

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
PRESCHOOL - GRADE 8



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
ACUSHNET, MASSACHUSETTS

Parent/Student Handbook 2019-20

Mission Statement

St. Francis Xavier School is a Catholic faith and academic community serving the students and families of St. Francis Xavier parish and surrounding communities.

We strive to develop God's gifts in our students, faculty, and others, working in cooperation and mutual respect with humility and compassion.

We live the teaching of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, and His Holy Catholic Church, demonstrating our faith in action through our care and service for one another.

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This Handbook was revised and published in August 2019. An official bulletin or letter will inform parents and students of changes made to this document after August 2019.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

It is essential that education should be a high priority in our lives. The school in cooperation with the parents assumes the responsibility of preparing their children for the future.

Our school focuses on the educational growth and development of each and every student, through the implementation of programs that promote the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical development of the student.

We believe that every student can learn, and our faculty and staff work diligently toward that end. We believe in the dignity and individuality of our students and we encourage them to develop their God given potential. A cooperative relationship among the administration, faculty, staff, parents, students and the community provides a true Christian community needed to support our children's development.

FAITH COMMUNITY

The faith formation of our children is one of the most important responsibilities we have as Catholic school leaders, catechists and parents.

Our youth are facing many grave challenges in today's culture. Our job as catechetical leaders is to equip families with a means of combating these challenges by strengthening our Catholic identity. Therefore families have a great responsibility in strengthening their Catholic Identity in a culture that, in many ways, speaks contrary to our beliefs as Catholics. We, as a faith community, must support each other in this common goal to make faith a priority, and to actively and consistently practice our faith as a family.

Parents as the Primary Teachers of Faith

"By virtue of their ministry of educating, parents are, through the witness of their lives, the first heralds of the Gospel for their children. Furthermore, by praying with their children, by reading the word of God with them and by introducing them deeply through Christian initiation into the Body of Christ-both the Eucharistic and the ecclesial Body-they become fully parents, in that they are begetters not only of bodily life but also of the life that through the Spirit's renewal flows from the Cross and Resurrection of Christ." *Familiaris Consortio* 39

Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by creating a home where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and disinterested service are the rule. The home is well suited for education in the virtues. This requires an apprenticeship in self-denial, sound judgment, and self-mastery - the preconditions of all true freedom. Parents should teach their children to subordinate the "material and instinctual dimensions to interior and spiritual ones." Parents have a grave responsibility to give good example to their children. By knowing how to acknowledge their own failings to their children, parents will be better able to guide and correct them. (Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 2223)

Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child's earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another to grow in faith by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the Gospel. Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other

forms of instruction in the faith. Parents have the mission of teaching their children to pray and to discover their vocation as children of God. The parish is the Eucharistic community and the heart of the liturgical life of Christian families; it is a privileged place for the catechesis of children and parents. (CCC 2226)

Education in the faith by parents, which should begin from the children's tenderest age, is already being given when the members of a family help each other to grow in faith through the witness of their Christian lives, a witness that is often without words but which perseveres throughout a day-to-day life lived in accordance with the Gospel. This catechesis is more incisive when, in the course of family events (such as the reception of the sacraments, the celebration of great liturgical feasts, the birth of a child, a bereavement) care is taken to explain in the home the Christian or religious content of these events. But that is not enough: Christian parents must strive to follow and repeat, within the setting of family life, the more methodical teaching received elsewhere. The fact that these truths about the main questions of faith and Christian living are thus repeated within a family setting impregnated with love and respect will often make it possible to influence the children in a decisive way for life. The parents themselves profit from the effort that this demands of them, for in a catechetical dialogue of this sort each individual both receives and gives. *Catechesi Tradendae* 68

Living the Faith—Student Participation

We live the teachings of Our Lord, Jesus Christ and His Holy Catholic Church at St. Francis Xavier school and offer our words and deeds to God in His name daily. We will live by the Gospel. *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and Love your neighbor as yourself. (Matthew 22:37-39).* All students, Catholic and non-Catholic, are required to participate in the religious activities and classes of the school. All students must attend religious services and respectfully participate in prayers.

Daily Prayer

At St. Francis Xavier school, the day begins with prayer over the intercom system in which the entire student body prays for a successful day and for intentions that either students or faculty would like to remember throughout the day. All classes are to pray together during the day, especially before religion class, and before meals. The school also prays together at noontime, by reciting the Angelus during Ordinary Time, and the Regina Caeli during Easter Time, as a reminder of how grateful we should be for the gift of Christ's Incarnation. Finally, the day ends in prayer over the intercom system, in which the entire school body is prompted to review their day (a short examination of conscience), asking God for forgiveness and the grace to amend our lives.

Class/School Mass

Teachers follow the Diocesan Religion Curriculum learning outcomes for their grade levels posted on our website. They will provide catechetical instruction in the classroom through the use of the Ignatius Press *Faith and Life* series as well as use of supplemental materials to proclaim the Truths of the Catholic faith in an age-appropriate way. Children will not only learn the stories of the Old and New Testament, and central tenets of the Catholic faith, but also how the Liturgical Year is lived out in the lives of the faithful to reflect those Truths.

Children will attend Mass every Monday (or First Fridays at the start of each month), weather permitting. It is important that students wear seasonally appropriate coats, hats, etc. for the walk

to the church on Mass days. Students in Small Wonders/PS3, both Preschool 4 (PS4) classes, Kindergarten and 1st grade are paired with a “buddy” in the older classes for the walk to the church. Children participate actively in school Masses and prayer services throughout the year. Holy Days of Obligation and celebrations dealing with the liturgical calendar including Advent, Christmas, Lent, Holy Week, and Easter are celebrated during the school year. A day of celebration will also mark the feast of St. Francis Xavier, patron saint of the parish and school in December. Parents are encouraged to attend and are always welcome at School Masses and faith celebrations.

ADMISSION/REGISTRATION POLICIES

Admission

St. Francis Xavier School is a Catholic Elementary School of the Diocese of Fall River. Being a Catholic school we are guided by the theological doctrines of the Catholic faith.

St. Francis Xavier School admits students of any age, race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to the school. St. Francis School does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, nationality, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies and scholarship, athletic and other school administered programs.

Please realize that all acceptances are conditional and rooted in the student’s ability to adhere to rules and regulations as outlined in the student’s handbook. Further conditions are dependent on the school’s ability to provide the proper academic program suited for the needs of each child. Students are admitted to St. Francis Xavier School at the discretion of the administration.

Application forms for admission to St. Francis Xavier School are accepted at any time during the year. Parents shall complete an application form online and state any medical, physical, emotional, or academic needs that may require special attention.

Parents of students entering school for the first time shall submit the following documents with the application form:

1. Copy of birth certificate
2. Copy of baptism certificate
3. Current immunization and health records (which indicate the completion of a physical and all necessary immunizations required for school entrance)
4. Special Education record (if applicable)
5. Most recent report card (if applicable)

Small Wonders/Preschool 3 (PS3) and Preschool 4 (PS4) requirements for admission:

- Small Wonders/(PS3)-- 2.9 years old by August 30th
- Preschool 4 (PS4)-- 4.0 years old by August 30th

Preschool students are required to be able to handle their bathroom needs independently prior to enrollment.

Kindergarten requirements for admission:

- Kindergarten-- 5.0 years old by August 30th

In the spring prior to beginning Kindergarten, new students attend a screening session to assess skills and readiness. Our Preschool 4 (PS4) program can have up to 40 students, therefore St. Francis Xavier School has an established acceptance criteria for the one Kindergarten section available. Preference for admission is given to children whose families are active members of St. Francis Xavier Parish and to children who have siblings in St. Francis Xavier School. Family interviews with our Principal and Pastor may be conducted and letters of recommendation may be requested from your place of worship.

Registration

New families interested in pursuing registration at St. Francis Xavier School can enter into a “pre-enrollment” status in the Fall. Parents are asked to visit the school to meet with administration, tour, and schedule a “spend-a-day” for their child(ren). This ensures a good fit not only for the school, but both socially and academically for the child and family before the registration process proceeds. Registration for new students takes place beginning with Catholic Schools Week in January, following our re-registration of current families. Open Registration dates are announced each year in the church bulletin and special notices are sent home from school and public advertisements run in the diocesan and/or local papers. When classes reach maximum size (25), registrants’ names are put on a waiting list. In this case, preference for admission is given to children whose families are active members of St. Francis Xavier Parish and to children who have siblings in St. Francis Xavier School.

When finalizing registration, a non-refundable \$120 registration fee is assessed for each child. This fee is not a part of the tuition requirement, but secures the placement for the child. At the time of registration, parents complete a registration form. The school office requests that parents release records including test scores, health record, and report cards from the child’s previous school prior to the beginning of the new school year.

Re-Registration

Students are enrolled at St. Francis Xavier School for a period of one year. Parents are responsible for re-registering current students for the following school year. Re-registration usually occurs in January, but dates and instructions for re-registration will be communicated well in advance. Those who fail to re-register on or before the registration deadline will not be assured of a place in class. Registration will then be filled on a first-come, first-served basis within the admissions framework set forth above.

Withdrawal

- Ideally, parents and school administration are in communication regarding any potential (social or academic) issues that would need to be addressed well in advance of any decision to withdraw a student. Both parents and school should always be working towards viable options for internal resolution, with withdrawal being the last resort. If, after working collaboratively with the school to find a resolution to any issue, parents conclude to withdraw students from the school; they are asked to notify the office officially in writing so that the school office can begin the process of completing the proper records. At this time an exit interview could be conducted, but all materials must be returned, bills paid, and release of records form signed. Parents will be asked to submit an exit survey electronically as part of the withdrawal process.
- The school will not forward records for students who withdraw with an outstanding balance.

Tuition Assistance

Parish Financial Aid: St. Francis Xavier parishioners and all other parishioners may apply for aid from their parish. Forms are available in the school office.

Diocesan FACE Scholarships: This is a need-based scholarship that is administered by the diocese and based on family income. Applications are available online. If aid is verified, tuition payments will be lowered to reflect aid.

ATTENDANCE

School Day

Regular school hours are from 8:20am to 2:30pm. Preschool students who are “half-day friends” attend from 8:20am to 11:30am. Full-day Small Wonders/PS3, Preschool 4 (PS4), as well as Kindergarten and 1st grade students dismiss after the 2:20pm prayers and announcements. Extended care is available both before and after school hours. See Extended Care section of handbook for more details.

Arrival/Drop Off

Students should arrive at school between 8:00am and 8:15am. Please note that traffic in the school driveway is **ONE WAY**. All traffic will use the driveway entrance closest to the school building. All students are to be dropped off at the MAIN ENTRANCE of the school and report directly to their classrooms. All cars will follow the exit driveway around the Grotto leading to Main Street. (Preschool families should refer to the preschool manual addendum to this handbook for arrival/drop-off procedures that are classroom specific for our youngest students.)

Please note: No one is to park in the driveway, or near the school building or crosswalk at anytime during drop-off. This is for the safety of students at high traffic times and also to allow for bus and emergency vehicle maneuvering space.

If parents have business in the office, or wish to walk their child(ren) to the lobby, they must park their cars in the side parking lot. When a parent enters the building he/she must report to the main office and sign in. Upon leaving the building parents must return to the office and sign out.

The school bus will enter and drop the students off at the sidewalk near the school building in the designated drop-off lane. The bus students will enter the same way as they drop-off students by the main entrance to the lobby where they will then report to their classrooms. The bus will also exit by going around the Grotto to Main Street.

Staff members will be present at the main entrance to assist in the flow of traffic in the drop-off lane. No students or parents will be allowed to congregate in front of the school, since cars will be coming in and dropping off students.

The school day begins after the 8:20am bell rings with Morning Prayer, The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, and recitation of the school's mission statement, followed by any announcements and attendance. If a student arrives after the 8:20am bell but during morning announcements, he/she is still considered tardy.

Tardiness

Tardiness is considered a serious matter as it disrupts the school day of both the student who is tardy and his/her classmates. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the student and his/her parents or guardians to ensure that the student arrives on time to school. The principal will address excessive tardiness or tardiness patterns. Excessive tardiness will be dealt with on an individual basis by the principal and may result in the loss of extracurricular privileges, including field trips.

It is recommended that students arrive by 8:15am. School begins at 8:20am. At 8:20am the traffic monitor will lock the school door. Students who report to school after 8:20am will be considered tardy. Students and/or parents arriving after the 8:20am bell but during announcements will be asked to wait quietly in the LOBBY out of respect and reverence during morning prayer/announcements. Once announcements are complete, students will be given an admittance slip to enter class by the traffic monitor. Any student arriving after announcements must be buzzed into the building and report to the MAIN OFFICE accompanied by a parent or guardian to receive an admittance slip to enter class. Parents/guardians must avoid excessive unexcused tardies as these have a negative impact on a student's learning and the classroom environment and will be addressed by the principal. Tardies will be reported as excused only for medical reasons or in the event of the death of an immediate family member. A doctor's note will be required.

Notification of Absences

In order that a student receives full credit for a year's work, regular attendance is necessary. It is the parents' and the student's responsibility to assure that the student attends class every day.

It is mandatory to notify the school that your child will be absent by 9:00am either by phone or email to the teacher or main office.

If a student is absent from class for five (5) or more consecutive days (excluding weekends), a doctor's note (permit) is required for the student to be readmitted to school.

Students will not be excused from participation in any class including physical education or dismissed early without a parent's note indicating the reason for the absence.

Vacation Trips

Parents are asked to plan family vacations during the scheduled breaks. Parents are also asked not to extend the school's scheduled breaks by leaving early or returning late. **If a student is to be absent for reasons other than illness, parents or guardians are asked to fill out the *Planned Family Vacation Notification Form* (**see APPENDIX and/or school website) at least one week prior to the planned vacation explaining the reason for the absence.** If parents choose to schedule a trip outside of scheduled breaks, the children are responsible for any school work, homework or test that is missed. Students will be informed of assignments when they return to school and assignments may be made up at that time. It is up to the teacher's discretion what, if any, assignments can/should be sent during vacations. Due to the additional pressure this places on children, these vacations are highly discouraged.

Dismissal

Please note again: Traffic in the school driveway is ONE WAY. All traffic will use the entrance closest to the school building. Parking in our school driveway can become problematic and is to be

exercised ONLY when absolutely necessary and NEVER during morning drop off. This is for the safety of students at high traffic times and also to allow for bus and emergency vehicle maneuvering space. This includes the drop-off/fire lane, the left side of the entrance driveway, or along the side of the building. At pick up, parking is only permitted after the school bus has cleared the driveway. All cars and buses exit by using the road by the Grotto and exit onto Main Street. **Please do not drive over the grass as you leave the parking lot.**

Bus students are dismissed after 2:20pm prayer/announcements at the end of the school building by the Preschool playground where they will meet the bus and leave the property. Only Acushnet residents have the opportunity to utilize bus transportation. Parents must transport students from other surrounding towns.

Following the 2:20pm prayer/announcements classrooms on the first floor (Small Wonders/PS3, both Preschools/PS4, Kindergarten, Grade 1) and their second floor siblings will begin dismissal. Those students staying for extended/clubs will remain with their teachers/aides in the classrooms. Students being picked up by a parent or guardian will be dismissed at the back doors to meet parents there and be escorted to their cars, which are parked in the parking lot. Students whose parent/guardian is not present for pick up as expected will be taken back to the classroom by the teacher/aide. **Parents of our Kindergarten and 1st Graders will need to wait to receive their child when they come down to the gym at 2:45pm.** All students without an adult to pick up at 2:45pm will then be checked into Extended Care and parents will need to check them out from Extended Care Staff and will be charged accordingly.

The students in Grades 2-8 who are not siblings of a 1st floor student will then be dismissed at the 2:30pm bell. After the 2:30pm bell, students in grades 2-8 who are remaining in extended will immediately enter into homework club/study hall. Those students in grades 2-8 being picked up at 2:30 by a parent or guardian will be released by a “dismissal monitor” in group through the back doors and walked around to the parking lot side of the playground area. Staff members will be on duty and remain with students until 2:45 as “dismissal monitors” at the back exit and parking lot area to assist the students in finding/meeting their ride and ensuring the safety and order of dismissal. **Since this is a high traffic time, to ensure the safety of our students, no students or parents will be allowed to congregate or dismiss from the front doors of the school (without administrative permission).** Also, please take great care with your vehicle in entering, exiting and backing out of spots within the school parking lot at this time.

If a parent/guardian of a student in grades 2-8 is not present for initial dismissal as expected, those students will be brought back into the gym area at 2:45pm by the “dismissal monitor” and they will be checked into Extended Care.

In the event of inclement weather, dismissal will take place in the school gymnasium. Parents will need to enter the school building and congregate within the gym to receive their child. Please do not crowd the stairwell and foyer areas on these days. On these days only students who are accompanied by a parent/guardian, or with permission of a “dismissal monitor” should exit the front doors of the school.

If a parent needs to enter the building at the close of any school day, he/she must be buzzed into the building and report to the main office and sign in. Upon leaving the building parents must return to the

office and sign out. If it is after office hours, parents must check in with the Extended Care Staff member.

Special Instructions from Parents

At the beginning of each year, parents are asked to communicate with the school through their teacher(s) regarding their child(ren)'s usual means of transportation. When it is necessary for a child to deviate from his/her normal school routine on any given day or for any period of time, a signed and dated note or email from the parents should be sent to the teacher and/or office explaining the details of the change. These changes include staying after school and a special event, walking to an address other than his or her own, or being picked up by another parent. In cases of emergency/last minute changes, phone calls on the day are accepted, but notes/emails are preferred in advance of the day so that teachers and the office are made aware.

I.D.'s are required of unfamiliar family members who are sent to pick up your child.

Early dismissal requests

When students are taken from school during the school day for doctors' appointments, parents must send a note/email to request early dismissal or temporary absence on or before the day of dismissal. The note must contain the reason for the dismissal, signature of parent or guardian and a phone number for verification. A phone call may be made to the school in the event of an emergency.

Parents must check students out in the office. They may not go directly to the classroom to pick up children. All parents picking up children for any reason during school hours should report directly to the office to meet their child. A student will be released from school only to his custodial parent(s) or to persons authorized by the custodial parent(s) and made known to the school officials.

School Cancellations

It is imperative that we always have the most up to date contact information on file for your family. St. Francis Xavier will utilize our FACTS Parent Alert System contact info (as provided by our families in ParentsWeb) to communicate any information via phone, text and email in regards to emergency or weather related events or time-sensitive announcements throughout the school year.

In addition to inclement weather conditions, which generally affect all area schools similarly, there could be many other reasons that are school or area specific (i.e. gas leak, water break, no heat, etc.), which may cause our school to operate separately from the Town of Acushnet's determination. For this reason, the system exists in which we post our school name separately on the television and online announcements and send out a specific Parent Alert phone call, email, and text to our parents.

As a Catholic School we are still an independent entity, and it is up to our discretion as to what we will ultimately decide is best for our school families. Please understand we take many variables into careful consideration when determining cancellation of an entire school day, our extended care/after school programs, early dismissals or late starts.

It is always our hope that parents stay informed by referring to the website (www.sfxacushnet.com) as well as the school social media sites (i.e. Facebook page) and/or television announcements to offset any confusion or technical difficulties that could realistically happen with any one particular electronic system as a part of these events.

When students are unable to be in the school building due to circumstances beyond our control, the principal may determine that the implementation of a new **Structured Alternative Learning (SAL) Day** policy is necessary for teaching and learning to continue at home. If a SAL day is enacted, students in K-8 will have assignments from their teachers to complete to satisfy school day requirements (therefore no calendar makeup days would be necessary). Please note: Not all school cancellation days will be SAL days. Please refer to the **SAL policy in the APPENDIX** for a more detailed explanation.

SAFETY CONCERNS

For the purposes of all conduct which occurs by students, all parents, teachers, administrators, etc., school property includes all land within the perimeter of the school site and the school building, structures, facilities, computer networks and systems, and school vehicles, whether owned or leased by the Diocese, and the site of any school-sponsored activity.

Visitors

For the safety of students and staff, our school is locked at all times. Visitors must enter through the main door. All visitors must ring the doorbell, be identified and then be admitted at the discretion of the office staff. Students are not permitted to open doors to admit visitors, even if the student knows the individual.

No one may go directly to a classroom at any time. All visitors must report to the main office on the first floor to explain their business at school and request a visitor's badge. If you bring forgotten items to school: i.e. eyeglasses, medication, lunch, etc. these items must be left with main office staff who will bring them to your child's classroom. If a parent is visiting a classroom, he/she must sign in and receive a visitor's badge.

School lavatories are for student use only, and not accessible to visitors/parents.

School Supervision and Dismissal Policies

It is the responsibility of the faculty and staff of St. Francis Xavier School to be sure that students are supervised at all times. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the parents to be sure that students do not arrive too early before school or stay too late after school.

During the school day, students are never allowed to leave the building or playground area without the consent and direct supervision of a staff member.

Official school supervision of the children starts at 8:00am and ends at 2:45pm. Students arriving before 7:45am or remaining after 2:45pm will be checked into our Extended Care Program. Parents will be charged accordingly.

The school cannot assume responsibility for any students injured on the playground after regular school hours. Small Wonders/PS3, Preschool 4 (PS4), Kindergarten, and Grade 1 students will not be dismissed from the building unless an approved adult guardian is present to directly receive them from the teacher and/or "dismissal monitor". All students (2-8) awaiting the arrival of a guardian at the rear of the school during pick-up must remain with the "dismissal monitor" and are not allowed to play on the playground until they are in the care of their guardian.

Emergency Dismissal During School Day

If a serious weather situation or emergency arises during the school day, parents may come to the school to dismiss their children at their discretion. Parents will be notified of any dismissal via phone (Parent Alert) and/or email (Constant Contact) in the event of an emergency. Our school website and social media page(s) will also be updated with any critical information.

Fire Alarms, Drills, and Emergencies

Fire drills are held regularly in accordance with state fire regulations. It is important that students realize the seriousness of these drills and treat each practice with due respect. Whenever the fire alarm signal is heard, the presumption is that an emergency exists. Therefore, all students and faculty members should file out immediately and in an orderly fashion. Absolute silence is to be observed and insisted upon so that directions given may be heard. During a fire drill, no one is to remain in the building. Students should not attempt to collect books and belongings, but simply file quietly out of the building following the exit procedures posted in each classroom or the most logical alternative exit procedures in the case of blocked exits, etc. Students should line up in rows by classes in the designated area and wait for instructions from the principal. No one is permitted to return to the school building until the principal or an authorized representative gives the signal. Fire alarm directions are posted in all classrooms. Students and teachers should be thoroughly familiar with these instructions. Other drills, such as Shelter-in-Place, Lock Down Procedures, and Active Shooter Preparation will be discussed and practiced in an age-appropriate way to ensure proper faculty and student preparedness.

Re-Location Plan

During such times when the building principal decides that certain factors present a threat to the safety of students and staff (i.e. leaks, chemical spills, threats, etc.) St. Francis Xavier School will be evacuated and students and staff will be relocated to the St. Francis Xavier Church building (125 Main Street) when the schoolyard is not a viable alternative. A notice for re-location will be placed in the school doors and on the website and parents will be notified via the school's phone emergency notification system.

Child Abuse Laws/Mandated Reporting

St. Francis Xavier School abides by Massachusetts General Law chapter 119, section 51A. This law mandates that all cases of **suspected** abuse and/or neglect be reported to the Department of Families and Children (DCF). The administration, faculty, and staff of St. Francis Xavier School are mandated reporters.

Student Safety and Health (Diocesan Policy Addendum)

A registered sex offender who is the parent/guardian of a student may come onto his/her child's diocesan school campus in order to transport his/her own child to and/or from school; attend Open House Nights/Back to School Nights; attend Parent-Teacher Conferences; attend school sporting events; attend school performances (i.e., school drama or musical performances) or any other school events that are listed specifically on the school's calendar of events. If a registered sex offender who is the parent/guardian of a student receives a notification from a school teacher or school administrator to

attend a meeting regarding his or her child, he/she must follow the protocol set forth in the next paragraph concerning, in general, the presence of registered sex offenders on a diocesan school campus.

In general, a registered sex offender who is the parent/guardian of a student is not allowed to come to campus for any other reason unless they have scheduled a specific appointment directly with the school's administrator/head of school. When an appointment is scheduled with and confirmed by the school's administrator, the parent/guardian must report directly to the Main Office of the school for that appointment and will be escorted by the administrator or his/her designee to the location of the meeting. The parent will be escorted back to the Main Office at the conclusion of the scheduled meeting and must leave the school premises immediately after the scheduled meeting.

SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

Illness

Please do not send your child to school when symptoms of illness are present. A child who is sick will not be able to perform well in school and is likely to spread the illness to other children and staff. Our school policy states that you should not send your child to school if he/she has:

- Fever (above 100.4 degrees) in the past 24 hours
- Vomiting / Diarrhea in the past 24 hours
- Contagious Illness (e.g. Chickenpox, Flu, Strep Throat, etc.)
- Red/Pink eyes with drainage
- Undiagnosed skin rash

If your child becomes ill at school and the teacher or school nurse feel the child is too sick to benefit from school or is contagious to other children, you will be called to come and take him/her home from school. It is essential that your child's teacher have a phone number where you can be contacted during the day and an emergency number in the event you cannot be reached. Children may return to school when they have been fever-free without medications for at least 24 hours.

NO medical services beyond taking temperatures, applying bandages or ice, and treating minor cuts or rashes with appropriate first-aid treatments, will be given by the school staff without permission from a parent/guardian. Please make the school nurse aware if your child has any allergies/sensitivities to certain first-aid treatments (e.g. Bacitracin, Hydrocortisone cream, Eye Wash, etc.) otherwise your child will be treated as deemed necessary by the school staff.

The School Health Office is staffed by a school nurse during the hours of 8:00am to 3:00pm on a regular school day and from 8:00am to 12:00pm on half days. If a school nurse is not available, staff trained in basic First Aid will assist students during school hours.

Emergencies

Injuries at school, if they are severe, will be handled by having an ambulance take the child to the Emergency Room. Parents/Guardians will be notified immediately if an ambulance is called. Please notify the School Nurse (yearly) of any medical conditions which may precipitate an emergency situation with your child (e.g. allergic reactions to food, insect bites or medications; asthma; diabetes; seizures; etc.).

Immunizations/ Physical Exams

All children are required to have a yearly Physical Exam from their physician. Parents/Guardians also need to provide a certified immunization record from your child's physician. Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health requires that all immunizations be up-to-date for children to attend school.

Health History

Parents/Guardians need to complete the Student Health History Form yearly in order to provide the most up-to-date information for the Health Office. In addition, please notify the School Nurse immediately if anything changes in regards to your child's health history during the school year so we can assure your child's needs are met and we can update our health records. It is especially important to contact your child's school nurse if:

- There has been a change in your emergency contact information
- Your child has received a new medical diagnosis
- Your child has been hospitalized
- Your child has been treated for an infectious disease
- There has been a change in your child's medication or started a new medication
- Your child has allergies or has developed a new allergy

Medications

St Francis Xavier School follows state regulations regarding the administration of medications to students. The School Health Office encourages families to administer medication to students before or after school, if possible. **NO child is permitted to bring their own medication to school. An adult must bring the medication to school and parents/guardians may retrieve medications from the school at any time.** All unused, discontinued, or outdated medications are to be picked up by the child's parent/guardian at the end of the school year or they will be discarded.

For medications to be administered, the medication must be in the original bottle with a pharmacy label stating the dose and time the medication is to be administered. A **MEDICATION ORDER FORM** completed by the ordering physician and an **AUTHORIZATION FOR MEDICATION FORM** by the child's parent/guardian is also required. (These forms are available from the Health Office)

*****MEDICATION (including over-the-counter medications) WILL NOT BE GIVEN AT SCHOOL WITHOUT THE APPROPRIATE PAPERWORK.*****

Food Allergies

At the start of the school year, all parents/guardians should inform the school nurse and teacher(s) about any allergies. All parents are required to fill out all appropriate forms in regards to the specific allergy as well as provide us with a detailed treatment/response plan for how they want the school staff to respond to an allergic reaction. All forms are available in the school health office.

- Appropriate staff will be trained in the use of emergency medication in the case of anaphylaxis in school or on a field trip. Classroom teachers reinforce that there is to be no sharing of food between students.
- **St. Francis Xavier School does not have the facilities to provide "safe allergy free meals" to students. The Parent/Guardian is responsible daily for providing an allergy free lunch for their child.** Personnel and monitors will be made aware of students with allergies. A peanut/nut or specified allergen free lunch table will be provided.

- All snacks that are to be eaten in the classroom or extended care are to be peanut/tree nut free.
- If you choose to send in a snack or treat your child's birthday or other classroom party please send in something that is store bought and in the original packaging with ingredient labels.
- Parent/Guardian of a student with food allergies is responsible for providing classroom snacks for his/her own child, which will be kept in a separate box. Should there be any question of allergens within a snack that is being shared by the class, the teacher will pull from this box.
- If your child rides the bus to or from school, Parents should make bus driver aware of any allergies. The bus follows the guidelines from the Town of Acushnet.
- Before/after school activities and summer programs: The parent/guardian of a child with an allergy should contact the program director and be responsible for the emergency plan when a reaction should occur during the time of the program. Office personnel are not available before/after school hours or during the summer.

Privacy Policy

St. Francis Xavier School understands the importance of protecting your child's health information. The Health Office will only share information on a need-to-know basis in order to provide your child with the best care possible. If necessary, they will contact your child's physician in order to obtain information for the health and safety of your child.

UNIFORM/DRESS CODE

The purpose of uniforms and dress codes is to minimize distractions so that an atmosphere conducive to learning is fostered. As a sign of self-respect and as an expectation of how a St. Francis Xavier student should represent our school to visitors or in public, the uniform must be clean and presentable when worn, and dress code must be followed at all times throughout the school year, unless permitted otherwise. Students should always be clean and neatly dressed. This includes the tucking-in of polo shirts for boys and the wearing of a belt with the gray slacks/shorts. If the student comes to school out of uniform/dress code, whether completely or partially, he/she must bring a written excuse from his/her parent or will be issued a warning. Failure to rectify the uniform/dress code infraction within the stated time frame could result in a detention. Parents and students are asked to refer to the **UNIFORM CODE in the APPENDIX** of this handbook for a detailed listing of Uniform requirements and expectations.

Our Swap Shop is available at the school year round for uniform exchanges and/or to order uniforms, call Donnelly's Uniform Apparel 800-498-0045 or visit the website link.

The St. Francis Xavier School **DRESS CODE** is as follows:

“Special Occasion” Uniform for the Middle School

Middle school (Grades 6-8) have an additional “Special Occasion” Uniform which is to be worn to school on regular school Mass days, Holy Days of Obligation, formal field trips (i.e. to Bishop Stang High School; the Cathedral; Government buildings; etc.) Please note the addition of a sweater/sweater vest for BOTH boys (maroon) and girls (gray). Sweater/sweater vest is REQUIRED Nov 1-May 1.

Spirit Wear

“Spirit Wear” (SFX fleece, SFX hooded sweatshirts, etc. purchased through Donnelly’s) is not a part of the official student uniform, and therefore not allowed during the school day, unless the principal has designated an official “Spirit Wear” Day.

Skirt length

The standard for acceptable skirt length for all girls will be slightly above the knee. No rolling of the skirts is allowed. Students are not allowed to wear gym sweatpants under the school uniform, but are encouraged to wear modesty/gym shorts under their skirts.

Gym attire

Gym uniforms should be worn with white sports socks and sneakers on the regularly scheduled PE day with the exception of Holy Days falling on a PE day when we will be attending Mass as a school family. On these days, students in Gr. 3-8 will be required to wear regular uniform to school (Note: Jumpers for girls 3-5 and Special Occasion for grades 6-8) and gym uniform and sneakers should be brought to school separately to be changed into following Holy Mass. Gym shorts length should be fingertip length. Gym t-shirts should be the gray with maroon lettering approved SFX program gear.

Make-up/Jewelry

Proper school uniform does not allow for makeup, or nail polish or excess jewelry. One watch and one ring is reasonable for girls and boys; one necklace; and small stud earrings for girls (only ONE piercing) or small hoops; no dangling earrings are allowed. No earrings for boys are allowed. One religious bracelet will be permitted, however no secular bracelets, and/or colored bracelets which promote charities or different products or sports teams are allowed. Middle school boys and girls should never have more than 3 pins (only of religious nature) on their special occasion uniform ties/cross ties. The school is not responsible for any damage or loss of personal jewelry brought to school.

Haircuts/styles/accessories

Only conventional, conservative, professional haircuts for boys are allowed. Hair should be clean and combed, and hairstyles must be appropriate. Dyed, streaked, or tinted hair is not permitted--no extreme styles. For boys: Hair should be above the collar. No lines may be cut into the hair. These should be visible: the face, half the ear, bangs should be above the eyebrow, therefore not obstructing student’s ability to see. No dying of hair allowed, for boys or girls. No feathers or hair extensions are allowed. Hair accessories (i.e. headbands, barrettes, hair ties, etc.) should be minimal in design (no large “JoJo” bows) and it is preferred that they are complementary in color to the school uniform (maroon, white, black, gray) or they will be asked not to be worn in school on uniform days.

No Uniform Days

The principal may deem an academic day a NO UNIFORM DAY. A no uniform day always demands appropriate, modest dress.

- No crop, tank or halter-tops (midriff may not be exposed)
- No spaghetti straps or low cut blouses
- No clothing with rips or holes
- No violent or vulgar T-shirts
- No short shorts, or miniskirts (at least fingertip length shorts)
- No form fitting clothing—tops or bottoms—when skinny jeans/pants or leggings are worn, back side must be covered by a longer shirt.
- Appropriate shoes or sneakers must be worn—no flip flop type shoes, sandals must have a back strap.
- No deviation from other aspects of uniform code (socks, jewelry, makeup, hair, etc.)
- Hats are not allowed to be worn in the building
- Students may not be out of uniform on scheduled Mass days

As always, the principal shall be the arbitrator of what is appropriate free dress and will determine the acceptability of any clothing and/or accessories. Students who are not properly attired will be asked to change, and their parents will be notified.

Non-uniform days will be granted by the **PRINCIPAL ONLY**.

“Spirit Wear” Days

The principal may designate certain days throughout the school year as SPIRIT WEAR DAYS. Students will be allowed to wear SFX School Gym Uniform on these days. “Spirit Wear” or SFX T-shirt must be worn. Solid color appropriate jeans or pants may be substituted for sweatpants.

Questions regarding the dress code can be clarified with the classroom teacher or principal. The dress code is in effect from the first day of school until the last day of school unless otherwise directed by the principal.

ACADEMIC/EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

This section of the Student Handbook describes St. Francis Xavier School’s academic standards and the method of measuring and recognizing students’ achievement of those standards. These policies and goals are designed to promote St. Francis’ primary objective of academic excellence and reward those who achieve it.

Courses

Grade K through 8 are offering all major and minor courses recommended by the Diocese of Fall River. These include the following:

Art	Computer Technology	Handwriting
Language Arts*	Latin (7 & 8)	
Mathematics *	Music (1-5)	Physical Education
Reading *	Religion *	Science *
Social Studies *	Spanish (K-8)	Spelling *

- * The above classes are considered “academic subjects”: for the purpose of determining make-up requirements and honors and awards. Students will receive academic letter grades, and /or number grades for each class. Effort and conduct grades are also included.

Homework

It is the philosophy of our school and the Diocese of Fall River that children need to develop study skills as well as the discipline to make their learning experiences an integral part of their everyday life. It is also invaluable for students to continuously review concepts and to apply them in varied ways to attain mastery.

To these ends, our teachers provide homework assignments. Homework will be assigned daily in grades K-8. On average, teachers give time amounts recommended by National PTA Guidelines, which is 10 minutes per grade level (10 minutes in K, 20 minutes in 1st, 30 minutes in 2nd, and so on). We at St. Francis recommend, but are not limited to these guidelines. Homework on weekends or during vacation periods will be given at the discretion of the teacher, especially when projects or other long-term assignments have been given. Parents should make sure that homework as well as study assignments are completed. Homework will not be given during vacation periods unless it is an ongoing project.

The middle school policy expands further to state that homework is a very important part of the learning process. Homework assignments are due on the assigned due date, and may require the use of technology or involve electronic submissions. Further guidelines surrounding homework and classroom participation in middle school will be clarified by each individual teacher.

Tests

Students may expect frequent quizzes and tests in all subjects. Proper studying and test preparations are essential to the successful completion of all course work. Appropriate study skills are stressed.

During the 2018-2019 school year, the elementary/middle schools in the Diocese of Fall River replaced the IOWA standardized tests with the MAP Suite Assessment system. The implementation of the MAP Suite Assessments is part of a larger Diocesan-wide initiative on Data Driven Instruction designed to gain a deeper understanding of our students’ learning needs. The data derived from these assessments will allow administrators and teachers to measure student growth and proficiency, identify strengths and weaknesses at the school, class and individual student levels, target instruction, and personalize learning. Data driven instruction provides school leaders and teachers with the information needed to make strategic and intentional decisions in real time about teaching and learning so that all children can succeed.

What this shift means in practice is that students in the Diocese of Fall River will be taking MAP Growth assessments 3 times each year (Fall; Winter; Spring). Grades K-8 students will take a Reading, Language Usage, and Math assessment, and St. Francis Xavier School has opted for Gr. 3-8 to also take a Science assessment. Each assessment will be given within a predetermined three week window. Students will utilize a computer adaptive system for all assessments. Each test is approximately 30-45 minutes in length typically. The data from these assessments will be accessible by the school within 24 hours of the testing window and will also provide scores compatible with various online learning resources (i.e. Khan Academy, etc.) already implemented within our school curriculum. These resources will assist teachers in challenging diverse student learning needs appropriately.

Progress Reports

Midway through each term, progress reports will be posted detailing the student's performance in Grades 1-8. Progress reports are an important indication of the areas in which the student should focus his/her energies in order to improve before the end of the term. Progress reports may also comment upon the student's conduct and effort for the term to date. Parents will be asked to acknowledge and verify student academic reports upon receipt.

The teacher may issue progress reports at any time, when the teacher believes it is necessary to keep parents informed of the progress or lack of progress of the students. Parents may also ask the teacher for a progress report to keep them up-to-date with the progress of their child.

Report Cards

Grades K-8 will have their report cards emailed as well as posted electronically within ParentsWeb three times during the school year. Parents without internet access/email can request to receive report cards in hard copy form.

Parents can discuss their child's progress with the classroom teacher and the principal by calling the school office to arrange an appointment at any time. Formal parent/teacher conferences will be held during the year during the first trimester for parents of students in K-8. Parents or guardians are strongly encouraged to attend parent conferences. Those who cannot come on these dates can schedule an appointment for a later date. Preschool (PS3 and PS4) progress reports and conferences are offered to all preschool parents in January and if need exists again in late May or early June.

Letter grades and their numerical equivalent

Grade	Numerical Equivalent	Grade	Numerical Equivalent
A	93-and above	B-	80-82
A-	90-92	C+	77-79
B+	87-89	C	73-76
B	83-86	C-	70-72
		D+	68-69
		D	65-67
		D-	63-64
		F	0-62

Honor Roll

Principal's List: Students from grades 3—8 with 90+ in each subject.

High Honors: Students from grades 3—8 with 90+ overall average (with no C's, D's or F's)

Honorable Mention: Students from grades 3—8 with 85—89 overall average (with no C's, D's or F's)

National Junior Honor Society

Students are eligible to enter the National Junior Honor Society beginning in the 6th grade, and once inducted, remain members until graduation as long as their adherence to NJHS bylaws is in good standing. The bylaws of the Sr. Louise Place, OP Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society at St. Francis Xavier School state that the guidelines for membership are as follows:

- The selection process must be public information, available to parents and students upon request.
- The selection process, determined by the Faculty, shall be fair, non-discriminatory, and consistently applied.
- In all cases, only those students who have a cumulative grade point average of 4.0 (90 percent) scale (not rounded) meet the **scholarship** requirement for membership in the National Honor Society. These students are then eligible for consideration on the basis of **service, leadership, citizenship and character**.
- While the academic criterion is important, membership should never be considered as the most important of the four criteria. Choosing members on the basis of scholarship alone is a violation of the constitution.
- In evaluating potential members for **leadership, service, citizenship and character**, the Faculty shall review the definitions of these criteria.
- The **leadership** criterion is considered highly important for membership selection.
- The criteria of **service** is often in terms of value of contributions, toward school, classmates and community as well as the student's overall attitude toward service.
- The criterion of **citizenship** refers to the student who understands the importance of civic involvement. He or she has a high regard for the principles of representative government and demonstrates mature participation through involvement in such activities as Scouting, community organizations and school clubs.
- **Character** is most difficult criterion to define. The Faculty should consider the positive as well as the negative aspects of character. All judgments should be free of hearsay and rumor.
- Students who have a chronic record of breaking school rules are poor membership risks, but should not be automatically excluded from consideration for membership. A proper regard for pre-adolescent growth and behavior is essential.

Promotion to the Next Grade

Continuing enrollment at St. Francis Xavier School is dependent upon the student's overall academic and behavioral performance and the family's completion of any financial obligations to the school. St. Francis Xavier School reserves the right to terminate a student's enrollment based on the school's standards of excellence in academic effort and conduct if the student is not being best served by this school's programs. Promotion to the next grade is granted by a successful completion of the previous grade. **If a student is in danger of being retained, a conference with parents, teacher(s) and the principal is to be held to discuss the possibility of retention.**

GENERAL POLICIES, PROGRAMS and INFORMATION

The following guidelines and regulations are designed to ensure that St. Francis maintains an orderly environment that promotes each student's spiritual, intellectual and personal growth.

Classes

Students' class periods vary depending upon grade levels. All major subjects are taught for 200 minutes per week. Small Wonders/PS3 and Preschool 4 are self-contained and run on their own schedules. Grades K-5 are also self-contained classes. Grades 6-8 are departmentalized and therefore move from classroom to classroom as their schedule necessitates.

Students are expected to be prepared for all classes, have all correct books and assignments and complete all homework. Their conduct in and out of class should be respectful to all teachers and staff as well as to their classmates.

Photo/Video Release

The school reserves the right to use student pictures in publications such as, but not limited to, a school yearbook, the Diocese of Fall River Catholic Schools Alliance (CSA) website or Facebook account, The Anchor, the SFX School and/or Parish Facebook account, and the school website (www.sfxacushnet.com). Student names are not released in media without the permission of their parent. Any parent, who does not wish his/her child's photo to be used, for print and/or online media must notify the school in writing within one week of school start date, specifically noting the photo limitations requested.

Electronic Devices

All electronic devices are prohibited on school grounds; this includes cell phones, iPads, iPods, Mp3 and any other electronic games, etc. and should not be brought to school without pre-approved permissions. Students have access to school phones if necessary. All phone communication with students should be routed through the main school office at all times. In special circumstances or for special projects, students may be permitted to bring electronic devices to school with a proper permission slip. If a parent of an older student desires that their son/daughter consistently have a phone for an emergency reason for before or after school hours, a written request must be made to the assistant principal for approval and a special permission form/release will be tailored to each situation and must be signed and returned. **Failure to follow this policy will result in confiscation of the device from the student and disciplinary action.**

Email and Related Electronic Correspondence

In accordance with the guidelines of the Diocese of Fall River Catholic Schools Alliance (CSA), students are held responsible for e-mail and other electronic communication, even if it is sent from a home or personal computer. This is especially true if the content matter of said electronic communication interferes with proper behavior at St. Francis Xavier School. Each student at the school is therefore asked to sign at the beginning of each school year an Acceptable Use Agreement form in which they are informed of and promise to adhere to the diocesan guidelines in regards to appropriate use of technology.

Contact Information Release

Your contact information (email, phone number, and home address) will be shared with the Diocese of Fall River Catholic School Alliance (CSA) and Lifetouch for the purpose of contacting you about school related news and events. If you do not want your contact information shared with the Diocese of Fall River Catholic Schools Alliance (CSA) or Lifetouch please notify the school in writing within one week of school start date.

Morning Snack Breaks

Grades K-8 have a ten-minute morning snack break in class. This break is designed to permit students' time to put their materials away from their previous classes and ready themselves for their next class block. They may also have a quick snack in homeroom. **All snacks that are to be eaten in the classroom are to be peanut/tree nut free.** Gum and candy are not permitted. There is also no sharing of food. At the conclusion of break, middle school students proceed to their next class block as quickly and quietly as possible being aware that other classes are in progress.

Recess

There is a 20 minute recess either preceding or following each lunch period for students in grades K-2, 3-5, and 6-8. Faculty/staff/volunteers on recess duty will be enforcing the following recess rules.

Recess Rules

Recess is a privilege and students must display proper Christian behavior in their play, treatment of others, and respect for school property. Unacceptable behavior will result in disciplinary action. The following rules apply:

- Students will exit the building in an orderly fashion.
- Students will place their lunch bags carefully along the wall (if applicable).
- Students should play, have fun, be kind to others, and follow all school rules.
- Keep all wood chips in the play areas.
- When the bell rings or a whistle blows, stop all play. Then walk to your grade level line.
- Enter the school building quietly and check your uniform for neatness.

No toys or recess supplies should be brought from home unless approved by the classroom teacher.

Students must stay in the schoolyard during recess. No students will be permitted to remain in their classroom or other parts of the building during recess unsupervised, for any reason, since all doors must be secured at all times. Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds unsupervised during the school day or during extended day.

Lunch

Full day Small Wonders/PS3 and Preschool 4 (PS4) students eat lunch as a group in the school cafeteria. Students in grades K-2; 3-5; and 6-8 are grouped for lunch periods and will have a 20 minute period of recess either before or after their scheduled lunch time.

Lunch will again be available daily to every student at St. Francis Xavier School, at no charge. Our school district was selected to participate in a new federal program that eliminates all meal fees, regardless of family income levels. This program was designed to serve more nutritious meals and save families money. Massachusetts was one of 10 states, along with the District of Columbia, to pilot the program. It is now available nationwide to communities that meet eligibility requirements. St. Francis

Xavier school was included by New Bedford Public Schools and therefore we are able to offer universal free meals in our school.

Students may bring their own lunch and eating utensils (**plastic**) to school or sign up to receive a hot lunch through our hot lunch program. Care should be taken not to send students to school with items that would spoil or require preparation. A hot lunch (with milk or water) is available daily and is ordered in advance. *Please note the microwave will not be used to warm up individual lunches.*

Students with Food Allergies (Peanut Allergies, etc.)

St. Francis Xavier School does not have the facilities to provide “safe allergy free meals” to students. The Parent/Guardian is responsible daily for providing an allergy free lunch for their child. Personnel and monitors will be made aware of students with allergies. A peanut/nut or specified allergen free lunch table will be provided.

Cafeteria Rules

Cafeteria behavior is to reflect proper etiquette and Christian behavior. Each lunch shift is supervised by teachers and parent/grandparent volunteers. Students enter the cafeteria with their homeroom, sit with their classmates in a designated area during mealtime, and may talk quietly during lunch. Students must display good eating habits, and are dismissed by the volunteer lunch supervisor or teacher by class once they have completed their lunch and cleaned up after themselves. NO FOOD is to be taken outside of the cafeteria. All students are to clean up their personal area and put all trash into the trash barrels and properly dispose of liquids or will not be released to recess. Students are expected to use a reasonable level of talking and are not to run around or be disruptive in the cafeteria. Unacceptable behavior will result in disciplinary action.

After School Programs

Students who need or choose to remain after school to participate in extracurricular programs are asked to sign into the Extended Care Program after official school dismissal is completed. Students in grades 2-8 will begin after school in homework club/study hall until 3pm and will then proceed when called to the designated area of their activity to be greeted by the responsible teacher or coach. **All snacks that are to be eaten in extended care are to be peanut/tree nut free.**

Study/Tutoring

Subject to the availability of tutors, students who are in need of extra help in any subject area may stay after school for tutoring. Arrangements for tutoring should be made through the classroom teacher at least one day in advance for planning and transportation purposes.

Birthdays/Invitations

Invitations to birthday parties or other outside of school class events should be sent to the home of the children that are being invited. Invitations should not be sent to school unless all class members are invited. We understand the need to limit guests at certain times; however, children who do not receive invitations feel left out. The school cannot give out addresses or phone numbers of other students, so please do not request such information from the secretary or any member of the school staff or room parent. Your cooperation in this matter is appreciated.

We celebrate each of our student’s birthdays by mentioning them by name over morning prayer/announcements as a school community each day. A simple snack may be sent to school to be shared with classmates if desired. **If you choose to send in a snack or treat your child’s birthday or**

other classroom party please send in something that is store bought and in the original packaging with ingredient labels. The sharing of the snack is to remain in the classroom of the person celebrating the birthday. If your child would like to visit former teachers and share their birthday treats, it must be done after school so as to not interrupt instructional time. Please refrain from providing balloons, favors or trinkets. Large displays and costumed characters are not appropriate. Please be sure to communicate with the teacher prior to making plans for the day.

Calendar

The school year calendar is posted and updated on the school website outlining breaks, conferences, academic milestones, etc. Parents should make note of vacation and testing dates when planning. School calendars will be prepared monthly identifying school vacations, holidays, parents' meetings, field trips, and all other school events and functions as they near.

Care of Books and School Property

Students are expected to use textbooks and school materials with care and respect. Textbooks must be covered and labeled with the student's name at all times. No "stick-on" book covers are allowed. All textbooks must be transported to and from home in a school bag/backpack. Chromebooks are to be handled with care and utilized according to the Acceptable Use Agreement guidelines. School furniture and other property/equipment must also be treated with care and used with respect. Students are expected to pay in full for textbooks, library books, etc. that they damage or lose through irresponsible or careless behavior. The school administration will determine the cost of lost or damaged books/materials. Vandalism to school property will result in disciplinary action.

School Supplies

Teachers will send a list home of any supplies which are not provided for by the school and for which students are responsible. The school supply list is also posted on the school website.

Lost Articles

Learning to be responsible for one's personal and school belongings is part of growing up. Should personal or school belongings be lost, reasonable efforts will be made to locate the lost articles. Lost and Found is located inside the Swap Shop at the bottom of the main stairwell. All unclaimed articles will be sent to either Goodwill or St. Vincent DePaul if not claimed by the end of each trimester.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

St. Francis' mission is to encourage the overall development of its students' intellectual, personal, cultural and spiritual growth. Therefore, the school promotes programs that increase the students' awareness of sports, performing arts, reading, etc. We offer boys' & girls' basketball, musical performances and other activities at various points during the school year.

Field Trips

St. Francis' field trips are designed to add unique cultural and educational elements to the student's education. Trips expose students to the history of their local world. They are intended to be both a learning experience and a chance to build spirit as well as unity among the students. Field trips are planned on school days during the school hours. A permission slip giving all necessary information about the field trip will be sent home to parents in advance of the trip. Students must return signed permission slips (not notes) and any required fee to participate. When possible, class fundraising and

grants will be used to help defray the cost of trips including bus transportation. Parents are most welcome to help chaperone when space is available. All potential chaperones will be required to fill out any necessary Chaperone Release Forms. **All volunteers for field trips must have completed the Safe Environment Training and CORI check.** Should a parent opt for their child not to participate in a proposed field trip, the child is still expected to attend school in uniform on the day of the trip and will be accommodated in the most appropriate classroom for the day. Should the child not attend school, they will be marked absent. Students who have been issued repeated detentions or who are not meeting the overall expectations as determined by the principal and teacher may be excluded from the field trip.

Participation in School Related Activities or CYO

To participate in boys' & girls' basketball and all other sponsored activities students must be in good academic and behavioral standing. Accordingly, any student receiving two D's and/ or a failing grade will be placed on probation or excused from the program at the discretion of the principal. Disciplinary issues may also be cause for termination or suspension of participation in a CYO sport. This rule is in keeping with all schools in the Diocese. If a student is absent or dismissed early from school due to illness, he/she will not be permitted to participate in evening practices/games.

Extended Care Program

Official school supervision of the children starts at 8:00am and ends at 2:45pm. Students arriving before 7:45am or remaining after 2:45pm will be placed in our Extended Care Program. Parents will be charged accordingly.

The Extended Care Program is available to students in Small Wonders/(PS3) & Preschool 4 (PS4) through grade eight. The program is available on school days including most half days. Sessions are from 6:30am to 8:00am and 2:45pm to 5:30pm. The fee is \$4.50 per hour.

All students must sign-in for extended day. If a student is staying for tutoring they must also sign-in if they are staying beyond 3pm. Children should bring a snack with them.

Students can only be signed out of Extended Care by those adults listed on their family's Emergency Contacts. Any exceptions must be arranged in advance with the school office. For security purposes, anyone entering the school building during Extended Care hours must check-in with Extended Care staff upon entrance, and may be asked to show their photo ID prior to the student release.

Extended Care Billing

- If your child is checked into extended prior to 7:45 am, you will be charged \$4.50, or one hour of extended care.
- It is extremely important for parents to pick up their child(ren) from school prior to 2:45pm, as extended care charges begin at 3:00pm.
- You are charged by the hour, depending on the time of pick-up:
 - Any child checked out between 3:00-4:00pm will be charged for the first hour,
 - Checkout between 4:00-5:00pm is charged for two hours
 - Checkout between 5:00-5:30pm is charged for three hours
- After school clubs/programs generally run from 3-4pm. Certain clubs (such as Track and Campus Ministry Club) are charged regular Extended Care cost (\$4.50/hour). If the activity has a separate charge for participation, extended billing will not apply unless

you are not present to pick up and your child is then checked into extended at the end of the program.

- All extended invoices are sent home in the Friday Folder of the youngest or only child. We require payment on the following Monday. There is no need to return the invoice, just return check payment in the envelope. No cash payments will be accepted unless an adult pays in the office. We welcome advance payment to establish a credit balance.
- Penalties may apply for late pick up.
- If there are outstanding bills, your child may not be able to participate in Extended Care programming.

BEHAVIOR/DISCIPLINE POLICIES

Here at St. Francis Xavier School, our aim is to insure a safe environment in which students can learn. Therefore, it is also our role as educators to expect correct behavior from the students while they are in our care.

St. Francis Xavier has adopted the following **school rules**:

- Be **on time** and **prepared** for school each day (uniform, homework)
- Be respectful of others by using appropriate language and voices
- Behave appropriately and keep hands, feet and all objects to yourself
- Follow the directions of the adult in charge

Demerits

Any student who chooses to violate a school rule or chooses to conduct themselves in such a way that is unbecoming of a Christian student will be issued a demerit slip. Demerits may be issued by any person in authority and must be signed by both parent and student and returned. Problematic behavior choices that led to the issuing of a demerit should be rectified as a part of self-discipline. Repeat demerit offenses are seen as a sign of disrespect by a student toward school expectations and authority, and may result in disciplinary action such as detention and/or certain privileges such as class field trips, classroom/school activities being eliminated, or a parent conference.

Withdrawal for Discipline Reasons

A parent may be asked to withdraw his/her child from school for disciplinary reasons. This will only be undertaken for misconduct of a very serious or repetitive nature. Such a request will be rarely made and only as a last resort for a clear and serious cause.

The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the school. The school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines the partnership with the parents to be irretrievably broken.

Student's Rights

Teachers are human and can make mistakes. That is why teachers will try to allow the student to tell "their side of the story". **Students must do this in a respectful and courteous manner**, during a time at the teacher's discretion. The teacher will listen and do his/her best to judge the situation fairly.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is not an acceptable means of discipline and is never allowed at St. Francis Xavier School. In rare confrontational situations, school personnel may need to use force to promote safety or prevent harm to themselves and other students (i.e. fire drill).

Cheating/Plagiarism

Cheating or copying of another's work is a serious offense and strongly disapproved of at St. Francis Xavier. A student's submission of work that is not truly his or her own is not acceptable. A zero may be given for any work which a student has cheated on, copied, or given to others to be copied; a detention or other disciplinary action may also be issued. In middle school, plagiarism and proper citation is reviewed at length with students. Plagiarism will be considered as cheating and may result in the student receiving a zero for the assignment and detention.

Search

It is the right and responsibility of the school at any time to conduct a search. This may include desks, lockers and other necessary items as determined by the principal.

Substance Abuse

St. Francis Xavier School is a smoke-free, drug-free workplace. The Smoking Restrictions in the School Act prohibits the use of any substance or items, which contain tobacco on school grounds.

Drugs consist of anything considered illegal by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (alcohol and tobacco are included) and, therefore, are not permitted at St. Francis Xavier. Any child in possession of, or under the influence of any drug will have the drug confiscated and their parents and police will be notified immediately. Disciplinary action will be at the discretion of the Principal and proper legal authorities.

Threats to School Safety

In accordance with Diocesan policy, any student proven to have made a threat to school safety shall be expelled without recourse or the possibility of re-admittance to any Catholic school in the diocese. Any instruction time lost in the school evacuation resulting from a threat to school safety shall be made up.

Weapons

No weapons may be brought on school property at any time (toy weapons are also not allowed). Any child in possession of a weapon will have the weapon confiscated and the police and their parents may be notified immediately. The student may be expelled at the discretion of the administration. Items that could be used as a weapon, in the possession of a child, will also be confiscated.

Behavior and Consequences

Attempts to resolve student behavior problems will be handled with utmost care. Steps will be followed to insure that students are given every opportunity to be heard and are treated fairly. Warnings, discussions, and plans for improvement will be formulated with the student. However, repeated disregard for good behavior or a very serious single violation of school policy will be met immediately with severe consequences.

The consequence for inappropriate behavior depends upon how serious the misbehavior is and how often it has occurred. Repeated offenses may involve notifying the parents as well as increasing the severity of the consequence.

The following are some consequences for poor choices:

1. Taking away of a privilege
2. Demerit
3. Detention
4. Excluding the student from field trips or special events
5. Removal from class or school (suspension)
6. Expulsion

Warnings and corrections will be given to students by the classroom teacher for inappropriate behavior or lack of preparation for class. If the behavior is not corrected the classroom teacher may issue a consequence. Suspension and Expulsion are determined by the principal and are issued for severe infractions or repeated offenses. The Student Conduct Addendum in the APPENDIX offers a general guideline for potential offenses and their consequences.

Conduct

Classroom discipline is maintained by the respective classroom teacher. However, the Principal and/or classroom teacher reserves the right to issue detentions for misconduct of students in grades kindergarten through eight. Suspension and expulsion is the sole responsibility of the Principal. **Please note: In the appendix you will find the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan for the Diocese of Fall River as well as a few examples of "conduct unbecoming a Christian student" which will lead to immediate disciplinary action.**

Bullying at schools within the Diocese of Fall River is strictly prohibited, and we hope you take the time to read the addendum in the appendix of this handbook outlining how we as a school work diligently to ensure that the dignity of every child is celebrated and protected within our community.

It must be mentioned that because we are one of very few schools that is not a peanut-free school environment, great care will be taken to educate staff, families and students on what it means to be a facility working with students with Life-Threatening Allergies (LTAs) and how we must be diligent in protecting these valued members of our school community. Please note that families must also join us in *“Educating classmates to avoid endangering, isolating, stigmatizing or harassing students with food allergies. Be aware of how the student with food allergies is being treated; enforce school rules about bullying and threats.”* (Source: *Managing Life Threatening Food Allergies in Schools, Massachusetts Department of Education, Law*)

Detention Policy

Detentions are issued as needed and must be served after school in various assigned, supervised locations. Detentions are held daily after parental notification and the return of a signed detention slip. Failure to return a detention slip by the following day will result in an added detention.

***Please note: Any student serving a detention must be picked up by a parent/guardian immediately following the detention. The student will not be allowed to attend Extended Day on the day of a detention.**

If a student's behavior still does not improve and the student receives more than 3 detention notices, a parent conference will be conducted with the Principal/Assistant Principal.

Types of detentions include:

Classroom Teacher Detention: Any classroom teacher may issue a "personal detention" to a student for misbehavior or misdemeanor. The teacher determines the need of correction (after sufficient warnings have been given). The personal detention will be sent home for a parent's signature and is to be returned to school signed the following day.

The student must remain after school on the day and time determined by the teacher. Personal detentions are served after notification is given so that parents will be able to set up transportation for the students. If a student receives a maximum of five personal detentions, parents may be asked to have a conference with the teacher and possibly the Principal/Assistant Principal.

Administrative Detention: Detentions issued by the Principal's office for chronic or serious infractions are considered Administrative Detentions. This detention will also be sent home to be signed by the parents and returned to school the following day.

Penalty for Detention Notices:

This detention will be served on the date indicated by the Principal/Assistant Principal
1st detention – 3:00-3:45
2nd detention –3:00-4:00
3rd detention –Required parent conference

Suspension

Suspension is invoked for serious and/or repeated infractions of school policies and rules and shall be with the jurisdiction of the Principal. Parents are notified and may be requested to meet with the principal. Suspension may be issued either as in-house or out-of-school. In-house suspensions will be held at school in a supervised area with a dismissal time to be arranged with the parent(s). During suspended time, the student will receive a grade of zero for all quizzes, tests, assignments, etc. he or she has missed. **Please note that these grades cannot be made-up.**

Expulsion

St. Francis Xavier School follows the expulsion policies set forth by the Diocese of Fall River Department of Education. Expulsion is the permanent termination of a student's enrollment, and is a serious matter, invoked only as a last resort. Expulsion is determined by the Principal, after consultation with the Superintendent and the Pastor.

Prior to expulsion, the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) may be granted a hearing by the Principal. If expulsion is determined, the Principal shall notify the parent(s) or guardian of the reasons in writing, and shall file a copy of this notification with the Superintendent.

- St. Francis Xavier School reserves the right to amend, add or change the policies listed within this document as they deem necessary. Parents will be notified of any new policies or changes.
- Any area of discipline that may not be covered will be handled by the Principal.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

St. Francis Xavier School Events Committee (SEC)

The St. Francis Xavier School Events Committee is one which all St. Francis Xavier families automatically belong. Each classroom will have one representative who will have the responsibility of generating interest, involvement and volunteerism. The classroom representative will also answer any questions you may have pertaining to our school fundraising events. Attendance at monthly meetings is mandatory, but not limited to classroom representatives. Any parent is welcome and encouraged to attend monthly SEC meetings.

The St. Francis Xavier School Events Committee works to:

- **generate financial support** for the school and our programs;
- **bring together** parents, pastor, principal and staff who are interested in undertaking cooperative efforts on behalf of Catholic education;
- **foster a spirit of cooperation** between the school and other parish organizations, and activities for the benefit of the school and parish community;
- **promote programs** for the growth and welfare of St. Francis Xavier School and our students;
- **come together** in a spirit of Christian friendship to share our talents and nourish the spirit of service among families.

SFX School Events Committee has a contributing goal of \$35,000, which goes toward the operating budget of our school. In order to meet this goal, all families are strongly encouraged to share of their time, talent and treasure.

There will be many opportunities throughout the school year for families to support our programs and events. SFX School Events Committee will meet monthly and will be announced in the school newsletter as well as on the website. Meeting minutes will also be posted on our school website. For more information, please contact the school to be directed to your SFX School Events Committee grade level representative.

Volunteers

Volunteers make our programs successful by acting as lunch supervisors, librarians, tutors, classroom helpers and much more. Interested parents are asked to consider all the options for service available to our school. Please contact your class' SEC representative to commit your time, talent and treasure! We need your continued attendance and participation in school events to make the year more fruitful for our students. **All volunteers must complete the Safe Environment Training and have a CORI check.**

Communication

Communication between home and school is of vital importance. The principal will keep parents well informed of school events through a weekly newsletter which is sent home by email and linked on the school website. All important school information is sent home within the "Friday Folder" each week, much of which is also sent electronically by email or linked to our website. This is an essential means of communication between home and school. Teachers and parents stay in close contact through the use of their classroom webpages, telephone calls, emails, notes, conferences, and teacher letters.

If a problem arises at school, always check with your child first to help you better understand the situation. Then, discuss the situation if necessary, with the teacher. If more information is needed, the principal can be contacted.

Grievance Policy

It is integral to the school's philosophy that a spirit of cooperation exists among parents, teachers, and students. Our policy is based on the Catholic church's principle of subsidiarity.

The principle of subsidiarity is based on the dignity of the human person. An integral part of the individual person's dignity is the ability for self-direction and ability to be entrusted with responsibilities both great and small. Thus, the principle of subsidiarity states that all the matters entrusted to a particular person at a lower level should not be interfered with or taken over by those at higher levels. Similarly, when problems arise at the lower levels, they should *first* be addressed at those lower levels *before* recourse is made to the higher levels.

Applied to the school community, the principle of subsidiarity would direct individuals as follows:

- A student having difficulty with his/ her teacher's procedures/decisions, etc., would first make the problem known to that teacher. (It would be a violation of the principle, as well as a failure to respect the teacher's dignity, for the student to make the problem known only to the school principal.)
- A parent having difficulty with a teacher's procedures/decisions, etc., would first make the problem known to that teacher. (It would be a violation of the principle, as well as a failure to respect the teacher's dignity, for the parent to make the problem known only to the school principal.)
- A teacher having difficulty with a school policy/procedure/decision, etc. would first make the problem known to the principal. (It would be a violation of the principle, as well as a failure to respect the principal's dignity, for the teacher to make the problem known only to the pastor.)
- A principal having difficulty with a school-parish policy/decision, etc., would first make the problem known to the pastor. (It would be a violation of the principle, as well as a failure to respect the pastor's dignity, for the principal to make the problem known only to the bishop.)

The attention of persons at higher levels of authority is sought only when sincere efforts with the lower level have been made and have failed.

The principle of subsidiarity invites those who work together to maintain open lines of communication, attributing to others the virtues of good judgment, the willingness to listen, and, most of all, charity. It also fosters growth among members of a community, encouraging and accepting the valuable contributions that can come from others who have a different perspective.

Difficulties and problems should be solved at the local level of authority if at all possible. The following guide is given:

- Approach the person with whom there is a problem and attempt to resolve the dispute.
- If efforts to solve the issue on this level fail, take the concerns to the principal.
- If a good faith resolution cannot be reached with the principal, contact the pastor.
- If a resolution cannot be reached with the pastor, the superintendent of schools may be contacted.

It bears repeating that the education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the school. The school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines the partnership is irretrievably broken.

Custody Documentation

Information regarding custody and visitation rights must be communicated in writing to the school office. Divorced or separated legal guardians are responsible for providing the school office with the most recent copy of the court certified divorce decree section concerning custody and visitation of the child(ren) enrolled at St. Francis Xavier School.

Financial Obligations

Tuition and Fees

The primary source of financial support for St. Francis Xavier School is student tuition and is payable according to the options set forth in the Tuition Contract.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

1. **Tuition Payment in Full**--An invoice will be sent for August payment for payment by cash or check. A 5% transaction fee will be applied to any credit card payment.
2. **Tuition Payments by the Month**-- Facts Tuition Management Co. handles monthly tuition payments. It involves a bank to bank withdrawal. It also necessitates the completion of a contract in April. Payments are made over 10 or 11 months and usually begin in July. There is a one time transaction fee by Facts Tuition Management.

Family Fundraising Requirement

Each family is responsible for meeting a \$300.00 per family fundraising obligation.

Your family fundraising obligation is part of the tuition obligation and is applicable for all students. If you participate in the designated MAJOR FUNDRAISERS, you may receive credits to this fee. We try to provide a variety of fundraising programs throughout the year to make it easier for each family to meet its obligation. These fundraisers have included the Otis Spunkmeyer cookie sales (40%), the Grocery Certificates Program (5%), and Fund-It Gift Cards (% varies), as well as the Boosterthon Fun Run (%varies). Participation in all fundraisers is optional. The balance, if any, of this payment is due by mid May of the current school year.

The school relies on fundraising money as well as tuition to meet budgeted expenses and curriculum improvements. We encourage you to participate in as many fundraising opportunities as you can. If your family raises more than your obligation amount, the money continues to benefit our children by funding additional educational expenses and improvements such as the school's *Call of the Heart Fund*.

APPENDICES

The following pages contain:

- St. Francis Xavier School Uniform Code
- Planned Family Vacation Notification Form
- Structured Alternative Learning (SAL) Day Policy
- Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan for the Diocese of Fall River
- Student Conduct Addendum
- Handbook Agreement Form
 - On the last page of this handbook, parents and students will find an agreement form, A copy of this form is given to families at the start of the year to sign and return with their child on the first day of school.

St. Francis Xavier School Uniform Code 2019-2020

The dress code is in effect from the first day of school until the last day of school unless otherwise determined by the principal. **Please refer to the Handbook for additional information re: skirt and gym short length, haircuts, jewelry, Spirit Wear, etc. Our SWAP SHOP is available at the school year round for uniform exchanges. To order uniforms, please call Donnelly's Uniform Apparel at 800-498-0045 or visit their website linked on our homepage. *Please call or email school administration with any questions.

Pre-school-3 (Small Wonders) and Pre-school 4	Kindergarten through Grade 5
<p>Small Wonders (PS3): No uniform required for our 3 year olds. Comfortable neat attire expected as well as sneakers or closed- toe shoes (velcro closure recommended)</p> <p>Pre-School 4 (PS4):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boys-- are expected to wear a SFX maroon polo shirt (short/long sleeve) with pants of their choice. Girls-- Maroon SFX polo dress or Maroon SFX polo shirt with bottoms of their choice. Comfortable neat attire expected as well as sneakers or closed- toe shoes (velcro closure recommended) 	<p>GIRLS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JUMPER Maroon & gray plaid jumper (modesty shorts must be worn underneath) SHIRT Maroon polo (short/long sleeve) or turtleneck with school logo SOCKS Knee/ankle-length/crew or tights (maroon, gray, black) SHOES Black Mary Jane style shoes with rubber soles (no boat shoes or “sneaker type” shoes) Optional Maroon or gray cardigan sweater with school logo. <p>BOYS: When choosing sizes, please note: SHIRTS MUST BE TUCKED IN AT ALL TIMES.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLACKS Gray trousers (corduroy, plain or pleated) or gray shorts (Aug/Sept and May/June only) SHIRT Maroon polo (short/long sleeve) or turtleneck with school logo BELT Plain black belt SOCKS Black socks SHOES Black formal shoes with rubber soles (no boat shoes or “sneaker type” shoes) Optional: Maroon sweater with school logo.
<p>*GYM/PE Uniform Required for ALL BOYS and GIRLS (Kindergarten – Grade 8) *optional for PS4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHIRT Gray t-shirt (short/long sleeved) with school logo PANTS Maroon sweatpants or Maroon gym shorts (fingertip length) without logo SOCKS White socks SHOES Sneakers Optional: Gray sweatshirt with school logo; Gray “wicking” short sleeve shirt with school logo 	
Middle School (Grades 6-8)	
<p>MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS (Standard Uniform):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SKIRT Maroon & gray plaid skirt (modesty shorts must be worn underneath) SHIRT Maroon polo (short/long sleeve) or turtleneck with school logo SOCKS Knee/ankle-length/crew or tights (maroon, gray, black) SHOES Black Mary Jane Style shoes with rubber soles (no boat shoes or “sneaker type” shoes) 	<p>MIDDLE SCHOOL BOYS (Standard Uniform): When choosing sizes, please note: SHIRTS MUST BE TUCKED IN AT ALL TIMES.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLACKS Gray trousers (corduroy, plain or pleated) or gray shorts (Aug/Sept and May/June only) SHIRT Maroon polo (short/long sleeve) or turtleneck with school logo BELT Plain black belt SOCKS Black socks SHOES Black formal shoes with rubber soles (no boat shoes or “sneaker type” shoes)
<p>**SPECIAL OCCASION 6-8 GIRLS Uniform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> White ¾ sleeve fitted shirt; Maroon crossover tie; <u>Gray</u> V-neck sweater vest or sweater with school logo (Sweater/Sweater vest REQUIRED Nov 1-May 1) 	<p>**SPECIAL OCCASION 6-8 BOYS Uniform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> White, long sleeve, button-down collared shirt (short sleeve shirt allowed Aug/Sept and May/June ONLY); striped Donnelly's tie; <u>Maroon</u> V-neck sweater vest or sweater with logo (Sweater/Sweater vest REQUIRED Nov 1-May 1)

Planned Family Vacation Notification Form

This form should be submitted at least one week prior to planned vacation.

Student's Name (please print)	Grade

Dates of planned absence: _____

Total number of School Days of Absence: _____

PLEASE NOTE: Schoolwork will not be provided before family vacations. The student bears the responsibility of the completion of all work missed due to absences because of a family vacation. Students will be permitted to make up all of the work missed within a period of time equal to half the number of school days missed. Any work not made up after the allotted time will receive a zero.

To keep current while out, please check the the class teacher's Google Site on the school website.

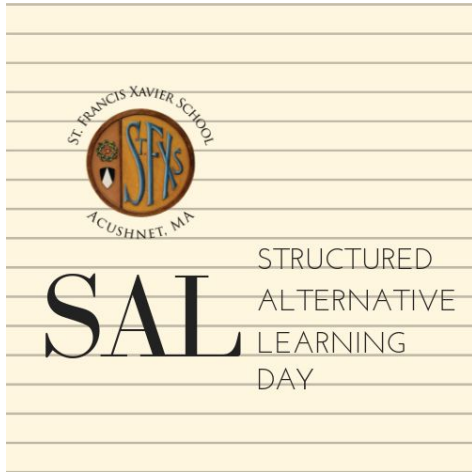
While we recognize the need to take a family vacation when a parent or guardian's work schedule permits, Massachusetts state law requires students to be in school while it is in session, and doesn't allow a family vacation as an approved reason for absence.

Turning in this form to the school will eliminate the need to call your home daily while your child is out for a vacation. It will also eliminate the need for a doctor's note after five consecutive school days missed.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ **Date:** _____

Signature of School Administrator: _____ **Date:** _____

*A blank copy of form can be found on our school website (under "Forms and Docs"). A copy of the completed form will be given to the child(ren)'s teachers for documentation and to assist in planning for makeup work.



Structured Alternative Learning (SAL) Days

When students are unable to be in the school building due to circumstances beyond our control...

(physical safety concerns--i.e. inclement weather, power outage, gas leak, heat/boiler issue, construction, structural damage, etc.)
...teaching and learning can continue!

What happens?

- Automated phone call, email, **and/or** school website/social media will announce if a SAL day will be put into effect as soon as we are aware of the need.
- K-8 Students complete SAL day assignments given for subject areas that would normally be covered on the day.
- All assignments must be completed and turned in for a grade.

Why?

Structured Alternative Learning will be initiated so that:

- Safety of the students comes first
- Students/ teachers avoid academic interruption
- SAL days satisfy school day requirements (no calendar makeup days!)

Academic Expectations:

Instruction

Teachers will provide digital (or other) instruction for students to complete. Teachers will assign work for each class/subject they would typically see on that day. For self-contained classes (K-5), teachers will plan for all five major subjects (math, literacy, religion, science and social studies). Integration of subjects/assignments is encouraged.

Performance

Students complete the assigned tasks associated with teacher-provided instruction. It is expected that students are engaged in learning activities for approximately 45 minutes to 2 hours, depending on the grade level of the students.

Communication

Teachers will be available to students and parents via email or on the Google Classroom during designated times during the SAL day.

Practical Logistics:

- Students should bring materials home when a SAL day is predicted
- Teachers will post SAL assignments on their Google site and/or Google Classroom by 9am on the day
- SAL work is due the following school day unless otherwise noted by teachers
- All work counts and will be graded/counted toward trimester averages
- Not all snow days will be SAL days. It is unlikely that St. Francis will call a SAL day for multiple days in a row in the event that we have more than one cancellation in a row
- This is a pilot program, and subject to review and amendment (*Revised April 2019*)

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN FOR THE DIOCESE OF FALL RIVER

“Every human being is created in the image of God and redeemed by Jesus Christ, and therefore is invaluable and worthy of respect as a member of the human family.

The body of Catholic social teaching opens with the human person, but it does not close there. Individuals have dignity; individualism has no place in Catholic social thought. The principle of human dignity gives the human person a claim on membership in a community, the human family.” (Taken from Byron, William J. S.J., *Ten Building Blocks of Catholic Social Teaching*. (2010). America: The National Catholic Weekly. American Press Inc.)

This plan is to be an addendum to the parent/student handbook, and it will immediately become part of the policy book of the Diocese of Fall River. The plan will be available on the diocesan website as well as each school’s website.

The Diocese of Fall River will review and/or update the plan at least biennially. The school will give notice to and provide a comment period for families that have a child attending the school. The plan shall apply to students and members of the school staff, including but not limited to educators, administrators, school nurses.

Parents/guardians and students shall receive annual written notice of the relevant student-related sections of the plan.

All school staff shall receive annual written notice of the plan. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the plan applicable to the school. Relevant sections of the plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook.

I. Definitions

The Diocese of Fall River and Name of School prohibits bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation as defined below. Bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation can occur on or off school property, and during or outside of school hours.

“Bullying” is the repeated use by one or more students *or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional* of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim’s property; places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the school. ***For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.*** (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

“Cyber-bullying” is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include: the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted

content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions included in the definition of bullying. (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

“Retaliation” against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be prohibited. (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

“Hostile Environment” is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student’s education. (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

“Aggressor” is a student, *or a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional*, who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.

“Target” is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

“Staff” includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals. (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

Bullying shall be prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school and (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions or programs. (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

II. Formal Procedure for Reporting

Students are to report any and all bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation to teachers or staff.

Staff and teachers are to report any and all bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation to the principal or his or her designee.

Parents, guardians, and others are to report all bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation to the principal or his or her designee.

This reporting may be done verbally or in writing. This reporting of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation may be made anonymously; however, no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. The principal and his or her designee will respond to and investigate all **credible** reports of bullying, and ensure proper documentation. This investigation will provide for the following:

- **Safety of the target**

The principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidences. Responses to promote safety may include but are not limited to: predetermining seating arrangements in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the classroom schedule to reduce that aggressor’s access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during or after the investigation, as necessary.

- **Protection of the reporter, witness, or provider of information during the investigation**

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting a student who has reported/witnessed or provided information during an investigation of a bullying situation. These responses may include but are not limited to the same responses noted for the safety of the target.

- **Notification, including the parents of both the target and the aggressor, as well as notification of law enforcement**

- a. **Parents/Guardians**: Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.
- b. **Notice to another school**: If the incident involves students from more than one school, the principal or designee will notify by phone any and all schools so that each may take appropriate action.
- c. **Notice to Catholic Education Center**: After determining that bullying has taken place, notice should be given immediately to the superintendent or his or her designee.
- d. **Notice to law enforcement**: At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal or designee will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the law and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency.

III. Investigation

The principal or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

IV. Determinations

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefitting from school activities. The principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

V. Range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against an aggressor for bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation

Each school in the Diocese of Fall River will include bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation into the age appropriate disciplinary code that is included in the student/parent handbook. These disciplinary codes may include, but are not limited to, suspension and expulsion.

VI. Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

VII. At the discretion of the principal or his or her designee, counseling or referrals to Catholic Social Services will be made available to targets, aggressors, and/or family members.

*****Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent the school administration from taking disciplinary action against a student for conduct that does not meet the definition of bullying, as defined above, but nevertheless is inappropriate for the school environment.***

STUDENT CONDUCT (addendum):

Students at St. Francis Xavier School are expected to demonstrate Christian conduct at all times toward their neighbor. It is understood that students may make poor choices in their behavior and will be disciplined accordingly.

The following are a few examples of "conduct unbecoming a Christian student" which will lead to immediate disciplinary action:

Incident	First offense	Repeat
● Possession of tobacco product	Parent contact, detention	Suspension
● Smoking, use of or sale of tobacco	Parent contact, detention	Suspension
● Possession of alcohol	Parent contact, suspension	Expulsion
● Sale of alcohol	Parent contact, suspension	Expulsion
● "Under the influence"	Parent contact, suspension, Referral	Expulsion
● Use of inhalants	Parent contact, police contact Possible suspension or expulsion	Expulsion
● Sale, possession, use of drugs	Parent contact, police contact Suspension or expulsion	Expulsion
● Possession of a weapon	Parent contact, police contact	Expulsion
● Assault on staff	Parent contact, possible police contact, suspension or expulsion	Expulsion
● Bomb threat	Parent contact, police contact Suspension or expulsion	Expulsion
● Sexual abuse	Parent contact, police contact	Expulsion
● Possession of pornographic material	Parent contact, detention	Suspension

The following are meant to serve as general guidelines for disciplinary actions.

Actions which may result in demerit (may include but are not limited to):

- Cheating or lying
- Plagiarism
- Disrespectful and/or inappropriate behavior
- Use of inappropriate language
- Intimidation of others
- Unnecessary noise
- Stealing or using other's belongings without permission
- Refusal to follow directions
- Repeated tardiness
- Refusal to work
- Refusal to follow classroom rules
- Repeated incomplete or missing assignments
- Failure to return signed papers/report cards
- Failure to have necessary supplies
- Uniform infractions
- Disorderly conduct
- Misbehavior in bathrooms

- Failure to observe playground rules
- Engaging in physical or verbal abuse
- Leaving classroom without permission
- Leaving grounds without permission
- Vandalism of school property or the property of others
- Failure to comply with school rules and/or policies

Behaviors that may cause detention, suspension or expulsion (may include but are not limited to):

- Continuous attitude of disrespect
- Arguing with authority
- Insolence, disrespect or insubordination
- Profanity, crude or vulgar language
- Stealing or borrowing without permission
- Vandalism of personal or school property
- Changing a grade or grades on papers or report cards
- Forgery of parent or guardian's signature
- Dangerous behavior to self or others
- Harassment of any type
- Threatening, fighting, intimidating or causing bodily harm to others
- Assault on or threat to a staff member
- Threats to the school, staff or student body (including bomb threats)
- Possession of dangerous weapons

Sexting:

Sexting is defined by the State of Massachusetts as “sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit messages, photos, or images via cell phone, computer, or other digital devices.” This can include sending intimate pictures or video via text message or through apps such as Snapchat and Instagram.

The electronic transmission or receipt from one minor to another of any photograph or video that depicts nudity may constitute illegal sexting. Students engaged in sexting will be subject to serious disciplinary consequences which may include expulsion from school. In addition, the school administration may report instances of sexting to the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) or local law enforcement for appropriate investigation as to violations of law.

Smoking/Vaping:

Massachusetts State Law prohibits smoking or vaping in a school building and on school property. Smoking or vaping is prohibited at all times in the school building, in its parking lot, playing fields and other property. This prohibition applies to faculty, staff, parents, and all visitors to the school. Smoking or vaping on the sidewalk in front of the school building is not allowed. This policy includes cigarettes, cigars, pipe or any other matter or substance containing tobacco, as well as the use of electronic cigarettes (e cigarettes), personal vaporizers, vape pens, e-cigars, e-hookah, vaping devices, mod systems, pod systems or any similar systems.

It is a violation of Massachusetts law for any minor to knowingly possess any tobacco product, nicotine product, or nicotine dispensing device. In addition, the use of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes,

and vaping carry known health risks that can be very serious. The use of any tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, and/or vaping in any form is prohibited on school property and at any school events. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary consequences which may include expulsion from school.



2019-2020 Handbook Agreement Form

I have read and reviewed the contents of the St. Francis Xavier School Parent Handbook containing our Discipline and Computer Policy with my child/children. We understand the policies and expectations set forth in this document by St. Francis Xavier School and will abide by them.

The Handbook was revised and published in August 2019. An official bulletin or letter will inform parents and students of changes made to this document after August 2019.

Student's Name (please print)	Grade	Student's Signature

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ **(please print)**

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Your acknowledgement and signature will be kept on file for the duration of the student's enrollment or until an updated handbook is published. This document should be retained for ongoing review with your child(ren).

For office use only:

Date returned: _____

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