocesan high schools, the president should be consulted.

#### **Dress Code and Personal Appearance**

SCCA implements a dress code, personal appearance, and uniform policy to ensure an atmosphere of simplicity and unity among the students. Our uniform is designed to unify and identify students as scholars of SCCA. Parents must ensure that their children are in compliance with the dress code, personal appearance, and uniform policies before they enter the school.

Students must be in school uniform each day, unless otherwise provided in the Handbook or by the Principal. If something is not expressly allowed in the Handbook, it is forbidden.

The school reserves the right to monitor and establish rules regarding new fashions in dress during the school year.

- Enforcement  
If a student is found to be out of compliance with these policies, parents will be notified to bring appropriate clothing is a student's dress.
- General Regulations
  - Students will maintain appropriate personal hygiene and cleanliness. Students may not write on hands, legs, arms, etc. Tattoos and body piercings are not permitted.
  - Students may not change or alter their uniforms before leaving school property.
  - Uniforms and all clothing worn to school may not show excessive wear and tear. Uniform pieces are to be replaced when they become ripped or soiled beyond cleaning.
  - Uniforms and all clothing worn to school are to be worn with Christian modesty in mind. Skirts may not be shorter than 3 inches above the back of the knee at any time during the school year.
  - All blouse or shirt buttons, excluding the top button, must be fastened.
  - Undershirts worn under the blouse/shirt must match the top shirt.
  - Long sleeve shirts may not be worn under uniform shirts
  - Only school logo jackets may be worn inside the buildings.
  - No jackets or hooded sweatshirts may be worn to church.
  - Students may wear jackets to school when cold weather begins, but all jackets will be hung up in the classroom immediately upon entering.
  - **No SMART watches allowed in school.**
  - All removable outerwear must be clearly and permanently marked with the student's name.
  - Students who need a haircut or skirt lengthening will be given one week to conform to the uniform requirements. If still out of compliance after one week, the student will be sent home until their appearance conforms to the requirements. See below for guidelines.
- Hair
  - Hair must be above the eyebrows and/or secured away from the face. No "fade" haircuts or styles, shaved heads (so there is no hair), or other unacceptable hair designs are permitted. The principal will determine if a hairstyle is appropriate. If in doubt, ask.
  - Girls may wear solid navy, white, red, black or school plaid hair bows or headbands.
  - Hair must be of a color and style that does not hinder learning or distract other students. Bleached hair, multi-toned hair color is not permitted.
- Jewelry & Make-Up
  - Girls may wear one pair of simple stud earrings. No other kind of piercing is allowed.
  - Medical identification bracelets may be worn.
  - One simple crucifix, cross, or other Catholic symbol may be worn on a simple jewelry chain around the neck.
  - Students may not wear nail polish or fake nails (including but not limited to acrylic, solar, or powder dipped) unless given special permission by the Principal.
  - 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and/or 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls may wear foundation make-up and clear lip-gloss.

Spirit Days – On Spirit Days, students may wear:

- Solid colored jeans or solid-colored shorts that are at least fingertip length
- Athletic shoes
- SCCA school spirit shirt or sweatshirt

Dress-Down Days

- Jeans or slacks
- Capris

- Shorts – at least fingertip length
- Dresses/Skirts – no more than 3 inches above the knee
- Shirts that completely cover the torso and shoulders. Midriff must be covered when arms are raised.
- Shirts may not be longer than shorts.
- Athletic shoes. Shoes must cover the entire foot (heels and toes). Sandals, flip-flops, Crocs, etc. are not permitted.

#### Inappropriate Attire – Not permitted

- T-shirts related to drug culture, music groups, advertisements that promote alcohol, drugs, obscene language or pictures or offensive phrases.
- Clothing that is tight
- Clothing that is ripped
- Other dress that may disrupt the learning environment or is deemed inappropriate/offensive by the administration.

Students who are not in compliance with the above guidelines for Spirit Day or Dress-Down Day will not be allowed to attend class. A parent will be called to bring the proper clothing. Students who violate the Spirit Day or Dress-Down Day regulation a second time will be excluded from participating for the remainder of the school year.

#### Uniforms

The official supplier of SCCA's uniforms is Flynn O'Hara. Only the uniform clothing listed below will meet the requirement of the school uniform. It is highly recommended that all uniform clothing be purchased at Flynn O'Hara. Earlier styles of uniforms are not acceptable.

\*If polo shirts are purchased somewhere other than Flynn O'Hara, they must meet the color and school logo requirements listed for each school level. SCCA school logo patches must be neatly and permanently affixed to the polo shirts, so they are similar to those purchased through our official supplier. Logo patches are available to purchase for \$7.00 each in the school office.

#### Elementary (PK3-5<sup>th</sup> Grades) Uniform

##### -Elementary Regular School Day Uniform

##### Girls

- SCCA plaid jumper, skort, or skirt
- Black modesty shorts for jumpers and skirts
- Navy slacks/pants with belt loops (may not be cargo, capri, nor have elastic at the ankles)
- Solid black or brown belt with navy slacks (exception: PK and Kindergarten do not have to wear a belt)
- Red polo with school logo
- White and navy saddle shoes only
- White or navy knee socks or tights
- Navy fleece jacket or navy sweater with school logo (not a hoodie)

##### Boys

- Red polo with school logo
- Navy slacks/pants with belt loops (no cargo pants or elastic around the ankles) or
- Navy walking shorts (must come to the knee) with belt loops
- Solid black athletic shoes (may not be Converse, Vans, or other similar shoes)

- Solid white or black crew socks. (must be long enough to cover the ankle when folded)
- Solid black or brown belt (exception: PK and Kindergarten do not have to wear a belt)
- Navy fleece jacket with school logo (not a hoodie)

#### -Elementary Mass Uniform

##### Girls

- SCCA plaid skirt or jumper
- Black modesty shorts
- White oxford button down collar shirt, long or short sleeve
- SCCA plaid criss-cross girls' tie
- White and navy saddle shoes only
- White or navy knee socks or tights
- Navy fleece jacket with school logo (not a hoodie) or navy sweater with school logo

##### Boys

- White button front shirt, short or long sleeve
- Navy tie
- Navy slacks/pants with belt loops (no cargo pants or elastic around the ankles)
- Solid black or brown belt (exception PreK and Kindergarten do not have to wear belts)
- Solid black athletic shoes (may not be Converse, Vans, or other similar shoes)
- Solid white or black crew socks (long enough to cover ankles when folded)

#### Middle School (6-8<sup>th</sup> Grades) Uniform

##### -Middle School Regular Day Uniform

##### Girls

- SCCA plaid skirt or skirt
- Black modesty shorts for jumpers and skirts
- Khaki slacks/pants with belt loops (may not be cargo, capri, nor have elastic at the ankles)
- Solid brown or black belt with slacks
- Navy polo with school logo
- White and navy saddle shoes only
- Solid White or navy knee socks or tights
- Navy fleece jacket or navy sweater with school logo (not a hoodie)

##### Boys

- Navy polo with school logo
- Khaki slacks/pants with belt loops (no cargo pants or elastic around the ankles) or
- Khaki walking shorts (must come to the knee) with belt loops
- All Black athletic shoes (may not be Converse, Vans, or other similar shoes)
- Solid white or black crew socks. (must be long enough to cover the ankle when folded)
- Solid black or brown belt
- Navy fleece jacket with school logo or navy sweater with school logo (not a hoodie)

##### -Middle School Mass Uniform

##### Girls

- SCCA plaid skirt
- Black modesty shorts

- White oxford button down collar shirt (may be long or short sleeve)
- SCCA plaid criss-cross girls' tie
- White and navy saddle shoes only
- White or navy knee socks or tights
- Navy Blazer with school logo

#### Boys

- White button front shirt, short or long sleeve
- Navy tie
- Khaki slacks/pants with belt loops (no cargo pants or elastic around the ankles)
- Solid black or brown belt
- Solid black athletic shoes
- Navy Blazer with school logo

#### **Extended Day Academy (After Care)**

- After school care is held across the street at Catholic Charities. Students must be registered with Catholic Charities to attend that after care program.
- If after school care is not available through Catholic Charities or a student is not registered with Catholic Charities, the school has an Aftercare program.
- Students who are still on campus at 4:00 will be placed in Aftercare and assessed the appropriate charge.
  - o Teachers or Staff may not watch students after 3:45PM unless it is in connection with an official school extracurricular activity or planned tutoring.
  - o If a child is still on campus at the conclusion of an official activity or tutoring, they will attend Aftercare and be assessed the appropriate charge.
- Siblings of students who are involved in extracurricular activities or tutoring must either be picked up by 3:45PM or attend Aftercare. They may not wait in the classroom, office, gym, etc.
- Aftercare ends at 6:00PM cost is \$7.00 per day per student
  - o Families of students not picked up by 6:00PM will be assessed an additional \$25 per child charge
  - o If there is an emergency preventing pick-up at 6PM, please notify the Aftercare coordinator immediately.

#### **Extracurricular Activities**

Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy offers students the opportunity to participate in various extra-curricular activities. The goal of all extra-curricular activities is to provide students opportunities for enjoyment and fun, opportunities to develop talents, skills and qualities of responsibility.

- Extra-Curricular activities may vary depending on availability of staff and volunteers.
- All extra-curricular coaches are volunteers and must first be cleared by a background check and Safe Environment Training.
- Determination of Eligibility
  - o Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy is an educational institution whose purpose is to provide excellence in academic and spiritual development for its students. Educational excellence requires a resolve by all members of the school community – students, parents, and teachers – promoting students to complete their primary task of education at an acceptable level before diverting time and energy to other activities. All members of the school community are expected to support the school's eligibility rules for the benefit of all students.
  - o Students in 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades that participate in extracurricular activities are subject to the following eligibility requirements:

- All assignments are to be current. Students who are missing work will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities including sport practices.
- Academic eligibility is reported at the end of the first three quarters. Students must achieve a passing grade in all subjects; any grade below 70% renders a student ineligible for all extracurricular activities. Ineligible students may be considered eligible if they achieve mid-quarter progress reports of 76% or higher in all subjects.
- A grade of “U” or “N” in conduct renders a student ineligible for all extracurricular activities for the following quarter.
- A student who receives an in-school suspension is rendered ineligible for all extracurricular activities for a period of four weeks after the suspension.
- A student who receives an out-of-school suspension is rendered ineligible for all extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year.
- A student who is ineligible for two review periods during the year is dropped from all extracurricular activities for which the student is participating at the time the second eligibility notice is issued.
- Students must follow all SCCA attendance requirements as described above.
- Parents of students who are ineligible receive an email from the Principal or activity sponsor. The school’s AD will notify the student’s coach, and the Principal will notify the sponsor of the student’s other extracurricular activities.
- An ineligible status prohibits the student-athlete from practicing with the team and playing in games. An ineligible student-athlete may not suit out or sit with the team. Any student who violates the condition of eligibility may be rendered, at the discretion of the Principal, ineligible for the activity for the remainder of the school year

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are part of the curriculum and are planned to enrich students’ educational and cultural experiences. Field trips are scheduled on school days and all students are expected to participate.

- If a parent refuses for their child to attend a field trip, that student may not come to school, and the resulting absence will be considered unexcused.
- Parents must consent in writing to the field trip by signing the school’s permission form. Students may not attend without a signed permission form.
- Transportation is provided by bus and all students are required to ride the bus to the activity. No parents or chaperones may ride on the bus.
- Field trips would not be possible without the generous help of parent volunteers who act as chaperones. A field trip is an educational experience for the class and is not intended to serve as special bonding time for parent and child. The children of parents who attend the field trip are required to follow the same directions and requirements as students whose parents do not attend. Therefore, they may not receive special privileges.
- Siblings of students may not attend.
- Except in special circumstances, students may not bring money on field trips to shop in gift shops. Additionally, parents who volunteer may not shop in gift shops or provide special treats for their own child or small group of children.
- Students who attend overnight field trips or retreats (The Pines) are expected to stay for the entire duration of the trip. Only students who are ill will be allowed to leave early.

### **Financial Requirements**

- Tuition
  - Tuition and fees are determined by the Principal and Pastor with consultation of the Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy Advisory Board.

- o In January, the tuition and fee schedule are posted on the School website for the following academic year.
- o The school contracts with FACTS Management Company to collect, record, and deposit tuition payments.
- o Families may elect to pay tuition:
  - In one installment due in May
  - Two installments due in May and December
  - 12 payments beginning in May
  - 11 payments beginning in June
  - 10 payments beginning in August
- o Tuition payments will only be accepted through FACTS Management Company. Families will receive instructions via email for enrollment information for the next school year in early January. It is the family's responsibility to enroll in the FACTS Tuition Payment Program to complete the registration process. Enrollment will neither be official, nor attendance granted until the agreement is completed.
- o A student's attendance at school and participation in extracurricular activities is conditioned upon the timely fulfillment of all financial responsibilities to the School. If a family fails to meet their financial obligations, the school reserves the right to exclude the student from class.
  - Failure to meet such obligations for more than twenty-one (21) calendar days and/or two or more late payments in any school year may result in the termination of the student's enrollment at SCCA.
  - In addition, enrollment for students whose tuition is delinquent after April 30 may be canceled for the upcoming year at the discretion of the school.
  - In no event will the student be permitted to attend class at the beginning of the following school year unless the delinquency is paid in full or alternative arrangements are made with the Principal and/or Pastor.
- o Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy desires to support families who have endured a financial setback or other difficulties that make paying tuition and other school-related costs difficult. Families who are experiencing such setbacks or are otherwise concerned about meeting their financial obligations are encouraged to contact the Principal or Director of Admissions, as soon as possible, preferably prior to falling behind in their obligations, to discuss alternate payment arrangements.
- Tuition Assistance
  - o Limited tuition assistance is available for qualifying families with children in kindergarten through eighth grades.
    - In order to be considered for tuition assistance, families must complete a FACTS Grant and Aid application online prior to April 1, 2022.
    - Families that complete their applications prior to December 31, 2022 will be able to submit their 2021 tax information instead of the current year.
  - o The amount of assistance is limited, families who apply first tend to receive the largest awards. Families are encouraged to apply early and pay attention to deadlines.
  - o Financial assistance forms are available on-line at [www.factstuitionaid.com](http://www.factstuitionaid.com). Contact the Admissions Director for assistance.
  - o Tuition assistance may be available to qualifying families of preschool students who have an older sibling currently attending SCCA.
- Incidental Fees
  - o Lunch
    - At the time of writing this handbook, the school was in process of applying for the federally funded free and reduced lunch program. Information will be

given to all families as soon as possible regarding the application process and what the charges may be.

- Parents are encouraged to pay lunch fees on FACTS. A “Lunch” deposit account is available where parents are able to apply money as needed.
- The cost of a student lunch is \$3.50
- o Aftercare
  - Parents are required to pay Aftercare fees on FACTS. An “Aftercare” deposit account is available where parents can apply money as needed.
- o Pines
  - The Pines Trip for 8th grade students is paid on FACTS.
  - Parents are invited to make small deposits throughout the year.
  - All fees must be paid two weeks prior to the student leaving for the trip.
  - The amount for this trip will depend on camp, transportation, and chaperone costs.
- o Field Trips
  - Field Trip fees may be paid on FACTS.
  - Amounts will be determined by costs associated with the trip including but not limited to admissions, transportation, and chaperones.

### **Fundraising**

All fund-raisers must have prior approval of the Principal preferably prior to the beginning of the academic year. Students may not solicit funds for any reason not pre-approved by the administration. This includes personal gain gifts and solicitation for organizations not sponsored by Santa Clara Catholic Academy. All families must participate in all fundraising. Cookie dough, chocolate sales, raffles.

### **Volunteer Hours**

All families must volunteer 25 hours per year. 15 hours for the fall semester. 10 hours for the spring semester. The cost per hour is \$10 if not fulfilled. Billing for Fall hours will be due Dec 23. Billing for Spring hours will be due May 19.

### **Governance and Organizational Structure**

- Pastor

According to Canon Law, the Pastor is the parish leader and is responsible to the Bishop. The Pastor delegates the direction of the school program and the ordinary administration of the school to the chief administrator, the Principal. The Pastor with the Principal establishes the terms of such delegation and the means of regular and formal communication on school matters. The Pastor assists in the development of the Catholicity of the school through instruction, the practice of the liturgy, sacramental preparation programs, prayer, and spiritual direction. In general, the Pastor oversees personnel and sanctions all activities. He is ultimately responsible for all financial matters. He also 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.
- Principal

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. The Principal is responsible not only for the educational program, but also for the financial administration of all school funds. The Principal, as chief administrator of the school, is responsible for the implementation of school policies, diocesan policies, and governmental requirements. As the educational leader of the school the Principal has administrative responsibility for carrying out the instruction program. The Principal acts as the executive officer of the school advisory board. The Principal's highest



priority is the building of a Christian community of faith in which the Christian message and experiences of community, worship, service, and social concern are integrated. Additionally, a paramount responsibility is to promote and facilitate student learning of the highest quality.

The Principal has the following major responsibilities.

- o Administer the total school program.
  - o Supervise and evaluate the teachers, the students, and the instructional program.
  - o Oversee the operation of the facility and supervise all support staff members.
  - o Interact with the parent, parish, and general public communities.
  - o Collaborate with and seek counsel from the Catholic Schools Office.
  - o Execute all actions and policies approved by the School Advisory Board.
  - o Fulfill accreditation criteria articulated by Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and other accrediting agencies.
- Advisory Board  
The Board serves as an advisory group to the Pastor and Principal in the administration of the school as regards policy development, planning, financing, and evaluation of the principal. Members are elected or appointed by the pastor and/or principal. The board will establish a regular schedule for meetings which will be announced when the schedule is established.

## **Health**

Accurate and complete health information is kept on all students. All student files include the following: emergency release forms, health history information, and immunization records. Parents of returning students need to inform the office of any updated information from their physician. It is necessary for parents to complete a new Emergency Release Form for each child in the family who is enrolled in the school.

- Accidents  
If a student is injured and requires medical attention, every effort will be made to notify parents. The person indicated as emergency contact will be notified in the event that parents are unavailable. Serious injuries will result in ambulance transport. All student accidents and injuries on school premises and at school sponsored events are to be reported to the School Office immediately. An accident report is to be completed by the witnessing adult.
- Accident Insurance  
Included in tuition, Santa Clara Catholic Academy provides each student with student accident insurance. This coverage is secondary when the student has health coverage under another insurance plan and primary when not covered under another plan. This insurance covers accidental injuries to students during school hours and at all school sponsored functions including sports, both on and off campus. This coverage is not health insurance. Insurance claim forms are available in the School Office. If an accident occurs, the school will complete the top portion of the Student Accident Claim Form and provide it to the parent. The parent will then complete the remainder of the form and mail it, along with all required attachments, to the insurance carrier directly at the address indicated on the form. All claims under the Student Accident are handled directly by the insurance carrier with the Parent/Guardian. Coverage is provided in accordance with the plan document and specific coverage terms and conditions.
- Food Allergies  
Teachers will inform parents if there is a student in their class with any food allergy – mild or life-threatening – along with the requirements for the allergic student to be safe. All parents

agree to abide by the needs of the child with allergies. All families must report food allergies to the School Office so that it can be noted in the student's file.

- Illnesses (Not Covid-19 Related)

In consideration of others, students are required to stay home from school if they are ill. Providing rest at home will best comfort the student and facilitate a speedy recovery. If a student has a fever, he/she must be kept out of school until fever-free for 24 hours.

- Students will be readmitted to class 24 hours after fever, vomiting, or other symptoms have subsided.
- Please report all communicable diseases, including strep throat, chicken pox, pink eye, and skin diseases.

Students may not attend school if they have:

- Oral temperature of 100 degrees or above
- Vomiting, nausea, diarrhea or severe abdominal pain
- Sore throat, acute cold, or persistent cough
- Red, inflamed, or discharging eyes
- Acute skin rashes or eruptions
- Swollen glands around jaws, ears, and neck
- Suspected scabies or impetigo
- Any skin lesion in the weeping stage, unless protected and diagnosed as noninfectious
- Earache
- Pediculosis (head lice) – The Diocese of Dallas has a no nit policy. Even after treatment with a prescription or over-the-counter shampoo, nits or eggs may remain. A student must be cleared through the school office before being admitted to class.
- Any other symptoms which are suggestive of acute illness

- Medication

Students requiring an asthma inhaler may keep it in their possession.

Medication of any kind, including Aspirin, cough drops, cough syrup, or any other over-the-counter drugs, are not allowed to be given except as follows:

- Only medication which is necessary for a student to remain in school will be administered by authorized school staff during school hours. These medications must be prescribed by a licensed physician or dentist and be dispensed by a registered pharmacist.
- The school is unable to give any student over-the-counter medication unless it is prescribed by a licensed physician and labeled by a licensed pharmacist with proper directions. In addition, a signed permission form from the parent/legal guardian is required to accompany the medication.

Each student's medication must be in a properly labeled container with the following information:

- Student's Name
- Physician/Dentist's Name
- Date
- Name of medication
- Dosage
- Directions for administration
- Duration medication is to be given

The written medication permission form and properly labeled medication is to be given to the school office.

Medication that is received in an unlabeled container or plastic bag will not be accepted. No exceptions may be made to the medication policy.

- Screening  
State law mandates vision, hearing, and scoliosis screening of students. Screenings will be done unless parents provide documentation from a physician that testing has been complete and the school has a written note from the parents that they do not wish for screenings to be done again
- Immunizations  
Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy follows the Texas Department of Health rules covering immunizations. The Texas Education Code requires students in elementary and secondary schools to provide proof of required immunizations. A current immunization record must be received by the school before a student can attend class. All records must be validated by a physician's signature.

#### Lunch

- Students may bring lunch from home or purchase a hot lunch at school.
- As of the printing of this handbook, SCCA is working on approval to participate in the Federal Free/Reduced Lunch program.
- Hot lunch is \$3.50
- Students inform their teacher if they would like to purchase hot lunch. The lunch count is taken, and parents are billed monthly.
- If parents would like to pay ahead for lunches, they can contact the school office to make arrangements.
- Lunch menus are sent out ahead of time. However, meals are subject to change without notice depending on the supplier.
- On a child's birthday, parents may NOT join their students for lunch in the cafeteria. Please notify the office before coming to school.
- Lunch delivered via third-party delivery services are not accepted as a general rule. Exceptions may be made for special occasions such as birthdays.

#### Parties/Gifts

- The intention of classroom parties is to provide students the opportunity to celebrate a specific occasion together in an appropriate manner within the classroom setting. Parents may be asked to provide refreshments or some support for parties during the year. All parties must be coordinated with the classroom teacher.
- Non-school sponsored party invitations may not be distributed at school unless everyone in the class is invited to the party.
- No special gifts (balloon deliveries, limos, entertainers, etc.) are allowed.
- Deliveries of gifts will be held in the school office until dismissal.

#### Religious Formation

Students receive religious instruction and formation daily. Students attend Mass on holy days of obligation and weekly on Fridays at 10 AM. Classes take turns planning the liturgy.

Students are encouraged to participate in the Mass and have opportunities to cantor, serve, bear gifts, and lector.

The school participates in para-liturgical services, praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet in September and April, praying the rosary in October and May, and the Stations of the Cross during Lent.

Students pray frequently as a class during the day: early morning, before snacks and lunch, after recess, and at the end of the day. They are also encouraged to pray individually.

Students in 2nd grade receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. Students in 8th grade receive Confirmation.

All students, Catholic and non-Catholic, participate in religion classes, prayer, and liturgical services.

#### Preschool

SCCA Preschool follows the same policies as the rest of the school. However, there are some policies that are specific to the needs of the youngest students:

- Toileting  
All students are expected to be completely toilet trained prior to the beginning of the school year. Teachers do not help students with toileting tasks. If a student has an accident, the parent is called, and the child is taken to the school office to wait for the parent to arrive to assist the child.
- Biting  
The results of one child biting another can be serious. If a child bites, the parents of the child who bites and the child who is bitten will be notified. After the first incident, the child who bites will receive a warning. Further incidents will result in the child being sent home. The school will work with the parents to help the child discontinue this behavior. If the behavior continues, the parents will be required to withdraw the child from SCCA.
- Snacks  
Parents are asked to pack two snacks each day for their child. Healthy snacks are strongly encouraged. The snacks should be simple and easy for the child to manage.
- Clothing  
Parents of preschool children are required to send a complete change of clothes for their child. If possible, this includes a pair of inexpensive shoes. This change of clothing should be something that the child can manage alone.

### **SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND SECURITY**

#### Building Access

Access to the school building is granted through a secure door. Parents may only enter or exit through the main door of the school. After school hours, all requests to enter a classroom area must be made through the school office.

#### Safe Environment Training and Criminal History Background Checks

All personnel are required to participate yearly in Diocese of Dallas Safe Environment training. Parents who wish to participate in school activities including field trips or classroom parties must be Safe Environment cleared. Parents are cautioned to apply for clearance at the beginning of the school year, as it takes time to have diocesan background checks and reference checks completed. The Safe Environment program is required by the Diocese of Dallas and no alternatives or exceptions are allowed.

#### Blood Borne Pathogens/First Aid Training/CPR

At the beginning of the school year, personnel receive blood borne pathogens, first aid, and CPR training.

#### Crisis Management

Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy takes its responsibility for the safety of its students, teachers, staff, and parents seriously. SCCA cannot release a student while there is an outside

threat from weather, natural disasters, or criminal/terrorist activity. In the event that the Crisis Management Plan has been activated, it is imperative that parents do not attempt to remove their children from the school until the Principal has determined that it is safe to do so. Once a Crisis Response Protocol is activated, parents will be notified.

#### Smoking

In accordance with the City of Dallas smoking ordinance, smoking is prohibited in all school facilities and on the school campus.

#### Weapons

Weapons are not allowed on the school campus.

#### School Hours

- Regular School Day
  - 3:30pm Early Learning PreK3 - 1st Grade
  - 3:30pm Elementary 2nd - 5th Grades
  - 3:30pm Middle School
- Early Release Days
  - 11:30am Early Learning PreK3 - 1st Grade
  - 11:30 am Elementary 2nd - 5th Grades
  - 11:30am Middle School

**\*Please note there is no Aftercare available on Early Release Days**

- Office Hours  
7:30am - 3:15 pm Monday - Friday

#### Searches

Lockers remain under the jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student. SCCA reserves the right to inspect any locker at any time. In addition, the school may inspect personal possessions of students, including backpacks and digital memory devices for valid reasons. Searches of lockers or personal possessions must be conducted by a faculty/staff member and witnessed by another faculty/staff member.

#### SUPERVISION

The cafeteria is open 7:15 AM and students are not to arrive prior to 7:15 AM. Supervision is provided from 7:15 AM to 7:50 AM in the cafeteria. As students arrive, they are to go immediately to the cafeteria. Students will be directed to homeroom classes at the appropriate time. Students who arrive on campus prior to class time are not to leave the campus after they arrive without a supervising adult and are released through the school office. Likewise, at the end of the school day, students should not return to campus following dismissal from school, unless under the supervision of parent, adult, or extra-curricular activity sponsor.

After-school supervision ends at 4PM. Aftercare services are available until 6:00 PM for an additional fee.

Students are allowed to be in the gym only when they are under the direct supervision of their coach or activity sponsor. If a student is discovered on campus at a time when no supervision is provided, the parents/guardians will be notified. If it is discovered that a student leaves campus after being dropped off by a parent/guardian and returns before school begins, the parents/guardians will be notified.

#### TECHNOLOGY

Santa Clara is proud to offer all students access to its secured internet. The internet is provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to these services is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Students are responsible for good behavior on the SCCA secured internet just as they are in a classroom.

General school rules for behavior and communications apply. Access to the internet includes responsibilities. Students may not:

- Use the network or internet to harass, insult, or attack others.
- Access another student's work: altering, moving, or deleting another student's work.
- Enter social network sites, chat rooms, or send email.
- Willfully damage computers, software, computer systems or networks.
- Place a pencil, pen, or other material on the keyboard or screen of a laptop.
- Use the internet to plagiarize or violate copyright laws.
- Employ the internet for commercial purposes.
- Deliberately access or display offensive and/or obscene messages or pictures.
- Use computers to access material that is profane or obscene, that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people.
- Download software from the internet without the permission of the teacher;
- Access the internet without permission from the teacher.

#### Social Networking

Social networking sites should be used in a manner in accordance with the school and community values. The networking interaction, while taking place on personal time and not in relation to the school day, nevertheless impacts the overall harmony of the community.

Parents are encouraged to take time to set appropriate parameters for their children when using any technology such as internet sites and cell phones, to have ongoing discussions about site usage, and to monitor their child's internet and cell phone use. It is important that students realize the wide reach and possible ramifications some of their exchanges may have. Technology is a way of life for students; it is vitally important that educators and parents educate them in appropriate use as well as potential issues which may arise from impulsive commentary.

#### Consequences of Violation

Violation of the policies and procedures of Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy concerning the use of computers and networks will result in disciplinary action that may result in, but is not limited to:

- Students may lose computer privileges/Internet access. Length of privilege suspension will be determined by the administrator/teacher.
- A student will be removed from class and may be recommended for in-school suspension.
- Termination of enrollment may be considered in flagrant violations that blatantly corrupt the educational value of computers and the Internet, or instances when students have used SCCA Internet access to violate the law or to compromise another computer network.

Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy School has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials and does not assume responsibility for inappropriate materials acquired through the internet while at the school.

#### **VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS**

Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy welcomes volunteers from our parish community. Those wishing to volunteer time and energy are encouraged to contact the Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy office.

It is the intent of Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy to fully comply with all applicable Safe Environment policies of the Diocese of Dallas and Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Community.

- All visitors and volunteers (including a student's parent, guardian, or other relatives) entering the school must first report to the school office. No one may proceed directly to a classroom or cafeteria.
- All visitors and volunteers must sign in and out and display a current cleared volunteer badge as issued by the school. Those without cleared badges must be cleared by the school office and issued a visitor badge by presenting a driver's license. The cleared volunteer or visitor badge must be displayed at all times while in the school building or on school grounds during school days.
- Visitor badges are a privilege and the school office reserves the right to refuse a badge to any person.
- A visitor badge is only valid for one (1) day and is not good for in and out access to the school during that day. A visitor must return to the school office for a visitor badge on each day and/or each visit.
- Santa Clara Catholic Academy reserves the right to deny access to school property for any reason.

## **WITHDRAWAL**

If a parent wishes to withdraw their student from Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy, the parent must notify the school office and complete an Exit Interview. All books and other school-owned materials must be returned. Upon request by the new school, a transfer form will be issued, and all school records will be mailed directly to the new school. Requests for teacher recommendation must also be made through the school office and mailed directly to the new school. Families may request a refund of unused tuition by emailing the school accountant. After the student is withdrawn and the request is received, the school will reimburse the family within 30 days.

## **DIOCESAN LEGAL POLICIES THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF DALLAS SCHOOL POLICIES HANDBOOK ADDENDUM**

### **1. OVERVIEW**

Catholic schools within The Roman Catholic Diocese of Dallas (the "Diocese") are an extension of the religious ministry of the Diocese and, in the case of parochial schools, of the parish to which they are attached. To help schools fulfill this important role, the Diocese has promulgated certain policies for implementation in every school within the Diocese. Accordingly, the policies contained in this Addendum amend, replace, and control over any local school policies which apply to the same subject matter thereof.

### **2. EXPULSION**

Orderly school administration is essential to fulfilling the core mission of Catholic schools. Even a single failure by a member of the school community to uphold the standards of behavior to which all community members agree when a student is enrolled can cause irreparable harm. Thus, while in many cases expulsion is reserved for very serious or persistent misconduct, a school may properly determine that a single instance of on- or off campus misconduct requires separation of a student from the school community. Misconduct committed by a member of the school community other than a student (including without limitation parents and siblings) can also 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 (e.g., parents and siblings) may result in the expulsion of the student from the school when, in his or her sole discretion, the chief administrator determines that such action is appropriate.

#### **a. Grounds for Expulsion**

Any instance or course of misconduct may, at the sole discretion of the school's chief administrator, be sufficient grounds for expulsion. In many cases, it is appropriate to attempt to correct the problem behavior through less severe disciplinary measures. In other cases, however, the school's chief administrator may determine that expulsion is the appropriate sanction for misconduct that has not previously resulted in probation, suspension, or other discipline.

Examples of behavior that will generally result in expulsion include but are not limited to:

- i. Actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of other students;
- ii. Incurable or disruptive behavior which impedes the progress of the rest of the class;
- iii. 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;
- iv. Habitual or persistent violation of school regulations;
- v. 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;
- vi. The on-campus use, sale, distribution, or possession of a substance intended or commonly used to mimic a narcotic, controlled substance, or alcoholic beverage;
- vii. Use or possession of firearms or other potentially harmful objects or weapons;
- viii. Gang-related conduct or activity including but not limited to, symbols, graffiti, apparel, colors, hazing/initiations, and hand signals commonly associated with gangs;
- ix. Theft, extortion, arson;
- x. Habitual truancy;
- xi. Malicious damage or destruction of real or personal property at school;
- xii. Hazing;
- xiii. Serious bullying and/or harassment;
- xiv. Conduct which may damage the reputation of the school or parish;
- xv. Transmission of nude or otherwise inappropriate images of any student or person who appears to be a minor child; and
- xvi. Use of social media in such a manner as constitutes bullying or online harassment or which causes another student or member of the school community to fear for the safety of any member of the school community. Additionally, off-campus misconduct may result in expulsion, especially when it is related in some way to the school community because it is directed towards a member of the school community, directly or indirectly involves multiple members of the school community, or may negatively impact the school's reputation in the community.

b. Procedure for Expulsion Circumstances giving rise to expulsion can arise and unfold quickly. The chief administrator's primary duty in such situations is to protect the school community. No student or family has any right to the application of a particular procedure before or in connection with the expulsion of a student. Nevertheless, the following process can serve as a general guideline when, in the chief administrator's discretion, circumstances warrant:

- i. When practical, the pastor of a parochial elementary school and the president of a diocesan high school should be apprised of the circumstances of a potential expulsion before the decision to expel is implemented;
- ii. When circumstances permit, before the decision to expel is implemented, the student's parents should be advised of the potential for expulsion and a summary of the grounds for expulsion.
- iii. The student and his or her parents should be invited to a conference with the school's chief administrator. In parish schools, the local pastor should be advised of the



scheduled conference. In high schools, the president should be advised of the scheduled conference. At the chief administrator's discretion, this conference may be held before or after the decision to expel is implemented.

iv. The final decision to expel a student rests with the school's chief administrator and will not be reviewed except to ensure compliance with any applicable pre-expulsion procedures. In parochial elementary 78 schools, the pastor should be consulted. In diocesan high schools, the president should be consulted.

c. Tuition and Fees Prepaid tuition and fees are not refunded if a student is expelled. If a student is expelled before tuition or fees would ordinarily come due, the family of an expelled student shall be excused from further payment.

### 3. PARENTAL ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS

Parents will be allowed to inspect and review their student's education records, at a date and time convenient to the school, unless a court has ordered otherwise. Records will always be reviewed in the presence of school personnel appointed by the chief administrator. The school may provide copies of the records and, if it does so, may charge a fee. In the event a court order is in place which limits a parent's access to a student's educational records, or which otherwise limits the contact a parent may have with the school regarding the student, the family must provide a complete, final, signed copy of the order to the school when the student is enrolled. If such a court order is issued after a student has enrolled, the family must provide a complete, final, signed copy of the order to the school as soon as it is signed by the judge. The school will, when and to the extent reasonably possible, honor restrictions on access to educational records imposed by such an order. However, school personnel are not family lawyers and it is not the school's responsibility to enforce court orders. See below for additional information regarding reimbursement of the school's costs and attorneys' fees for involvement in family custody disputes. Schools will generally not release a student's records to third parties without the written consent of a student's parent or legally responsible adult. As an exception to this rule, a school may disclose student records to or for:

- i. School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- ii. Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- iii. Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- iv. Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- v. Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- vi. Accrediting organizations;
- vii. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- viii. Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- ix. State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

If a specific reason exists to further limit access to a student's educational records, the student's parent or legally responsible adult must provide a specific, written request that explains the basis for the additional restriction to the school's chief administrator. The chief administrator, in his or her sole discretion, will determine whether implementing special procedures for a student's records is appropriate and reasonably feasible on a case-by-case basis.

### 4. CUSTODY AND FAMILY LAW ISSUES

The Diocese and its schools understand that many families within the school community are affected by custody and other related legal disputes. The Diocese and its schools work to balance sensitivity to difficult family situations and the interests of safety and orderly school administration. Involving school personnel in family and custody diverts finite school resources from the school's primary function. As a result, it is important that families within the school community who are affected by custody and other related legal disputes read and understand the following policies and procedures. Generally, a child's biological or adoptive parents have equal rights to custody of and visitation with

the child unless and until a court orders otherwise.

When this arrangement has been changed by court order, it is the responsibility of the affected student's family to provide the school with a complete, final, signed copy of the relevant order and to point out to the school any relevant portions of the order. Unless and until a student's family does so, the school may assume that both of a child's biological or adoptive parents have equal rights to custody of and visitation with the student. It is the responsibility of the parents, not the school, to ensure that the school is promptly provided with any relevant original or amended custody orders. Schools will take reasonably practical steps to facilitate compliance with relevant family court orders. However, it is the responsibility of the family, and not the school, to enforce family court orders regarding a student. School personnel are not family law attorneys and are not responsible for interpreting or enforcing custody or other family court orders.

Attorneys representing parents in custody disputes should not contact school personnel directly, including requesting the production of documents and execution of supporting affidavits for use in litigation. Parents may obtain contact information for diocesan legal counsel from the school and should provide this information to the parents' attorneys if school involvement in a custody dispute is requested. If the school is required to engage counsel to interpret or otherwise advise the school regarding a custody or other family court order or dispute, the parents of the affected student are jointly and severally liable to the school for all costs and attorneys' fees associated therewith. As an exception to this general rule, upon request by either parent, the school will generally, at the chief administrator's sole discretion, provide one copy of a student's central file (e.g., attendance records, report cards, enrollment documents, etc....) with a supporting business records affidavit to both parents or their attorneys free of charge.

Diocesan schools are private property and are not open to the public. Additionally, it is detrimental to the wellbeing of the affected students and to the school community as a whole when family disputes are brought onto school property. Parents are expected to do everything possible to avoid parental confrontations or arguments on school grounds. The chief administrator of the school or his or her designee has full discretion to exclude any person from the school when, in his or her sole discretion, doing so is necessary or appropriate. School personnel may contact law enforcement for assistance when doing so is necessary to enforce this discretion.

If a parent who is prohibited by court order from coming to or near the school attempts to enter the school, the school may call the police and/or seek other appropriate recourse. If school personnel believe that the behavior of a parent or other legally responsible adult presents an imminent threat of harm to a student, the school may refuse to release the student to the parent or other legally responsible adult or take such other steps, including but not limited to contacting law enforcement or the student's emergency contact, as the school deems necessary.

## 5. REPORTS TO AND COOPERATION WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

a. Reports to Law Enforcement Texas law requires the principal of a private school, or his or her designee, to notify law enforcement if the principal has reasonable grounds to believe certain crimes listed in section 37.015 of the Texas Education Code. The notice provided to the police must include the name and address of each student the person believes may have participated in the activity and must also be provided to each employee of the school who has regular contact with a student whose conduct is the subject of the notice. It is the policy of the Diocese of Dallas and its schools to comply with this statutory requirement.

b. Cooperation with Law Enforcement and Child Abuse Investigations Texas law requires schools to make students available for interviews by child protective workers in connection with an investigation into suspected child abuse. The child protective worker may or may not allow

a school representative to witness the interview. Diocese of Dallas schools will cooperate with such interview requests. From time to time, law enforcement officers also seek to interview students while at school in connection with an allegation or suspicion that the student has committed a crime. When faced with such a request, school personnel will refer the requesting officer to the school's chief administrator or his or her designee. The chief administrator or designee will request additional information regarding the nature of the interview requested and the allegations or suspicions relating to the student. The chief administrator or designee will, if the crime is not serious and contemporaneous or imminent, also request that the interview be delayed until the student's parent or other legally responsible adult is present. School personnel will then notify the student's parent, other legally responsible adult, or emergency contact as soon as possible. If the officer refuses to delay the interview until the student's parent or other legally responsible adult arrives, the chief administrator or designee will request to be present during the interview. However, if the officer refuses to allow the chief administrator to be present and refuses to delay the interview, school personnel will not physically prevent the officer from conducting the interview, and the parent or other legally responsible adult signing below agrees that the school is under no duty to do so.

## 6. PARENTAL COOPERATION AND BEHAVIOR

All members of the school community, including parents and family members, are expected to comply with all school rules and policies while on campus and in communications with the school, 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. A community member's failure to meet these expectations jeopardizes school administration, requires the school to expend limited 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.

At the school's sole discretion, the failure of a student's parents or other family members to comply with these expectations, separate and apart from the student's conduct, may result in suspension or expulsion of the student.

## 7. REIMBURSEMENT FOR SCHOOL COSTS AND ATTORNEY'S FEES

The Diocese of Dallas and its schools recognize the financial sacrifice many of its families make to participate in the school community. Out of respect for this sacrifice and in recognition of the school's responsibility to wisely steward financial resources for the benefit of all members of the school community, the Diocese and its schools have implemented the following policy:

From time to time, a school is required to retain outside legal counsel to respond to parent requests or demands, requests or subpoenas for testimony or documents in legal proceedings to which the school is not a party, or to address other issues affecting or involving only one or a few students or families. In such situations, the school is typically required to expend finite financial resources to address an issue which otherwise affects only a very small portion of the school community. To ensure that the school community at large is not adversely impacted in such situations, the school will, when the chief administrator in his or her sole discretion deems it appropriate, require the family or families involved to reimburse the school for attorney's fees, costs of court, and other expenses incurred (including, without limitation, the cost to secure substitute staff when school personnel are subpoenaed to testify in court proceedings).

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 a school within the Diocese of Dallas, agrees that, in the School's absolute and sole discretion, he or she shall indemnify and reimburse the School, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Dallas, and their respective officers, employees, agents, and representatives ("Indemnitees") on demand from and for any and all attorney's fees and related costs including without limitation the cost of

responding to requests for documents or other records or information arising from, in connection with, or related to

- 1) a violation of any provision of this Handbook,
- 2) any request or demand made upon the School which pertains to a legal proceeding to which the School is not a party,
- 3) threatening or harassing communications directed to any Indemnitee, or 4) threatened or actual litigation against any Indemnitee which does not result in a final and appealable judgment adverse to the Indemnitee.

#### 8. AUTHORIZATION OF CONSENT TO TREAT MINOR

I/We, the Parents listed below, are the parent(s) / guardians of the Student listed below, and as such do hereby authorize the School named below and its employees, contractors, and adult volunteers as our agent(s) (collectively, "School") to consent to any x-ray examination, anesthetic, medical, dental, or surgical diagnosis or treatment or hospital care which is deemed advisable by, and is to be rendered under the general or specific supervision of, any physician or surgeon licensed under the laws of the jurisdiction where such diagnosis or treatment may be given, whether such diagnosis or treatment is rendered at the office of said physician, at a hospital, or at any other location.

I/we understand that this authorization is given in advance of any specific treatment or diagnosis, but is given to provide authority and power of treatment or hospital care which the aforementioned physician in the exercise of best judgment may deem advisable. This authorization is given pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 32 of the Texas Family Code. This authorization shall remain effective for up to one year from the date of completion of this form, unless sooner revoked in writing delivered to said agent(s).

In consideration of acceptance of this authorization, but without any time limitation and without any future right of revocation, I/we hereby release and agree to fully and unconditionally protect, indemnify, and defend School, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Dallas, and their respective officers, agents, and employees, (collectively, "Indemnitees") and hold each Indemnitee harmless from and against any and all costs, expenses, attorney's fees, claims damages, demands, suits, judgments, losses, or liability for injuries to property, injuries to persons (including Student) and from any other costs, expenses, attorney fees, claims, suits judgments, losses, or liabilities of any and every nature whatsoever arising in any manner, directly or indirectly, out of, in connection with, in the course of, or incidental to such treatment, treatment decisions, diagnosis, or hospital care relating to Student, REGARDLESS OF CAUSE OR OF THE JOINT, COMPARATIVE OR CONCURRENT NEGLIGENCE OF THE INDEMNITEES.

#### 9. ENROLLMENT

I/We is/are the natural parent(s) or managing conservator(s) of the Student listed below and have the legal authority to enroll Student in the School. Having considered all the facts, I/we believe that enrolling students in the School for the coming school year is in Student's best interest. I/we understand that School is a Roman Catholic School and that Student's education and the expectations for Student's behavior and the conduct of Student's family in relation to the School community will be consistent with and governed by Christian morals, values, and principles.

I/we have been provided with and have read, understood, and had the opportunity to ask any questions regarding the School's student/family handbook. I/we understand that the handbook is incorporated into this agreement and forms a part of this legally-binding contract. As a result, I/we understand that Student's continued enrollment at School during the coming school year is contingent upon compliance with the policies set out in the handbook by Student and by Student's family in their dealings with the School community.

I/we understand and agree that failure to comply with the expectations for conduct set out in the handbook may result in discipline, up to and including separation of Student from the School at School's sole discretion and without any right to appeal.

I/we understand that I am/we are responsible for providing School with a current and complete copy of any court order affecting Student's enrollment in School or the right of a parent or conservator of Student to make educational decisions for Student, communicate with School, or access Student's educational records.

I/we understand that it is not the School's responsibility to mediate or resolve disputes regarding custody of Student and related matters, and that involving School in custody and similar disputes requires School to expend unbudgeted time and other resources. I/we have read and agree to the provisions of the School handbook regarding School's right to recover attorneys' fees incurred as a result of Student or family misconduct and custody and related legal matters.

I/we have informed School of all relevant information regarding any special educational or medical needs of Student and agree to advise School if Student's educational or medical needs change during the school year.

I/we agree that School may contact any person who signs this agreement or whose name is provided to School as an emergency contact regarding any emergency involving Student and may disclose to those individuals information regarding Student's education, behavior, and/or medical conditions as needed.

I/we have been provided with and understand all necessary information regarding tuition, fees, and costs associated with Student's enrollment at School for the coming school year and am/are satisfied that I/we will be able to pay all such tuition, fees, and costs subject to any applicable financial aid awarded. I/we understand that the School's budget for the school year anticipates full payment of all amounts due on behalf of all enrolled students. Accordingly, I/we understand that failure to pay all tuition, fees, and costs in full and on time may, in School's sole discretion, result in Student's separation from School without any refund of amounts already paid.

## 10. PARENT CONSENT AND RELEASE FORM

The School offers students the opportunity to participate in a wide range of education, extracurricular, and athletic activities, both on and off campus. The School believes that parents, students, and the School community are best-served when parents and students together determine the range of activities that are appropriate for a particular student's participation. Parents should review the opportunities listed below, determine which activities are appropriate for their student's participation, and students and parents should sign where indicated below for each activity.

Student Name ("Student"): \_\_\_\_\_

**Athletics:** Subject to the Release and Indemnification terms below, by my/our initials below, I/we consent to Student's participation in School-sponsored athletic activities, including without limitation athletics-related training and exercise programs, practices, School-sponsored pre- and post-game activities, games, competitions, and tournaments.

I/we have read, discussed with Student, and understand the Student conduct expectations set forth in the Handbook and understand that Student's continued participation in athletics is conditioned upon his/her compliance with all applicable policies and rules of conduct when engaged in any School related activity, whether academic, athletic, or otherwise.

Parent(s) initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes : No

**Transportation to/from Athletics:** Subject to the Release and Indemnification terms below, by my/our initials below, I/we consent to Student's use of School-sponsored transportation to and from any and all School sponsored athletics activities described above.

I/we have read and discussed with Student the conduct expectations set forth in the Handbook and understand that Student's continued use of School transportation is conditioned upon his/her compliance with all applicable policies and rules of conduct.

Parent(s) initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes : No

**Extra-curricular Activities:** Subject to the Release and Indemnification terms below, by my/our initials below, I/we consent to Student's participation in School-sponsored extracurricular activities, including on-campus and off-campus extracurricular activities.

I/we have read and discussed with Student the conduct expectations set forth in the Handbook and understand that Student's continued participation in extracurricular activities is conditioned upon his/her compliance with all applicable policies and rules of conduct when engaged in any School-sponsored activity, whether academic, extracurricular, or otherwise.

Parent(s) initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes : No

**Transportation to/from Extracurricular Activities:** Subject to the Release and Indemnification terms below, by my/our initials below, I/we consent to Student's use of School-sponsored transportation to and from any and all School-sponsored extracurricular activities described above.

I/we have read and discussed with Student the conduct expectations set forth in the Handbook and understand that Student's continued use of School transportation is conditioned upon his/her compliance with all applicable policies and rules of conduct.

Parent(s) initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes : No

Video/Image Release: Subject to the Release and Consideration and Indemnification terms below, by my/our initials below, and for good and valuable consideration, I hereby grant to the School the irrevocable and unrestricted right to make, use and/or publish any and all photographs, videos, and other images of Student, or images in which Student may be included, now existing or hereafter made, in any case, with or without identifying Student for editorial, advertising, news, or any other purpose and in any manner and medium; to alter the same without restriction; and to copyright the same.

Parent(s) initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes : No

#### 11. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT

For hard copy handbooks: By my signature below, I agree that I will comply and will require the student listed below to comply with the school's policies, procedures, and instructions, and understand that such compliance by me, the student, and persons connected to the school by reason of the student is a condition of the student's continued enrollment in the school. I also understand and agree that the timely payment of all tuition, fees, and costs imposed by the school is also a condition of the student's continued enrollment in the school. Furthermore, by signing below, I represent, warrant, and agree that I am authorized to sign this agreement, undertake the duties, and grant the releases set forth herein on behalf of Student.

Student Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

School Name (print): Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy

Parent Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

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

School year: 2023-2024

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For online acknowledgement:

By submitting this form to the school, I represent that I have read the foregoing Handbook and understand and agree to the contents thereof. I agree that I will comply and will require the student listed below to comply with the school's policies, procedures, and instructions, and understand that such compliance by me, the student, and persons connected to the school by reason of the student is a condition of the student's continued enrollment in the school. I also understand and agree that the timely payment of all tuition, fees, and costs imposed by the school is also a condition of the student's continued enrollment in the school.