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Parent / Student Handbook
2017-2018

Notre Dame Catholic School admits students of any race, creed, or ethnic origin.
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INTRODUCTION

This document has been developed by the Principal in collaboration with the School Council’s Policy & Planning Committee in order to familiarize families with Notre Dame Catholic School and provide information about key policies, procedures, and expectations for parents and students of Notre Dame Catholic School.

1.1 Mission and Philosophy

The Archdiocese of San Antonio – Dedicated to a Vision

The fundamental purpose of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of San Antonio is to proclaim the Good News of Jesus the Christ. His news is one of challenge, love and unity; His spirit is caught in the lives of students. Affirming that parents are the primary educators and partners of education, we prepare students to share the spirit of Jesus through community building, Christian acts of service, and word and worship. We commit to provide inspiring active learning and quality education so that all students Share The Spirit of Catholic education.

The Vision statement calls forth beliefs that affirm the missionary dynamics of all Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of San Antonio. They are:

Foster a Catholic Identity – We prepare students to encounter the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to bring Catholic teachings and values into their lives and the global world.

Invest In Community Building – We are committed to building a communal spirit that is the heart and reality of Christian formation.

Provide Quality Education – We teach knowledge and critical skills so that students function fully as citizens within a changing technological and multicultural society.

Encourage Moral Formation – We lead by example in teaching moral values that encourage respect and responsibility.

Appreciate Families – We recognize the family as the basic faith community in which all members share as active participants in the educational process.

Support Parish Life – We believe that the school contributes to the parish through the formation of students as active participants of the parish community.

Share Governance – We seek support and participation from those who share a common vision, mission and philosophy.

Seek Equitable Distribution – We are challenged to establish just distribution of resources to ensure quality and affordability to families and our Church.
Mission

The mission of Notre Dame Catholic School is to educate our students to live following the model of Jesus.

Philosophy

We believe that each child is uniquely created by God; therefore we are called to foster their individual gifts and to develop their greatest potential. In a caring educational environment, enhanced by the integration of Catholic faith and values, we seek to encourage the students’ spiritual, moral, intellectual, personal, cultural and physical development.

Goals and Objectives

Notre Dame Catholic School, through an environment created for the purpose of educating the Christian person, seeks to achieve the following goals and related objectives:

- To promote the faith development of students, families, and faculty through an emphasis on spirituality, morality, and service…
  - by providing opportunities for faith development for those in our community
  - by instructing students on Church doctrine and issues related to social justice and Christian morality
  - by developing our sense of service to others through study of our unique differences and needs, and helping those in need

- To provide an enriched educational experience that challenges each student to
  - reach their potential personally, intellectually and creatively …
  - by helping students become personally responsible for learning in a challenging academic program that is enriched with positive activities and experiences
  - by helping students develop their creativity through exposure to the fine arts, technology, physical education and sports
  - by enhancing the learning environment with unique extra curricular activities to develop leadership, cooperation and understanding

We want the graduate of Notre Dame Catholic School to recognize that:

- God has uniquely created each person and He loves them unconditionally
- Compassion, tolerance, justice and respect are essential for a caring world
- Knowledge, critical thinking, effective communication, collaborative planning and leadership are required elements for citizenship in a complex, global society
- Each Christian’s personal response is to bring Christ’s presence to the world.

As a faculty, we are committed to working toward this goal of the Profile of the Notre Dame Graduate, so that every year, each student may make significant strides in this endeavor.
1.2 History

Rev. H. M. Kemper established Notre Dame Institute, Kerrville’s first parochial school, soon after he arrived here in 1911 to take over the Catholic parish. Father Kemper, a young theologian just out of college in Rome, assumed his pastoral duties in Kerrville, and funds for the founding of the school were made available by his father, William Francis Kemper, a wealthy Chicago businessman.

From its beginning, Notre Dame Institute held its own quota in the twelve grades to secure greater efficiency. Its avowed purpose was to teach the four basic academic subjects of reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion and to train scholastic beginners in character, culture and citizenship. Many of the leading Kerr County citizens of today began their education at Notre Dame Institute before entering the public schools.

On August 28, 1912, three Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word of San Antonio arrived in Kerrville to take charge of the newly founded Notre Dame Institute, which was dedicated by Father H. M. Kemper on the Feast of Our Lady’s Nativity, September 8, 1912.

Notre Dame Institute had kindergarten through twelfth grade from 1912 to 1925. The school was free for boys and girls from kindergarten to twelfth grade inclusive, to all who could not pay the nominal fee of one dollar a month. No religious discrimination was made, except that Catholic students received instruction in Christian doctrine in the morning before school began.

Since 1912, Notre Dame Catholic School (Institute) and parish have witnessed many changes and much growth. A vast number of young people have attended the school and have made significant contributions to the church and society. The faculty has always been a mixture of religious and lay teachers dedicated to educating our students.

1.3 Changes in Policy

The Pastor and/or the principal retain the right to amend the handbook for just cause and parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

This manual supersedes all previous parent/student handbooks.

Parent Bulletin

A Notre Dame Catholic School Bulletin is published each week on Friday and e-mailed to all families and placed on our website. Hardcopies are available in the front office for those families who need them. If you do not receive it, please contact the office to ensure we have the correct e-mail address.

Parent/Student Handbook

Notre Dame Catholic School will publish and/or annually update a Parent/Student Handbook. Parents/guardians must annually sign an agreement verifying that they have
read the Parent/Student Handbook and agree to abide by it. The handbook will be accessible through the school website.
(Addendum-Exhibit 1.3)

2200 LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

22.01 School Council

Every parish and archdiocesan school must have a school council. The local school council, whose authority is derived from the pastor of the parish or authorized agent, is called into being by the pastor/authorized agent and given its mission to advise the principal and pastor/authorized agent in areas of finances, school enhancement, policy, development and strategic planning.

A school council shall be established to serve as a consultative body to the pastor/authorized agent and the principal. Each council shall be composed of elected, appointed and ex-officio members as set forth in its constitution.

The blueprint constitution and by-laws of the Archdiocese shall be used for all school councils. Any addendum to the constitution and/or by-laws must be submitted to the president of the Catholic Schools Council of the Archdiocese of San Antonio (CSCASA), who in consultation with the Council will approve the changes before implementation.

The Notre Dame Catholic School Council, whose authority is derived from the pastor of the parish, is called into being by the pastor and given its mission to consult the principal and pastor in areas of finance, school enhancement, policy, development and strategic planning.

The Notre Dame Catholic School Council is established to serve as a consultative body to the pastor and the principal. The Council shall be composed of elected, appointed and ex-officio members as set forth in its Constitution and Bylaws.
(See exhibit 2200)

22.03 Parent-Teacher Club (PTC)

Every school must have a Parent-Teacher Club. The purpose of the club is to foster a partnership between the home and school and to aid the principal in providing programs and financial resources for the improvement of the educational programs of the school. All teachers should attend the meetings and be available to the parents for consultation. The blueprint constitution and by-laws of the Federation of the Catholic Parent-Teacher Club shall be used for all Parent-Teacher Clubs. Any addendum to the constitution and/or by-laws must be submitted to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools for approval of changes prior to implementation.
The membership of the Notre Dame Catholic School PTC consists of every parent or guardian and other persons interested in the development of Catholic youth in Notre Dame Catholic School. The PTC sponsors various fundraising activities throughout the year. Meetings are held throughout the school year in an effort to foster a closer union between the home and school.

**Booster Club**

The membership of the Booster Club consists of every parent or guardian and other persons interested in the physical and intellectual development of the students of Notre Dame Catholic School. The Booster Club sponsors various fundraising activities that benefit the physical education and athletic programs of the school. Meetings are held once each quarter throughout the school year.

The membership dues for the PTC and Booster Club are paid at the time of registration. We urge all parents to become actively involved in these organizations and to attend and to participate in all the activities of Notre Dame Catholic School.

### 3000 PERSONNEL

#### 31.03 Background Investigations

The Archdiocese retains the right to conduct background investigations on current employees, prospective employees, or volunteers for all positions in order to obtain criminal records and credit reports.

No employee/volunteer may begin work until a clearance is issued. The finding of an arrest and/or conviction record will not automatically eliminate an individual from consideration for employment. All relevant circumstances, such as how long ago the arrest or conviction occurred and the crime involved, will be considered in relation to specific job responsibilities and requirements. Additionally, arrest records alone may not be considered in determining an individual’s eligibility for employment.

Any employee/volunteer whose responsibility is to collect, record, and/or dispense monies must undergo a credit report investigation prior to hiring. Credit information will be reviewed in relation to the position for which the candidate has applied. A bankruptcy or negative credit history will not automatically disqualify a candidate from the employment/volunteer process.

These investigative reports will be conducted as defined in Public Law 91-508 and/or the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

All employees and volunteers will be screened every three years based on the date of their first screening. If, during that time, an employee or volunteer wishes to minister at another Catholic institution within the Archdiocese of San Antonio, the employee/volunteer can request that the clearance status be transferred to the new site.

#### 31.05 Sexual Misconduct Training and Safe Environment Training (Virtus)

All parents/volunteers and employees are required to receive orientation on the Archdiocesan Policy on Sexual Misconduct and Safe Environment Training (Virtus). You will receive a copy of the policy and a copy of the certificate must be on file in the
school office. All school employees must fully comply with the Policy on Sexual Abuse on the Part of Church Personnel of the Archdiocese of San Antonio. (See exhibit 31.05A for Safe Environment Training)

4000 STUDENTS

40.01 Catholic School Students
A Catholic school exists primarily for the Catholic student. (Where room and facilities permit) Students of other faiths or traditions may be admitted according to stated priorities issued by NDCS.

40.02 Non-Discrimination
Notre Dame Catholic School admits students of any race or national origin to programs and activities of the school with all rights and privileges. Equal opportunity and access is provided to persons without regard to race, national origin or gender.

This policy is in compliance with Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of Education Amendments of 1972.

40.03 Dress
Notre Dame Catholic School engages its students in the serious task of learning. Consequently, we expect our students to dress for a Christian, academic learning environment. Research has proven that there is a direct correlation between a student’s appearance and their overall attitude toward school. Since attendance at Notre Dame Catholic School is a privilege, every student is expected to abide by the dress code.

Standards of student dress will promote dignity, cleanliness and good health. The dress code is effective the first day of school. A student not wearing the proper uniform will:

1. Receive an email notice via RenWeb to inform parents,
2. Violations will require a parent call for a change of clothes. If a parent cannot be reached, every effort will be made to find the student clothes for the day. The parent will be charged for the used uniform given to the student. The accounting office will gladly refund the charge once the uniform item is returned, if the parent wishes to do so.
3. Three (3) violations will result in a loss of the next Thursday Casual Dress.

School spirit days will be once a week. On those days, students may wear their Notre Dame Catholic School White/Navy ND Logo Polo Shirt and neat, solid colored relaxed fit denim jeans, skirts or shorts of appropriate length. The 5th grade class may wear their “DARE” t-shirt on spirit day in place of the NDCS logo t-shirt. Students may opt to wear their daily uniform rather than wear the Spirit Day uniform.

Appropriate dress for field trips is either the regular uniform or the school Logo Shirt with solid color denim jeans at the discretion of the teacher and approval of Principal.
Students are not allowed to wear hair feathers, extensions, etc. of any color or style. The 8th grade girls will be privileged to wear painted / acrylic nails for their 8th grade Dinner Dance and Graduation Ceremony. They will be allowed to keep them on for those two events. Unless otherwise the two events are scheduled too far apart then the acrylic nails and nail polish must come off after the 8th Dinner & Dance and/or before the next school day.

Parents will be contacted and corrections to the infraction will be made before allowing the student to return to the classroom. Continued disregard to the dress code policy will result in disciplinary actions that could include suspension. (Addendum-Exhibit 40.03)

4100  ADMISSIONS (Exhibit 41.01)

41.01  Admissions of Students

Notre Dame Catholic School is open to all students regardless of race or ethnic background, but preference must be given to students of the Catholic faith.

Reasonable effort will be made to provide a Catholic student with a Catholic education. The parish and school council will make a strong effort to provide a Catholic education for students whose parents are unable to pay full tuition.

In those cases in which physical space makes it necessary to restrict the intake of students in a given school, priority will be given to students of Catholic parents residing in the parish and who have demonstrated support of Catholic education in the past.

41.02  Admissions Requirements

Parents who seek a Catholic education for their child enter into a contractual agreement. This agreement is established between the parent/student and Notre Dame Catholic School and in accordance with the rules governing all areas of the student’s development. As part of the contractual agreement, there are explicit (expressed) and implicit (implied) expectations placed on both the parent/student and the school. Explicit rules and regulations are included in the parent/student handbook and various school communications.

Non-Discrimination

Notre Dame Catholic School admits students of any race, national origin or gender to programs and activities with all rights and privileges. Equal opportunity and access is provided to students without regard to race, national origin or gender.

Admissions and Registration

Pre-registration for students already attending Notre Dame Catholic School will begin in March. Registration for new families will follow one month later. Final submission of registration forms will be due for all in August.
**Age Requirements**

Students entering the Pre-K 3 program must be three years old on or before September 1st and must be fully potty trained.

Students entering the Pre-K4 program must be four years old on or before September 1st.

Students entering Kindergarten must be five years old on or before September 1st.

Students entering first grade must be six years old on or before September 1st. Exception may be made in the case of a child who has completed kindergarten in a state where the entrance age is lower, providing there is a written statement from the kindergarten teacher that the child is ready for first grade.

A student who does not meet the age requirement may apply for admission and/or placement outside of the student’s age group. Admission and placement is within the sole discretion of the principal based on testing, observation and other assessments.

Consideration must be given to the student’s emotional, social and academic development and maturity.

**Documentation Requirements**

Before a student’s admission, the following records are required:

1. Official Birth Certificate
2. Baptismal Certificate
3. Official cumulative record or transcript of previous grade
4. Health Record  
   a. Immunization record  
   b. Illness record
5. Court-Certified copy of the custody section of any existing Divorce/Separation Decree (when applicable)
6. I-20, for International Students (when applicable)

Enrollment is not complete until all required documents are received, reviewed, and found to be in order by the school.
In order to enter Notre Dame Catholic School the following information is necessary:

A. After completing registration information, copies of report cards and last year’s test scores must be submitted to the school office for review.

B. The new student will be on a one semester academic and conduct probation.

C. A certified birth certificate and copy of student’s social security card must be presented to the office for all students.

D. All entering Catholic students must submit a baptismal certificate when registering or no later than September 15th.

E. The child's immunization record must be submitted. This can be obtained from the source where shots were given. Children cannot enter school without starting their immunizations, it is very important that immunizations be done as soon as possible.

F. All students transferring to Notre Dame Catholic School must present an official certification of grade level, a report card and a copy of social security card. Records will be requested from the previous school.

G. When a student attending a non-accredited school applies for admission to Notre Dame Catholic School, the principal or other qualified staff member shall administer a standardized test to the student in order to determine his/her level of academic achievement. The student shall be placed in the appropriate grade as determined by test results.

Students withdrawing from Notre Dame Catholic School will be charged a $60 withdrawal transfer fee. Notification should be given to the principal at least one week in advance. A transfer card and report card can then be issued to the principal of the school to which the child is transferring.

Records will be sent upon receiving a request from the new school. At the time of withdrawal, unpaid tuition and any other business matters are to be resolved.

41.03 Admissions of Student from Schools within the Archdiocese

The transfer of a student from one Catholic school to another within the Archdiocese can occur only after consultation between the principals of the two schools involved. All financial obligations must be met prior to transferring.
41.04 Admissions of Students from Public and other Non-Public State Approved Schools

Admissions of students transferring from public and other state approved non-public schools is the decision of the principal based on testing, observation and other assessments. This decision is made if it is deemed in the best interest of the student and the placement is agreeable to both parents and the principal.

41.05 Admissions of Students from Home Schooling and Non-Accredited Schools

The Archdiocese requires that each school have a written policy for admitting students who transfer from non-accredited schools or home schooling.

Notre Dame Catholic School requires that the parent provide documentation of grade completion. In addition, the school will administer standardized tests to determine appropriate grade placement within the campus.

41.06 Admissions of Students from Foreign Schools

Admissions of students transferring from foreign schools must be determined by the principal.

All government required documents must be completed by the school and parent/guardian; copies must be kept on file at the school and Catholic Schools office.

Credits earned by students in schools located in foreign countries, once verified, will be accepted only after review and approval of the principal.

41.07 Admissions of Students with Special Needs

Notre Dame Catholic School will provide students with special needs an opportunity for admission. However, if the school is not capable of offering the necessary programs and facilities, the student will be referred to other schools and programs that have the ability to effectively serve the needs of the student.

4200 EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

42.01 Activities Program

The activities program, including sports, is the responsibility of the principal and must be under her/his general supervision. Any activity or program held during the school day
should meet the needs, interests and abilities of the students and must not interfere with the normal routine of the school.

**Athletic and Extra Curricular Participation Policy**
The following is a list of all possible clubs and organizations included in this policy.

1. Athletic sports – including but not limited to
   a. Soccer
   b. Volleyball
   c. Basketball
d. Track (optional)
e. Baseball/softball
   f. Golf (optional)
2. Student Council
3. PSIA
4. CACC
5. National Junior Honor Society
6. Optional clubs (Drama, Spanish, Art, etc.)

Notre Dame Catholic School has chosen to strengthen our extra-curricular programs which include athletics by following a “No Pass, No Play” rule. This rule stipulates that students who participate in extracurricular activities must achieve a passing grade (70% or higher) each 9 weeks in order to qualify to continue participating in extracurricular activities. If a student receives at least one failing grade on his/her report card during a given 9 weeks, the student becomes ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities until the failing grade or grades have been improved to passing levels. The Athletic Director or sponsor will check grades each week and counsel participants regarding grades.

Grades are evaluated weekly by the Athletic Director or school sponsor once a failing grade has been earned. Once a student becomes ineligible, he/she will not be able to participate in competitions or activities of the group, club or team until the Athletic Director or school sponsor reports a passing grade in all subjects. The Athletic Director or school sponsor will report eligibility to the principal on Monday of each week.

Students participating in AIAL leagues are also subject to the following eligibility policy:

“A student enrolled in a member school that is in good and regular standing is permitted to participate in any League contest. He/she may not be failing more than one subject nor receive less than a 70% overall grade point average at the end of any progress reporting period or regular report card period. Ineligibility caused by failure or low grade point average lasts until the deficiency is removed as indicated by the progress report or regular report card.”
Grades must be checked at all progress reports and all report cards to ensure that students are not failing two classes and that their overall average is about 70%. If they are failing two classes or if their overall average is below 70%, the AIAL policy will override the Notre Dame “No Pass, No Play” policy.

In addition to academic expectations, students must demonstrate strong self-discipline, respect towards others and self and responsible behavior. Failure to maintain appropriate behavior may also be cause for ineligibility.

If a student is absent from school on a game/competition day, the student cannot participate in the extra-curricular activity. See Student attendance 43.01 for policy.

All team, club, and/or group members represent Notre Dame Catholic School, coaches, students, teachers, parents, and our Notre Dame Catholic Church community whenever they travel to games or competitions or whether they are at the school.

**Student Council (STUCO)**

Student Council is a school sponsored organization that enables students to hold office and represent their fellow students on an advisory board to the faculty and administration. Students from grades 6 – 8 run for board offices and are elected by their peers. Grades 1 – 5 will send a representative to be a member of the group on a regular basis. Students participating in STUCO both as officers and as members at large are expected to meet eligibility requirements.

**PSIA**

Private School Interscholastic Association is a school sponsored activity that encourages all students to participate in academics. PSIA is available for students in grades 1 – 8 that exhibit and interest in academic competition. Categories include Art, Calculator Applications, Creative Writing, Dictionary Skills, Impromptu Speaking, Listening, Maps, Graphs and Charts, Mathematics, Modern Oratory, Music Memory, Number Sense, On Site Drawing, Prose Interpretation, Ready Writing, Science, Spelling, Storytelling, and Vocabulary. Eligibility requirements for participation in PSIA are as above.

**CACC**

Catholic Academic and Arts Competition (CACC) is a special program that provides opportunities for students, teachers and school leaders to participate in programs/events that will enhance their learning experiences Religion, Language Arts, History, Fine Arts, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. CACC encourages students to honor God as they express their uniqueness as Catholic students, enhance social and personal skills, and foster community among Catholic schools. Through participation in CACC events, schools will earn points based on individual and group competitive outcomes.

**NDCS National Junior Honor Society**

The purpose of this organization is to create enthusiasm for scholarship, stimulate a desire of service, promote leadership, develop character and encourage citizenship in all students of Notre Dame Catholic School.
Membership is an honor bestowed upon a student. Selection for membership is by faculty council and is based upon outstanding scholarship, character, leadership, service and citizenship. Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities.

To be eligible for membership, the candidate must be a member of the 7th or 8th grade class, or second semester 6th grade, have attended Notre Dame Catholic School for at least one semester, and have a cumulative scholastic average of at least 90% per year. In addition, the student shall abide by all school rules pertaining to behavior and attendance.

Members who fall below the standards shall be promptly warned in writing by the advisor and given 9 weeks to correct a grade deficiency.

42.02 Elementary School Athletics

Notre Dame Catholic School is a member of the Archdiocese Interscholastic Athletic League which is recognized by the superintendent. NDCS must abide by all rules required by the league.

Athletics

All athletes will submit on a weekly basis eligibility grade/conduct check during any sports program. This form is given to each student’s teacher to determine whether the student is passing, failing, or borderline on grades as well as on conduct. This form is to allow the Athletic Director of the school to stay informed of all athletes grades/conduct.

All athletes and parents are required to read and sign the Athletic Program Handbook acknowledgement form as well as the athletes Code of Conduct.

4300 ATTENDANCE

43.01 Student Attendance

Students must be present for 90% or 162 out of 180 school days to receive academic credit for the school year. State law requires students are to attend school unless there are valid reasons for absence. Valid reasons such as sickness are considered excused. Invalid reasons, such as extra vacation, are unexcused. In all cases, students are responsible for all work missed and are subject to the school policy for determination of whether absences are excessive. Students may not be promoted if excessive unexcused absences are determined to be the case and time and work are not made up as directed by an attendance committee.

Students must be present for three and a half (3.5) consecutive hours to be considered in attendance for a half day and for seven (7) hours to be considered in attendance for a full day.
If a student is absent from school, they will be ineligible to participate and/or attend extracurricular activities on that day or weekend should the absence occur on a Friday. If a student leaves due to illness during the school day they will be unable to participate in extracurricular activities for 24 hours or until they return to school for at least one half day.

An excused absence does not mean a student will not be marked absent. A student not physically present at school, excused or unexcused, is marked absent.

Perfect attendance is awarded to students who are present for 180 schools days and arrive by 7:50 a.m. for the 180 school days. Being tardy disqualifies a student from being awarded perfect attendance.

Parents should be careful to schedule doctor’s appointments after school or during elective periods, rather than during core subject times. Vacations or special outings are discouraged during school days, and should be planned around vacation schedules. Absences per course will be considered when reviews are made for excessive absences.

When a student has an appointment the parent will come to the school office, sign the student out, and school staff will retrieve the student from class. The student will not be called out from class ahead of time. Upon returning to school the parent is required to bring the student to the school office, sign the student in and school staff will return the student to class.

**When an absence can be determined in advance, assignments should be obtained from the teacher prior to the absence.**

A written request must be submitted no less than a week in advance and must have the principal’s approval prior to a family trip. Failure to do so could result in unexcused absences and the student receiving zeros on all work missed. CAUTION: Please do not schedule family vacations during school days. Refer to your yearly calendar for the appropriate dates.

**Excused/Unexcused Absences**

**A student may be excused for:**

1. illness
2. sickness or death in the family
3. quarantine of illness
4. dangerous travel due to road or weather conditions
5. a signed note from a doctor or dentist appointment
6. natural disaster
7. any other unusual cause acceptable by the principal

**43.02 Recording Attendance**

NDCS is required to keep an accurate record of attendance, tardiness and absences.
Daily attendance records are kept for each student and a daily report is reviewed by the registrar and/or principal. Every student enrolled in the school must be included in the records and is a member of the school until officially withdrawn. A student is considered absent unless officially withdrawn. Attendance records are maintained by the school office and kept on file for a minimum of five years.

Attendance is recorded at 7:50 a.m. Should a student arrive after this time, they are tardy and are expected to report to the front office for a tardy slip.

Tardiness should be rare. Students need to be at “Prayer/Pledge Opening” when it begins at 7:50 a.m. Students younger than 2nd grade should be escorted by a parent to obtain a tardy slip from the office. Upon receiving the fourth tardy per quarter, one detention will be assigned. For tardies beyond the four in one quarter, a detention will be given for each additional two tardies. This will apply to tardy offense in between classes as well specifically for Middle School students.

Regular daily attendance and punctuality are important to the child from the very first day of school. The earlier students learn they have something important to do, the more satisfactory their growth will be. The responsibility to teach this lies primarily with the parents as demonstrated by their actions. When a student is absent, he/she is expected to bring a note written and signed by the parent explaining the absence on the morning of his/her return to school.

**Tardiness**

A student missing less than three and a half hours of the school day, regardless of whether the day is a half or full day of instruction is considered absent for a half day.

**43.03 Notification Necessary for Releasing Students during School Hours**

A student may be released from school during school hours into the custody only of those persons listed on the student’s emergency information card. Identification of the person to whom the student is released must be verified.

Parents or guardians must be notified by telephone to make suitable arrangements when it is necessary to send a student home because of illness or other reason. Documentation of this notification must be made.

Students must not be released from school, sent on errands off the school grounds, or sent home for books, homework, etc. without written parental permission that is signed and dated. Students must only be released through a definite process conducted through the school’s main office.

**43.04 Release of Students to a Law Enforcement Officer / CPS Officer**

The school is lawfully obligated to provide law enforcement with requested information.

The following procedures will be observed when students are released to an officer:
1) Ask for identification to verify that the person is an officer. The officer is not required to present a warrant to speak with a student, but will be requested to wait until parents are notified and given reasonable time to come to the school.

2) Contact and ask the parents or guardian to come to the school to be present with the student during the interview. If a parent or guardian cannot come to school, the principal or his/her designee will sit in for the interview in lieu of parents.

3) A warrant for arrest must be presented by an officer before removing the student from the school. If the student has been involved in some suspected illegal activity immediately prior to the officer’s arrival on campus, or while the officer is present, the principal must contact the parent or guardian to come to the school. If the parent or guardian cannot come, the principal or designee must accompany the student.

4) Contact the superintendent immediately if a student is arrested.

4400 STUDENT RECORDS

44.01 Emergency Information and Release Form

The school will keep an emergency information card for each student enrolled. These cards will contain information to be used in case of accident or illness. Parents are asked to send emergency card information changes throughout the school year as they occur. Please make sure all medications taken by the students are listed. (Addendum-Exhibit 44.01A/44.03C)

44.02 Permanent Record

A permanent record must be maintained for each student according to a system approved by the superintendent.

The student’s official file should contain only these items: permanent record; academic testing; health records (unless kept in a separate health office); and emergency information. Only the contents of the official file should be forwarded to a new school. A copy of the permanent record is retained by the school when a student transfers or graduates.

44.03 Health File

Notre Dame Catholic School has made every effort to find a comprehensive dental plan that will meet the needs of both families and individuals. A detailed explanation of benefits and how to use the insurance is available in the dental summary plan booklet provided by the insurance company.

A health file will be maintained on each student, which will include a record of immunization, vision and hearing screenings, pertinent medical information and doctor's name. Health records are treated as confidential; they are available to the principal, school nurse, and the professional staff. The student's original Health Record is given to the receiving school when the student transfers to another school.
A copy of the Health Record is to be kept as part of the permanent record.

Health Policies
Our schools health services:

1. Coordinate in our school the community, county, and state health service checking vision, hearing, and the possibility of scoliosis in older students.
2. Provide for emergency care of sick or injured students by having an emergency phone number(s) on file in the office for each student.
3. Maintain a cumulative immunization form on file for each student.
4. Head lice can spread rapidly. Students found to have head lice must be excluded from school immediately. It is strongly recommended that the school follow a “nit free” policy for readmittance to school. “ Nit-free” means the child is to be free of nits and lice on their head. The child is required to be checked by school personal before returning to class.
5. When a child is sent to the office, his/her temperature is taken and parents are notified if the child has a fever registering over 100 degrees. A child who has been absent due to a contagious disease must present a signed note from a doctor upon her/his return to school.

All students are required to present a record of immunizations they have received. The record of immunizations may be acquired from the child's physician or the health department. Immunizations required by the Texas Department of Health are: DPT, Oral Polio, Measles, Rubella, Mumps, HepB, HepA, and Varicella.

44.04 Access to Records

In 1975, the Buckley Amendment, also known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, gave parents and students the right of access to records and the right to request that statements be changed or deleted. If the school refuses to change or delete records, statements made by parents or students should be included in the record.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

44.05 Release of Records

All material in the student’s file shall be treated as confidential and shall be accessible only to the principal, members of the professional staff, to the legal guardian, the parents and to the student after his/her eighteenth birthday. Parents are to be made aware that they have the right to this information (see Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)
44.06 Non-Custodial Parents’ Access to Records

All parents and non-custodial parents can now access your child’s records on the internet with our “Parent’s Web Site” at www.renweb.com.

The school will abide by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order, or non-custodial Parent must provide the school with a copy of the custody section of the divorce decree. This information will also help the school in determining when, if ever, the child can be released to the non-custodial parent.

The school can ask for twenty-four hours notice and can require the parent to make the request in writing.

44.07 Request for and Transfer of Student Records

Permanent record cards and health records will be released to a receiving school when that school applies directly by mail to the sending school. A release form signed by the parent or legal guardian must be obtained by the requesting school.

If the student is transferring to a Catholic school within the Archdiocese, the original permanent record card and health records shall be transferred. A copy should be retained for the school’s records.

If the student is transferring to a school that is not recognized as a Catholic school within the Archdiocese, a copy of the student’s permanent record card and the original health records shall be transferred.

All special education or psychological test results, which are to be released to a receiving school, must include a parent’s signed release of that information. The student’s original permanent record card or a copy is then placed in the inactive file with a notation made indicating to which school the student has transferred, the date and the reason for the transfer.

4500 DUAL ENROLLMENT

45.01 Dual Enrollment with Non-Accredited Schools

Notre Dame Catholic School may not enter into a dual enrollment arrangement with non-accredited schools for any portion of the day. This position is taken because of the commitment to operating an accredited school.
4600 DISCIPLINE

46.01 Code of Conduct

The code of conduct and disciplinary procedures are based on Catholic values and the dignity of the human person. The purpose of the code of conduct is to develop sound moral character, responsibility, and citizenship.

Based on the assertive discipline concept, staff and students at Notre Dame Catholic School have the right to have basic needs met in an environment conducive to fulfilling the curriculum design as defined in the NDCS policy manual. (Addendum-Exhibit 46.01b)

The following conduct guidelines for ALL school sponsored classes and functions are outlined.

Students at Notre Dame Catholic School are expected to:
1. Exercise responsible, self-disciplined behavior.
2. Be considerate of the needs of others.
3. Be honest in all situations.
4. Know and follow the rules set forth in the NDCS policy manual. This includes the Conduct Code.
5. Take responsibility for academic progress.

Conduct Code

- Be responsible for their own actions
- Be respectful to teachers, adults who work in the school, and other students.
- Complete all assignments to the best of their ability. Make good use of time by reading or working on appropriate material when the assigned work is finished.
- Be honest at all times especially during examinations and written assignments.
- Go to classrooms and other areas in a quiet and orderly manner especially walking in or around the buildings.
- Be considerate of others and avoid loudness and nonsense. Keep hands, feet, and objects to oneself.
- Respect school and personal property by not damaging or marking on walls, books, book covers, school supplies, etc.
- Ask permission to leave the classroom or designated area.
- Follow the uniform code at all times.
- Not write or pass notes.
- Use good table manners. Clean the table and surrounding area after lunch.
- Play so as not to cause harm to anyone.
- Leave skateboards, hard balls, toys, radios, tape or CD players, headphones, games, etc. at home.
- Keep cell phones turned off in backpack, unless with teacher’s permission.
- Not bring or chew gum at school. Not eat candy or food during class periods (unless with teacher’s permission). Not bring or use tobacco products.
Not use obscenities or bring inappropriate material to school.
Be on time for school.

Choosing to follow these guidelines will result in personal and tangible rewards of success given by the staff.

Choosing not to follow these rules will result in the following consequences for minor infractions (i.e. talking in class, not working, etc.). Teachers will notify parents of minor infractions via Renweb prior to administering a consequence.

1st consequence: Classroom Warning
2nd consequence: Lunch detention
3rd consequence: Call to parents & After School Detention

- Detention is served from 3:30 to 4:00 PM on an upcoming assigned day, within a week and will be spent in service to the school.
- There will be NO excuses for missing detention.
- Parents may question the date and time of detention and, under extenuating circumstances, this must be taken into consideration.
- Any student who earns a regular detention more than once per quarter will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activity for two weeks. In addition, the student will serve Saturday morning detention from 9:00 to 11:00 am and will be charged $20.00 per hour.
- Any student who participates in writing or passing notes, obscenities, defiance, back talk, lying, defacing books or school property or personal property, leaving the assigned room or other area without permission, or cheating will automatically receive detention after school. Students who are cheating will also receive a zero on that assignment.
- Any student who is fighting, brings undesirable printed or other material to school, or performs an action that is injurious or potentially injurious to another person will be automatically suspended for the remainder of that school day. Any suspension earned after 12:00 noon will also result in suspension for the following school day. The suspension may be in school or out of school at the discretion of the principal depending on the severity of the misconduct.

Academic Dishonesty
Cheating is morally wrong and is considered a serious offense. Cheating is the improper acquisition or distribution of information pertinent to a homework assignment, quiz, test, or exam. Plagiarism, the stealing of the ideas or writings of another, is also considered cheating. During a quiz, test, or exam a student may not have in their possession or in the
vicinity of their desks any books, notebooks, or materials not prescribed by the teacher or proctor, nor make any audible sounds, nor look in any direction that could be construed as a violation of testing procedures, nor may then communicate in any way with another student without specific permission.

The following examples are the most noteworthy violations of testing procedures:

1. Open notebooks, texts, or other course-related material during a quiz, test or exam without the explicit permission of the teacher or proctor.
2. Concealed notes during a quiz, test, or exam.
3. Communication with another person (verbal or non-verbal) during a quiz, test, or exam without the explicit permission of a teacher or proctor.
4. Use of unauthorized test aids such as calculators, tables, formulas, etc., during a quiz, test, or exam.
5. Copying of homework assignments or the loaning of an assignment to another who copies the assignment.

The first offense will result in an office referral and redoing the work in question.

The second offense will result in receiving a zero (0) grade for the work in question.

46.02 Disciplinary Action

In establishing appropriate disciplinary regulations, the following guidelines should be used:
1. Good classroom discipline is first and foremost the responsibility of the classroom teacher.
2. Emphasis should be placed on positive values rather than on punishment.
3. In dealing with student behavior, respect for the personal dignity of the student should be evident.
4. Conferences and written communication between the home and school regarding infractions and reasons for continued dissatisfaction must be documented via RenWeb and kept on file.

The following disciplinary measures are forbidden:
1. Corporal punishment (e.g., but not limited to: spanking, shaking, slapping, pinching, etc.);
2. Language which is sarcastic or calculated to bring ridicule on the student, his/her parents, or background;
3. Sending a student outside the classroom where he/she is deprived of supervision;
4. Using religious exercises or important class assignments as punitive measures;
5. Any extreme or unusual form of punishment or any touching of a student in a manner that is considered punitive.

The Principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rule for just cause at her/his discretion.
46.03 Substance Abuse

No student shall possess, use, or attempt to possess, use, or be under the influence of any of the following substances on school premises during any school term or off school premises at a school-related activity, function, or event:

1. Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate;

2. Alcohol or any alcoholic beverage;

3. Any abuseable glue, aerosol paint, or any other volatile chemical substance for inhalation;

4. Any other intoxicant, or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drug.

Definitions:

“Use” means a student has smoked, ingested, injected, imbibed, inhaled, drunk, or otherwise taken internally a prohibited substance recently enough that it is detectable by the student’s physical appearance, actions, breath, or speech.

“Under the influence” means a student’s faculties are noticeably impaired, but the student need not be legally intoxicated.

Students who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action including expulsion.

The transmittal, sale, or attempted sale of what is represented to be any of the above listed substances is also prohibited under this policy. Students who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action including expulsion. A student who uses, in the manner prescribed, a drug authorized by a licensed physician through a prescription specifically for the student's use shall not be considered to have violated this policy. Authorized school personnel must administer any prescribed medication.

The transmittal, sale, or attempted sale of what is represented to be any of the above listed substances is also prohibited under this policy. Students involved in such actions shall be expelled from school.

46.04 Suspension

A student may be suspended by the principal or his/her designee for a serious violation of school regulations. The school must carefully document the violation and the reason for
the suspension. Written notice must be given to the parent or guardian of the student. No suspension may last longer than three (3) days.

During the period of suspension the student is marked absent.

- In-school suspension. If the matter warrants it, a student may be excluded from class for the day or for a period of time designated by the principal, while still attending school. Work of the day and assignments for the next day must be turned in. Incomplete work will not be accepted or graded.
- Out of school suspension results in zeroes for all work missed during the suspension

46.05 Expulsion

A student may be expelled from school after two or more suspensions within a year. A student may be immediately expelled from school for certain very serious reasons and/or after a single violation if, despite his or her previous disciplinary history, the student's continued presence in the school would seriously hamper the school in fulfilling its obligation to other students.

Expulsion is a serious matter and should be invoked only as a last resort. Normally it will follow a single grave offense or a series of offenses indicating a basically hostile attitude. When such a serious case arises the following procedures are followed:

1. There must be a documented conference of the principal, teacher and student. If the problem cannot be resolved in this conference, the student is suspended.
2. This meeting is followed by a documented conference of the principal, teacher and parent. If no solution is reached, another conference is held with the pastor/authorized agent or his/her designee present.
3. The principal and pastor/authorized agent or his/her designee then decide either to readmit or expel the student. If readmitted, the student is on probation for a period of time. If the decision is for expulsion, the Archdiocesan Superintendent of Schools is notified and given a brief explanation of the reasons in writing.

**IMMEDIATE EXPULSION**

A student may be subject to immediate expulsion when he/she:

- participates in disruptive activities by a group such as a gang;
- actions seriously detrimental to the moral, physical and/or spiritual welfare of the pupils and school personnel;
- repeated profanity or vulgarity;
- possesses, uses, or delivers narcotics, dangerous drugs or alcohol on school property or at school sponsored-related activities;
- smokes or uses any tobacco product on school property or at a school-related activity;
- possesses, uses or conceals a weapon, a weapon is any instrument which may produce bodily harm or death (knives, chains, cubs, guns, etc.) on school property or at a school-related activity (Penal Code 46.06 Texas Ed. Code 4.30)
- threatens of bodily injury or harm to a student/school personnel;
• assaults, battery or any threat, force violence directed toward a student, parent or any school personnel;
• vandalizes school property or the property of others; or willful cutting, defacing or otherwise injuring in anyway, property, real or personal, belonging to the school premises (Penal Code 28.04)
• engages in chronic or repeated behavior which disrupts the learning environment;
• open defiance of the teacher’s authority;
• truancy;
• use of fireworks, lighter, smoke bombs, matches, etc.;
• leaving school grounds without permission from the school office

THE PRINCIPAL IS THE FINAL RECURSE IN ALL DISCIPLINARY SITUATIONS AND MAY WAIVE ANY DISCIPLINARY RULE FOR JUST CAUSE AT HIS/HER DISCRETION

46.06 Grievance for Student Expulsion

This policy and procedure shall apply only to instances of student expulsion.

PROCEDURE:
Prior to the initiation of a formal grievance, parents who seek redress for their expelled child must first confer directly with the principal (“conference”) for resolution of the situation.
If there is not a satisfactory resolution of the complaint, the following are steps in the formal grievance procedure:

1. A written statement of the complaint, including a brief summary of all pertinent conferences, must be prepared and filed with the school council secretary with in three (3) school days of the conference, or decision resulting there from, whichever is later. The date and time of filing will be recorded on the original of the complaint.

2. The school council secretary will, within 24 hours of filing, inform and forward the grievance to the Local Grievance Council (“LGC”), who will review the grievance proceedings. If it deems necessary, the LGC may hear further statements, evidence or arguments within seven (7) school days of its receipt of the grievance. The LGC will render a decision within ten (10) school days of its receipt of the grievance.

3. If the aggrieved party is still not satisfied with the decision of the LGC, an appeal may be made to the pastor with in three (3) school days of the decision of the LGC. The pastor/authorized agent, will review all documentation of the grievance procedure and set a date for hearing the grievance with all parties of the initial grievance in attendance. This meeting will take place within seven (7) school days of the pastor’s receipt of such an appeal. The pastor will then render his decision within five (5) school days.
4. If the aggrieved party remains unsatisfied with the decision of the pastor, the avenue of further appeal would be the Archdiocesan Grievance Council. Such an appeal must be sent in writing within five (5) school days of the pastor’s decision.

5. Pending outcome of the formal grievance, only the principal or pastor/authorized agent may, with or without condition, abate the termination.

**Local Grievance Council – Composition**
1. The LGC shall be composed of three to five members appointed by the local School Council.
2. Individuals appointed to the LGC should be people of integrity with some expertise in education, human relations, and conflict management, if possible.
3. One member may be a present or former School Council member. The other two members should have no direct relationship to the school.
4. The appointment to the LGC is for one year and is renewable.

**Local Grievance Council – Duties and Process**
1. Both parties to the grievance will prepare a complete written statement of the nature of the grievance and the remedies sought. The LGC will review these statements and the procedures followed and decide if additional steps need to be taken or if it will uphold the decision of the principal.
2. If the decision of the LGC is to uphold the principal’s decision, then the process moves to No. 8.
3. If the decision of the LGC is such that it feels that additional discussion of the situation needs to take place, it will call a meeting of both parties to the grievance.
4. Each party to the grievance may be accompanied by one other individual who is not an attorney and who will act as an observer/advisor.
5. Both parties will appear before the LGC together and make an oral presentation. The aggrieved party will make the first presentation. At no time is there to be cross-examination or direct discussion between parties to the grievance.
6. After both presentations have been completed, the LGC will enter into closed session to consider the oral and written presentations.
7. The LGC may recall, together, both parties to the grievance for clarification of points that may have been raised in either of the written or oral statements.
8. The LGC will render its recommendation in writing to both parties involved.

**46.07 Grievance for Non-Expulsion**

All disciplinary actions/decisions that do not result in student expulsion will be resolved at the local school level. Neither the Local Grievance Council nor the Archdiocesan Grievance Council will hear these matters.

Schools are to provide an opportunity for individuals to be heard in redress of a group.
Student complaints will be presented by the students in the presence of their parents/guardians.

The primary aim of any local procedure is to establish and publish the procedure to be followed and to provide fair notice and hearing of the matter. Complaints may be heard from individuals, parents, parent organizations and employees. Schools are encouraged to devise creative ways of addressing and resolving these situations, while at the same time, providing a consistent forum for redress of perceived wrongs.

The principal, council and pastor/authorized agent shall formulate a local grievance procedure in advance of the school year and must publish it in the student/parent/employee handbooks for that year.

**Complaint Filing and Investigation Procedures**

The following procedures must be followed for filing and investigating a harassment claim:

1. The person may first choose to tell the individual causing the harassment that the conduct is offensive and must stop. If the objectionable behavior does not cease immediately, the person must report the harassment to the Principal. In the case of sexual harassment allegations, the person is free to raise the issue with another administrator if he/she prefers to do so.

2. If the complaint is against the principal, the person must report the incident to the pastor or the superintendent of schools.

3. As soon as the verbal report has been given, the school personnel must report the incident to the parent and the superintendent.

4. The person alleging harassment will be asked to complete a formal, written complaint. The claim will be investigated thoroughly, involving only the necessary parties. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible.

5. The investigation will include a meeting with the person alleged to have harassed, sharing with that person the nature of the allegations as well as the name of the person bringing the allegation.

6. Once the facts of the case have been gathered, the principal, in consultation with the pastor and associate superintendent of the Archdiocese will decide what, if any, disciplinary action is warranted. The disciplinary action will relate to the nature, context, and seriousness of the harassment and can include all disciplinary actions up to and including expulsion.
7. If the complaint is against a non-employee such as a parent, parishioner, volunteer or vendor, the school will take steps, within its power, to investigate and eliminate the problem.

46.08 Search and Seizure

Since the legal relationship between the Catholic school and the student [or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s)] is one of contract law, the parent/student handbook of rules and regulations governing school operations and procedures must contain a statement concerning the use of lockers, the possession of illegal substances and objects, and the resulting disciplinary action for violation of the school rules in these areas.

The School Principal and/or his/her designee may search student desks, lockers and belongings including, but not limited to, handbags, briefcases, backpacks and other items in a student's possession.

46.09 Anti-Harassment Environment

The schools of the Archdiocese do not condone harassment of any kind. All students of the Archdiocese are to be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment in any form is prohibited. This prohibition against acts of harassment applies to all people engaged in all school related activities; all students, regular or temporary, part-time or full-time employees; volunteers, itinerant instructors, and consultants. (See Appendix)

**Sexual harassment** must be defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's academic success or achievement of any other nature.

2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decisions affecting the student.

3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonable interference with a student's school performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment.

4. Grievance Procedures and Policies are on pg. 31.

**Verbal harassment** must include derogatory remarks, jokes, or slurs, and can include belligerent or threatening words spoken to another.

**Physical harassment** includes unwarranted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal school work or movement.
**Visual harassment** includes derogatory, demeaning, or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, novelties, or gestures.

### 46.10 Use of Electronic Communication

**Scope**
Electronic devices have become a common means of communication and information access in today’s society. However, these devices have the potential of disrupting the orderly operation of the school. The school has therefore created this policy to govern the possession and use of electronic devices on school premises, during school hours, at school sponsored activities, and on school transportation.

**Definition**
For purposes of this policy “Electronic Device” means a privately owned wireless and/or portable electronic handheld equipment that include, but are not limited to, existing and emerging mobile communication systems and smart technologies (cell phones, smart phones, walkie-talkies, pagers, etc.), Personal Digital Assistants (PDA’s) (Palm organizers, pocket PCs, etc.), handheld entertainment systems (video games, CD players, compact DVD players, MP3 players, iPods ©, walkman ™ devices, etc.), and any other convergent communication technologies that do any number of the previously mentioned functions. Electronic Device also include any current or emerging wireless handheld technologies or portable information technology systems that can be used for word processing, wireless Internet access, image capture/recording, sound recording and information transmitting/ receiving / storing, etc.

**Possession and Use**
Students may possess and use electronic devices at school subject to the following:

1. Students may possess electronic devices at school and school-sponsored activities as long as the device is powered down and kept in a backpack.
2. Use of electronic devices during the school day, is strictly at the discretion of the teacher. They must be completely powered down, turned off and kept out of sight, unless the teacher allows for their use for classroom purposes. School staff will supervise that use when allowed. Personal electronic devices can only be used as it relates to the curriculum and teacher directed activities.
3. Cell Phones-Student cell phones will be collected by Homeroom teachers at the beginning of the day and left turned off unless a teacher request students use their phones as an instructional tool
4. Use of electronic devices on school buses is at the discretion of the bus driver. Distracting behavior that creates an unsafe environment will not be tolerated.
5. Use of electronic communication devices is not allowed on any other portion of the school campus at any time, including school-sponsored activities, unless an emergency situation as defined by school staff exists.
6. Students who need to contact their parents may use the office phone during school hours.
**Prohibitions**

Electronic devices shall not be used in a way that threatens, humiliates, harasses, or intimidates school-related individuals, including students, employees, and visitors, or violates local, state, or federal law.

Electronic devices may not be used for recreational activities at school including social networking, gaming, harmful or inappropriate web sites, gambling, or cyber bullying.

**Confiscation**

If a student violates this policy, his/her electronic device may be confiscated. When an employee confiscates and electronic device under this policy, he/she shall take reasonable measures to label and secure the device and turn the device over to the principal as soon as the employee’s duties permit.

The electronic device will be released/returned to the student’s parent or guardian after the student has complied with any other disciplinary consequence that is imposed. If a student violates the policy a second time they will loose the privilege of having the device at school.

**Security of Devices**

Students shall be personally and solely responsible for the security of electronic devices brought to school. The school shall not assume any responsibility for theft, loss, damage, or unauthorized calls made with an electronic device. If devices are loaned to or borrowed and misused by non-owners, device owners are jointly responsible for the misuse or policy violation(s).

Acceptable Use Agreement

Exhibit 46.10 must be signed and returned to the office before a student may bring access or use electronic devices at school.

**Prohibitions on Audio Recording**

Camera or audio recording functions of electronics devise may pose threats to the personal privacy of individuals, used to exploit personal information, and or compromise the integrity of educational programs. Accordingly, the use of the audio recording or camera functions of electronic devices is strictly prohibited on school premises at all times.

**Potential Disciplinary Action**

- At the discretion of the principal, violation of this policy may result in discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion, and notification of law enforcement authorities.
- A student who violates this policy may be prohibited from possession of an electronic device at school or school-related events.
- Confiscation of device for increasing periods of time for subsequent violations.
- In-school suspension.
- Out of school suspension
- Notification of law enforcement, at school’s discretion, if circumstances warrant such notification. (Cyber bullying)
Exceptions
With prior approval of the principal, the above prohibitions may be relaxed under the following circumstances:

- The use is specifically required to accommodate a classroom requirement.
- The use is at the direction of a teacher for educational purpose;
- The use is determined by the principal to be necessary for other special circumstances, health-related reasons, or emergency

46.11 Parent Code of Conduct

The school requires the continued support of parents if the school is to achieve its goals. Therefore, parents enrolling their children in the school agree as follows:

- To review and abide by all school and Archdiocese policies and regulations;
- To accept the principal’s role as supervisor of school personnel;
- To positively accept, abide by and not challenge disciplinary actions;
- To positively accept, abide by and not challenge grades and other academic decisions;
- To communicate respectfully with school personnel, parents, and students at all times and to communicate to their children their support and respect of school personnel and policies;
- To act respectfully towards opposing teams and parents at sporting events;
- To promptly complete and return all forms and records necessary to comply with school, Archdiocesan and state regulations;
- To participate in school activities, including without limitations, events and fundraising;
- To promptly pay all tuition, fees, financial liabilities owed to the school; and
- To refrain from disparaging or criticizing the school or school personnel in the community or on the internet.

Parents may be asked to withdraw their children from the school and/or the children may not be invited to return the following year, if in the sole and absolute discretion of the Principal, parents fail to fulfill their responsibilities under this agreement.

4700 MORALITY

47.01 Pregnancy

Notre Dame Catholic School encourages employees to discuss any issues they may have with a co-worker directly with that person. If a resolution is not reached, employees should arrange a meeting with their direct supervisor. If the concern, problem, or issue is not properly addressed, employees should contact the Human Resources Department. Any information discussed in an Open Communication meeting is considered confidential, to the extent possible while still allowing management to respond to the
problem. Retaliation against any employee for appropriate usage of Open Communication channels is unacceptable.

A primary purpose of Catholic education is to guide students' growth in Christian values and moral conduct. Catholic teaching stresses that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and that the sanctity of family life is enhanced through the fulfillment of God's plan as expressed by a loving and permanent commitment in matrimony. Premarital sexual activity is contrary to these values.

However, when a pregnancy occurs outside of marriage, the total school community seeks to offer support to the pregnant student and/or the student father so that the pregnancy can be brought to term. The reality of the situation, in all its dimensions, is to be treated in a Christian and humane manner.

In order to insure the best interests of the student(s), parents and the school community, the following guidelines will be implemented:

1. When a pregnancy becomes known to school personnel, the principal must meet with the pregnant student and both parents and/or guardians.

2. The student must be required by the school to receive appropriate professional counseling consistent with Catholic teaching.

3. If the father-to-be is identified and if he is a student in a Catholic school the following guidelines will be implemented:

   The principal of that school must meet with him and his parents and/or guardians. It must be required that he be involved in a counseling program similar to that provided the mother-to-be.

   The school will assist the pregnant student in completing her education either by allowing her to continue attendance or by referring her to an appropriate alternative program.

   If the student is to remain in school, she will be allowed, with a doctor's written approval, to participate in all activities to the extent that her condition and the common good of the school dictate.

   If the student desires to return to the school after the birth of the child, the school will facilitate her continuance only with appropriate documentation from a health care provider.

   The condition of pregnancy, itself, must not exclude the student from participating in the public graduation ceremony. However, the principal, in consultation with the superintendent, the parents and/or guardians, and in the case of parish schools, the pastor, must determine whether unique circumstances may necessitate pursuing an alternate action.
47.02 Abortion

Abortion, which disregards innocent human life, is incompatible with and contradictory to the fundamental teachings of the Church, the mission of the Catholic school and the values that ought to permeate Catholic education. Catholic teaching does not accept that anyone may justifiably arrange for or procure an abortion for oneself or for another person, be forced or pressured into having an abortion or influence or coerce another person to have an abortion.

Therefore, the involvement of any student in procuring or assisting in the procurement of an abortion is cause for such student to be dismissed from school.

If it becomes known to any member of the school community that a student is contemplating or planning an abortion all reasonable encouragement must be given to the student to save the life of her unborn child. In all circumstances, the mother of the unborn child must be treated with compassion and respect.

4800 HEALTH AND SAFETY

48.01 Immunization

Every student enrolled in a Catholic School in the State of Texas shall be immunized against vaccine preventable diseases caused by infectious agents in accordance with the immunization schedule adopted by the Texas Department of State Health Services. A student who fails to present the required evidence shall not be accepted for enrollment. The only exception to the foregoing requirement is a medical exemption signed by a licensed physician (M.D. or D.O.) authorized to practice in the State of Texas.

This policy was adopted by Texas Catholic Conference Education Department, December 2008.

- Provisional Immunization Enrollment

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

  A school nurse or school administrator shall review the immunization status of a provisionally enrolled student every 30 days to ensure continued compliance in completing the required doses of vaccination. If, at the end of the 30-day period, a student has not received a subsequent dose of vaccine, the student is not in compliance and the school shall exclude the student from school attendance until the required dose is administered.
48.02 Medication Policy

Only medication which is necessary for a child to remain in school will be given during school hours. At the direction of the student’s physician, an exception may be made in the cases of diabetic medication and supplies or rescue medication, including a rescue inhaler or single dose epinephrine auto injector. The Medication Permission Request Form (Form 3502A) must be completed by the parent/guardian and health care provider in order for any medication, including over the counter” medication (including, but not limited to acetaminophen, ointments, cold tablets, cough drops), to be given by school personnel. The signing health care provider and the parent/guardian cannot be the same person.

Medication is to be brought to the school office by the parent/guardian. If the medication is liquid, it must be accompanied with a calibrated medication dispenser, which has legible numbers on it.

Prescription medication must be in its original container clearly labeled with the following information:

1. Student name
2. Physician/Dentist name
3. Date
4. Name of medication
5. Dosage
6. Directions for administration
7. Duration of administration

Over-the counter medications must be accompanied by a signed Medication Permission Request Form, in their original, unopened container and display the student’s name. Over-the counter medications must be the smallest available sit to meet the student’s medical needs.

The staff member who is designated by the principal to assist a student in taking his/her medication may refuse to do so at any time. No expired medication will be given. School personnel will return any medication only to the parent/responsible party.

48.03 Bloodborne Pathogens

Notre Dame Catholic School follows the Blood borne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan approved by the Superintendents of the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department in 1993, with the following modifications:

All schools are to have a designated waste receptacle in the area of the health coordinator. The receptacle should be of heavy-duty plastic. It should have a fitted lid which opens in
and not out. The receptacle should be lined at all times with a plastic bag. Whenever handling waste material, the staff person should always wear latex gloves, or something comparable in the case of latex allergies.

Schools are not viewed by the Texas Department of Health or the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission as being generators of “regulated medical waste” and are therefore not required to use red bags or bio-hazard labels for trash disposal. The school nurse or health coordinator may dispose of waste in the regular dumpster.

If red sharps containers are used, the TNRCC does not recommend dumpster disposal. Options for disposal include; working with the current waste services provider, partnering with a local health department clinic, hospital, physician’s office or other health care provider, or utilizing an approved medical waste transport service.

48.04 Role of School Health Coordinator

The health coordinator is appointed by the principal and is responsible for insuring that required health screenings are performed, followed-up and documented according to state regulations by certified screeners. Additionally, they may monitor immunizations, maintain health records, complete state and archdiocesan statistical reports and perform other health service related duties as designated.

48.06 Medication/Health Related Incidents Documentation

Notre Dame Catholic School maintains a daily log of health-related incidents, illnesses or complaints as well as a daily medication log.

48.07 Child Abuse

Link: Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)  
http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us; www.txabusehotline.org

The Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of San Antonio will pursue all reasonable measures to assist maltreated children and their families. The Archdiocesan Department of Catholic Schools will:

1. Require that all Catholic schools comply with the requirements of *Texas Statutes Family Code Chapter 261—Investigation of Report of Child Abuse or Neglect.*
2. Cooperate with official child protective agencies in identification and reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect.
3. Cooperate with official child protective agencies if officials seek to interview a child at school.
4. Provide child abuse awareness in-service education, including legal requirements, for school personnel.
5. Encourage inclusion of appropriate child abuse awareness education in classrooms at all grade levels.

Reporting Abuse or Neglect:
A person who has cause to believe that a child’s physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall immediately make a report as required by law, *Family Code 261.101*. The report must be made no later than 48 hours after the hour that the person first suspects that the child has been or may be abused or neglected.

The report shall contain: name and address of the child, the name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child, and any other pertinent information concerning the alleged or suspected abuse or neglect.

Reports shall be made to any local or state law enforcement agency, and in addition shall be made to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) at the San Antonio phone number 53-ABUSE or by their toll-free number 1-800-252-5400. More information on reporting can be found on the DFPS website: ([www.tdprs.state.tx.us](http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us)). Online reporting can be done at [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org).

If the allegation of abuse is being made against a school employee, the Superintendent of Schools must also be notified immediately.

**Reporting of Sexual Abuse** (For implementation 2006-2007)
Any allegation of sexual abuse that involves a school employee, volunteer, or student must be reported to the Office of Victim Assistance and Safe Environment (OVASE). Superintendent of Schools must be notified of the reporting.

### 48.08 Student Accident Insurance

The school carries the required archdiocesan student accident insurance for every student enrolled. This student accident insurance provides basic coverage and payment and is part of the regular fees. Student accident insurance is secondary insurance and covers students at all school-related activities and for travel to and from all school-related activities. Parents are given the opportunity to purchase supplementary insurance at higher levels in addition to the required basic insurance coverage.

### 48.09 Student Transportation

If a school or parish is responsible for the operation of a school bus/van, it is expected that all state regulations regarding licensing, insurance, safety and other legalities be observed. Any driver transporting students in an archdiocesan vehicle must be approved by the insurance company of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.
In July 1999, the National Transportation Safety Board issued a safety bulletin, which officially requested organizations to discontinue the use of 10-15 passenger vans to transport children. It has been determined that 10-15 passenger vans are unsafe. Included in the webpage for the insurance company of the Archdiocese is literature distributed by the National Safety Transportation Board. For more information, call 1-800-228-6108.

48.10 Wellness

The Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of San Antonio are committed to providing school environments that promote the development of lifelong wellness practices. In order to protect students’ health and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity, the schools will:

• Strive to comply with the Texas Public School Nutrition Policy and/or the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans for all foods and beverages sold or served at school.
• Provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical education.
• Provide opportunities for all students to be physically active on a regular basis.
• Involve students, parents, teachers, food service employees, and other interested community members in developing and implementing school nutrition and physical activity goals.
• Appoint a Wellness Committee to annually evaluate compliance with the wellness policy and local school goals.

Parties

School sponsored parties are held at Christmas and St. Valentine's Day for students in Grades Pre-Kindergarten through 8th. The room mothers for each grade working with the teacher should arrange these parties. The parties are held the last 45 minutes of the day. Instruction should not be interrupted by early arrivals.

Parties for students or faculty members are not a part of the elementary school program. However, treats that parents may wish to send on special days may be part of the class lunch or may be shared during the last 10 minutes of the school day. Parents are requested to check with the teacher concerned at least one day prior.

Private party invitations may not be given out at school without the permission of the teacher concerned. Party invitation may only be issued if:

1) all girls are invited or
2) all boys are invited or
3) the whole class is invited
**No Deliveries** to the school of balloons, corsages or gifts for students will be allowed. **No** non-inflated balloons are allowed on school campus.

**Gifts**: Please no gift exchanges. Public gift giving is not acceptable, please give in private.

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**5000 FINANCIAL POLICIES**

**54.01 Policy for Non-Payment of Tuition and Fees**

All parents of students attending Notre Dame Catholic School (NDCS) should be aware that a significant portion of the school budget is funded by tuition payments, even though tuition income does not cover the full cost of educating the children attending NDCS. Therefore, enrolling a child into NDCS includes a commitment by the parents to make the required payment of tuition and fees in a timely manner. NDCS does have limited funds available for tuition assistance through its Guardian Angel Fund (see exhibit 54.01). This assistance, however, requires previous application and is governed by another policy in the handbook. Scholarships received through the Guardian Angel Fund cannot be utilized to pay previous balances. Financial Assistance is also available through the Archdiocese of San Antonio, Hope for the Future Funds.

Although most parents of NDCS are faithful in paying their tuition obligations on time, this policy explains how delinquency or non-payment of tuition and fees will be handled.

The principal, pastor, and finance officer governing NDCS recognize that unforeseen hardships sometimes occur during the school year, resulting in delayed payment of tuition and fees. Therefore, parents are required to come in and discuss a revised payment schedule with the NDCS bookkeeper if a change becomes necessary.

When such alternative plans are made and tuition or fee payment falls behind, the following protocol will be followed:

1. Payments are due the 1st of the month with a grace period until the 15th of month. After the 15th of the month a $20 late fee will be added to the tuition.
2. If there is a tuition balance 30 days overdue, an additional fee of $35 will be added to the tuition and the family will be contacted about payment by the NDCS bookkeeper.
3. If payment is 45 or more days overdue, the family will be contacted by the NDCS finance officer to discuss a revised payment schedule.
4. Any significant balance more than 60 days past due, with no attempt to discuss an alternative plan with NDCS, puts the governing body of NDCS in the difficult but necessary position of asking the family to find another school setting for their child/children.

In every case, all tuition and fee balances must be paid or arrangements made 30 days before the closing of the school year. If balances remain from the prior school year and alternative
arrangements have not been made, NDCS will unfortunately be unable to enroll that child or children for the following year. Any 8th grade student who is not current in tuition or fees will not be able to participate in the graduation exercises or receive his/her diploma. All accounts for the family must have a zero (0) balance.
*Note see page 57 – Student Progress Reports (Section 84.01)

It is the goal of the governing body of NDCS to offer a secure present and future for the education provided for the children entrusted to their care. This requires the cooperation and assistance of everyone concerned to maintain the responsible payment of all tuition and fees.

6000 GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

60.01 Asbestos Notifications are on file and managed in the Parish Business Office.

60.02 School Calendar

The Department of Catholic Schools publishes a calendar annually. Schools may request changes from this calendar because of local public school schedules or other serious reasons. All schools must have 180 instructional days and 10 professional days. One of those 10 days is the required archdiocesan conference. All school calendars must be submitted and approved by the Associate Superintendent to ensure that TCCED requirement is being met.

The Superintendent will specify the maximum number of early dismissal days. Any instructional days missed because of inclement weather will be made up at the discretion of the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, in accordance with TCCED standards.

Any missed instructional days will be made up at the discretion of the Superintendent of Catholic Schools and in accordance with TCCED standards.

After School Care

After School Care is available on campus from 3:30 until 5:30 P.M. on days that school is in session. All users of the program are to complete an After-School-Care registration form. This period allows for outside play, study and quiet time, quiet games, and a snack. Students in the program are expected to obey school rules regarding acceptable behavior.

The fee for this service is entirely separate from school tuition. Fees for children who are brought to the After-School Care program are pro-rated as arranged with the person in charge of the program. Any student, regardless of age, remaining on campus after the fifteen minute period following their dismissal, will automatically be sent to the After School Care program and assessed a fee for this service.
Additional charges will be assessed for students not picked up by 5:30. They are: $5.00 for each 15 minutes past 5:30 p.m. Drop-ins must pay as they use the program.

**Arrival and Dismissal**

**Arrival**
Students are to arrive promptly each morning, well before the 7:50 am bell. Early arrival allows time for students to put their things away, visit with friends, and prepare for work.

**Dismissal**
Students will be dismissed each day by the side of the gymnasium by grade levels. Dismissal time is at 3:30 for all students. All students must be picked up by the gym.

**Drop off and Dismissal Procedure for Notre Dame Catholic School**
For the safety of your child and all other children at Notre Dame Catholic School please cooperate with the following procedure as approved and recommended by the city traffic division. Please note: siblings should sit together during pick up time. (Addendum-Exhibit 60.02)

1. Enter only on Water Street heading west (toward Sidney Baker), making a right turn only onto the school grounds.

2. Circle in front of the Gym entrance.

3. Remain in the dismissal line. *Do not park in parking area across from the pick-up line and expect your child to cross through the traffic to reach your car.* You must park in the area near the Social Center so the student can walk along the sidewalk. Do not park in the spaces that were auctioned & purchased by families and parishioners.

4. Pull all the way up to the front of the line and stop. Watch for directions given by adults on duty.

5. Instruct your child to watch for you and to follow the instructions of the supervising adults regarding loading.

6. AFTER you have your child/children in your car, slowly pull out and drive CAREFULLY onto Water Street, (making a right turn only) being careful of oncoming traffic.

7. No drop off or pick up from Main Street.

8. Students dropped off or picked up from the “Bell Tower” parking lot must be escorted from the car to the classroom.
9. No parking of any kind is allowed on Main Street.

NOTE: To ALL Notre Dame Catholic School Parents

NDCS strives to provide a safe environment for both students and faculty. The difficulty we face on our campus is the many open passageways that face Main St., Washington St. and Water St. Our corridors are easily accessible to the public and people walking down the street. Our drop off and dismissal procedure has been designed with the approval to the School Council and the Kerrville Police Department. It proves to be the safest method for all children. It is also approved by our insurance carrier. This notice is to inform all parents that our school and parish insurance will not cover any injury or accident that may befall a student should parents choose to ignore the designated procedure. Parents who choose to not abide by the rules are accepting the responsibility for anything that may happen to their child. By choosing to ignore the safety issues, parents are putting their own children at risk.

Therefore, it is our duty to let parents know that Notre Dame Catholic School is not responsible for injury or accident to a child (or any other harmful action such as abduction) that may happen to a child if parents choose to go against the designated plan. Even though the injury or accident may happen on school property, Notre Dame Catholic School is not responsible.

Safety and Dismissal Procedures
To safeguard our students, the following regulations should be observed:

A. Children who ride their bicycles to school must walk their bicycles onto and off the grounds. Parked bicycles should be locked.

B. Children who walk home after school must leave the school grounds as soon as possible. They are to cross the street at the corner only. Students may walk home only with parent’s written permission.

C. To alleviate congested traffic and for safety it is extremely important that parents be on time to pick up their children and that they leave immediately afterwards. Students are dismissed at 3:30 P.M. Teachers remain in the dismissal area for fifteen minutes to assure a safe and orderly dismissal.

D. There will be no supervision of students in the dismissal area after 3:45 P.M. Students, Regardless of age, who have not been picked up by 3:45 P.M. must go to After-School Care and a fee will be assessed for this service.

E. If you have a change in your normal pick up procedure (send student to ASC, another parent to pick up etc.), please notify the office NO later than 2:00 P.M. so that the teachers can be informed.
F. If someone other than a parent is to pick up a student, the office must be informed in writing.

**Early Bird Program**

Students should not arrive before 7:30 a.m. Students arriving after 7:30 a.m. but before 7:48 a.m. are to go to the gymnasium for supervision. A staff member will be on duty at this time. Students may not go to the classroom for any reason nor may they wait outside the classroom door. Students may not leave the campus without being signed out in the office once they have come onto the school grounds.

**Early Dismissal**

School will be dismissed at 12:00 for all students on designated days throughout the year for teacher in-service. This will be announced in the Parent Bulletin and/or the Calendar. Lunch will not be served on Early Dismissal days. There is no after school care on Early Dismissal days.

**Early Student Release**

A written request from the parent or guardian is required for early dismissal. If a child becomes ill during the day, he/she is not sent home until the parent or guardian has been consulted by telephone. In no case shall a child be released unless the school office staff knows the reason for the release and the person to whom the child is released.

The parent, guardian, or his/her designee will be required to sign the student out of school in the book provided in the office.

If there are persons to whom the child is not to be released, the parent or guardian should make the names of these persons known to the school office in writing.

Parents are urged to make medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. We ask parents to please be sensitive to the academic curriculum and testing schedules.

**Personal Belongings**

A child's personal belongings should be marked clearly with the child's name with indelible marker from the first day of school. The school will not be responsible for misplaced items. Lost articles are placed in a box in the gym so those students may check there before or after school. Items not claimed within a reasonable length of time will be given to the needy.

Students should not bring items of expensive value to school. The school is not responsible for accidental loss or damage to an article. Parents are requested not to allow their children to bring toys to school unless arrangements have been made with the
teacher. Toys or articles that symbolize war or violence are not appropriate in a Catholic school setting.

Safety Policies

Before/During School Safety

Students must only be dropped off at designated areas.

When students must leave school early due to illness or emergency, they must be signed out in the office by the parent, guardian, or his/her designee.

Students should not bring toys or personal PE equipment to school without specific permission from their teacher.

Students are expected to use playground equipment in a safe manner and only as directed by the teacher on duty.

Student Visitors

All visitors must report to the school office immediately upon arrival. A visitor badge will be provided for use while on campus. Student visitors must be accompanied by a parent during their time on campus unless it is a scheduled visit for a perspective family/student.

60.04 Publication of Addresses

The school will not publish the addresses or phone numbers of any parents/guardians, students, or employees without their written consent. (Addendum-Exhibit 60.04)

6100 COMMUNITY RELATIONS

61.04 Student Photographs/Interviews

Student’s photographs and interviews may not be taken or used without written parental and administrative permission. Schools are to apprise parents of their procedures in the school’s registration packet and/or handbook. (Addendum-Exhibit 61.04)

61.07 Media

The Principal will be the primary speaker on the school’s behalf for all media correspondence.
6200 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

62.02 Crisis
Schools are to use the “Emergency Response Procedures” guide as a resource for providing a safe school environment.

School facilities are to be organized as to provide smooth and safe flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. All building exit doors are to open outward and be equipped with panic hardware. All exits are to be clearly marked and have legal exit lights. An exit plan is to be prominently displayed in each room.

It is the principal’s responsibility to develop and publish a comprehensive plan for use in the event of emergency conditions. Areas to be considered, but no limited to, are: death of a student/teacher, natural or chemical disaster, drive-by-shooting, intruder on the campus, transportation accident, etc. Staff training must be provided.

The plan should include:

1. Chain of command and responsibilities
2. List of all emergency numbers and contact person
3. Emergency calling system (before and after school)
4. Emergency calling system for notification of parents/guardians
5. A warning system different from the fire alarm
6. Designation of places to which the student will be taken
7. Practice drills at irregular intervals
8. Formation of a Damage Assessment Team and a SWEEP Team.

62.03 Fire Safety and Severe Weather-Tornado Drills (Shelter in Place)
Shelter in place, fire and severe weather drills are held at regular intervals during the year. (Addendum-Exhibit 62.04-62.06)

7000 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Religious education is the singular element that makes Notre Dame Catholic School different from the public school system. Because our philosophy is totally Gospel oriented, the entire curriculum is taught in light of the Christian value system. Christian morals and values consciously permeate our educational system. All students are required to follow our religious education program with due respect to their own faith. Non-Catholics cannot receive the sacraments.

Special weekly Mass days for all grades are provided for students. Reconciliation services are also celebrated at special times during the school year. The children are actively involved in the planning of these celebrations. Parents are encouraged to attend the children's Masses and celebrations as often as possible.
The Christian way of life is a vital part of our school. In order to encourage awareness of the need for Christian service to others, the students are involved in planning and carrying out service projects for the school, parish, local, and global community. Parents are encouraged to remind their children of the importance of morning and evening prayer in their lives as well as the importance of responsibly living out their faith.

### 70.07 Catechesis in Human Sexuality and Sexual Morality
Each school must develop a program of education in family living, human sexuality, and sexual morality appropriate to the age and maturity of the students. This program shall be described in the school handbook. This program shall be developed and administered according to the guidelines issued in the Archdiocesan Religion Curriculum Guide.

### 70.10 ACRE Testing
The required Archdiocesan testing program includes a standardized test of religion programs. NCEA ACRE (Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education) is a religion program assessment, given in grades 5 and 8. It measures the religious knowledge, beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, and practices of students in elementary and secondary schools. A school that wishes to administer an alternative comprehensive assessment which is based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church must seek approval from the Superintendent.

### 8000 CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONS

#### 80.01 Academic Information
All Catholic schools must have curriculum documents in place for use in instructional planning as well as a process for assessing and documenting student mastery of curricular objectives.

Notre Dame Catholic School is fully accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department, which is recognized as the accrediting agency for all Catholic schools in the state of Texas by the Texas Education Agency.

#### 80.02 Curriculum Objectives
Curriculum implementation for all schools should follow the curriculum guides of the Archdiocese of San Antonio that are developed using the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and national curriculum standards with the integration of Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Special programs and courses outside of TCCED standards may be established by schools in consultation with and approval by the Archdiocesan Superintendent.
**Curriculum Objectives**

The distinct purpose of the Catholic School is to proclaim the Gospel message, to build community, and to educate. Within the school community the teachers, priests, parents and students experience together what it means to live a life of prayer, community, personal responsibility, and freedom, manifesting the Gospel values of peace, justice, community, love, patience, reconciliation, and respect.

To achieve this purpose Notre Dame Catholic School organizes its curriculum, its staff, and its physical facilities to:

1. Make known to all students the person and message of Christ and to help students develop a spirit of prayer and worship.
2. Assist the students in developing an understanding of the Catholic Church, its community growth and its world dimensions.
3. Develop in all students a respect for the rights of others, as individuals and as groups with moral and spiritual values, ethical standards of conduct, and basic integrity.
4. Provide for all students’ educational opportunities and experiences related to their heritage, and their responsibilities to family, local community, and the larger society.
5. Enable students to acquire basic skills, especially in the art of communication, in quantitative and in qualitative thinking, and in the sciences.
6. Help students develop the power to think constructively, to solve problems, to reason independently, and to accept responsibility for self-evaluation and self-instruction.
7. See that all students have available experiences to develop a sense of wonder and an appreciation for beauty and culture as their knowledge of human development expands.
8. Help students to develop and foster physical and mental health and to deal constructively with the psychological tensions inherent in change and adaptation.

**80.03 Curriculum Requirements**

Notre Dame Catholic School maintains a balanced curriculum including religion, language arts (English grammar, reading, spelling, and phonics), science, mathematics, social studies, fine arts, health, physical education, computer education and foreign languages.

To implement these standards the school will follow the TCCED requirements.

**80.05 Copyright**

Appendix: Copyright Law Overview 8005A
All employees, volunteers, and students will abide by the federal copyright laws.
Employees, volunteers, and students may copy print or non-print materials allowed by:
1. copyright law,
2. fair use guidelines,
3. specific licenses or contractual agreements, and
4. other types of permission.

Employees, volunteers and students who willfully disregard copyright law are in violation of Archdiocesan policy, doing so at their own risk and assuming all liability.

8100 INSTRUCTIONS

81.04 Grading Period and Report Cards

Notre Dame Catholic School and all schools in the Archdiocese of San Antonio are on a quarterly (nine weeks) grading period schedule. Numerical grades are used from grade 2 through grade 8.

1. For 3PK, 4PK, 5K and grade 1, the following evaluation keys are used:

- E = Exceptional Progress
- V = Very Good Progress
- G = Good Progress
- L = Limited Progress

2. For grades 2 through 12, the following evaluation keys are used:

- 94-100 = Exceptionally High Achievement
- 85-93 = High Achievement
- 75-84 = Average Achievement
- 70-74 = Low Achievement
- 0-69 = Failure to Master Material

3. Conduct grades are indicated in the following manner. Christian Growth, Work Study Skills and Conduct in the elective areas are assessed by the following scale in kindergarten and first grade.

- O = Outstanding Effort
- S = Satisfactory Effort
- I = Improvement Needed
- U = Unsatisfactory Effort
- N = Not Observed

4. Academic Honor Roll is defined in the following manner (each school may include other qualifications in addition to these minimum standards):

- High Honors: 94-100 Average of core subjects with no grade below 85 in any subject.
- Honors: 85-93 Average of core subjects with no grade below 84 in any subject.
Honorable Mention: 75-84 Average of core subjects with no grade below 70 in any subject.

Core subjects include: Religion, English, Reading/Literature, Social Studies, Science and Mathematics.

Elective Classes: Grades will reflect and be recorded as letter grades.

In order to qualify for Exceptionally High Achievement, a student must maintain an O (Outstanding) or at least an S (Satisfactory) in Conduct, Effort, and Non-Academic grades. A student with seven tardies or seven absences (not due to serious illness) per nine weeks on his/her report card automatically loses all honors. Honor Roll award will be given at the end of each marking period following the above criteria.

Awards: Accelerated Reading Award (Library)
        Perfect Attendance (All year)
        Second Honors (85-93 all year with good conduct)
        High Honors (94-100 all year with good conduct)
        Outstanding Academic Achievement (highest GPA 8th grade student)

81.05 Promotion Policy

Social promotions are prohibited in the schools in the Archdiocese. Students are promoted to the next grade level based on their academic achievement. At the end of the school year, students who have satisfactorily completed the grade level curriculum and have not been excessively absent or tardy from school will be promoted to the next grade level. The following are the specific regulations for promotion for various grade levels:

3PK-4PK: Promotion at this level is determined by the teacher and principal in consultation with the parent/guardian.

5K-1: A student must have at least a “G” final average in reading and mathematics.

2-5: A student must have at least a “70” final average in Religion, Reading, English, and Mathematics. A student who fails Reading and Mathematics is not promoted.

6-8: A student must have at least a “70” final average in all core subjects – Religion, English, Reading/Literature, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. A student who fails more than 2 core subjects is not promoted.

For each core subject below “70” a student must demonstrate the successful completion of work in summer school. If summer school is not available, work will be assigned and the student will be tested prior to advancement to the next grade level. The Superintendent is to be informed in writing of the availability of summer school programs.

Failure in two core subjects will result in retention.
**Parent-Teacher Conferences**
Faculty members are always eager to discuss pupil progress with parents. Parents should call the school office to set up an appointment with a teacher. Conferences are scheduled by appointment during the teacher's 45-minute conference period or after school hours if necessary.

Teachers may not be disturbed once the school day begins at 7:50 a.m. A message will be taken by the office and delivered to the teacher at the earliest opportunity. Items brought in after 8:00 a.m. may be left in the office and will be delivered to the classroom.

*Parents are asked not to meet with a teacher at the beginning of the school day as this is their time to prepare for the day, organize needed classroom materials and, most importantly, greet each student as they enter the classroom.*

81.06 **Homework**

Homework assignments are meaningful and fit the intellectual needs of the students. The amount assigned should be reasonable and based on material that has been taught. Consideration should be given to extracurricular activities and work assigned in other classes.

Homework is an extension of the school day. Its purpose is to reinforce and enrich the learning process. Study assignments, as well as written assignments, are extremely important for success. Should an assignment be difficult for your child to complete at home, please send a note to the teacher indicating the specific task that was difficult causing them not to complete it. Because of the varying educational levels of each student, the amount of time needed for completion of homework assignments will vary.

**Homework Time Allotments**
The following are reasonable guidelines although certain variances may be necessary to meet the student’s needs. A parent-teacher conference is advised when this occurs. All subjects should not exceed maximum minutes indicated per night. However a student who does not use class time wisely may exceed the time allotment guidelines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elementary:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kinder</td>
<td>30 minutes per night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Grade</td>
<td>60 minutes per night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Grade</td>
<td>60 minutes per night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Grade</td>
<td>60 minutes per night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th &amp; 5th Grade</td>
<td>60 minutes per night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th-8th Grades</td>
<td>90 minutes per night</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Grading Late Work**

It is important for students to complete their assignments in a timely fashion. To assist students in developing personal responsibility for their work, a student assignment book has been issued and will be utilized by the student. Homework assignments can also be found on Renweb. The following late work penalties will apply.

(Grade 1-5) 10 points will be deducted from the grade earned for each day the assignment is late. All assignments are expected to be turned in. Parents will be contacted if an assignment is over 3 school days late.

(Grades 6-8) 1 day late 70% on assignment
               2 days late 50% on assignment
               3 days late 0% (zero) on assignment

**Regardless of assignments being late, students will be required to complete the assignments.**

Parents should communicate with teachers about upcoming conflicts and any serious difficulties that affect a student’s ability to work on schedule. If a student is chronically late with work or missing assignments (5 per quarter) a conference will be requested with the parents.

**Textbooks**

In order to help our parents financially, Notre Dame Catholic School has a book rental system. All books with the exception of consumable workbooks must be kept covered at all times. Writing in or on textbooks is absolutely forbidden. If books are lost or severely damaged, the purchase price of the book is to be paid. If books have minor damages, a fine will be assessed.

81.07 **Internet Safety Policy**

Addendum (Exhibit 81.07)

81.08 **Field Trip and Outings**

Field trips are related to the curriculum and serve to enhance classroom learning experiences. Field trips are scheduled at the discretion of the teacher and principal. Students must have a signed and dated permission form from their parents. Parents are responsible for any fees that apply to the field trip and all fees are non-refundable. Uniforms are worn on field trips. Students should not bring additional backpacks, electronic equipment or toys unless directed by the teacher. Students may be retained at school due to disciplinary reasons prior to any field trip. Parents must have a completed Criminal Records Check to attend and must be willing to assist in supervision. Should a parent opt to attend a field trip, they are expected to provide their own transportation and pay any entrance fees.
Students are expected to ride to and from the school sponsored field trip on the school bus. Only with prior permission from the Principal may a child be allowed to be transported by his/her parent. A parent may not transport any child other than their own. (Addendum-Exhibit 81.08)

8200  THE SCHOOL SCHEDULE

82.01 The School Day
A school day, as defined by TCCED, is seven hours in length with a required minimum of six hours for instruction, except for:

- Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten with a minimum of 5 hours, 20 minutes
- Half-day Pre-kindergarten and Kindergartens programs with a minimum of 2 hours, 40 minutes.

Any time set aside for lunch, recess, etc. will be in addition to this minimum instructional time.

Reduction of the amount of instruction time in the regular school day, apart from the approved calendar, shall be only for serious reasons and requires the prior approval of the Archdiocesan Superintendent.

Class schedules are planned according to the time allotments specified by TCCED. A master schedule is retained in the principal's office.

School Day
7:30 am Office opens/Early Bird begins
7:40 am Teachers in classrooms & students allowed to enter
7:50 am Beginning of School Day - Tardy bell rings/Prayer and Pledge begins
8:00 am Classes in session
3:30 pm All students dismissed
3:45 pm Students not picked up taken to After School Care
4:00 pm Teacher work day ends
4:00 pm School Office Closed

8300 ACCREDITATION AND ASSOCIATIONS

83.01 Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED)

All Catholic schools PK-12 are accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED), an accrediting agency established by the Bishops of Texas which has been formally recognized by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to provide to TCCED updated Information regarding the schools in the Archdiocese so that appropriate data is available to TEA and TEPSAC (Texas Private School Accreditation Commission).
83.02 Dual Accreditation

Accreditation by an additional association is a local school option but does not substitute for accreditation by TCCED.

83.03 National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA)

Every school in the Archdiocese must have an institutional membership in the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA).

8400 STANDARDIZED TESTING

84.01 Archdiocese Testing Program

Each school shall test according to the guidelines established by the Department of Catholic Schools.

The Archdiocesan testing program includes standardized tests of general achievement and scholastic ability for grades first through eighth. Kindergarten testing is optional. This balance should provide local schools and the Archdiocese with sufficient data for making realistic decisions about the future goals of the system, its individual schools, and individual students.

The required archdiocesan testing program includes a standardized test of religion programs. NCEA ACRE (Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education) is a religion program assessment, given in grades 5, 8 and 12. It measures the religious knowledge, beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, and practices of students in elementary and secondary schools. A school that wishes to administer an alternative comprehensive assessment which is based on the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* must seek approval from the Superintendent.

A copy of this assessment and the students’ results must be submitted to the Superintendent on an annual basis.

*Standardized Testing*

Students in first through eighth grade are given standardized achievement tests during the spring semester each year. The program used is adopted for the schools by the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

Students in grades 5 and 8 are given the ACRE Test, adopted by the NCEA (National Catholic Education Association), during the spring semester of each year to assess their religion education.

Students in 2\(^{nd}\) and 6\(^{th}\) grade are given an Achievement Assessment which is adopted for the schools by the Archdiocese of San Antonio.
**Student Progress Reports and Report Cards**

Report cards are sent home four times a year. After careful review, report card envelopes should be signed and returned during the same week they were received.

**Final report cards for Pre-K thru 7 grade** will be mailed the Wednesday, following the last day of school.

**Final report cards for 8th Grade** will be issued on graduates “last” day. See school calendar for date.

Progress reports and report cards will not be issued if there are any outstanding fees or if work is not completed due to lengthy absences.

Progress Reports are sent home mid quarter and as needed to indicate academic concerns. Parent conferences will be held at least once a year at one of the four report card times. Other conferences may be arranged with individual teachers as needed.

Progress reports are also used to determine whether or not a student maintains standards to participate in extra-curricular activities including sports.
9000 ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I acknowledge that I have been made aware that I may retain a copy of the Notre Dame Catholic School Parent/Student Handbook through the school website at www.notredameschool.cc.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Policy on Sexual Misconduct”. I do commit to read and follow these policies.

I am aware that if, at any time, I have questions regarding Notre Dame Catholic School policies I should direct them to the School Principal.

I know that Notre Dame Catholic School policies and other related documents do not form a contract of employment and are not a guarantee by Notre Dame Catholic School of the conditions and benefits that are described within them. Nevertheless, the provisions of such Notre Dame Catholic School company policies are incorporated into the acknowledgment, and I agree that I shall abide by its provisions.

I also am aware that Notre Dame Catholic School, at any time, may on reasonable notice, change, add to, or delete from the provisions of the school policies.

________________________________  ___________________________
Parent’s Printed Name                Student’s Printed Name

________________________________  ___________________________
Parent’s Signature                   Date