



ST. RAPHAEL ACADEMY
CATHOLIC ACADEMY OF BRIDGEPORT

PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

2025 – 2026

“Providing Students and Families with... Something More”

ST. RAPHAEL ACADEMY

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Phone: 203-333-6818

www.catholicacademybridgeport.org

Handbook Last Revised: July 31, 2025

PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport is rooted in the person of Jesus and in the mission entrusted by Him to the Church. Through education the Church seeks to prepare its members to proclaim the Gospel and to translate this proclamation into action. Consequently, the purpose of the school is to expose students to a Catholic Christian way of life based on the Gospels and the principles of freedom, equality and respect for individual rights. The faculty aims to provide a quality education by assisting each child's spiritual, intellectual, physical, moral and aesthetic development in order that all students will acquire a sense of their responsibility toward God, self and others.

The educational climate of the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport fosters these values by acknowledging the uniqueness and potential for growth of each individual. The faculty endeavors to meet the individual needs of each student and to create a warm, supportive atmosphere. Efforts are made to help each child develop a healthy self concept.

United in a spirit of charity among themselves and with those they teach, faculty members strive to witness to the Gospel message by their own lives as well as by their teachings. The same spirit is encouraged among the children at all grade levels. Our aim is to help students integrate their faith into every area of living. In this way, students will acquire the skills and virtues needed to grow in service to God, the Church, their parishes, the general community and one another.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the four campuses of the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport is to provide a Catholic, Christ-centered, academically rigorous learning environment where cultural diversity is welcomed and celebrated. Students are nurtured, encouraged and challenged in preparation for a successful life of leadership and service.

Principal's Right to Amend Handbook

St. Raphael Academy reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the school communication system.

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ORGANIZATION

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 1.100 - Ecclesiastical Authority

Catholic schools are governed by Canon Law, the law of the Catholic Church. Canon Law gives the bishop the jurisdiction to approve schools, exercise vigilance over them, and implement policies and procedures governing them. All Catholic schools are subject to the Bishop in matters of faith and morals, and in all other matters prescribed by the Code of Canon Law. Canon Law gives the bishop the jurisdiction to approve school, exercise vigilance over them, and implement policies and procedures governing them. The bishop coordinates this ministry through the Secretariat of Catholic Education and Faith Formation and the Office of the Superintendent of Schools.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 1.101 – Superintendent of Catholic Schools

The Superintendent is appointed by the bishop, represents him in Catholic educational matters and acts as his liaison to the schools.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 1.104 – Pastor

The Pastor of each parish where a Diocesan elementary school is located has the responsibility for the spiritual and liturgical life of the school community. The Pastor works collaboratively with the Principal regarding the physical plant of the school. The pastor is responsible for the envelope of the elementary school.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 1.105 – Principal

The Principal is the educational and spiritual leader of the school community. The highest priority of the Principal is the building of a Christian community of faith that provides for the spiritual, moral, educational, intellectual, aesthetical, emotional, social, and physical needs of the students in the school.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 1.109 – Assistant to the Principal

When an elementary school does not have an assistant principal, an assistant to the Principal should be named. This person is responsible in the absence of the Principal and is typically a full-time teacher...He/she should understand the emergency procedures of the school and be knowledgeable about appropriate action to fulfill the role of the Principal in case of the Principal's temporary absence from the building.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 1.112 - Parent Organization (aka HSA)

Each school shall have a parent organization (Home School Association or similar organization), which operates by established by-laws.

All disbursements from income raised by parent organizations at a Diocesan elementary school are to be determined by the Principal in collaboration with the parent organization. Parent organizations are required to follow the fiscal policies and procedures of the Office of School Finance. Home School Associations may not operate a bank account without knowledge and approval of the Director of School Finance.

It is recommended that, whenever funds are raised for a specific purpose, it also be made known that if the specific purpose is not met, or the specific purpose cannot be met, that the funds shall be used for the general advancement of the school. Where appropriate, the parent organization is strongly encouraged to support the school's annual fund.

Every currently enrolled school family is automatically a member of the HSA and is asked to volunteer at some level. Volunteering not only provides the help needed to run all of the activities, but more importantly makes families feel involved in the life of the school.

In addition to volunteering, each family is expected to support and promote the school's major fundraisers as established by the administrator. Supporting the fundraisers involves primarily volunteering time and talent, along with a small donation to the Annual Fund, so that we can show strong support from our current community to current and prospective donors.

The Diocese of Bridgeport requires that any adult volunteer comply with the Safe Environments Policies. Volunteers are required to authorize a background check and attend the Virtus Training Program.

Background check forms are available in the school office. Schedules for the Virtus Training program are available on the Diocesan website by visiting www.Virtus.org and searching for the Diocese of Bridgeport.

The Catholic Academy of Bridgeport complies with all Safe Environment policies and encourages parents to become certified to ensure the ability to participate in school events.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 1.113 - Connecticut Federation of Catholic School Parents

The Connecticut Federation of Catholic School Parents shall advocate public policy to protect, preserve and promote the rights that children in Catholic school are provided to the fullest extent of the law. The Federation is committed to empowering Catholic school parents and the Catholic school community regarding their rights concerning the education of children attending Catholic schools.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 1.114 – NEASC Accreditation

All schools shall seek, maintain and promote accreditation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

St. Andrew, St. Ann, St. Augustine and St. Raphael have received accreditation from New England Association of Schools and Colleges. The Catholic Academy of Bridgeport completed the Self-Study necessary to receive accreditation in 2018 as one school.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 1.115 – Bishop Visits and Communication

All requests and communication to the bishop by school administrators, teachers, staff, students, parent organizations and boards must be made through the superintendent.

Parents as Primary Educator

The Catholic Academy of Bridgeport believes that parents and guardians are the primary educators of their children. It is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for your child's physical, mental, spiritual, emotional and psychological development. Your choice of the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child recognize God as the greatest good in his or her life. We consider it a privilege to partner with parents in this endeavor.

Good example is the strongest teacher. Your relationship with God, with each other and with the community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless they are nurtured by the examples set at home.

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at Catholic Academy of Bridgeport, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of nourishing yet challenging the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation, new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times, your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits which provide a young person with both guidance and security.

It is essential that a child take responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments. This responsibility also extends to times of absence.

Together, let us begin each year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she is capable of becoming. As partners in the educational process at the Catholic Academy, we ask parents and guardians:

- To set rules, times and limits so that your child:

- Arrives on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day
- Is in proper uniform
- Completes assignments on time and with quality
- Has a nutritional breakfast, brings a healthy snack, and orders or brings a healthy lunch
- Goes to bed early on school nights
- To actively participate in activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences
- To see that the student assumes responsibility for any damage to books or property due to his/her carelessness or neglect
- To notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent (in addition to calling the school to advise of absence)
- To notify the school office of any changes of home address, email address or important phone numbers
- To meet all financial obligations
- To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety and health
- To promptly complete and return any requested information
- To read notes, newsletters, e-mails, weekly, to show interest in the student's total education;
- To support the religious and educational goals of the school;
- To support and cooperate with the code of conduct;
- To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems;
- To become involved in the life of the school by volunteering, supporting the Annual Fund, and participating in annual fundraising;
- To promote the school to friends, neighbors and family members, as we know that "word of mouth" is our best marketing tool.

Parents and guardians are also expected to uphold the behavior expectations and rules of courtesy for their children, including siblings of students or other guests, at school events. This includes supporting our expectation of courteous, non-distracting, and safe behavior on school and church property during events.

This means:

- No running or horseplay;
- No swinging on poles;
- No playing on the "stage" area, including jumping on and off;
- Per Diocesan policy, no alcoholic beverages are allowed at events when children are present.

Examples of behavior that "*seriously interferes with teaching, learning, and the orderly operation of the school*", includes, but is not limited to:

- Loud and/or abusive language toward a teacher, administrator or staff member;
- Demanding to see a teacher, administrator or staff member without an appointment, or otherwise interfering with that person's regular duties (e.g. "conferencing" at arrivals or dismissal with a teacher who is on duty);
- Utilizing social media to air grievances with the school;
- Initiating or participating in a petition against the school.

ADMINISTRATION

CATHOLIC ACADEMY BOARD of DIRECTORS

MEMBERS

Bishop Frank Caggiano
Msgr. Thomas Powers
Mrs. Stacie Stueber

DIRECTORS

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Mrs. Marylou Queally Salvati
Mr. Michael Sweeney
Mr. Sergio Toni
Mr. Thomas J. Walsh, Jr.

ST. RAPHAEL ACADEMY ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Devin Lynch, Principal
Mrs. Carol Bartolomei, Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Keila Hernandez, Administrative Assistant

SCHOOL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

School Hours

Arrivals Supervision Begins	7:15 a.m.
School Begins	7:30 a.m. (students must be in homeroom)
Tardy Bell	7:35 a.m.

***Note: Students who arrive after 7:35 a.m. are considered tardy.**

Lunch & Recess	10:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. (depending on grade)
Closing Prayer	1:45 p.m.
Dismissal	2:00 p.m.

Extended Day Program	Dismissal – 5:30 p.m.
• Academic Hour/Tutoring (K-3)	Dismissal – 2:45 p.m. (K) or 3:00 p.m. (1st – 3rd)

Office Hours – School Year	7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Office Hours – Summer	8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Monday - Thursday

Delayed Opening (1 hour)	
Arrivals Supervision Begins	8:00 a.m.
School Begins	8:30 a.m.

Delayed Opening (90 minutes)	
Arrivals Supervision Begins	8:30 a.m.
School Begins	9:00 a.m.

Delayed Opening (2 hours)	
Arrivals Supervision Begins	9:00 a.m.
School Begins	9:30 a.m.

Early Dismissal	
Closing Prayer	11:15 am
Dismissal	11:30 am

After School Care is **CLOSED** when Early Dismissal is for weather-related or other emergencies.

Early Closing and Delayed Openings

The Catholic Academy will follow the Bridgeport Public School System decision regarding delayed openings or early dismissals due to inclement weather or other emergency situations. We will also utilize the Rediker Notify system to alert all parents and guardians to the announcement. Please do not call the school as this will unnecessarily tie up phone lines. If an early dismissal announcement is made, we implement the dismissal procedures parents/guardians have indicated in the Dismissal Section of this parent handbook. You must have an emergency number listed where someone can be reached at all times. Make sure your child knows what to do if an early closing is announced. NOTE: Should Bridgeport Public Schools close for HEAT RELATED issues, the Catholic Academy will be OPEN since all classroom spaces are air conditioned.

Transportation, Arrival and Dismissal Policies

We ask that you, as a parent, read carefully and follow these procedures which will ensure the safety of your children.

- For the safety of all, please be patient and model the virtues we wish to instill in our children, particularly at drop-off and dismissal times.

- From 7:15 a.m. – 7:30 a.m., cars pull into the school drop-off line through the FRANK STREET gate. Cars form a single file and students will exit the car and walk to the front door of school for entry. Cars then exit on to OAK STREET. No cars may enter through Oak Street.
- St. Raphael Staff are outside to supervise children as they disembark from cars and walk to the front door.
- Parents MAY NOT drop their children off on the street. It is unsafe for children to enter the moving traffic. All cars must join the car line.
- Parents who walk their children to school should enter through the sidewalk along CENTER STREET and follow the SIDEWALK to the front door of school. Do NOT walk through moving traffic.
- In the morning, children will report to their designated area (cafeteria or school building).
- At dismissal, do not park along the fence bordering the parking lot as this is reserved for the buses.
- From 2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m., cars enter the parking lot through the FRANK STREET gate and form a single file line.
- All cars MUST display the car tags for EACH child they will be picking up. Any unrecognized drivers will be asked to show ID and their suitability to pick-up any child will be verified with the school office.
- Any changes in a child's regular dismissal routine must be sent to the office in writing.

Tardiness

- Students should arrive by 7:30 a.m.
- At 7:35 a.m., the tardy bell rings and the school day officially begins. Students not seated in their homeroom by the 7:35 a.m. tardy bell are marked tardy.
- The Frank Street gate closes just BEFORE the tardy bell.
- All students arriving tardy after the FRANK STREET gate has closed must be accompanied by an adult to the FRONT OFFICE of school. Ring the bell and enter WITH the student into the front office. The accompanying adult must sign the student into the office and give an explanation for tardiness to the school principal (or administrative assistant).
- Tardiness must be kept to a minimum. Tardiness has a significant detrimental impact on students starting their day in an organized and positive manner. *Your cooperation is essential.*

Early Dismissal

Students are learning until the end of the school day. We ask parents, whenever possible, to make appointments for their children ***after*** school hours. If you need to have your student dismissed early, please call or send a note to the school office that includes the date/time of dismissal and the reason for dismissal. ***Early dismissal must take place before 1:30 p.m. and all students must be signed out with the front office by a parent or guardian.***

Morning Snack/Lunches/Snacks

Students may choose to participate in the free breakfast snack program. Students may eat an alternate snack from home. This must be a healthy breakfast snack like granola bar or fruit. Students may NOT eat chips or cookies during breakfast snack time. It is not permitted to eat “fast-food” or “carry-out” food in the classroom at any time.

Students must bring lunch from home or participate in the free lunch program at school. It is not permitted to bring in “fast food” or “carry-out” lunches or have them delivered to students. Students are not allowed to eat snacks for lunch. Students may drink a juice box or water bottle at lunch. They may not have sugary drinks including but not limited to soda.

Due to severe food allergies, students may NOT bring any foods that contain peanuts or other nuts. This includes and is not limited to peanut butter, nutella, or candy with nuts or peanut butter. If a student has items containing nuts, they will be confiscated. Students will be offered food from the free-breakfast/free-lunch/free-snack program as replacement.

Recess

Students in grades PreK - grade 3 have recess every day. During inclement weather, recess will be held in the classrooms. The Catholic Academy of Bridgeport follows the Connecticut State Department of Education guidelines (www.sde.ct.gov) about safe temperatures for children to be outdoors. "Children can go outside when the temperatures are above 15 degrees Fahrenheit (including wind chill factor) and below 90 degrees Fahrenheit." These guidelines assume children have proper clothing (coats, hats, gloves) during the winter months. A teacher will use his/her discretion and may keep a child indoors if he/she does not have proper clothing.

Permission to Photograph

On your admissions application, you will be asked to consent to media and permission to use your child's photograph for marketing purposes. If you do not select the "Opt Out" option, the specific Diocesan policy applies as follows:

The Catholic Academy of Bridgeport and the Diocese of Bridgeport have active marketing programs. Students and their work may appear in school newsletters, newspapers, brochures, videos, websites and official social media pages as well as other promotional material. Such productions may be used for educational or marketing purposes and may be copied or copyrighted with the school retaining any and all rights.

I hereby give permission to the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport, the Diocese of Bridgeport and its agents and representatives to take photographs and/or videos of my child while he/she is participating in-school sponsored activities for as long as he/she is a student at the school. In addition, I hereby give permission to the school to use such photographs and/or video in perpetuity for any purpose and in any manner deemed appropriate by the school, in any media, including, without limitation, print, video and web-based uses. I understand that such use may include, without limitation, use in connection with school yearbooks, newsletters, newspapers, brochures, websites, and promotional materials. I understand that the school has complete editorial discretion with regard to use of such photographs and video and that I will not be compensated in any way for any such use.

I release and forever discharge the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport and the Diocese of Bridgeport, its affiliates, officers, agents, representatives and successors from any claims, costs, liabilities, and or expenses, including without limitation, any claims of invasions of privacy, defamation, violation of publicity rights, and hereby hold St. Raphael Academy and the Diocese of Bridgeport and its agents harmless from and against such claims.

Student Use of the Telephone

Students are allowed to use the office phone only in emergencies. Calling home for such things as forgotten homework, lunch and gym clothing or to arrange permission to go to another student's home after school is not permitted.

Students may NOT use any electronic devices brought from home during the school day for any reason. This includes but is not limited to smart phones, tablets, Apple Watch, and Nintendo Switch, among others. If a student uses one of these devices from home during the school day, it will be confiscated and kept in the office. A parent or guardian must come to school to retrieve it.

Messages for Students/ Afternoon Announcements

All announcements will be made at 1:45 p.m. just before dismissal. Parents wishing to get a message to a child or change dismissal must call the school **before 1:30 p.m.**

Communication Between Home and School

1. St. Raphael Academy primarily communicates through email. Please make sure that you have an active email on file to remain up-to-date with information from the school. Emails are sent through our student information database system during the school year, containing important reminders and time-sensitive information, including early dismissal announcements or school delays. At the beginning of the school year, parents will be asked to submit emergency contact information. It is the parents' responsibility to update contact information so that proper communication can take place.
2. From time to time, we will send home announcements and flyers in your student folders.
3. Finally, the school website at **<https://www.catholicacademybridgeport.org>** has some information related to school calendar and uniform vendor information.
4. We invite you to like our Facebook page, St. Raphael Academy Bridgeport, as well.

Parent Conferences

Parent Conferences are scheduled during the first marking period, and also in the spring, if necessary. In addition, parents may request in writing or by calling the office to set up other conferences with the teacher. Conferences may be requested by either parent or teacher, if there is reason for concern regarding a child's academic progress, behavior, attitude or anything that would impede the child's progress. We ask that you refrain from attempting to hold informal conferences with teachers at social events or during arrivals and dismissals.

Classroom Policies/Birthday Celebrations

Classroom celebrations are kept simple in order to maximize time in learning. On a student's individual birthday, they will be remembered during morning prayer. Students are to be in uniform on their birthdays. Children are allowed to bring a treat to school for their birthday. They may bring store-bought cupcakes and/or pizza. However, this must be planned in advance. The teacher must notify all parents of students with food allergies or restrictions so that the parent can provide, if necessary, an alternate treat for their child. All birthday treats must be nut-free. Cupcakes must be store-bought, in their original packaging, and with all ingredients listed on the label. If any student has an additional serious allergy, additional restrictions may be made on what foods can be brought in for birthdays. Any student who brings in a birthday treat without prior notice will not be able to serve the treat. It can be served the following day once notice has been given to parents. **Please Note: Parents may drop off treats for their child's birthday, but are NOT permitted to stay for the celebration.**

For special holidays, teachers may organize special food items as part of the celebration. All foods should be nut-free and all parents will be notified in advance of the planned menu. No food can be served in the classroom without advance notice.

With regard to celebrations, please keep in mind that students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students. Invitations for slumber parties or birthday parties should be sent to the homes of students via the U.S. mail unless an invitation is being given to **every** student in the entire grade or all girls or all boys are being invited.

As a general rule, students are not permitted to bring toys (including spinners), cards or games to school. Cell phones, smartphones, smart watches, tablets, play stations and other electronic devices are **not** allowed in school, on the playground or bus before, during and after school. If a student does bring these items to school, they will be collected and kept in the office until the parents can come to school and claim them. Parents will be notified each time students do not respect this policy.

Any items found in the school building or on the school grounds will be placed in the Lost and Found basket in the office. Items placed in Lost and Found remain there for 30 days and then are donated to charity if not claimed.

Money collections may not be taken for any reason without first obtaining permission from the Principal. Sales of any kind are not allowed without the necessary permission. Any flier or letter that is sent home to students and families must be cleared through the office.

Spiritual and Religious Activities

All students, regardless of religious affiliation, are instructed in the teachings of the Catholic Church. Since the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport provides the atmosphere for learning and living the faith in its total environment, formal religious studies classes are not the only occasion for instruction. Provision is made for daily prayer and liturgical celebrations on a large and small group basis with student and faculty participation. Other types of religious programs designed to foster and exemplify the faith are scheduled by the Principal and/or teacher. Students are expected to participate respectfully. Parent participation at such programs is encouraged.

To facilitate the spiritual growth of families, St. Raphael Academy offers two opportunities: one for students and one for families.

- *Choir* provides students with an opportunity to learn additional music and singing techniques. Songs will be sung at all-school Masses and annual concerts.
- *GFASC (Great Family of the Sacred Heart)* is a family-oriented spiritual experience sponsored by the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Centered around the promises of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and incorporating the consecration of the home and family to the Sacred Heart, this organization seeks to assist families in developing a stronger prayer life and provides an opportunity for Scripture sharing and social interaction with other like-minded families.

Service

Service to others is one of the “Top Ten” Diocese of Bridgeport Gospel Values, and one that the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport wholeheartedly embraces. Service to others is a distinguishing part of the Christian life and is constantly modeled and stressed. All students will be involved in school, grade-level and individual service in order to give students many opportunities to give to others in need without payment.

Giving to others to help the poor, elderly, sick and others in need is an essential part of our faith as a Catholic community. Mother Theresa of Calcutta so beautifully stated, “Love seeks to serve; Love cannot remain by itself – it has no meaning. Love has to be put into action and that action is service.

Missing Work

St. Raphael Academy teachers will notify parents if a student does not have homework or other assignments. Upon notification, parents should ask their children about this issue at home and support the school’s expectations with regard to work ethic. Parents of students who chronically

have missing work will be required to meet with the teachers and Principal. Continued issues may result in withdrawal for academic reasons.

Tuition

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 5.205 – Tuition

A goal of the Diocese of Bridgeport Catholic Schools is to provide a Catholic school education to every student that desires one. Tuition payments are an investment in a student's education and religious formation. Tuition payments are also a financial reality necessary to keep the school in business. Every family must be registered with FACTS (ES)/SMART (HS) Tuition Management.

The school relies upon the tuition and fees for a substantial portion of the budget to operate an excellent spiritual and educational program. Therefore, when tuition and fees payments become delinquent it is a serious matter.

Delinquent Tuition/Fees

When payments are not made in the manner described by a parent/guardian's tuition agreement form, the following steps will take place:

30 Days Past Due

- 1. When an account becomes **30 days past due** under the arrangements established by the Tuition and Fees Agreement Form or an accepted alternate plan for payment, the family shall receive written or phone call notification from FACTS that their account is past due.*
- 2. It is the responsibility of the family to contact the tuition management office, Mrs. Angela Mantero, within 15 days of receipt of the past due notice to correct the situation or make an acceptable alternate plan for payment.*
- 3. If a parent does not contact Mrs. Mantero in the tuition management office, she will contact the family to set-up a payment plan by sending a letter via certified mail, email or regular mail.*
- 4. If families are unresponsive, the Principal will arrange for a meeting to discuss the delinquency.*
- 5. The tuition management office will prepare a mutually agreed upon payment plan with the family and agreed upon by the Principal.*
- 6. Late fees will be assessed based on the school's Tuition and Fees Agreement Form.*

60 Days Past Due

- 1. When an account becomes **60 days past due** under the arrangements established by the Tuition and Fees Agreement Form or an accepted alternate plan for payment, the family shall receive written notification from the Tuition Management Office that their account is past due **and their child(ren) may not return to school until an acceptable tuition payment is made.***
- 2. Report cards and transcripts will be withheld until payment in full is received.*
- 3. Students will not be permitted to register or to return for the following academic year until the balance is paid in full or an acceptable alternate plan for payment is in place.*
- 4. Late Fees will be assessed based on the school's Tuition and Fees Agreement Form.*

90 Days Past Due

- 1. When an account becomes **90 days past due** under the arrangements established by the Tuition and Fees Agreement Form or an accepted alternate plan for payment, the family shall receive written notification that their account is past due.*
- 2. Students will be withdrawn from their respective Catholic school at the end of a quarter.*
- 3. Report cards and transcripts will be withheld until payment in full is received.*

In connection with tuition and fees commitment delinquencies, the school may pursue legal action against, or require promissory notes from, parent/guardians for failure to honor their tuition agreement. Such notes or legal action will only be sought in an amount equal to the fair market value of the educational goods and services provided as established annually by the school, or the parent/guardian's unpaid tuition and fees commitment, whichever is less.

Parent/Guardian account information and activity will be submitted to the Bishop of the Diocese of Bridgeport, Superintendent of Schools, and diocesan attorney for review. If a parent/guardian refuses to act in good faith, the administration, after consultation with school, may refuse to accept the child(ren) as students in the diocese and may turn the delinquent balance over to a collection agency.

End of School Year Balances

- 1. All account billing and fees must be paid by June 1st or the family must have an alternate plan for payment approved by the Principal and respective Business Manager.*
- 2. Families with account balances and unpaid fees that do not have an alternate plan for payment approved by the Principal shall receive written notification that their account is past due with copy of this commission policy.*
- 3. Report cards and transcripts will be withheld.*
- 4. **Students** will not be permitted to register or return for the following academic year until the balance is paid in full or an acceptable alternate plan for payment is in place.*

The Catholic Academy of Bridgeport Business Office handles all tuition issues. Families are required to set up an account on FACTS management system and pay tuition by automatic draft from checking or savings accounts. Details regarding tuition amounts and options are available at registration time and on the school's web site.

It is important that tuition be paid on time. Late payments will result in the assessment of late fees and your child/children not being able to attend school, report cards being held, and records not sent to new schools until full payment has been made. Families who owe money will not be able to register for the following school year.

Tuition assistance is available based on need and applications must be resubmitted each year through FACTS Grant and Aid Assessment. Applicants can apply online at factsmgmt.com. If you have any questions or concerns about the application process, you may speak with a FACTS Customer Care Representative at 1-866-315-9262. All questions regarding tuition payments and tuition assistance should be directed to the Tuition Office. When FACTS refers parents to the school, it is not the school office but the Business Manager that they are referencing.

Tuition Assistance

Should you consider withdrawing your child from the Catholic Academy, including transferring to another Diocesan school, please contact the principal so that he/she can try and work out any difficulties and/or issues.

Withdrawal by Parent

Should you decide to withdraw from the school, you must give at least 60 days notice IN WRITING. E-mail notices will NOT be accepted. The written notice will be forwarded to the Tuition Office so that your tuition account can be closed out.

After School Care Program

The purpose of the After School Care Program is to provide a caring environment for those children needing supervision after school. After School Care is not included in the tuition fee. Children in the After School Care programs are bound by all the articles of this Handbook. Bills for the After School Program are sent home every Wednesday, unless otherwise noted. We ask that bills are paid by the Friday of the same week the bill was issued.

STUDENTS

Student Admission

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.100 - Admission

The age requirements for admittance to kindergarten or grade one should be in accord with requirements of the State of Connecticut. Connecticut requires that a kindergarten enrollee must turn five by September 1 of the year in which s/he will begin. The parent/guardian of a child five years of age shall have the option of not sending the child to school until the child is six years of age and the parent/guardian of a child six years of age shall have the option of not sending the child to school until the child is seven years of age.

By applying for admission to a Diocese of Bridgeport Catholic School, parents and guardians agree that they will support the school's mission and commitment to the Catholic faith. The Diocese of Bridgeport schools admit students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.

The Catholic Academy of Bridgeport uses a rolling admissions process. It is very important that parents considering Catholic Academy of Bridgeport apply using the online application at catholicacademybridgeport.org.

The Admissions process generally consist of:

- Completion of an application
- A shadow day, on which the prospective student spends the entire day with his/her potential classmates, or with students near his/her age during summer “camp”.
- An interview by the principal with parents and the student
- A tour of the school
- Academic or readiness screening per Diocesan guidelines, is usually done on the shadow day
- A review of current academic records, if applicable, specifically report cards and standardized test results.
- A reference check with the school the student is transferring from, if applicable
- Providing originals (we will make copies and return the original to you) of appropriate documents, including but not limited to:
 - School admissions applications;
 - Official birth certificate;
 - Baptismal certificate (if the child is Catholic);
 - Immigration form (if applicable)
 - Health records (immunization data and updated health examination).

For students to be fully registered upon acceptance, a family account and payment plan must be created on FACTS.

Priorities for Elementary Enrollment

In the enrollment of students to elementary schools, the priority shall be as follows:

1. *Currently enrolled students;*
2. *Siblings of currently enrolled students;*
3. *Children of active parishioners in local parishes;*
4. *Children of alumni;*
5. *Children transferring from a Catholic school outside the local area*
6. *Catholic children from outside the local parish area; and*
7. *All others*

Diocesan Policy 3.101 Registration Process

Parents shall return a registration form for the next academic year. If this form is not returned by a specified date outlined on the form, the student may be removed from the class list for the next school year.

Parents shall also register for any appropriate tuition payment plan through the appropriate diocesan vendor. Tuition accounts must be current to secure a student's registration for the subsequent academic year.

Through automatic re-enrollment, current students are re-registered for the following school year. The registration fee is automatically added to the parents' active FACTS account. Financial aid applications must be renewed EACH YEAR and a new payment plan must be active and in place for the aid to be awarded. All three components (automatic re-enrollment; FACTS financial aid application; FACTS payment plan) must be met before a student is considered registered for the following academic year.

Diocesan Policy 3.102 Transfers and Withdrawals

A student transferring from another school or district may be admitted conditionally as the records indicate until placement can be verified.

Based on testing, observation, and other assessments, the principal reserves the authority to decide on the placement of the transfer students from non-accredited schools, home schooling, public, or other state-approved, non-public schools. The decision shall be made in the best interest of the student.

Diocesan Policy 3.103 Academically Gifted Students

Teachers shall identify, monitor, and foster the exceptional ability and talent of academically gifted students in schools.

Diocesan Policy 3.104 Admission of a Special Needs Student

Students with special needs shall be given the same consideration as all applicants. However, prior to admitting a student with diagnosed special needs, a school shall make a determination as to whether or not it feels it can provide an appropriate education for that child.

Diocesan Policy 3.105 Non-Catholic Students

Schools shall admit a non-Catholic student provided that he/she and his/her parents, clearly understand that the student will be required to participate in the Catholic religious instruction, formation in the Catholic faith, and school related activities related to the Catholic identity of the school. Parents of non-Catholic students acknowledge and agree to support the school's mission and commitment to the Catholic faith.

Diocesan Policy 3.107 Conditional Acceptance

All new students are admitted on a conditional basis. If it is determined that the placement is not beneficial, parents will withdraw the student. Tuition will be refunded on a pro-rated basis. Non-refundable fees are not considered tuition and thereby will not be refunded.

At St. Raphael Academy, the student and his/her FAMILY is admitted for a probationary period of at least one marking period. During the probationary period, we are looking for success in the following areas:

- Student academic performance, including study skills and work ethic
- Student adherence to the Code of Conduct
- The ability of the school to meet the student's academic, social and emotional needs

The probationary period may be extended at the principal's discretion.

Lunch money, school field trip money and school supply money are considered non-refundable.

Student Instruction

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.201 - Grading

The Grading System for the elementary schools of the Diocese of Bridgeport is as follows. Students will be evaluated based on their skill development within academic subjects. This is a more specific report for parents about what their children are learning.

MARKING CODES

PreK and KINDERGARTEN through Grade 2

- | | |
|---|--|
| E | Exceeds Grade Level Standards |
| M | Meets Grade Level Standards |
| W | Working Towards Mastery of Standards or Is Inconsistent |
| N | Not Yet Meeting Grade Level |
| I | Insufficient Evidence provided Usually Due to Lack of Attendance or Effort |

GRADE 3

- | | |
|------|--|
| 4.0: | Distinguished: Student demonstrates knowledge which exceeds grade level standards. |
| 3.5: | Student demonstrates some understanding beyond grade level standards. |
| 3: | Proficient: Student demonstrates mastery on grade level standards. This is the target/goal for student success. |
| 2.5: | Student demonstrates partial success on grade level standards. |
| 2: | Developing: Student demonstrates basic understanding and is partially proficient at meeting grade level standards. |
| 1.5: | Student demonstrates partial success on foundational skills or made major errors on grade level standards. |
| 1: | Emerging: With help, the student demonstrates some understanding of foundational skills and grade level standards. |
| 0.5: | With help, the student demonstrates some understanding of foundational skills. |
| 0: | Deficient: Even with help, the student is not successful. |

The Catholic Academy philosophy is that a grade is a measure of achievement towards grade-level curriculum expectations. Subject grades are not awarded for attendance, effort, a student's psychological needs, or to placate a student and avoid conflicts. These are not measures of achievement.

At Catholic Academy, at appropriate grade levels, a student's reading level is formally assessed three times per year and is reflected on the student's report card in the form of a message.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.202 – Progress Reports

Student Progress Reports, in conformity with the Diocesan Grading System, will be distributed mid-marking period. A progress report must be issued to parent(s)/guardian(s) whose student is failing a subject. Specific procedures for Progress Reports will be determined by each school.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.203 - Report Cards

Report Cards will be distributed to Grades 1-8 on a quarterly basis as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee(s). Kindergarten report cards will be distributed three times each year beginning with the second marking period. Developmental evaluations may be used for Pre-K at the discretion of the Principal. All financial obligations must be met prior to the release of report cards.

Catholic Academy of Bridgeport issues report cards for Pre-K, Kindergarten, and Grades 1-3 three times per year. Students with delinquent tuition accounts will not receive a report card until the delinquency is cleared.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.200 – Homework

Homework is considered to be part of the total educational program and should be a reinforcement of classroom teaching. Reasonable time allotments should be worked out by principal and faculty. The guidelines for grades one to eight are as follows:

Grade 1 – 20 Minutes

Grade 2 – 20 Minutes

Grade 3 – 40 Minutes

***These homework times do not take into account student distractibility or off task behavior.**

Catholic Academy of Bridgeport believes that homework should be given primarily for one of the following purposes: pre-learning, independent practice, to study for a test or quiz, as part of a long-term project. It is assigned to help students become self-reliant and self-directed, and therefore must be done independently. The role of parents is to provide an environment conducive to concentration, to ensure that students are using assignment pads appropriately, and to check that students are producing quality work. Parents are not expected to try and teach a concept, but should send a note to the teacher if a student is truly struggling with an assignment after visible effort.

When a student is absent, a list of assignments and necessary materials will be assembled for pick up in the office after 1:30 p.m. upon parent request.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.206***Policy on Modifications in Academic Programs and Grading***

Students who have disabilities that resulted in qualifications for 504 Plans and/or IEP (in a public school) may be considered for an accommodation plan and/or modified grading.

In order to qualify for modified academic programs, students must have learning differences that are:

- Identified by means of a formal psycho-educational or educational evaluation or report from a medical doctor, therapist, clinical counselor or learning specialist which is considered by the school Student Study Team.*
- Described clearly to the parents (guardian) in a meeting with the evaluator, principal and classroom teacher(s).*

- *Presented to the parents (guardian) in writing on a form seeking informed consent. The development of a 504 Plan including accommodations for the student based on the disability is the responsibility of the Student Study Team with the assistance of the Learning Specialist and all teachers responsible for implementing the Plan.*

Teachers are authorized to make only those accommodations/modifications that are recommended by the school team and learning specialist and disclosed to the parent. Such accommodations/modifications may include, but are not limited to, extended time testing and/or oral testing, differences in content expectations, etc. Only those students who have modified programs are eligible for modified grading, and all students with modified programs will receive modified grades.

Report cards and permanent record cards of those students who have modified programs with modified grading will reflect those modifications. An “” will be used to indicate the specific programs and/or grades that have been modified. Thus, a report card grade of “A*” indicates that a particular student has done very well, but that this grade was earned with some modification and therefore, is not the same as that of a student who earned an “A” without modification.*

Upon graduation, students with modified programs with modified grading who successfully complete the required course of studies, will receive a diploma.

Catholic Academy of Bridgeport fully complies with this Diocesan policy. Students with identified disabilities (including ADD/ADHD) receive an accommodation plan to support their learning as needed. Students with learning differences are evaluated either privately or by the Bridgeport Board of Education PPT team in consultation with the St. Raphael Principal, teachers and parents/guardians, and may be offered an IEP (Individual Education Plan), including special services, in the public school setting. Parents/guardians can either accept or deny the IEP. In some cases, parents are counseled to accept the IEP in the public school setting, if Catholic Academy does not have the resources necessary to meet the needs of the student. In other cases, Catholic Academy can work with the parents/guardians and the students, and the IEP is converted by the Bridgeport Board of Education team to a “Service Plan”, which comes with very limited resources from the public school district.

Diocesan Policy 3.207 Assessment Programs

It is the responsibility of the principal to administer the standardized testing and assessment programs in accordance with the guidelines established by the Office of the Superintendent of Schools. All standardized test scores must be shared with parents.

*The official testing program of the Diocese of Bridgeport consists of **Iowa Test of Basic Skills and CoGAT, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), Assessment of Catechesis Religious Education (ACRE)**, and any other diocesan benchmark assessment.*

At St. Raphael Academy, in accordance with additional Diocesan guidelines, standardized testing is administered to the following grades:

Kindergarten	DRA
Grade One	DRA, CoGAT (Cognitive Abilities Test, iReady
Grade Two	DRA, iReady
Grade Three	DRA, CoGAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) and/or IOWA, iReady

The IOWA is an achievement test aligned to the Curriculum. It is used to determine student growth in curriculum areas and the results assist the administration and faculty in assessing relative strengths and weaknesses in the school's program.

COGAT is a cognitive ability test, and helps teachers and parents compare ability vs. achievement.

Benchmark testing (DRA) is conducted three times per year in the fall, winter and spring, to monitor a student's progress towards his/her current curriculum objectives, primarily in reading and math. Teachers use the results of these tests to measure student growth, identify program strengths and weaknesses as early in the school year as possible, and to determine content strengths and weaknesses for individual students that need to be addressed through differentiation of instruction.

iReady is an interim assessment which will be given 3 times a year to provide data for personalized instructional planning to maximize individual student growth.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.208 – Referral and Testing

When children struggle to learn basic academic skills and/or appropriate school behaviors, it is often necessary to refer them for evaluation and/or counseling. Schools in the Diocese of Bridgeport will comply with Connecticut State Guidelines when referring students for psycho-educational evaluation and/or counseling.

Each school will have a standing Student Study Team, comprised of the Principal and one teacher from each level served in the school – primary, intermediate, middle school. The Student Study Team is responsible for recommending:

- *Curriculum accommodations;*
- *Classroom accommodations; and/or*
- *Alternative interventions*

Teachers are responsible for implementing the recommendations of the Student Study Team and documenting the student's progress, or lack thereof.

If the recommended accommodations do not result in sufficient student progress, the Principal will inform the parent/guardian that the student should be referred for a psycho-educational evaluation and/or counseling. When conducted by the public school district, a psycho-educational evaluation is available at no cost to the parents. Parents who elect to have the child evaluated by a private provider are responsible for payment.

When counseling is needed, this is available at no charge in schools where a social worker and/or counselor is on staff. In schools where no such service is available, parents will be responsible for taking the child to a private provider.

When students fail to learn with traditional teaching methods, curricula, and social controls, it is imperative to learn whether the school is an appropriate placement, and if so, how best to instruct the students. Parents should be assured that psycho-educational reports are kept in a separate, confidential file to which the only the principal has access.

Parents who refuse to have their child tested or seen by a counselor, as well as those who comply with the request for testing but refuse to share the results with the appropriate school personnel, may be asked to remove their child from the school.

At Catholic Academy, the Student Study Team is comprised of the classroom teacher, the school counselor and the principal.. Teacher input on rating scales is expected by any assessment/medical provider. Teachers willingly participate in completing rating scales and attend meetings at the conclusion of the assessment. All documents completed by teachers for physicians or assessors are forwarded directly to the provider. This Catholic Academy policy ensures that the documents go directly from the school to the provider in a timely manner. **Documents are not given to parents to hand deliver to providers.**

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.209 – Promotion/Retention

All K-8 homeroom teachers are required to sign each student's report card certifying that the pupil was PROMOTED to the next grade or RETAINED in the grade.

PROMOTED means that the pupil has completed the grade's work and has attained a minimum of a "D" average in all major subject areas. Major subjects: Religion, Social Studies, Math, Science, Language Arts.

RETAINED means that the pupil has failed on the final average, two or more major subjects. Major subjects: Religion, Social Studies, Math, Science, Language Arts.

If consideration is being given for a pupil to either be advanced or retained, the parents shall be notified in writing no later than the end of the third marking period. Prior to this time, teachers should have been in frequent contact with parents and administrators to discuss the difficulties the student might be experiencing.

In all cases concerning retention, teamwork between school and home is essential. A positive attitude should be maintained.

Written notification of the determination to retain a pupil shall be sent to the parents by the principal no later than the end of May 1 of the school year.

The final decision to promote or retain a student is made by the principal, based on the student's academic performance and best interests.

Factors used in determining to retain a student include, but are not limited to:

- Qualitative and quantitative sources of assessments, student responses to strategies implemented for intervention, teacher input and consultation among faculty, administration, and parents;*
- Standardized testing; and*
- Psychological evaluations and medical exams on hearing, eyesight, physical and social wellness.*

At Catholic Academy, formal indications of retention risk will begin appearing, if applicable, on the 3rd marking period report card, if not sooner. Spring conferences resulting in an action plan will be required for at-risk students. Formal notification will be sent per Diocesan guidelines.

A student may only be retained once during his/her tenure at Catholic Academy. Should a student need to be retained a 2nd time, he/she will be required to withdraw from the respective school, and the administration will assist with placement in another Diocesan elementary school.

Should a student be required to repeat a grade, parents will meet with the Principal to discuss whether or not Catholic Academy is the best fit for the student. The final decision will be made by the Principal, who will work with the parents for placement in another Diocesan elementary school.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.210 – Summer School

A student who fails one major subject, except Religion, must successfully complete summer school or 30 hours of private tutoring by a certified teacher approved by the Principal. Upon successful completion of either program and receipt of written documentation, the student will be promoted. If a student in grades 6-8 fails Religion, he/she must work with their teacher to complete a summer project.

Students for whom summer school is required or recommended will be notified at the beginning of May; options will be provided to the parents. St. Raphael students may be required to attend Summer School if they are reading below level or if their grasp of mathematical concepts is weak.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.211 - Withdrawal

When a student withdraws before the end of a marking term, the grade will be reported as of the date of the withdrawal. This grade and such notation will be indicated on the report card and the Permanent Record Card.

A school may require a student to withdraw if the school is incapable of meeting his/her academic needs. In this case, the conditions must be met:

- *Sufficient advance notice of the request must be given in writing to the parents;*
- *Required progress reports shall have been given to the parents;*
- *Parents shall have been given the opportunity to discuss with the appropriate staff personnel the future school placement of the student;*
- *The school must cooperate with any receiving school in matters concerning the placement of the student in an instructional program; and*
- *The principal must notify the Office of the Superintendent prior to the withdrawal.*

Families must notify the school in writing if a student is withdrawn from the school. The school will not forward records for students who withdraw with an outstanding tuition, fee balance or who have not returned books or materials belonging to the school.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.212 – Student Records

Student records are confidential. Therefore their contents are available only to parents or guardians or those staff members who have a legitimate educational interest. Unless prohibited by law and documented court records, non-custodial parents have access to student records.

These records shall be available to others only on written authorization of the parent or guardian, or where appropriate demands are made for such records by courts or other agencies through the issuance of a subpoena.

Types of student records include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *Electronic record generated from student information system;*
- *Permanent record card which includes application, achievement/aptitude, screening test scores, attendance records;*
- *Student file;*
- *Health records;*

- *Special records which can include records provided by the public school district such as speech and language reports, psychological evaluation, PPT records, occupational therapy, and physical therapy reports (these reports belong to the public school and are either returned to the parent or destroyed when the student leaves the school); and/or*
- *All additional records maintained in accordance with the mandate of the city/town.*

When a student transfers to another school, a written release of records is required. Original records will be mailed directly to a Diocese of Bridgeport school and copies of records will be mailed directly to non-Diocese of Bridgeport schools.

All financial commitments to the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport must be fulfilled prior to records being transferred to another school. In addition, all school books, library books and materials belonging to the school must be returned.

Diocesan of Bridgeport Policy - Clinical Records 3.213

If a student has had psychological or clinical evaluations, reports from such assessments are confidential and therefore shall be stored in a folder separate from the permanent record folder. Clinical records shall remain in the school until the student leaves the school. The records shall be returned to the parent(s)/guardian(s) when a student graduates or transfers. Parents wishing to transfer clinical records to another school must indicate so in writing.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.300 – Student Code of Conduct

In collaboration with the faculty and staff, the principal shall develop a code of conduct and disciplinary procedures based on Catholic values and the dignity of the human person for which students must adhere to. The purpose of the code of conduct is to develop sound moral character, responsibility, and citizenship in students.

At the beginning of the school year, the expectations of student conduct should be clearly explained to faculty, staff, students, and parents.

Students and parents will be required to sign the parent/student handbook signature page. The school must keep the signature pages on file for each school year.

If a student's conduct is disruptive of the educational process, violates a policy of the school, or negatively impacts the school, this may be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

At the Catholic Academy, we believe that every child and every member of our school staff and transportation staff is entitled to a courteous and well-ordered environment in which to work and learn. We also believe that every child chooses how he/she will behave in school and that he/she is responsible for the consequences of his/her actions: that is, praise for positive behavior and disciplinary/restorative measures for negative behavior. Any faculty or staff member has the right to correct a child for improper behavior at any place or time during the school day or during functions.

Family cooperation and support is essential to maintaining this environment. We expect parents to respect and support the authority of the teachers. Issues must be dealt with in a calm, respectful and non-threatening manner. Parents/Guardians who do not abide by this expectation may be asked to withdraw their children from the school. We also expect parents to support the teachers in their academic demands, ensuring that a proper homework environment is maintained and that communications from teachers are acknowledged.

The Catholic Academy Code of Conduct, based on the Diocese of Bridgeport's Student Code of Conduct (Practices/Procedures) expects students and families to live up to the ideals embodied in our vision statement of being morally courageous citizens. The expectations can be categorized as follows:

- Respecting God and the beliefs of others with honorable behavior
- Maintaining an orderly and safe environment
- Respecting ourselves
- Respecting others
- Participating in a civil society

Respecting God and the dignity and beliefs of others with honorable behavior

This includes, but is not limited to: respectful participation at Mass and other liturgical functions, refraining from sacrilegious behavior in speech, actions and entertainment choices, respecting the religious differences of others, and refraining from discriminatory slurs.

Offenses will result in conferences with parents and/or administrators and possible suspension depending on the severity of the offense, and subsequent offenses will result in possible exclusion from co- or extra-curricular activities, a restorative conference with those offended, suspension or expulsion.

Respecting ourselves

Included in this category, but not limited to, are: adherence to uniform requirements, maintaining good attendance, conducting oneself properly during the suspension/detention environment, being honest about one's work by not cheating or participating in plagiarism, and refraining from the use or possession of tobacco and smoking paraphernalia.

Cheating includes talking during tests or quizzes. Students in grades 3 – 8 who choose to cheat will receive a score of zero on the test, quiz or assignment, plus detention. Repeated offenses may result in suspension and withdrawal for academic reasons.

Maintaining an orderly and safe environment

This includes, but is not limited to: Following bus rules, following rules during safety drills, following school and teacher rules for conduct in classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, church, and in hallways and passageways during transitions, and remaining within the boundaries of school property, as defined by teachers, during school hours.

Any offenses will result in notification to and/or conferences with parents and administrators, detention, professional counseling, and possible suspension and police notification.

Offenses in this category may result in conferences with parents/guardians, loss of credit, detention, professional counseling, the involvement of the Superintendent's office, social and legal agencies, and the police.

Respecting others' persons and property

This includes, but is not limited to: behaving appropriately in all school buildings or on the playground, proper use of technology, refraining from inappropriate physical contact such as pushing or shoving, refraining from verbal assault or threatening physical harm, hazing, using laser pointers or other dangerous items, refraining from fighting, treating all faculty and staff members with respect and obedience, talking with others using appropriate language, refraining from directing inappropriate gestures at any student or adult, keeping commitments to serve

detentions/suspensions, refraining from falsifying signatures, and refraining from possessing of, posting or distributing libelous, obscene or defamatory materials or literature.

Consequences for failure to uphold this section of the Student Code of Conduct may involve notification of parents/guardians, conferences with teachers, parents/guardians and administrators, exclusion from co-curricular and extra-curricular activities for a period of time, detention, professional counseling, suspension, involvement of the Superintendent and/or Safe Environments offices, or expulsion.

Participating in a civil society

Catholic Academy expects all in its community to uphold all local, state and federal laws for the maintenance of our civil society. Illegal activities include, but are not limited to: Arson, weapons possessions (real, facsimile or replica, including fireworks), hate crimes, criminal mischief, making bomb threats or other forms of false alarms, assault, graffiti, vandalism, theft or possession of stolen goods, borrowing, taking or receiving items (including money) by force, threat or intimidation, trespassing, or any misconduct leading to a felony arrest or class A misdemeanor/adjudication as a delinquent or youthful offender.

Consequences include parent/guardian notification, conferences with the principal, Superintendent/Office of Safe Environments notification, police referral, suspension and possible expulsion.

Diocesan of Bridgeport Policy 3.301- Cell Phones/Electronic Devices

Each school is to determine a local policy governing the use of electronic devices before, during the course of, and after the school day as well as on school field trips or at other school-related activities. No school is to be held responsible for the loss/damage of these devices on school property, at school events, or on school buses.

At St. Raphael Academy, cell phones, tablets or any other electronic device or game system are not permitted in school. School owned technology is utilized throughout the school day to enhance and support learning. Any student who does not abide by this policy will have the electronic device taken and a parent will be called to pick it up.

Diocesan Policy 3.302 - Attendance and Excused Absences

Student attendance in Catholic schools of the Diocese of Bridgeport shall be in accordance with the statutes of the State of Connecticut. The responsibility for compliance with this law belongs to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child. Students must attend school punctually and regularly and conform to the attendance policies and procedures established by the school and outlined in the parent/student handbook.

A student not physically present at school, excused or unexcused, is marked absent.

When a student is absent due to illness, accident, quarantine, or attendance at the funeral services of a member of a student's family, this is considered an excused absence.

When a student is absent due to medical and/or dental appointment, verification of such appointments is required from the medical or dental office in order to be considered an excused absence.

When a student is absent because a parent wishes to take their child out of school for personal reasons, this is considered an unexcused absence.

*Students who have four (4) unexcused absences in one month, or ten (10) unexcused absences in a school year, are considered to be **truant**. If a truancy problem cannot be solved by the school, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) shall be notified. Excessive tardiness may also be reported to DCF.*

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

Students “shadowing” or spending the day at another school will be marked with an excused absence, provided the following has occurred:

- 1) Prior notification to the Principal from the parent;*
- 2) Note from visiting school stating that the child was present for the day;*
- 3) No more than three (3) school visits to be considered as excused absences during a school year; and*
- 4) Multiple visits to a single school within one school year will be counted as unexcused absences.*

These excused absences will not affect a student’s eligibility for perfect attendance recognition.

Family vacations should not take place when school is in session. Should such a vacation occur during school time, such vacation will be deemed as an unexcused absence. It is expected that all missed assignments will be made up in a period of time determined by the teacher and approved by the Principal. Teachers will not provide work before a vacation. The school is not under any obligation to provide tutoring, make-up work, or special testing schedules for such a period of absence.

Students are responsible for all class work, assignments, and exams missed due to absences or tardiness.

At St. Raphael Academy, we believe that daily attendance at school is an essential factor in the learning process. Tardiness interferes with the child's progress in school and leads to the formation of undesirable traits. It also shows a lack of respect for the classroom teacher and classmates. Parents assume the responsibility for impressing this upon their children. Please be aware that attendance – both absences and tardiness – is considered in the high school acceptance process.

- A student is considered tardy if he/she is not in the classroom by 7:30 AM.
- Parents or other authorized persons must come to the office to sign out a student during the school day, and may be asked for identification.
- Bus delays DO NOT count as tardies.
- Weather-related and traffic-related delays will count as tardies, except in unusual circumstances as determined by the Principal.
- Make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations or unexcused absences will be provided at teacher discretion upon a student’s return. Planned assignments and tests will NOT be given in advance. Parents take full responsibility for instruction & material missed during unexcused absences.
- Parents are required to call the office by 7:30 a.m. if their child is going to be absent. Leaving a message the night before is acceptable. Students may not make this call for themselves. If the school does not receive a call, a parent will be contacted within the first hour of the school day. If the parent cannot be reached, the police will be contacted to investigate.

- **Parents who consistently bring children late to school will be required to meet with the principal to discuss this issue. Consistent and deliberate tardiness will not be permitted and it may result in asking a family to withdraw a child(ren) from St. Raphael Academy.**
- An excused absence is defined as one for:
 - o illness involving a fever, gastrointestinal issues or other infectious diseases. Students absent due to fever must have a normal temperature for 24 hours **without medication** before returning to school.
 - o shadow day visits per Diocesan Policy.
 - o other appointments required by the student for psycho-educational evaluations, etc.

A written note is required in the above instances, or the absence will be considered unexcused.

- Excessive parent notes indicating illness will require a meeting with the Principal, and may result in a requirement for doctor notes and/or consultation.

If you wish to have a sibling or other student bring home the homework, please let the office know by 1:00. It is the responsibility of the student to check with the teacher(s) or preferably a student “buddy” about tests and other assignments missed while he/she was absent.

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

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.303 – Uniform

The Principal shall establish a uniform dress code that will promote cleanliness, health, safety and the development of Christian values. Comparable dress codes should be established for both boys and girls. All students are required to wear a school uniform determined by the local school.

Gym uniforms shall be worn on the day of physical education; however may NOT be worn on days when the student will be attending Mass.

It is our strong belief that a student’s appearance for school has an impact on his/her attitude, behavior and readiness to learn. A formal dress code is not meant to stifle the individuality of our students since every child still remains unique and special while wearing a uniform that shows membership in our community of faith and learning. It is important that we establish a standard of modesty and decorum that contributes to an environment of respect and mutual understanding. Parents have the primary responsibility for ensuring that their children follow these guidelines. Teachers also have a responsibility for taking appropriate action when guidelines are not followed.

Uniform Supplier

In order to keep continuity within the school, there is only one supplier of the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport Uniform: **Blake’s Uniform Company**. They have a conveniently located store located in Stratford and online ordering is available. Blake’s is aware of all of the uniform items necessary for each grade level.

Dress Code for St. Raphael Academy

Uniforms must be clean and neat. Should a student come to school without a proper uniform, a parent/guardian will be notified. Shoes should fit firmly on the foot to avoid slipping off easily. While affording the students an opportunity to be more comfortable in the hot weather, the

summer uniform is still to be worn with the same respect and neatness as the winter uniform. The uniform is to be the appropriate size for the student, avoiding pieces that are either oversized or snug. All shirts are to fit appropriately, be worn appropriately above the hips, and for the boys and girls, be worn with a belt.

All uniform regulations and guidelines are subject to the discretion of the principal. All uniforms (excluding socks and shoes) must be purchased from Blake's Uniform Company.

WINTER UNIFORM

Worn from October 1st through April 30th.

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten (boys and girls)

- Royal blue sweatpants with school logo
- Royal blue crew neck sweatshirt with CAB logo
- Gray or navy polo with CAB logo under the sweatshirt
- Velcro-fastening sneakers without wheels, lights or other "accessories," no slip-ons
- White ankle/crew/athletic socks (socks must be above the ankle bone)

Boys, Grades 1-3

- Navy blue pants with black belt
- Gray or navy polo shirt, long or short sleeves, with CAB logo
- Navy blue sweater with CAB logo
- Black shoes with rubber soles that tie or close with Velcro (no slip-on shoes)
- Black or blue socks (above the ankle)

Girls, Grades 1-3

- Blue long or short sleeve Oxford (blouse)
- Plaid jumper
- Navy blue sweater with CAB logo
- Navy blue knee socks or navy blue tights
- Black shoes with rubber soles that tie or close with Velcro. Black Mary Jane shoes that have a wide enough strap so that the shoes stay firmly on the feet may also be worn. No ballet shoes or slip-on shoes are permitted.

SUMMER UNIFORM

Worn from the first day of school through Sept. 30th & May 1st through the last day of school.

Prekindergarten and Kindergarten

- Royal blue swart shorts/pants with CAB logo
- Gray or navy short sleeve polo shirt with CAB logo
- Velcro-fastening sneakers without wheels, lights or other "accessories," no slip-ons
- White ankle/crew/athletic socks (socks must be above the ankle bone)

Boys and Girls, Grades 1-3

- Navy blue shorts
- Gray or navy short sleeve polo shirt with CAB logo
- Velcro or tie sneakers without wheels, lights or other "accessories," no slip-ons
- White ankle/crew/athletic socks (socks must be above the ankle bone)

PHYSICAL EDUCATION UNIFORM

- Royal blue sweatpants with school logo
- Royal blue crew neck sweatshirt with CAB Logo

- Gray polo with school logo under the sweatshirt
- Velcro-fastening sneakers without wheels, lights or other “accessories,” no slip-ons
- White ankle/crew/athletic socks (socks must be above the ankle bone)

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Jewelry

Jewelry is limited to one watch (non-beeping) and one ring. A simple cross or holy medal on a chain may be worn under the shirt. No body piercings except for pierced ears are allowed. Girls may wear one pair of **stud** earrings in the lower earlobe. No cartilage piercings and no hoop earrings of any size are allowed. Boys may not wear earrings of any type. Students should be discouraged from bringing or wearing valuables to school. The school is not responsible for loss or damage to personal property.

Tattoos

No tattoos of any kind are allowed.

Make-up/Nail Polish

Girls may not wear make-up of any type to school. Nails must be natural (no fake, acrylics, etc.) and only clear polish may be worn. Colored chapstick may not be worn. There may be special times when the principal allows this guideline to change.

Hair

The main focus for hair at the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport for both boys and girls, is that however it is worn, children must come to school with their hair clean and groomed. Additionally, no non-natural colors are permitted (i.e: pink, purple, green, etc.). No designs, logos, or words should be cut into hairstyles. Parents and students should take into consideration and avoid any styles that might distract or impede the ability of the child, or the child’s classmates, to focus on learning. Hair must always be worn in a way that does not impair the child’s vision, or impede the ability of those around them to see easily during class.

Scheduled Out of Uniform Days

During the year there will be certain days when the uniform is not required. Dress on those days will be in compliance with the rules of modesty and decorum and should be according to the theme for the day. **Guidelines for out of uniform days include the following:**

Students Should NOT Wear:

- *skirts/dresses shorter than three inches above the knee
- *shorts shorter than three inches above the knee
- *flip-flop sandals
- *open back shoes
- *tank tops or tops/dresses with thin straps/open backs/low cuts, etc.
- *T-shirts with inappropriate writing or design
- *form fitting shirts/short/pants/skirts/dresses
- *sneakers that convert to roller skates
- *biker shorts/shirts/spandex
- *pajama pants
- *make-up

**ALL UNIFORM REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES ARE SUBJECT TO
THE DISCRETION OF THE PRINCIPAL**

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.306 – Transportation

The transportation program for all eligible students shall be organized and planned in cooperation with the local public school officials. Conduct on school buses should be in accordance with the regulations drawn up by the local director of bus transportation and the school.

Bus service to the Catholic Academy schools is provided by the Bridgeport Board of Education Transportation Department through a third party provider (currently WE Transportation).

In August, the school secretary provides information to the transportation department for all those families indicating the need for bus service on their application/re-registration form. Once the bus schedule is established, the school secretary contacts all families with the bus stop and estimated pick up times. In the afternoons, the route is run in reverse. Generally, the bus route cannot be modified.

Concerns about bus transportation can be communicated to the school secretary, and the principal will file a report when necessary.

Riding the school bus is a privilege which is earned by proper and safe behavior. For the safety of all, students riding the bus must conform to the rules and regulations of the bus company and to school policy. Suspension of the riding privilege may be the result of misbehavior on the bus or at the bus stop. The bus driver is in charge of the students when they are on the bus.

Per Bridgeport Board of Education Policy, students are not allowed to ride a bus other than the one officially assigned, nor exit at a stop other than the one assigned. Students who are not signed up to ride the bus may never do so. The following has been established in order to insure the safety of all students who ride buses:

- The students are to be on their best behavior and no food or drinks are allowed.
- The students are to remain seated in their seats, facing front when the bus is in motion.
- The students do not change seats on the bus whether the bus is stopped or moving.
- The students do not save seats for friends/classmates on the bus.
- The students should place their backpack under the seat in front of them, not on a seat.
- **The students are not to have any electronic devices out on the bus. (This includes NO iPads/iPhones or other listening, recording or photo taking devices.)**
- The students are not to talk to the driver unless it is an emergency.
- The students are not to open bus windows without the driver's permission.
- The students are not to litter inside the bus or throw anything out the bus windows.
- Destruction of property is not tolerated.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.310 – Bullying

Bullying is prohibited in all Catholic schools in the Diocese of Bridgeport. It must not be tolerated during the school day or during any school-sponsored activities on or off school grounds. Bullying and intimidation are actions that are contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Any behavior deemed by the school administration to be considered as bullying shall result in disciplinary actions, which may include detention, suspension and expulsion from school.

Any student who retaliated against another student for reporting bullying may be subject to disciplinary actions, which may include detention, suspension and expulsion from school.

Bullying is defined as [A] the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying directed at or referring to another student (B) a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student, that: (i) Causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property, (ii) places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for such student, (iv) infringes on the rights of such student at school, or (v) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

If it is concluded that an act of bullying has occurred, the parents or guardians of the student who committed such acts and the parents/guardians of the student against whom such acts were directed shall be notified. Consequences for students who bully others shall depend on the results of the investigation and include parent conferences, professional counseling, detention, suspension, or expulsion. Depending on the severity of the incident, or the series of incidents, the administrator may also take appropriate steps to ensure student safety.

Clarification of terms:

"Cyberbullying" means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications;

"Mobile Electronic Device" means any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more individuals, including, but not limited to, a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital images are taken or transmitted;

"Electronic communication" means 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;

"Hostile environment" means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate;

"Outside of the school setting" means at a location, activity or program that is not school related, or through the use of an electronic device or a mobile electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school

"School climate" means the quality and character of school life with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community between and among students and adults.

The Catholic Academy fully supports the Diocesan Policy against bullying, and works hard to maintain a climate that is counter-conducive to such behavior.

Students can report incidents anonymously to the principal or any faculty or staff member via a written note to a teacher, the Principal, or any staff member sent through a variety of means. If a parent is concerned, he/she should contact the Principal immediately to share that concern. The Principal, at the parent's request, will conduct an investigation keeping the family that reported the incident anonymous.

St. Raphael Academy, at the suggestion of representatives from CALI (Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative) – Positive Climate, is working with students, faculty and staff to refrain from using the term “bully” or “bullying” and rather use the term “mean” followed by a description of the mean behavior. This approach allows the school to deal with specific situations, hopefully before rising to the very severe level of bullying as defined in Diocesan policy.

The principal reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action if any doubt arises.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.311 – Harassment

The schools of the Diocese of Bridgeport do not condone any form of harassment. All individuals are to be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment in any form is prohibited. The prohibition against acts of harassment applies to all individuals involved in the school.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances.

Verbal harassment includes derogatory comments, jokes, or slurs; it also can include belligerent or threatening words spoken to another individual.

Physical harassment includes unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, and deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement.

Visual harassment includes derogatory, demeaning, or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, novelties, or gestures.

A student who harasses another student shall be disciplined and may be expelled from the school.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.312 – Suspected Illegal Substance

No student shall possess, use, or attempt to possess, use or be under the influence of a prohibited substance on school premises during any school term or off school premises at a school-related activity, function or event. A “prohibited substance” is defined as:

- 1) Any controlled substance or illegal or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to, marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate;*
- 2) Alcohol or an alcoholic beverage;*
- 3) Any abuse of glue, aerosol paint, or any other volatile chemical substance for inhalation;*
- 4) Any other intoxicant, or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior altering drug; and*
- 5) Any prescription drugs used in amounts or purposes not contemplated by the prescription.*

The transmittal, sale or attempted sale of a prohibited substance is also prohibited under this policy.

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

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

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

An interview with the parent/guardian of the student is required before a decision is made regarding the student’s readmission to school. The school reserves the right to require professional counseling as a condition of maintaining a student’s enrollment.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.314 Weapons

No student shall possess, use, transmit, or conceal or attempt to possess, use, transmit, or conceal a weapon, including a firearm or electronic defense weapon while on school premises during any school term, or off school premises at a school-sponsored activity, function or event. Students who fail to comply with this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.315 – Search and Seizure

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

The Parent-Student Handbook of rules and regulations governing school operations and procedures must contain a statement concerning the use of lockers, the possession of illegal substances and objects, and the resulting disciplinary action for violation of the school rules in these areas.

At St. Raphael Academy, students may store their backpacks and jackets on a hook in the classroom, in a cubby provided by the teacher, or in the hallway locker, depending upon the location of the classroom. The Principal and/or his/her designee reserves the right to search for any illegal substances and objects according to the following procedure:

Procedure:

If a student is suspected or observed using, transmitting, or concealing or attempting to possess, use, transmit, or conceal an illegal substance or object (including, but not limited to a weapon), the following steps shall be taken:

1. The teacher or other person have the aforesaid information shall notify the principal;
2. The principal for gather information to make a determination of student use, transmission, or concealment of the illegal substance or object;
3. Upon confirmation of student involvement in the aforesaid activity, the student’s parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be notified, appropriate action shall be taken and written documentation shall be kept on file;
4. If activity cannot be confirmed and concerns exist about student behavior, the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified and written documentation of notification kept on file; and
5. Local law enforcement shall be notified when appropriate.
6. When appropriate and when law enforcement is notified, the Office of the Superintendent should also be notified as soon as reasonably possible.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.316 – Withdrawal of Students for Academic Reasons

A school may require a student to withdraw for serious academic reasons if the school is unable to meet a student's needs.

The Catholic Academy makes every effort to determine whether or not student academic needs can be met through the admissions process. All students are accepted on a probationary basis, and in some cases an academic and/or behavior contract may be agreed upon as a condition of acceptance.

Students who exhibit evidence of academic struggle will be placed on an action plan, and failure to meet the terms of the action plan could result in withdrawal.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.317 – Discipline

The primary goal of any disciplinary code is self-discipline; enabling the student to internalize Catholic values and principles and to behave in accordance with those values and principles. Each student has the right to learn in a safe, caring, Catholic environment. This right must be respected and safeguarded. The Diocese of Bridgeport has a published Student Code of Conduct (Practices/Procedures) which outlines specific behavior expectations and consequences to be used as a guideline for each individual school's own discipline policy. Additionally, the following guidelines apply to all.

- 1. A teacher should never dismiss a pupil from the classroom for a disciplinary reason without notifying the Principal*
- 2. A student must be accompanied by school personnel when dismissed from class.*
- 3. On the rare occasion when it is necessary to remove a student from the school for part of a school day, the Principal will resolve the situation and notify the parents/guardians.*
- 4. Direct supervision of the pupil who is being disciplined is the responsibility of the teacher or principal and is required in all cases. Placement in corridors, closets or corners is never acceptable.*
- 5. The use of corporal punishment is forbidden.*
- 6. Discipline records shall be maintained for the academic year.*
- 7. Bullying of a student by another student is forbidden.*

Catholic Academy faculty and staff practice sound classroom management techniques in order to maintain an environment conducive to learning. The best techniques involve well-planned and engaging lessons, and a classroom of students well-trained in the procedures and routines of the classroom and the day.

Other techniques include, but are not limited to, verbal warnings, counting down, various transition methods to bring students to order, using “traffic light” symbols, and other commonly used reward and consequence systems such as “gem jars”, star charts, individual and group behavior charts, and more.

Sometimes it is helpful or necessary for a student to have a temporary break from the classroom environment in another supervised situation for a period of time. This could be either to settle him/herself, or to prevent disruption of the learning environment for others. This could mean a space within the classroom, in another classroom, or in the office. Children typically spend time reflecting on their behavior and making better choices. Often, restorative actions such as apologizing or having a conversation with those offended are warranted. Teachers and the Principal might counsel or coach students through the restorative actions.

Should these techniques not result in modified behavior, disciplinary action is likely to escalate. These could include warnings and loss of recess. For younger grades, loss of recess is typically, one minute per the age of the child. Rarely will students lose their entire recess, as we believe children need time to run and play and expend energy.

At other times, either due to failure of other techniques to be effective, or due to the severe nature of the incident, the consequence will escalate to an after school detention. If a student receives a detention, it will be served within a week after the detention is given. A notice will be sent home to the parent before the student will be able to stay for detention. This notice must be returned to school with a parent signature. Students who have detention will serve it from 2:00-3:00 pm. Serving a detention takes precedence over attending an afterschool activity.

In some cases, a behavior contract will be established identifying specific escalation processes.

Should a child exhibit behavior outside the above expectations, a teacher will initiate a disciplinary referral. The usual order for a disciplinary referral is:

1. Student/Teacher conference
2. Student/Principal conference
3. Parent/Teacher phone conference
4. Parent/Teacher conference
5. Parent/Teacher/Principal conference

In some cases, the order is adjusted due to the discretion of the principal.

We expect the following behavior from our students:

- Showing courtesy and respect at all times in the building and on the playground
- Following directions
- Working independently
- Requesting permission to leave a classroom or other assigned area
- Keeping hands, feet and objects to oneself
- Respecting and taking care of property, including textbooks and library books
- Bringing only educational items to school. Items NOT allowed include, but are not limited to: electronic devices, fidget spinners, laser lights, toys, collectible items (trading cards, etc.)
- Completing assignments on time and with quality to the best of his/her capability.

The following are considered to be serious offenses:

- Disrespect of **any type** to faculty or staff member
- Teasing or bullying another student
- Creating a disturbance in a classroom or on school property
- Fighting or threatening to fight another student
- Use of profane language or gestures
- Defacing school property or the property of others
- Stealing or cheating
- Possession or use of cigarettes, alcohol, unlawful drugs or dangerous weapons
- Truancy

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.318 – Suspension

The Principal has the right to suspend those pupils whose presence in the school has become a serious impediment to the school operation. When serious disciplinary action in the form of suspension from school is deemed necessary, strict adherence to the following guidelines is expected:

1. *Parent/Guardian is notified by the Principal immediately.*

2. *No pupil is to be sent home from the school premises until the parents of legal guardians have been contacted. The Principal will notify the parents/guardians who are responsible for making transportation arrangements.*
3. *A conference is to be arranged immediately by the Principal involving the parents or legal guardians, all personnel involved and the Principal. This meeting will serve to clarify the circumstances concerning the suspension for all concerned parties. Also, the terms of the suspension will be made clear.*
4. *The period of suspension shall never exceed five (5) school days.*
5. *Suspended pupils are responsible for making up all tests and assignments missed during the period of suspension.*

At the Catholic Academy, suspensions can take the form of In-School Suspensions (ISS) or Out-of-School Suspensions (OSS) and will be given for repeated offenses or egregious behavior. ISS is most typical with OSS being reserved for the most severe situations. This includes, but is not limited to fighting in anger, and violation of rules during safety procedures/drills. A student serving an ISS will do his/her work in a space away from the usual classroom situation. Involvement of the Superintendent's Office, Office of Safe Environments or even the police department may take place in certain situations, typically on a case-by-case basis.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.319 – Expulsion

Expulsion of a student from school should only follow a period of suspension, unless the situation calls for immediate action. Expulsion should only be considered a last resort; if other means of discipline have proven ineffective and/or the continuation of a student in membership of the school is considered to be a hindrance to the welfare and progress of the school.

Expulsion may result from actions (physical, verbal, or virtual) occurring in or out of school or on or off school property.

Student Health and Wellness

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.400 - Health

All students attending schools in the Diocese of Bridgeport will be expected to comply with the existing policies of the local Board of Health as they pertain to required physical examinations and schedule of immunizations. In all health related areas, including procedures for students with allergies, schools will follow their local Board/Department of Health or public school guidelines. No non-medical exemptions are accepted at the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport. All medical exemptions must be verified by a legally qualified practitioner of medicine.

State law requires complete primary immunizations and a health assessment by a legally qualified practitioner of medicine...An immunization update and additional health assessments are required in the 6th or 7th grade...Specific grade levels will be determined by the local [public school] board of education.

A health assessment record is required every year for students participating on sports teams.

All students attending the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport will be expected to comply with the existing policies of the local Board of Health as they pertain to required physical examinations and immunizations. In all health related areas, including procedures for students with allergies, schools will follow their local Board of Health or public school guidelines. All forms provided by the local Board of Health will be used. Parents who choose to have their child exempted from immunizations must present a religious exemption form to the Principal.

State law requires complete primary immunizations and a health assessment by a legally qualified practitioner of medicine, an advanced practice registered nurse or registered nurse, licensed pursuant to chapter 378, a physician assistant, licensed pursuant to chapter 370, a school medical advisor, or a legally qualified practitioner of medicine, an advanced registered nurse or a physician stationed at any military base prior to school entrance in Connecticut (C.G.S. Secs. 10-204a and 10-206).

Catholic Academy takes all reasonable precautions to protect the health and safety of students, faculty and staff. The policies and procedures described below indicate what the school IS able to do and what it is NOT able to do.

- The Bridgeport Board of Education provides us with a school nurse two days per week during school hours
- We CANNOT guarantee that there will always be a nurse at either school every day, or for the entire day. The nurse is NOT present during the extended day program.
- There ARE faculty members present throughout the school day and during the Extended Day Program who are trained to give medications such as Epi-pens, inhalers, and Benadryl.
- St. Raphael Academy does not directly supervise the school nurse, but does work with his/her supervisor should any issues arise.
- Neither the school nurse nor any St. Raphael personnel can give any medication, oral or topical, prescribed or over-the-counter, without a doctor's note. A parent note for over-the-counter medication IS NOT SUFFICIENT.
- Unless exceptions are approved by the school nurse and principal, and with written authorization from the child's physician, students ARE NOT allowed to self-medicate at any time. DO NOT give your child a pain-reliever, for example, to take at school.
- We CANNOT monitor a student's temperature during the day. If you are concerned about a spiking fever, keep your child at home. Of course, if a child indicates he/she is not feeling well or a teacher observes behavior indicating illness, a child's temperature will be taken.
- We DO NOT claim to be "nut free" or allergen free, but do take every reasonable precaution in food allergy situations.

Parents will be notified if a student is too sick to remain in school. In this case, it is essential that a child be picked up within an hour after the call is made. If a parent cannot do so, another relative or friend who is the emergency contact can meet this expectation. In the case of an accident, when deemed necessary by either the school nurse, principal or teacher, an ambulance will be called.

Per the City of Bridgeport Board of Education Health Services Guidelines (published 4/25/11):

Keep your child at home when he/she has:

- Cold symptoms with fever, malaise, cough, discolored nasal drainage
- Diarrhea &/or vomiting
- Eye drainage (profuse &/or thick)
- Fever (for any reason)
- Rash (undiagnosed – not seen by M.D.)
- Sore throat (if cultured, until 24 hr. result is back & negative)
- Sore throat with positive culture – 24 hr. after antibiotics started
- When child feels too sick to take part in the school day

Your child may return to school when:

- Temperature is normal for 24 hrs. after stopping Tylenol or Ibuprofen
- Diarrhea &/or vomiting has stopped for 24 hrs.
- Students who have sent home with vomiting and/or diarrhea should stay home the next day

- Rash has been seen by M.D. (must bring note to the school nurse)

Children are generally non-infectious:

- 24 hrs. after starting antibiotics
- After all chicken pox lesions are scabbed (usually 1 week)
- 1 week after the onset of any communicable disease

Please note:

- Children unable to participate in P.E. Class and/or recess because of injury (wearing cast, split, or using crutches) or illness, **MUST BRING A NOTE TO THE NURSE FROM THE CHILD'S M.D. INDICATING RESTRICTIONS AND THE DURATION OF THE RESTRICTIONS.**
- Children who have been treated for an injury, have had surgery, or have been hospitalized even overnight **MUST BRING A NOTE TO THE NURSE FROM THE CHILD'S M.D. STATING THAT THEY MAY RETURN TO AND INDICATING ANY RESTRICTIONS.**

Suspected Abuse

State Law requires that all cases of abuse (physical, mental, emotional, sexual) be reported to the CT Department of Children and Families (DCF). It is important to note that all teachers, administrators, staff and even volunteer (or paid) coaches are **MANDATED REPORTERS**, and as such are required by law to make a report to DCF in certain circumstances. It is not the job of a mandated report to make a determination as to the credibility, accurateness or severity of a circumstance – that is the function of DCF. Failure to report an incident could result in fines and liability. For more information, visit <http://www.ct.gov/dcf/site/default.asp>.

Diocesan Policy 3.401 – School Nurse

The school nurse shall be responsible for the health records of the students and provide medical treatment as approved by the local public school district.

Diocesan Policy 3.402 Health Records

A current health record for each student shall be requested annually and is to be kept active and up-to-date. Health records shall be kept in files separate from student records.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.403 – Emergency Information for Students

Schools must request emergency information for each student enrolled in the school. This must include pertinent information in case of accident or illness.

Parents/Guardians must update their emergency information annually prior to the beginning of the academic year. Parent(s) and Guardian(s) send changes to emergency information throughout the school year as they occur.

All families are required to submit emergency contact information on their admissions application and at the beginning of the school year. Should the information change parents/guardians must submit changes in writing to the office as soon as possible. The school secretary will update the database.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.404 - Medication

Administration of medication by school personnel should be in compliance with the city/town in which the school resides. Proper medical authorization forms must be used.

Students requiring prescription and/or over-the-counter medications in school must present a physician's authorization and written parent/guardian permission. Such medication must be in its original pharmacy container, and shall be kept in a locked file in the nurse's office. In some circumstances, a student may be allowed to self-administer medication with a physician's written authorization.

Due to privacy regulations, medical information from the health form is not shared with faculty and staff unless the parent/guardian signs the release statement at the bottom of the blue health form, which is preferred. Therefore, it is extremely important that parents communicate food allergies, asthma, or other serious medical conditions to the school via the appropriate section on the registration/application form. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school should this information change.

Any parent who requests that medication be given at school assumes full responsibility for any side effects. Staff may not dispense medication to any child without a prior signed physician's order on file in the school office.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.405 - Allergy Policy

In general, the school nurse will follow the health policies of the town in which the individual school is located. The school nurse will formulate an Individual Health Care Plan for each individual child with a food allergy and discuss this plan with the appropriate school staff members and the student's parents.

At Catholic Academy, parents/guardians must notify the school via the Emergency Section of the application and the Health Form if a student has any serious food allergies. While the school takes what it considers to be reasonable measures to guard against an allergic reaction, the school cannot and will not be responsible for ensuring that no contact with an allergy-related product will occur. The most important preventative measure is taken in the home in the preparation of food. A parent or guardian of a student with food allergies is responsible for providing all food for his/her own child. Snacks will be kept in a separate snack box or bag provided by the parent or guardian. Sharing or trading food in the class will be prohibited. Proper hand cleaning techniques will be taught and encouraged for the handling/consumption of food. **Peanut butter and nut products are not permitted in school.**

All faculty and staff members participate in annual food-allergy awareness training. In addition, there are several teachers trained by the school nurse in the administration of an *Epi-Pen* in the case of signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis. For field trips, should one of these trained teachers not be able to attend, the child's parent must go on the field trip. In this case, a parent is considered a school volunteer and must be Virtus trained and background checked.

If an *Epi-Pen* needs to be utilized in the case of an allergic reaction, 911 will be contacted to transport the student to the hospital and his/her parents will be contacted. *"An individual who is qualified to administer an epinephrine auto-injector may do so only to students who have a written order for such injection by a qualified health care provider and written authorization from the parent(s)/guardian(s). No such injection may be given to a student who has not been identified as having a life-threatening allergy and for whom no written order has been received."*

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.500 - Safety of Students

The principal shall oversee the supervision of students on the school premises. The faculty shall share this responsibility with the principal. ALL entrances and exit doors must be secured at all times. No school personnel or students shall open secured entrances to admit unknown persons.

Such person must be directed to the main entrance and must register at the school office. Visitors must wear an identifying badge for the duration of the visit. NO visitor is exempt from this policy.

At St. Raphael Academy, visitors, which includes parents and guardians, are required to use the front main entrance when coming into the school building. All visitors are to report to the main office, sign the visitor log, and wear a visitor badge, then sign out at the office when leaving the building. Parents are not allowed to go into a classroom when it is in session without permission from the Principal.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.502 – School Doors

All school entrances must be locked at all times. Where appropriate and necessary, doors should have exterior alarms. Only specified school personnel may admit visitors.

Interior doors to classrooms must be closed and locked during the school day unless the municipalities state otherwise. Teachers or students may admit into the classroom the principal, other faculty or invited visitors who have registered at the office and are wearing an identifying school badge.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.503 – Visitors and/or Authorized Persons

All schools shall establish procedures to register visitors on school property. There shall only be one main entrance for visitors. School entrances, including where visitors must sign in, must be clearly marked.

All entertainers, vendors, and guests must be in full compliance with Safe Environment Policies. Short term visitors (less than 3 hours) and one time only guest speakers must be directly monitored by a cleared adult for the entire time they are present with students and they must be instructed to use a faculty or staff only bathroom. A cleared adult is someone who is in full compliance with the Safe Environment requirements of the Diocese of Bridgeport and the USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.505 - Fire Safety

Proper fire exit directions must be posted clearly in each room of the schools. All schools are required by State Law to conduct ten drills a year. There shall be at least two fire drills held during the first two weeks of a school term and eight additional fire exit drills during the year. All schools must conform to the requirements of the current city/town fire code. Monthly fire drills are required in all schools.

St. Raphael Academy holds two major types of emergency drills: fire and active threat.

During fire drills, students are expected to exit the school by walking in silence in either single or double file in silence, according to the emergency exit plan posted in the room and/or at the direction of their teacher. All students line up outside the fence around the parking lot until all are accounted for. The signal is given to re-enter the building, and students are to walk in silence back to the school.

Lockdown drills are held several times per year to train students on what to do should there be an intruder in the building or if there is a threat coming from outside the building. When the signal is given, students are to gather in a designated spot on the classroom floor in silence. Teachers will close and lock classroom doors. Students who are in lavatories or hallways will not be allowed in the classrooms once doors are closed. These students should remain in lavatories or go to lavatories until the clear signal is given.

In certain situations, the school might go into “soft lockdown” or “shelter in place” mode, which means normal school operations will continue WITHIN THE MAIN SCHOOL BUILDING, and students will not go outside or move to other buildings on campus.

Should a real lockdown situation occur, parents must not come to the school to get their children until local authorities have given approval to the school for safe release of the students. The school will not answer the door or respond to telephone calls should this situation arise. Parents must listen to local news or radio stations to obtain information. All of this is done to ensure the safety of the students.

Due to the importance of maintaining a safe and orderly environment during emergencies, students who violate the behavior expectations during emergency drills will be subject to disciplinary action.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 3.507 – School Safety and Crisis Intervention Plans
Each school must have its own School Safety and Crisis Intervention Manual outlining the procedures to be followed in the event of an accident or serious injury, fire, bomb or bomb threat, intruder, incapacitated teacher, attack, bus accident, kidnapping, hostage taking, suicide, and death of an employee or student. Each school shall have periodic safety and crisis drills each year so that all employees and students are familiar with the procedures outlined in the manual.

Academic Information

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 4.100 – Objectives of the Instructional Program
The purpose of Catholic Schools is to foster a learning environment centered on the teachings of Jesus Christ that provides academic excellence through rigorous curricula and prepares students to be life-long learners and contributing members of the 21st Century global community.

To achieve this purpose, each Catholic school within the Diocese of Bridgeport organizes its curriculum, staff, and its physical facilities so that the student will be able to:

- Know the person and message of Christ through joyful and prayerful worship which will help to nurture the growth of spiritual values, ethical standards of conduct, and moral integrity;*
- Develop an understanding of the Catholic Church as a universal community of faith;*
- Evolve and progress in their ability to think constructively, become independent problem-solvers through the guidance of educators entrusted with their spiritual and academic on-going development.*

Curriculum

The Diocese of Bridgeport curriculum mapping and guidelines are consistent with the State of Connecticut guidelines, and followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas. The curriculum and maps can be accessed via the school website as well as the Diocese of Bridgeport website (www.DOBCatholicSchools.com).

St. Raphael Academy offers students opportunities for growth in the following subjects:

Religion	Language Arts
Science	Math
Social Studies	Handwriting
Spanish	Physical Education
Fine Arts (Art & Music)	Technology

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 4.112 – Prayer

The school day shall begin and end with prayer. Traditional prayers of the Church shall be taught. Informal prayer shall also be encouraged.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 4.113 – Mass and Sacraments

Catholic students shall be encouraged to practice their faith and particularly to receive the Sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist in such a manner that they shall come to realize that spiritual growth is a matter of cooperation with divine grace.

Efforts should be made to encourage attendance at Mass and the sacraments, but students should not be intimidated by or embarrassed about such matters. Ordinarily, the Sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation shall be provided to students by the school during the liturgical seasons of Advent and Lent. Ordinarily, well-planned liturgical experiences in accordance with approved liturgical norms shall form an integral part of the religious education programs. Mass shall be celebrated monthly and on Holy Days of Obligation. Attendance at Mass by the entire student body may be used as a substitute for religion classes on school days.

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 4.116 – Field Trips

Field trips having educational value are recommended provided all aspects of health and safety are assured.

The following guidelines are to be followed for all field trips:

- 1) Field trips should have an educational purpose. Trips to amusement parks/areas are prohibited. Overnight field trips are strongly discouraged by the Office for Education and are not allowed without permission from the Superintendent.*
- 2) Field Trip Permission Forms are required for all field trips. Official Diocesan field trip permission forms must be signed by a parent or guardian. Parents shall be informed of the date, purpose, destination, means of transportation, and probable time of return.*
- 3) Except in extenuating circumstances, parents and teachers are not permitted to transport students in private vehicles on field trips.*
- 4) The ratio of children to adult chaperones will be determined by the school administrator. Chaperones should be made aware of their responsibilities prior to departing. All chaperones must be in full compliance with the Safe Environments Policy of the Diocese of Bridgeport.*
- 5) A student who DOES NOT have a signed, official Diocesan permission form must not go on the planned trip. Parent phone calls and/or handwritten notes are not acceptable. A faxed permission slip is allowed.*
- 6) The Principal always reserves the right to exclude a student from participation in a field trip due to concerns regarding behavior. A student is not to be excluded due to delinquent tuition. No student shall be denied a trip because of parental inability to pay.*
- 7) Connecticut law prohibits transportation of Pre-K students on school buses.*

At Catholic Academy of Bridgeport, we believe field trips are an integral part of education and are NOT OPTIONAL. However, they are considered a privilege which may be lost due to inappropriate conduct or neglect of academic work. No refunds will be given should a student lose his/her field trip privilege after the price per pupil is published, as it is not fair for others to have to incur increased costs in these situations. Students unable to go on a field trip ARE NOT excused from school work, and assignments will be provided to cover the educational experience received on the field trip, to the extent possible. All school rules apply.

Signed permission forms are due no later than the day before the trip. Students who do not have forms the day of the trip will not go, and refunds will not be issued.

Families unable to cover the cost of a trip are asked to contact the principal so that assistance can be arranged.

After School Care Program

- The Program begins after dismissal at 2:00 p.m. and ends at 5:30 p.m.
- Children are encouraged to complete homework and will be assisted, if necessary. However, they are expected to complete the homework on their own.
- The children may play outside, do arts and crafts, play board games, and have organized games during the After School Care program. Students are placed in age appropriate groupings and there is a structure to the program offering homework, gross motor and fine motor activities as well as free play.
- If you are late picking up your child from school for any reason, he/she will be automatically sent to the After School Care Program. There will be a minimum fee of one hour charge when the students attend.
- There is a \$5 fee, per hour, per student. After School Care is charged on an hourly basis; a bill is sent home weekly on Wednesday, unless otherwise noted.
- Please be punctual with pick up. An escalated fee of \$10.00 per every 10 minutes after your child is not picked up at 5:30 p.m.
- Students who attend other school sponsored extracurricular activities must sign in once the other activity has finished.
- Registration/Emergency Forms must be completed prior to the attendance in the program, including the names of people you wish us to contact in case of emergency and people authorized to pick up your child(ren).
- If you wish someone to pick up your child(ren) who is not on the emergency form, you must write a note and send it to your child's teacher. This person must have acceptable identification with him/her.
- If there is NO school, there is NO After School Care. If school is dismissed early due to weather, there is NO After School Care.
- Please consult the school calendar, newsletters, registration paperwork, and other notices regarding dates when After School Care is closed.
- When picking up your student, please use the bell at the side door (by church), and state your child's name, your name, and relation to the child.

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY

Diocese of Bridgeport Policy 4.301 – Informational Technology – Acceptable Use Policy

Use of all available technologies by students, faculty, and all school personnel must be in support of education and research consistent with the educational goals and objectives of the school.

The logo, name or mascot of the school may not be used or reproduced by any student without permission of the Principal. Violations of this policy will lead to disciplinary action that may lead to expulsion.

Equipment:

All technology and communication tools purchased or provided by the school are considered school property intended for professional use only and subject to reasonable inspection. All use of technology and communication tools during school hours is likewise school property and subject to reasonable inspection for appropriateness.

The use of any electronic communication device during tests or assessments must be approved by the teacher and the principal where appropriate.

Digital Communication:

Improper use of digital communication includes engagement in social networking, emails, online blogs, text messaging, websites postings, or any postings that include defamatory comments regarding the school, a person's dignity, bullying, harassment, threats or other inappropriate comments that are contradictory to Catholic teaching.

If a student's use of digital communication is contrary to Gospel values, endangers the safe environment, the student may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. This policy applies whether it occurs within or outside of school.

St. Raphael Academy expects parents and guardians to abide by this policy as well as students. It is expected that each parent along with the St. Raphael Academy student will read the following acceptable use policy:

DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

October 2002

Internet Safety and Computer Equipment Use Including Related Systems, Software, and Networks

By Students and Staff

I. Office for Education Responsibilities/Rights

1. To create an ***Acceptable Use Policy*** for the schools for the Diocese of Bridgeport
2. To publish said policy
3. To review it annually
4. To be free from liability for presence of unacceptable materials
5. To comply with State and Federal Regulations
6. To cooperate with authorities in criminal investigation
7. To be free from liability for financial obligation incurred through unauthorized use of system
8. To amend the policy at any time

II. School Responsibilities/Rights

1. To oversee resources including scheduling
2. To place reasonable restrictions on systems and technology
3. To perform routine system maintenance
4. To search individual Internet activity with reasonable suspicion
5. To open all files on school network
6. To be free from liability for presence of unacceptable materials on the school's system
7. To comply with Diocesan, State, Federal Regulations
8. To provide a filtering system in accordance with CIPA, as protection measures
9. To provide opportunities for technological training for staff
10. To cooperate with authorities in investigation of criminal activities
11. To bypass passwords to determine activity

12. To publish student works on its website
13. To deny student/staff access

III. Parents'/Guardians' Responsibilities/Rights

1. To see their child's e-mail file upon request
2. To deny their children Internet access
3. To prevent the use of children's names and pictures on the Internet by the school

IV. Student Privileges/Expectations/Understandings

1. To use Internet in distance learning
2. To access World Wide Web for educational purposes
3. To have individual e-mail accounts to send and receive e-mail
4. To receive instruction in technology use
5. To have reasonable protection measures
6. E-mail or Internet correspondence is not privileged or confidential
7. To use Internet to consult experts
8. To communicate with other students
9. To locate information to meet educational needs
10. To have staff assistance to find, use, discriminate among, information services

V. Prohibitions

1. Modifying documents or files without permission
2. Playing unauthorized games
3. Making purchases
4. Conducting commercial or private business
5. Personal use – unrelated to appropriate educational purposes
6. Political lobbying
7. Installing software for personal use
8. Installing school software at home without school permission
9. Altering, interfering with, dismantling, disengaging internet
10. Installing education software without Office for Education permission
11. Installing stand alone (CD/Diskette) without Office of Education approval
12. Illegal activities
13. Accessing knowingly inappropriate material
14. Downloading large files without permission
15. Sending chain letters
16. Spamming
17. Plagiarizing
18. Copyright infringements
19. Profane, obscene language/defamation
20. Accessing and transmitting pornography
21. Accessing information advocating violence of discrimination outside the scope of research under the direction of a teacher/supervisor
22. Accessing, modifying, erasing, rename, making usable or unusable another's file or programs
23. Modifying, copying, transferring software provided by school, faculty, another student without permission
24. Aiding or abetting another student in policy violation
25. Introducing or spreading viruses or other harmful programs
26. Divulging passwords

VI. Individual Responsibilities

1. To comply with security measures
2. To report illegal activities
3. To report improper language or unacceptable activities on the Internet
4. To report any damage or tampering with equipment or system
5. To report any violations of privacy

VII. E-Mail Etiquette

1. Be patient
2. Be polite
3. Keep paragraphs short
4. Use "Subject Line"
5. Include signature
6. Capitalize only to highlight important points

Diocese of Bridgeport Acceptable Use Policy – Internet Safety October 2002

Internet Safety and Computer Equipment Use Including Related Systems, Software, and Networks *By Students and Staff*

The Catholic Church understands that technology has opened the world of Cyberspace Where not only adults but also children live and learn.

The Catholic Church understands that technology is an educational tool the rapidity of whose development sometimes outstrips the concerns for its effects. The Internet offers a dizzying array of undifferentiated facts, knowledge and wisdom. It is a place of instantaneous long distance connections and multiple sources of information from newsgroups, to chat rooms, instant messaging, listservs, audio and video conferencing, etc.

New technologies are often seen as good in and of themselves without consideration of their far-reaching consequences for individual human beings and for humanity as a whole. We must learn to question not only what we are doing but also why and whether we should be doing it.

While it is true that this technology carries with it the potential for unprecedented good it also brings the possibility of incredible risks of which the Church is ever conscious. This understanding is especially critical in light of the Church's responsibility to assist its people in the making of good moral decisions.

With these facts in mind, the Church, nevertheless, also understands that it would not be faithful to its mission should it fail to use telecommunications technology to bring others to Christ. Along with other forms of media, today the Church encourages schools to make wise use of the Internet. In a paper promulgated in February 2002, Archbishop John Foley, President of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, stated that, "the Internet is relevant to many activities and programs of the Church – evangelization...catechesis and other kinds of education." The Pastoral Instruction *Communio et Progressio* spoke of the urgent duty of Catholic schools to train communicators and recipients of social communications in relevant Christian principals (n.107). In the age of the Internet, with its enormous outreach and impact, the need is more urgent than ever. The world has become a global village through telecommunication, and, as a result, technology has become increasingly more necessary as a means of spreading the message of Christ. Effective catechesis depends on the wise use of the latest communications technology, and our teachers must continue to develop themselves in the use of technology not only to advance the cause of academic excellence but also to promote and proclaim the Gospel.

Since as Catholic educators and students in Catholic schools, we are called to follow the teachings and example of Jesus Christ, we willingly agree to comply with the provisions of the **Acceptable Use Policy** listed below as an expression of our love of God, neighbor and self.

ARF/#
10/9/2002

Diocese of Bridgeport Safe Environment Training

VIRTUS PROTECTING GOD’S CHILDREN FOR ADULTS

This is a mandatory three (3) hour training required of every person age 18 and over who works or volunteers within the Diocese of Bridgeport. This training teaches adults how to identify early warning signs of child sexual abuse and how to prevent it. Awareness training is required by the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young Persons.

HOW TO REGISTER

1. Go online to WWW.VIRTUS.ORG or WWW.VIRTUSONLINE.ORG
2. Click on the yellow link labeled “REGISTRATION” in the left hand column
3. Select the Diocese of Bridgeport from the pull-down menu list of organizations by clicking the downward arrow and shading the Diocese of Bridgeport by holding the mouse button.
4. Create a **USER NAME and PASSWORD** that you can easily remember This is needed for registering and for continued training online.
5. Select the primary location where you work or volunteer.
6. Select your role(s) with the Diocese (employee, clergy, volunteer, etc.)
7. Other required fields include and phone number
8. ENTER YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS – it is REQUIRED
9. Finish filling out the form and click “Submit” at the bottom of the screen. Now on the new screen...
10. Click the button on the left of the class for which you wish to register.
11. Please carefully read the training details to determine if the training is an open session or is reserved for a select group of individuals. Additional training opportunities will be posted monthly.
12. Click “Submit Registration” and you have been registered.
13. You should complete the application for a background check on the same site.

ALL SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS must submit to a background check and attend VIRTUS Training. Every five (5) years, employees and volunteers must be re-trained.

*The Parent/Student Handbook sign-off sheet
and acceptable use policy agreement sheet
(included in the Back-to-School Packet)
must be signed and returned to school by September 12, 2025.*