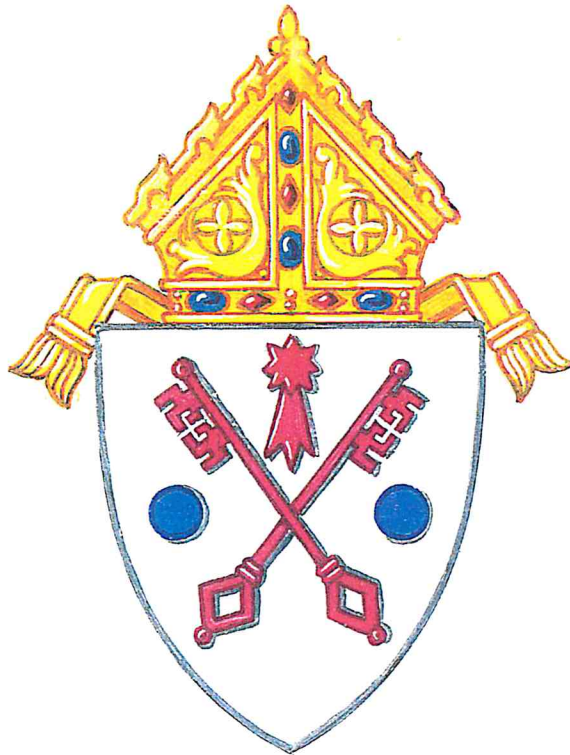


DIOCESE OF SCRANTON
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
STUDENT/PARENT
HANDBOOK



2026/2027 SCHOOL YEAR



**2026/2027 STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK
SIGNATURE PAGE**

MUST SIGN EACH YEAR & RETURN TO SCHOOL OFFICE

*Please read the Student/Parent Handbook, which can be accessed electronically
on the school's FACTS SIS homepage,*

***PLEASE PRINT AND SIGN THIS RELEASE FOR EACH STUDENT
ATTENDING A DIOCESE OF SCRANTON CATHOLIC SCHOOL.***

The Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools developed rules, regulations, and
procedures in conjunction with policies stated in the School Policy Handbook
for Students and Parents.

Student Name

Student Signature

Parent(s)/Guardian Name

Parent(s)/Guardian Signature

Date



DIOCESE OF SCRANTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE
2026/2027 STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE

Each parent and student at the beginning of each new school year agrees in the handbook that appears here. Parents and students alike should be familiar with the terms outlined in this handbook.

I UNDERSTAND AND AM WILLING TO ABIDE BY THE FOLLOWING CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL REGULATIONS:

1. **Each Catholic student/family must be registered members of a parish community.** All students/families must be full and active participants of their respective parishes. All students/families must be willing to give of their time, talent and treasure.
2. Students who fail any course at the end of the school year must make up this course work in summer school or with a certified private tutor before being readmitted the following year. Students who fail three or more courses may not be readmitted for the following school term.
3. Students in possession of or under the influence of drugs, including alcohol, in school, on the school bus or during school-related activities whether on or off school property may incur the penalty of expulsion from School.
4. Students who engage in **any** illegal activities at **any time** (including the use of drugs and alcohol) may be subject to school disciplinary actions, including expulsion.
5. Students who exceed **3 or more unexcused** tardies during a quarter of the school year will be ineligible to participate in the next scheduled social, co-curricular, or extra-curricular activity, including athletics, and will receive a **DETENTION**.
6. Students who fight or use abusive, demeaning, harassing, profane or threatening language at school or on the bus may be subject to school disciplinary action including expulsion.
7. Parents/guardians are expected to adhere to the Diocese of Scranton Parent Code of Conduct as stated in the Student/Parent Handbook (pgs. 10-11).
8. Students are bound by all the rules of the Student/Parent Handbook.
9. **The registration of a student in The Diocese of Scranton Catholic Elementary Schools is considered recognition on the part of the student and his or her parents or guardians of compliance with all rules and regulations of the school.**
10. **The school reserves the right to amend all school rules as found in this Handbook. Parents will be given prompt notification of all changes.**



DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

“They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one’s need. Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes. They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart, praising God and enjoying favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.” Acts 2:42-47

DIOCESE MISSION STATEMENT

“We, the Catholic faithful of the Diocese of Scranton, are called through Baptism to imitate the servant leadership of Jesus Christ. In union with our Holy Father, the Pope, we proclaim the Gospel faithfully, celebrate the sacraments joyfully, and boldly promote life, justice and peace in northeast and north central Pennsylvania.”

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

“We, the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Scranton, are committed to educate students and their families in the Catholic faith. We provide a Catholic education that is spiritually sound and academically excellent. We strive to prepare our students to be faith-filled leaders and life-long learners dedicated to serving the church and society.”

ACCREDITATION

The Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools accredits Diocese of Scranton High Schools. Diocese of Scranton Catholic Elementary Schools are accredited by Middle States Elementary Commission.

Precepts of the Church

- You shall attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation and rest from servile work.
- You shall confess your sins at least once a year.
- You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist during the Easter season.
- You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.
- You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church.

Table of Contents

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON	4
Diocesan Mission Statement	4
Catholic Schools' Mission Statement	4
Accreditation	4
PRECEPTS of the CHURCH	5
I. ADMISSIONS	10
A. Kindergarten	10
B. New Student Probation Period	10
C. Child Custody	10
D. Transfer Students	10
II. PARENTS AS PARTNERS	10
A. Code of Conduct	10-11
III. FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS	11
A. Registration, Tuition, & Financial Aid	11
B. Student Transcripts	11
IV. STUDENT LIFE	12
A. Attendance	12
1. Excused Absences	12-13
2. Unexcused Absences	13
3. Truancy	13
4. Absentee Make-Up Work	14
5. Vacations	14
6. Late Arrival	14
7. Unexcused Tardies	14
8. Absence Procedures	15
9. Early Dismissal	15
B. Back to School Night	15
C. Student Health	15
1. Immunizations	15
2. Student Medication	15
3. Illness at School	16
4. Hospitalization	16
5. Health & Safety	16
D. Guidance & Counseling	16
E. School Uniform Dress Code	16
1. Required for Girls	16
2. Required for Boys	16
3. Grooming	17

4. Out-of-Uniform Day	17-18
F. Cafeteria.....	18
G. Field Trips	18
H. Assemblies	18
I. Games & Dances	18
J. Athletics.....	18-19
1. Interscholastic Athletic School Policy	19
K. Extra-Curricular Activities/Athletic Eligibility.....	19
L. Fundraising	19
M. Physical Education	19-20
N. Student Textbooks & Technology.....	20
V. ACADEMIC POLICY - Introduction.....	20
A. Curriculum	20
B. Parent/School Communication.....	20
1. FACTS SIS	20-21
2. Parent/Teacher Communication.....	21
3. School Newsletters/School Website	21
4. Parent/Teacher Conferences.....	21
5. Social Media.....	21
C. Standardized Testing	21
D. Progress/Deficiency Reports	22
E. Report Cards	22
1. Marking Code	22
F. Retention	22
G. Honor Roll	22
1. Honor Roll Criteria	22
H. Academic Probation	22-23
I. Promotion, Course Failure, Summer School.....	23
J. Academic Integrity.....	23
1. Artificial Intelligence (AI)	23
2. Plagiarism.....	23-24
3. Violating the Rules of an Assignment	24
K. Penalties for Academic Dishonesty.....	24
VI. STUDENT BEHAVIOR & CONDUCT	24
A. Discipline Policy	24
B. Detention	24
C. Teacher Detention	24-25

D. Behavior Contract	25
E. Suspension	25
F. Types & Terms of Suspension	25
1. Short-Term Suspension	25
2. Long-Term Suspension	25
G. Expulsion	25
H. Disciplinary Review Board	25
1. Appeal Process	25-26
I. Behavior Outside of School Campus	26
J. Care of School Building	26
K. Drugs/Alcohol	26
L. Electronic Devices/Cell Phones/Wearable Technology	26
M. Gum Chewing	27
N. Restricted Areas	27
O. Smoking/Vaping Policy	27
P. Stealing	27
Q. Student Privacy of Search & Seizure	27
R. Weapons Policy	27
S. Threats	27-28
T. Withdrawals from School	28
U. Policy on Harassment, Hazing, & Discrimination (Student Version)	28
1. Definition of Harassment	28
2. Definition of Hazing	28
3. Definition of Discrimination	28
4. Responsibilities	28-29
5. Confidentiality	29
6. Procedure	29
7. Retaliation	29
8. Remediation	29
9. Education & Assessment	29-30
VII. TECHNOLOGY	30
A. Internet Use	30
B. Technology & Device Use Rules	30-31
C. Electronic Devices/Cell Phones/Wearable Technology	31
D. Online Social Networking	31
VIII. GENERAL INFORMATION	31
A. Bus Service	31

B. Change of Address, Telephone, Parish.....	32
C. Crisis Drill Directions.....	32
D. Fire Drills.....	32
E. Inclement School-Weather Closing	32
F. Lost & Found	32
G. Personal Property.....	32
H. Posting Materials	32
I. Student Insurance.....	32
J. Telephone.....	33
K. Traffic in Corridors & Stairways.....	33
L. Visitors.....	33
M. Asbestos Hazardous Emergency Response Policy	33
N. Notice of Regarding Reporting Sexual Abuse of a Minor	33
 Addendum 1 – Internet Student Access Contract	 34
Addendum 2 – School Device Student User Agreement.....	35-36
Addendum 3 – Google Meet Student User Agreement	37
Addendum 4 – Technology Student Usage Agreement.....	38
Addendum 5 – Virtual Classroom Parent Acknowledgement Form	39-40
Addendum 6 – Delinquent Tuition & Fees Policy.....	41
Addendum 7 – Request to Have a Guest Visit.....	42
Addendum 8 – Field Trip Form	43-44
Addendum 9 – Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form	45-46

I. ADMISSIONS

Since the formation of students in the Catholic faith and its religious traditions is the primary purpose of Catholic schools, both parents/guardians and students must be willing to abide by the values inherent in our Catholic faith and by our philosophy of Catholic education.

Students and parents/guardians who desire a Catholic education and who fulfill the requirements and conditions for enrollment specified below, are eligible for admission in the Diocese of Scranton Catholic schools without discrimination with respect to sex, race, ethnic origin, or disability, if with minor adjustment, they can meet the school's requirements, according to the subsequent provisions of this policy.

The request for the admission of students from a public or private school must be carefully reviewed and the reasons for the request examined.

Parents may apply for admission to the Diocese of Scranton Catholic schools for their son or daughter. Application does not guarantee admission.

A. Kindergarten

Each elementary school in the Diocese of Scranton will follow an admission procedure relating to the Kindergarten age requirements set by the public school district in which the Catholic school is located.

B. New Student Probation Period

All newly enrolled students are subject to a 9-week probation period. The school reserves the right to determine that the school is not a good fit for the student and to require withdrawal of the student. In such a case, any tuition paid will be refunded.

C. Child Custody

Every Catholic school in the Diocese of Scranton requires that the custodial parent file a court certified copy of the custody section of the divorce decree or a court certified copy of the custody decree with the school. If no such copy is on file, the school officials will presume that both parents have custodial rights. School officials will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that children are released only to the appropriate parent at the appropriate time according to the court mandated custody arrangements. However, parents must accept the primary responsibility as to which parent should have physical custody of them on any given day.

D. Transfer Students

Acceptance of students transferring from another school will be considered upon the fulfillment of the following requirements:

1. Submission of a copy of a complete school transcript indicating passing grades in all courses.
2. Clearance by the Dean of Students, Vice Principal for Academics, Guidance Department, DRF, Athletic Director, & Finance Office.
3. Approval by the Principal.

All transfer students are required to sign a probationary contract before being accepted.

II. PARENTS AS PARTNERS

A. Code of Conduct

As Catholic school parents/guardians, you are the first and most important educators of your children and play a vital role in supporting the mission of the school. In alignment with our Catholic faith and Diocese of Scranton Catholic School policies and procedures, all parents/guardians are expected to adhere to the following Code of Conduct:

1. Support Catholic Values

- a. Uphold the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and encourage your child's growth in faith, service, and moral responsibility.

2. Communicate Respectfully

- a. Treat all school administration, faculty, staff, clergy, volunteers, and families with courtesy and respect, both in person and in written or electronic communication.
- b. Use appropriate channels of communication when raising concerns or questions and avoid gossip or public criticism that can harm the school community.

3. Support a Safe and Positive School Environment

- a. Supports expectations of student behavior in conjunction with classroom/school discipline policies.
- b. Promote positive relationships between students, families, and school personnel.
- c. Refrain from any conduct (including online behavior) that could be disruptive, intimidating, or threatening to students, administration, faculty, staff, clergy, volunteers, and/or families.

4. Use Social Media Responsibly

- a. Social media is not the place for resolving school-related issues, which should be addressed through appropriate channels such as your child's teacher and/or the principal.
- b. Refrain from social media conduct that could be disrespectful, intimidating, or violates the privacy of students, administration, faculty, staff, clergy, volunteers, and/or families.

5. Engage as Partner in Education

- a. Participate actively in the life of the school and in your child's education.
- b. Follow school policies, procedures, and decisions, especially regarding curriculum, discipline, and student welfare.
- c. Make every effort to attend school Masses, parent/teacher conferences, school events, and participate in volunteer opportunities when possible.
- d. Ensure your child attends school regularly, arrives on time, and is prepared to learn.
- e. Depending on your child's grade level, support age-appropriate student learning expectations and independence.

Repeated or serious breaches of this Code of Conduct may result in limited access to school premises or in, severe cases, reconsideration of a family's continued enrollment.

III. FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

A. Registration, Tuition, & Financial Aid

Registration begins in February for the upcoming school year. Parents are encouraged to return all registration materials promptly so teaching staff needs can be determined and accurate budgets may be developed for the following school year. A registration fee will be charged. Parents seeking any financial assistance are required to complete the FACTS Grant and Aid forms that will be posted on the school's Student Information System page when made available. The forms must be returned by the deadline date established.

Students registering for admission to kindergarten must meet the age requirements set by their local public school district of residence.

B. Student Transcripts

A transcript is a copy of a student's school record that lists classes taken; grades earned, and standardized achievement test scores. An official transcript is signed and sealed by the principal and sent directly to another institution.

All financial obligations must be fulfilled before a transcript will be issued.

IV. STUDENT LIFE

A. Attendance

Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools enables students to reach for academic excellence. In order to accomplish this goal, regular student attendance is vital and an integral part of the learning process. **The State of Pennsylvania mandates 180 days of instruction for successful completion of grade level course requirements.** This is necessary in order for the school to advance or graduate a student to the next grade.

Although Pennsylvania statutes on Education provide compulsory attendance for all children between the ages of six and sixteen, the **Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools mandate student attendance in Kindergarten through 8th Grade. The responsibility to comply with this mandatory Diocesan Student Attendance policy belongs to the parent(s).**

Pennsylvania state law mandates that schools take and monitor attendance, tardies, and absences. Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools are required to keep accurate records of daily attendance, tardiness, and absences.

A school day is defined as one where the student receives four or more hours of classroom instruction. **The PA Department of Education (PDE) defines chronic absenteeism to include any student who is absent for eighteen (18) days or more in a school year, regardless of cause.**

Once a student arrives on school property, he or she is NOT permitted to leave the grounds. Leaving school grounds once a student has arrived is considered a truancy and may result in disciplinary action.

Students who are absent from school may not participate in any athletic practice, contest, or other co-curricular, and extracurricular activities on that day. If an absence occurs on a Friday, the student may not participate in any school activities, including school sponsored events that occur over the weekend, until he/she returns to school on Monday.

1. Excused Absences

In the Diocese of Scranton, it is necessary for Catholic school students to remain current in their studies. This can only be accomplished by students being present in class; therefore, removing students from school for vacations, etc. is contrary to school policy. However, situations may occur where a student is unable to attend school for reasons beyond the student's control. Examples of **Excused Absences** include, but are not limited to:

- Illness
- Medical/Doctor's appointment
- Family emergency/death in family

Excused Absences must be reported to the school **in writing within 24 hours** of the absence; failure to do may result in the student being given an **Unexcused Absence**.

A maximum of **ten (10) Excused Absences**, verified by parental/guardian notification, will be allowed during any school year.

For all absences beyond those 10 days, and any absences of **three (3) consecutive days or more**, a written excuse from a treating physician may be mandated for an absence to be considered excused. Physician excuses must include the date and time of the student's visit to their office. Parents/guardians of student(s) that have an existing, professionally diagnosed medical condition that has the potential to significantly impact a student's attendance shall contact the principal to make him/her aware of the condition and allow the school to offer academic support if necessary. Students are required to speak with their teachers to discuss making up work missed as a result of an **Excused Absence**.

If a written excuse is not provided within that time, the absence will be counted as **Unexcused**.

Students who are absent or “truant” from school for ten (10) consecutive school days may be dropped from the active student membership roll unless the absence is partly or completely excused.

2. Unexcused Absences

An **Unexcused Absence** occurs when a student is absent from school without reason or without proper notification from the student’s parent(s)/guardian. **Unexcused Absences** are a violation of school policy and pose a significant concern for the school and a safety risk for students. **Unexcused Absences** include, but are not limited to:

- Absences as a result of skipping school
- Missing school without school permission
- Vacations taken while school is in session
- Failing to report excused absences in a timely fashion

3. Truancy

Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools educate all students for success. Truancy is a major barrier to the achievement of that goal. Habitual truancy negatively impacts a child’s school performance.

A student is defined “truant” if he/she incurs three (3) or more school days of unexcused absences during a school year. A child is “habitually truant” if the child has incurred six (6) or more school days of **Unexcused Absences** during a school year.

Students who are “truant” may be subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, the following:

Infraction	Penalty
Failure to report absence from school	• Requirement to make up missed work for reduced or no credit • Detention • Student Attendance Improvement Meeting (SAIM) with student, parent(s)/guardian, and Principal.

Parents/guardians will be notified, in writing, within ten (10) school days after the child’s third unexcused absence during a marking period. If the child incurs six (6) or more additional unexcused absences after this written notice, a **Student Attendance Improvement Meeting (SAIM)** will be scheduled with the student, parent/guardian, and principal. The outcome of the SAIM will be documented in a written School Attendance Improvement Contract signed by all parties. Further unexcused or unlawful absences will result in a progression through the truancy elimination program defined by Pennsylvania School Law, up to and including a referral to County Children and Youth, and the issuance of a citation to the parent/guardian. This may also result in a student expulsion from the school.

The Principal can stop this action if he/she determines that:

1. Illness has been verified by a physician’s excuse.
2. Absence resulted from a death in the student’s immediate family.
3. Absence was caused by a verified medical emergency within the immediate family.
4. An unusual circumstance exists.

4. Absentee Make-Up Work

A student who is absent from class, is responsible for making up all work missed. This responsibility belongs to the student; **class work must be made up no later than FIVE school days after the student has returned to school.** The student is responsible to make arrangements with his/her teacher(s) to determine what work is to be completed and the exact date when the work is due.

In cases of EXTENDED AND/OR CHRONIC illnesses in which the student's absence will not exceed two weeks, parents are responsible for contacting the school office after the third day of the illness. In turn, the school office will contact the student's respective teacher(s).

In cases of prolonged illnesses that may involve hospitalization or a homebound condition, parents should contact the School Office and the School District of residence. In such cases, each local school district will inform the parent/caregiver of their protocol. The tutor must provide the School with a written summary of work completed with the student as well as a written evaluation of the student's understanding of the material in such a way that the subject teacher will be able to grade the student.

5. Vacations

It is the expectation that students and parents follow the school calendar. Students are to be present on all school days, even when there is a shortened or irregular schedule. Parents are discouraged from planning a vacation during the school year. Students who are taken out of school against this directive must notify the Principal and teachers and/or the School Office. These absences may be counted as **Unexcused Absences**. *Please refer to section 2 and 3 above regarding Unexcused Absences and Truancy.*

Teachers have no responsibility in arranging and/or providing schoolwork for a student prior to a planned trip/vacation. **Upon the student's return, the student assumes full responsibility for the schoolwork missed.** He/she must make arrangements with the teacher for making up work, quizzes, tests, labs, etc. at the teacher's convenience. Teachers have no responsibility for tutoring, setting up lab experiments, etc. when a student is absent and on a trip/vacation. Please note - distance learning/livestreaming is not provided for students who miss class due to a trip/vacation.

6. Late Arrival

Students who are not present for the beginning of the school day and morning prayers will be marked tardy. **A student is tardy when he/she arrives after the school's published start time.** A note must explain tardiness for any reason other than bus delays from the parents/guardians. All students must report to the School Office upon late arrival to obtain a late slip for entry into the classroom.

7. Unexcused Tardies

Students who exceed 3 unexcused tardies during a marking period will be ineligible to participate in the next scheduled social, co-curricular, or extra-curricular activity, including athletics, and will receive a DETENTION.

A student who has received three (3) unexcused tardy detentions (equal to nine (9) or more unexcused tardies), will receive one (1) in-school suspension. In addition, a meeting will be held with the student, parent/guardian, and principal to scheduled. The outcome of the meeting will be documented in a written agreement, signed by all parties, to improve the student's punctuality at school.

- **Tardy** - students who arrive after the school day has begun and is less than 2 hours late.
- **Half Day** – students will be marked absent for a half day if they arrive at school more than 2 hours late, but less than 4 hours late.
- **Absent** – students will be marked absent if they are not present in school or if they are not present from more than 4 and a half hours of the school day.

8. Absence Procedures

If a student is ill and cannot come to school, the student's absence is to be reported to the School Office by phone by his/her parent/guardian. If a phone call is not received, the school may phone the student's home. If no answer is received when the call is made, further investigation will take place.

All students who have been absent from school must present a written excuse from their parent/guardian indicating the reason for absence. Upon their return to school, this note needs to be provided to the student's Homeroom teacher or the School Office. These notes will become part of the student's attendance record for the school year.

9. Early Dismissal

Parents are asked to refrain from requesting their children be excused before the end of the school day for appointments, i.e., dental, medical, etc. A **WRITTEN REQUEST** for early dismissal should include the reason for the request and a telephone number where the parent/guardian can be reached during school hours as well as the name and phone number of the doctor, dentist, etc. When the student returns to school after the appointment, he/she should return with a medical excuse provided by the doctor's office.

For the protection of our students and families, no student will be allowed to leave school on the strength of a telephone call, no matter what the urgency. If a valid emergency exists, a member of the immediate family must come in person to the school office to request the student's early dismissal. Exceptions are granted only for very grave reasons. The Administration is able to make an exception to this rule.

An early dismissal is never a reason to miss a scheduled test/quiz or to not hand in work due during that day. Students are expected to complete their responsibilities the day before being dismissed early.

B. Back to School Night

Early in the school year, parents are given the opportunity to meet teachers and receive a description of the course, class, homework requirements, and testing and grading policies.

C. Student Health

1. Immunizations

The Pennsylvania Department of Health promulgates immunization regulations that require parents or guardians of students enrolled in grades K-12 to have their children immunized against various communicable diseases. Records will need to be given to the administrative offices of the diocesan school on or before the fifth day of class.

2. Dispensing of Medication

Medication will be dispensed by authorized School personnel only. **Necessary Medication, properly labeled, are to be brought to the school by the student's PARENT OR GUARDIAN only.** All medications will be stored in the School or Health Office.

Provided that a permission letter is on file, the student may obtain the medication during the day as needed. When a physician has provided specific written instructions, medication may be kept with the teacher in the classroom or with the student when developmentally or age appropriate.

Under no circumstances will medications be brought to school in plastic bags, non-prescription plastic containers, envelopes, or foil. The medication will be confiscated. No medication may be transported in on school vehicles. If your child has an inhaler and you would like them to carry it with them, this requires a Medical Permission slip stating they are able to carry and self-administer; otherwise inhalers are to be sent to School or Health Office in original prescription packaging and will be kept for student use as needed.

Medication forms must be renewed yearly by your physician. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to pick up unused medications prior to the end of the school year, with the exception of inhalers or EpiPens.

3. Illness at School

A student who becomes ill during the day is not to leave school until he/she receives the proper permission from the School Office. **Students who have been absent from school or who have gone home because of illness may not participate in any athletic practice or contest or in any school activity that same day unless they are present for more than four and one-half hours of the school day.** If a student is sick or absent on Friday, this rule applies to all weekend games or activities as well.

Should a student show flu symptoms during the school day, parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up his/her student.

4. Hospitalization

Hospitalization of a student is a serious event that needs the attention of the school so that academic progress can be combined with recovery of the student in a beneficial manner. Parents should contact the Administration immediately so that the school can make appropriate arrangements.

5. Health & Safety

The Sharing Good Health Guidance and Procedures documents, which have been emailed to each family and can be found on our website at <https://www.dioceseofscranton.org/catholic-schools/>. All protocols outlined in this document will be followed.

D. Guidance & Counseling

Guidance is concerned with the educational, emotional, and social development of all the students in relation to their total school experience. Guidance is a part of the total school program. It is a coordinated effort involving students, faculty, parents, administration and specialists as needed. The counselor implements a plan of guidance, with the cooperation of teachers, parents and administration.

The school counselor follows the professional standards established by the American School Counselor Association, treating each person individually and confidentially. With this in mind, all students should take advantage of this service available to them.

Counselors will keep confidential information shared in counseling sessions unless the student's or another person's health, life and/or safety are at risk or if criminal activity is being contemplated or has occurred. All school staff members have responsibilities towards students and their well-being and towards other people who could be harmed by the student. Additionally, failure to report criminal activity could make the counselor liable to charges of being an accessory to the crime before or after the fact.

E. School Uniform Dress Code

A reasonable dress code supports the goal of self-esteem, neatness and good grooming. Evidence is available which shows that young people are apt to succeed more when their self-esteem is uplifted by a good personal appearance. There are also other practical considerations. Students behave better, are spared unnecessary peer competition in dress, and are saved from the indecision of wondering what to wear each day when there is a fair dress code in effect. The school has attempted to provide a dress code that is both flexible and suitable to our purposes. Parents are expected to assist the school in encouraging their son/daughter to abide by the dress code.

School uniforms must be purchased through FLYNN & O'HARA.

1. REQUIRED FOR GIRLS

* Information will be provided by local school in the addendum.

2. REQUIRED FOR BOYS

* Information will be provided by local school in the addendum.

**Nothing may be worn over the boy's shirt or the girl's blouse
except the school uniform sweater or sport coat (where applicable).
No other sweater may be worn.**

Students who are not in complete uniform may be given a detention. It is strongly advised students' names be written with a permanent marker inside all uniform clothing.

Additional specifics for School Uniform Dress Code is located in the Addendum.

3. Grooming

	Hair	Jewelry	Makeup
GIRLS	Hair must be neat, clean, conservatively styled, and does not block the vision/eyes. There should be no ornamentation (fairy strands, hair extensions, flowers, beads, etc.). Hair coloring, bleaching, highlighting, or tinting is not allowed. Unusual or distracting haircuts, designs, or colors are not permitted. Exceptions may be made for hairstyles that reflect a student's cultural or ethnic identity.	Only one necklace and/or one bracelet may be worn. Watches may be worn. Medical bracelets or medical necklaces may be worn. One pair of non-dangling, post earrings are allowed. No other piercings are allowed. <i>Smartwatches are not permitted to be worn during school hours.</i>	No makeup is allowed. No nail polish or artificial nails are allowed. No visible tattoos either permanent or temporary are allowed. <i>Exception may be made for 7th and 8th grade girls at the school level. Refer to school addendum.</i>
BOYS	Hair must be conservatively styled, short, above the eyes and the collar of the shirt. Excessive hairstyles (Mohawks, faux-hawks, etc.) will not be allowed. Unusual or distracting haircuts, designs, or colors are not permitted. Hair coloring, bleaching, highlighting, and tinting is not allowed. Exceptions may be made for hairstyles that reflect a student's cultural or ethnic identity. No facial hair.	Boys may not wear earrings (including spacers, band-aids, or covering over earrings), bracelets, or pierced jewelry of any kind. Necklaces with a cross or religious medal on a linked chain may be worn. Medical necklace, medical bracelet, and/or watch are permitted. Hats may not be worn in the building. <i>Smartwatches are not permitted to be worn during school hours.</i>	

4. Out-of-Uniform Day

Out-of-Uniform days are an occasional privilege. Like all privileges, their beneficial effects can be forfeited because of the irresponsibility of a few. Out-of-Uniform days are time to show school spirit, wear the school colors, dress up or just enjoy a change of pace. Out-of-Uniform means a relaxed attitude toward dress, which does not result in extremes.

Clothes worn on Out-of-Uniform days must be modest in *all* circumstances. On days when the students do not have to wear their uniform to school, the following guidelines for appropriate Out-of-Uniform **MUST BE FOLLOWED:**

- No sleeveless or strap style shirts or blouses. No low-cut necklines.
- No tight-fitting clothing.
- No excessively bagging clothing.
- No low-slung pants or short tops that expose the midriff.
- No short skirts or shorts. (maximum of 3 inches above the back of the knee)

- No ripped or torn clothing.
- No inappropriate logos, slogans, or advertising on clothing.
- Only sport or athletic shoes with socks may be worn.
- No open-toed/backless (NO CLOGS) sandals.
- Make-up or jewelry (follow school's grooming requirements)

****Same uniform regulations apply for Out-of-Uniform days to boys & girls.****

Violators will be sent home to change and will lose the privilege of being Out-of-Uniform.

NOTE: The Administration reserves the right to determine what is appropriate for the Dress Code.

F. Cafeteria

A student may purchase lunch where applicable or bring his/her own. When using the cafeteria, students are expected to cooperate in maintaining cleanliness and order in the cafeteria and in practicing good table manners. No food of any kind is to be taken outside the cafeteria at any time during the school day*. Students may not leave the cafeteria without the permission of the proctor. Lavatory permission is restricted. Access to other parts of the building is permitted only in cases of necessity and with appropriate permission.

G. Field Trips

Participation in field trips is a privilege, not a right. Properly signed permission forms are required for the student to participate. The school accepts no liability for injury to students participating in field trips. Parents have a right to refuse permission to participate; however, the student is still obliged to attend school on that day. The Administration reserves the right to determine the number of Field Trip approvals for each grade. (See Addendum)

H. Assemblies

Assemblies are scheduled periodically throughout the school year for full and partial student body involvement and are intended to be a valuable part of the educational and spiritual process. Included under the designation "assemblies" are liturgies, educational programs, and pep rallies/Spirit Week.

In any assembly, courtesy and respect are an absolute must. Once the assembly has begun, students are to be silent. The general rule for proper behavior is this: no one is to be talking when the leader of the assembly is communicating. When the assembly has concluded, the entire student body is to await orderly dismissal by first sitting down. An administrator will then dismiss classes.

I. Games & Dances

Students are expected to conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen at all times, particularly at functions sponsored by the school, alone or in conjunction with other schools.

At dances, students are restricted to the designated area and students are not permitted to leave until the dance is over. If a student leaves at any time during the dance, he/she is not allowed to return.

J. Athletics

It is the belief of this school that an adequate, well-balanced athletic program is not based on the concept of winning as an end in itself. Rather, in The Diocese of Scranton Catholic Elementary Schools, athletics are founded on the ideals of good sportsmanship, teamwork, character growth, emotional control, and responsibility to the group. Any student who feels his/her individual self-gratification is more important than his/her commitment to the total program should be discouraged from entering any competition as a member of a team/activity.

Athletes in all fields, because they represent us all, are expected at all times to exemplify the highest of moral, social and personal standards.

All Catholic Elementary School athletes will be responsible to all of the rules and policies outlined in the Student Handbook. Every player will be expected to control any display of negative emotions and attitudes on and off the field of athletic competition. In addition, the rules governing all PIAA sporting events will be followed and implemented to the fullest extent possible as outlined in the Elementary Athletic Guidelines.

1. Interscholastic Athletic School Policy

Athletic programs are an integral part of the total school experience for a student.

The following rules govern The Diocese of Scranton Catholic Elementary Schools:

- ✓ The maintenance of academic standards in all subjects.
- ✓ The regulations for Junior High basketball are governed by the State Catholic Youth Organization and are outlined in the Diocesan Elementary Athletic Guidelines. Also, where applicable adherence to eligibility standards and regulations set down by the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA).
- ✓ **Students must be present in school more than 4½ hours in order to participate in after school activities or athletic contests.**
- ✓ Regular attendance at school (Students may not participate in an athletic practice or contest if they are not present in school for at least 4½ hours of the school day). This applies to weekend activities following a Friday absence.
- ✓ 3 unexcused tardies accumulated during a marking period will render a student ineligible to participate in the next scheduled social, co-curricular, or extra-curricular activity, including athletics, and will receive a DETENTION.
- ✓ Proper adherence to the discipline code of conduct at the Catholic Elementary School (See STUDENT CONDUCT-BEHAVIOR OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL).
- ✓ Attendance at all practices is required of all athletes. If an athlete is going to be late or expects to miss a practice session, parents/guardians must notify the coach in advance.
- ✓ All athletes should understand that athletic contests and practices do not take precedence over detentions or school suspensions. All school/team dress code regulations are to be followed at all times.

K. Extra-Curricular Activities/Athletic Eligibility

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Scranton recognize that athletics and extracurricular activities are important parts of the educational experience. Every student has the right to try out for activities and sports and to be evaluated fairly. While as many as possible will be allowed to participate, there is no absolute right to participate in extracurricular activities or play sports. All students who wish to participate in activities, including athletics, must meet the eligibility requirements set by each school. Specific information will be provided by each school in the addendum and also in the *Elementary Athletics Guidelines*.

L. Fundraising (Class, Club, & Athletic)

Any and **all** fundraising must have the permission of the Principal with proper requisition forms filed. All class, club, and athletic organization and activity funds are to be deposited in the Finance Office. The funds will be credited to the proper account. When funds are needed, the Moderator/Coach is to request a check using the proper requisition form from the School Office.

M. Physical Education

Physical Education is a **state requirement**. No one may take physical education unless he/she is in the **proper school gym uniform**. To be excused from physical education due to illness, a student must present a note from a medical doctor to the physical education instructor. A student who is consistently unprepared for class may fail Physical Education for the quarter or the entire year. The failure must be made up in summer school. (See Promotion, Course Failure, Summer School).

Students should never leave valuables (i.e., purses, money, watches, etc.) unattended in the Gym. The school cannot be responsible for the loss of unattended personal items.

N. Textbooks & Technology

Textbooks and technology are the property of either the school or the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Textbooks and/or technology are distributed to students in the beginning of the school year. It is the responsibility of the student to keep the books covered and to return books and/or technology at the end of the year in good condition. Lost and/or damaged books or technology must be replaced by the student at full replacement cost. Payments are made to the school's Main Office.

V. ACADEMIC POLICY - Introduction

After education and formation in the Catholic faith, the most important aspect of school is academic studies. Nothing should be allowed to interfere with the student's right to, and desire for, a sound education. Co-curricular activities should always be considered secondary to successful achievement in scholastic requirements.

In addition to time spent in class and study periods in school, it is suggested that students spend an age-appropriate amount of time at home in study and preparation for their assignments for the next day. Students are encouraged to ask a teacher outside of class to explain subject matter that was not understood in class. It is the desire of the teacher to help the students to avoid the possibility of failing.

A. Curriculum

Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools' curriculum is formulated to a solid commitment of academic excellence in the areas of: religion, language arts (English, spelling, handwriting, phonics, vocabulary development, and composition skills), reading, mathematics, science, social studies, and health/safety. Enrichment is provided through courses in music, art, physical education, foreign language, computer education, and library skills instruction.

Diocesan curriculum committees continually evaluate and update our Catholic schools' curriculum in order to provide for growth and improvement for each academic area.

B. Parent/School Communication

Diocese of Scranton Catholic schools seek to work collaboratively with students and parents to promote student responsibility. By empowering students to be accountable for their own learning, the school seeks to develop within students the traits of independence and responsibility. These traits are nurtured early on with students walking themselves to classes, bringing homework to school, submitting assignments on-time, making up assignments when absent, accepting consequences for behavior, and asking teachers for help when needed. Students are encouraged to discuss their progress directly with their teachers. If a student experiences academic or social difficulty, the first intervention taken by the parent should be to redirect the student back to the teacher. Follow-up action taken by the parent should be one that supports the role of the teacher in the classroom and the student as responsible for his/her own learning.

1. FACTS Student Information System (SIS)

To foster effective communication between home and school, Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools utilize FACTS SIS, a web-based school management system. Each family creates a username and password at the beginning of the school year. This log in access provides pertinent information regarding the following: your child(ren)'s academic progress, attendance, school newsletter, announcements, sports, reminders, list of activities/events, forms, schedule, parent/teacher conferences, download progress reports and/or report cards, and view/print the school calendar.

It is important parents update their contact information (home/cell/work phone number) and provide the name of their cell phone carrier to ensure they receive text messages sent by the school, including those regarding important or emergency information. Communication is also done via phone, e-mail, and conferences upon request. Through the school website, parents can also access the school calendar, forms, and the Parent/Student Handbook. Teachers are available for meetings with parents by appointment

only. Teachers attend required faculty meetings, professional development opportunities, and mandated diocesan teacher in-service days.

2. Parent/Teacher Communication

As a Catholic school community, we value open and respectful communication rooted in faith and partnership. For general questions or concerns, please email your child's teacher. Please allow your child's teacher 24 hours to respond. All classroom visits require prior approval. To schedule a meeting, please email your child's teacher or call the School Office. Meetings can be in person, by phone, or virtual. **For emergencies or urgent issues, call the School Office directly.**

3. School Newsletters/School Website

Because communication is such an important aspect of school and home working together for the good of our children, monthly newsletters, and calendars are prepared and distributed to inform parents of coming events, etc. This may be posted on FACTS SIS. The school's website is also continually updated with information. Parents are expected to read school communications regularly.

4. Parent/Teacher Conferences

At the beginning of the second quarter, parent/teacher conferences are held. This provides parents an opportunity to visit teachers individually to discuss their child's student's academic progress. Parents may contact the school at any time if there is a question concerning their child's progress or behavior. The following procedure is recommended:

- Consult with the teacher first.
- If the problem or concern continues, the parent should bring the matter to the attention of the principal.
- The Catholic Schools Office is the final recourse for unresolved problems.

5. Social Media

All Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools have an official school Facebook® page with its school website link attached to its Facebook school site. The Diocese of Scranton has strict regulations concerning the use of social media. As such, any links to the school must meet certain requirements and administrator rights must be assigned as specified in the guidelines. If an additional page, for example a Parent/Teacher Group page, is approved and established, that source will be communicated to parents via the monthly newsletter.

Any groups of parents, volunteers, or event chairs who have set up blogs or pages on Facebook®, Twitter®, Instagram®, or other social media sites, have not done so within the guidelines established by the Diocese of Scranton and these should not be considered official school sites. These sites, though helpful to groups of parents or friends, should not be considered sources of any official school information and should not be used to post information about students or staff.

Any postings via photos, texts, e-mails, blogs, on any Internet sites that include defamatory comments or images regarding the school, the students, the faculty, or the students' parents should be reported to the school administration and will be reviewed and handled in the manner most appropriate to the situation and/or offender.

C. Standardized Testing

The Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools utilize the NWEA Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) Growth Assessments for its standardized testing program. This test is administered to students in Kindergarten-8th grade in the fall, winter, and spring. Results are distributed to parents during parent/teacher conferences and in students' report cards. Special testing through the public school district or Intermediate Unit may be requested by parents to identify special instructional needs or placement.

D. Progress/Deficiency Reports

Progress/Deficiency Reports are sent at the midpoint of each quarter (and where applicable that information is available on *Student Information System*.) These reports are sent to those students in danger of failing, and also to students whose work is below the standards of the school or their own abilities. It is hoped that parents will follow the suggestions indicated on the report. Parents must understand that it is possible for a student to be passing at the midpoint of a quarter but to fail the quarter due to failing grades on later assignments and/or tests. While every effort will be made to notify parents when possible, a lack of notification will not affect the failing grade.

E. Report Cards

Students in grades 1st-3rd will receive letter grades; students in grades 4th-8th will receive numeric grades.

Marking Code

A: 95-100

B+: 90-94

B: 85-89

C+: 80-84

C: 75-79

D: 70-74

F: 69 and below

F. Retention

A student may be retained in his/her current grade for the following school year based on the recommendations of the teacher, principal, and/or other support staff. When making this evaluation, student attendance, tardiness, and academic achievement are reviewed as well as the student's social, emotional, and moral development.

A student support plan will be drafted and implemented at the start of the following school year. A mid-quarter meeting with the student's parent, teacher, principal, and/or other support staff will take place to track the student's progress. Decisions will be made on how to continue to support the student's needs as outlined in the student support plan and if other testing is needed.

G. Honor Roll

Grades 6th-7th-8th will be eligible for the honor roll. Major subjects are all subjects other than music, physical education, art, computers, foreign language or library. At the end of the quarter, the honor roll student will receive a certificate

Honor Roll Criteria

Principal List: All grades 95 or above in all major subjects; no I's; no negative comments or behavior issues

High Honors: Overall average 93 or higher; no grade below 88; no I's

Honors: Overall average 88 or higher; no grade below 83; one I permitted.

If a student receives two I's in the subject areas of music, physical education, art, computers, foreign language, or library he/she is not eligible for the honor roll. A mark of U will also result in a student being ineligible for the honor roll. Negative comments on the report card, may make the student ineligible for the honor roll.

H. Academic Probation

In addition to policies regarding Promotion and Course Failure:

- Any student failing two (2) or more subjects at the end of each marking period will be placed on Academic Probation.

- Any student failing two (2) or more subjects at the end of the second semester will be placed on Academic Probation for the following year. These students and their parents must meet with the administration before the start of the school year and an Academic Probationary Contract may be required.
- The Principal and/or Vice Principal will monitor the academic progress of these students during the probation period as defined in the Academic Probation Contract written during the meeting with the student and parents.

I. Promotion, Course Failure, Summer School

It is required that a student passes all courses taken at the school. Arranging summer school or make-up credits is the responsibility of the parents or guardians in consultation with the Principal. Courses must be made up during the summer following the failure.

Students failing courses during the school year will be given neither credit for the quality point average, nor class rank at the end of the year. Courses failed during the school year may be made up in an accredited summer school system. Documentation of attendance at summer school must be sent to the Principal as soon as summer school is completed. When this transcript is received, the failing grade will be changed to 70.

Students who opt to use a certified private tutor to make up courses failed during the school year must make arrangements with the Principal before tutoring begins. The tutor must be certified in the subject area of tutorial work. Documentation must be sent to the Principal as soon as the work is successfully completed. When the documentation is received, the student may be required to complete an additional assessment or test. If the test is passed, the course grade will be changed to a 70. Any student failing to make up courses in summer school may be dis-enrolled from the school.

J. Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty demonstrates a lack of integrity and character that is inconsistent with the values of our Catholic educational institution.

Honesty in academic work is necessary for the effective intellectual development of the student, the fair evaluation of his/her academic performance, and most importantly as a moral mandate of our Christian faith. Education is based on learning specific skills, forming lifelong work habits, and developing mature coping skills according to each student's unique abilities. Education in a Catholic school fosters learning in an environment infused with the values implicit in the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. Stress often propels students to make unethical choices. When students choose to commit academic dishonesty, it may be a symptom of a more serious problem such as inappropriate class placement, over-commitment to extra or co-curricular activities, and/or academic desperation. The compromise of their values through academic dishonesty may lead to a loss of self-esteem, as students are often painfully aware of their shortcomings and fight a tiring battle to preserve their images at the cost of their ethics. True self-esteem is based on competence and academic dishonesty robs students of their opportunity to become competent.

A student can violate academic integrity in three major ways:

1. **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Students are prohibited from utilizing AI software tools such as ChatGPT for any academic or assessment-related purposes, including but not limited to completing assignments, quizzes, or tests. A student may use AI tools only if a teacher or school administrator explicitly gives permission and supervises its use. The unauthorized use of ChatGPT or other similar AI programs to complete school assignments is a violation of academic integrity and is subject to disciplinary action.
2. **Plagiarism** is the unacknowledged use of the ideas, words, research or assistance of another in preparing an assignment. Some common forms of plagiarism are using another person's words as if they were one's own, putting another person's work without documentation, or even presenting someone else's line of thinking in development of a thesis as if it were one's own. Education depends greatly on an

exploration of the ideas and writings of others. Many assignments will require a student to research those ideas and writings. Whenever the words, ideas or researches of another are used, the student must acknowledge that use. Teachers will provide guidance and instruction as to the accepted methods of identifying sources clearly and accurately.

3. **Violating the rules of an assignment:** A student who prepares an assignment in such a way as to “get around” the legitimate purpose of that assignment is also guilty of academic dishonesty. Some examples of violating the rules of an assignment include copying someone else’s homework, falsifying data for a lab report, or submitting the same term paper for different assignments without the instructor’s permission.

Elementary school is a time of multiple learning experiences. Therefore, unless a teacher has approved submission of a previously submitted paper, the student is required to write a new one. It is the student’s responsibility to understand the rules under which an assignment is to be completed.

Other examples of compromising your academic integrity would be:

- A. Copying another student’s answers on tests, quizzes, lab reports, etc.
- B. Discussing answers with other students during the test itself or in between classes when others have not yet taken the exam.
- C. The use of a cheat sheet, copies of tests, or other unauthorized information either during or before the administration of the test.
- D. Re-submission of old work, either your own or someone else’s.
- E. Allowing a parent or friend to do your work and presenting it as your own effort.
- F. Impeding the academic progress of other students, including, for example, taking another student’s text or notebook from his/her locker without permission or stealing or defacing another student’s work.

K. Penalties for Academic Dishonesty

The penalty for academic dishonesty is normally a failure for the assignment. Serious or chronic violations could be a reason for further penalties and could be reason for a student’s dismissal from school.

VI. STUDENT BEHAVIOR & CONDUCT

A. Discipline Policy

The Diocese of Scranton Catholic Elementary Schools subscribe to the belief of the redeemed value of each person. Teachers, as well as administrators, should have faith in the student’s ability to want to do the right thing. Such a positive approach, while it can create student trust and faith, can build self-confidence, and can improve morale, it does not mean that students are provided license or unrestricted freedom to do as they please. Freedom is linked invariably with responsibility. A person who is truly free is one who acts and chooses while fully accepting the consequences of his/her actions. Restrictions should not be looked upon as only negative controls. Restrictions that are placed in keeping with the responsibility needed grant the individual more freedom and as such become rewards.

B. Detention

Detention is a form of corrective action intended to remind students of their agreement to abide by the rules of the school community to which they voluntarily belong.

C. Teacher Detention

Each teacher is responsible for the environment in his/her classroom. If this environment is disrupted, it is the responsibility of each teacher to issue and proctor a private detention. The Principal should be notified for the purpose of accurate record keeping.

For the safety of the student, the student must be given at least 24 hours of notice before serving the detention.

If a teacher has persistent problems with a student, this should be made known to the Principal. A conference may then be set up with the Principal, the teacher and the student. In some instances, parents may be required to be in attendance.

D. Behavior Contract

A Behavior Contract is to be used only after all previous disciplinary consequences have failed to alter negative behavior or when a particular infraction is of such a serious nature as to warrant a contract. It is signed by the student, parents, and Principal and is binding on all parties. If the student fails to follow the expectations outlined in the Behavior Contract, a student may be placed on suspension. At the discretion of the principal, a Disciplinary Review Board hearing may be held to review the case and if further disciplinary action should be taken.

E. Suspension

If a student's actions and/or conduct demonstrate a disregard for the welfare of others (classmates, teachers, school property, school officials), or deprives others of their right to pursue their own education, compulsory removal may be necessary. In this event, proper procedures (as outlined below) will be followed.

F. Types & Terms of Suspension

1. **Short-Term Suspension** - A student is excluded from all classes, the school building, school grounds, and/or school related activities for up to ten (10) days.
2. **Long-Term Suspension** - The student is excluded from all classes, the school building, school grounds, and or school related activities for ten (10) days or longer.

G. Expulsion

The expulsion of a student is an unusual and rare occurrence. In the event that expulsion will be considered by the school, the following procedures will be taken:

- The student will be denied access to school and placed on long-term suspension until a Disciplinary Review Board hearing takes place.
- The school principal will notify the Catholic Schools Office to request a Disciplinary Review Board hearing. A day/time will be scheduled for the hearing. This will take place at either the Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools Office or virtually.
- The Disciplinary Review Board will listen to the student's and/or parents'/guardians' version of the case.
- The Disciplinary Review Board will review all evidence presented at the hearing. Within a reasonable amount of time, the Disciplinary Review Board will make a recommendation regarding whether the student should be expelled from his/her school.
- The Disciplinary Review Board will send their recommendation regarding the student's expulsion to the Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools Assistant Superintendent. The Assistant Superintendent will affirm or disaffirm the Disciplinary Review Board's recommendation.
- Within a reasonable time, a letter containing the decision regarding expulsion will be sent by the Assistant Superintendent electronically and by mail to the student's parents/guardians and to the school principal. A copy of this letter will be kept in the student's permanent file.

H. Appeal

The student and parents/guardians may appeal, in writing, the Disciplinary Review Board's recommendation and the Assistant Superintendent's decision. The appeal must be made in writing to the Catholic Schools Office Superintendent within five (5) business days of receipt of the letter from the Assistant Superintendent. The appeal must state the grounds for such appeal. The appeal will be decided by the Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools Superintendent without the presentation of further evidence by the school, student and/or parents/guardians. Within a reasonable time of receipt of the appeal, the Superintendent shall issue a written

decision which shall be sent to the student's parents/guardians and to the school principal both electronically and by mail.

I. Behavior Outside of School Campus

Students, when enrolled in any Catholic school in the Diocese of Scranton, commit themselves to the policies and philosophy stated in the school guidelines. **At all times their actions and behavior are reflections on the school.** Any actions undertaken by the student which are illegal or which are detrimental to the reputation of the school, the Roman Catholic Church and/or its teachings may be subject to disciplinary action by the administration (Please see below in regards to electronic media)

J. Care of School Building

Any student found guilty of damaging or defacing school property will be required to pay for the damages. The student and his/her parents/guardians will be required to meet to discuss the damage, the expense, and its method of payment with the school officials. Students guilty of malicious destruction or abuse of school property are liable for dismissal.

K. Drugs & Alcohol

The possession or use of drugs, alcoholic beverages, or firecrackers, is a violation of the law. Any student who violates the law is **LIABLE TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION INCLUDING DISMISSAL** from school and criminal prosecution **whether or not the action takes place in school or at a school sponsored event.**

The school will follow the Scranton Diocesan Policy concerning drugs. For the purpose of this policy, the term drug shall include alcohol or any malt beverage inclusive of wine coolers; any drug defined by law as a controlled substance; designer drug/s; any over-the-counter or prescription drug not registered with and approved by the School's Health Office; look alike drugs; anabolic steroids; any drug from the five classifications of drugs: inhalants, hallucinogens, narcotics, stimulants and depressants; any volatile solvents or inhalants such as but not limited to glue, varnish remover, etc.; any chemical or abused substance; any chemical manufactured in a clandestine laboratory such as but not limited to amyl and butyl nitrite; tobacco and tobacco products such as cigarettes, chew/snuff, etc. Act 26 Section 1304-A (PA) requires all schools to provide future schools with notification of suspension or expulsion from any public or private school of this Commonwealth or any other state for an act or offense involving weapons, alcohol or drugs, or for the willful infliction of injury to another person or for any act of violence committed on school property.

L. Electronic Devices, Cell Phones, Wearable Technology

It is highly recommended that students do not bring electronic devices, cell phones, or wearable technology (i.e. Smartwatch) to school. If this occurs, the classroom teacher may collect the electronic device, cell phone, or wearable technology at the start of the school day. The item will be secured and returned to the student before school dismissal. Otherwise, the electronic device, cell phone, or wearable technology must be turned off and kept in the student's backpack or school locker, including during student breaks and class transition times. The student may not use his/her electronic device, cell phone, or wearable technology during the school day unless given authorized permission by school personnel. Parents are asked NOT to call their child's cell phone during the school day (phone calls should be made to the School Office). Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools are not responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen electronic device, cell phone, or wearable technology.

This protocol also applies to students during school trips and extra-curricular activities both on the school site and off-site, unless alternative arrangements have been made.

If this policy is violated for any reason, the school faculty, staff, or administration may confiscate the electronic device, cell phone, or wearable technology. The item(s) will be placed in the School Office. The student's parent will be responsible for picking it up from the School Office. The student will receive disciplinary action, which may include DETENTION, for violating this policy.

M. Gum Chewing

Gum chewing is never permitted in the school building because of the potential damage to the school building.

N. Restricted Areas

Private property is never to be visited or used for loitering or trespassing by students of this Catholic School. Good public relations between the students and neighbors demand respect and courtesy. Students should not be gathering near homes, apartment buildings or businesses within the neighborhood.

O. Smoking/Vaping Policy

The Safe and Drug Free Schools Act provides civil penalties for anyone using tobacco products in school or within one thousand feet of any school property. Students should not be smoking or vaping at any time. Students found using tobacco or vaping products will be suspended immediately from all classes and activities and their parents notified of the situation. Legal authorities will also be notified in the event of repeat offenses.

Students who need assistance to quit smoking or using tobacco/vaping products should seek such help through the Student Assistance Program.

POSSESSION OF ANY TOBACCO/VAPING PRODUCT IS CONSIDERED USE OF THAT PRODUCT.

P. Stealing

Stealing is beneath the dignity of any student and completely contrary to the very purpose of this school. Any student found guilty of such an action will be subject to severe disciplinary action including reporting the incident to the local police authorities and may be subject to dismissal from the school.

Q. Student Privacy of Search & Seizure

Students should not be subjected to arbitrary searches of their persons, possessions, locker, desk, and/or other storage area; however, principals and their designees are authorized to search students if they deem necessary and/or appropriate. The search should be made in the presence of a third party.

R. Weapons Policy

Anyone in possession of a weapon on school property, a school sponsored activity, or transportation to and from school is subject to immediate notification of the authorities and severe disciplinary action. A weapon is defined as any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and any other tool, instrument, or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

Any student found in violation of this policy will be dealt with as follows:

1. The incident will be investigated and parents will be notified.
2. In accordance with the Pennsylvania Crime Code, sec. 912, the local police will be notified, and the student will be immediately suspended into the custody of a parent or guardian. The Diocesan Superintendent will also be notified.
3. As a result of the investigation, the student is liable to further disciplinary action and/or expulsion.
4. Act 26 Section 1304-A (PA) requires all schools to provide future schools with notification of suspension or expulsion from any public or private school of this Commonwealth or any other state for an act of offense involving weapons, alcohol or drugs, or the willful infliction of injury to another person or for any act of violence committed on school property, school sponsored activity, or transportation to and from school.
5. In accordance with PA Act 44 of 2025, the school shall notify all parents and staff members of the school of any incident involving a weapon as described above.

S. Threats

Threat is defined as an expression of intention to inflict evil, injury, or damage. Any incident, which even remotely is considered a threat, will result in the immediate suspension of the student as determined by the principal. A formal evaluation of the student will be required. The specific elements of the evaluation will be

determined by the school. In all cases, the written evaluation provided to the school must state that the student does not pose a threat to him or herself or any member of the school community.

T. Withdrawals from School

Students desiring to transfer from the school must have parents or guardians consult with school authorities. The following procedure is to be followed by all students who are withdrawing from the school: (1) make an appointment to see a member of the Administration who will conduct an exit interview; (2) return all books/technology to the School Office; (3) Principal will issue the transfer or close the student's record. **No transcripts will be issued until all books/technology are returned and all financial obligations discharged.** Students who voluntarily withdraw from the school, or are dismissed for academic or disciplinary reason, will ordinarily not be re-admitted at any subsequent date.

U. Policy on Harassment, Hazing, & Discrimination (Student Version)

Philosophy

In recognition of the dignity and worth of each individual, this policy promotes an environment in which all persons at our Catholic Elementary School shall be free from all forms of harassment, hazing, and discrimination and conduct, which can be considered harassing, hazing, coercive or disruptive. Such behavior undermines Catholic values and jeopardizes the integrity of the relationship that exists among staff members and among students with their peers and with all school personnel.

Definitions:

1. **Harassment** is defined as any inappropriate verbal or physical conduct based on *gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, ethnic background, race or color, physical appearance and/ or intellectual or motor abilities* made by any member of the school community. The concept of intent is not addressed here, but rather, it is the recipient's reaction that is considered to be the critical variable in making any determination. Any conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment shall be considered a form of harassment when:
 - Subjection to such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic performance.
 - Subjection to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition for one's education;
 - Subjection to a rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that individual.
 - Subjection to such conduct causes discomfort, physical or emotional harm to the person.

Harassment may include but is not limited to verbal and/or physical harassment or abuse, repeated remarks with demeaning implications and/or explicit or implicit threats concerning one's academic status or participation in co-curricular activities.

2. **Hazing** occurs when in connection with initiation of members to a particular group, someone knowingly or recklessly organizes, promotes, facilitates, or engages in any conduct, other than competitive athletic events, which places or may place another person in danger of bodily injury. Hazing may include any activity that endangers the physical safety of another person, produces mental or physical discomfort, causes embarrassment, fright, or ridicule, or degrades another individual.
3. **Discrimination** is the unequal treatment of a person based on a characteristic shared with others. The following are illegal types of discrimination: race, national origin, color, sex, age or disability. [It should be noted that Catholic schools may discriminate on the basis of religion. Nonetheless, there should be no ridiculing of another's religion.]
4. **Responsibilities:**
 - a. The Administration is required to ensure adherence to and compliance with this policy and upon being informed of possible harassment, hazing or discrimination is required to take appropriate and

timely action. The Administration is further required to publish this policy in the student handbook/calendar.

- b. Anyone, including the person affected, a person involved in the incident, faculty/staff, parents, friends, community members may and should report the incident immediately. If you are not sure that the incident clearly falls into one of these categories, report it. The Administration will assess the situation and make the final judgment. If you are concerned, it probably fits the definition.
- c. Students are encouraged whether directly or through a third party to notify the alleged harasser that the behavior is offensive and unwelcome. Whenever appropriate, staff members and students are encouraged to report unresolved incidents of harassment, hazing and/or discrimination to a higher authority, or if all else fails, to the Principal.

5. Confidentiality:

To the extent possible, any investigation of alleged harassment, hazing, and/or discrimination by a staff member or by a student will be conducted in a manner to protect the confidentiality of all individuals involved in the incident.

6. Procedures:

Whenever possible, the parties involved should attempt to resolve their differences between themselves or with the assistance of a mediator. The first course of action is to inform the offender to stop his/her unacceptable behavior.

- a. Immediately make a written record of the incident noting the individual(s) involved as well as the date, time and location of the incident, any witnesses present, and the exact nature of the offense. Complete the "Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Reporting Form" (Addendum 3) and return to the school Principal.
- b. Promptly report allegations to your parents, a responsible teacher, or the Principal as soon as possible, preferably within ten school days. Delays can make any valid investigation difficult to conduct and document.
- c. If any of these individuals can resolve the incident, the matter should be considered closed to the extent possible.

**ALL MATTERS REFERRED TO ONE OF THE ABOVE NAMED
PEOPLE MUST ALSO REPORT THE INCIDENT TO THE PRINCIPAL.**

Serious allegations of harassment, hazing, or discrimination should always be referred to the Principal as well as to the other staff members. When required by law, the Principal will report the particular incident to the legal authorities. Both the accused and the student making the allegation will have the right to appeal any decision deemed unsatisfactory to the Principal and/or the Superintendent of Schools.

7. Retaliation

Retaliation, intimidation or threats in response to a complaint will not be tolerated. The retaliation can be direct, indirect, or subtle. If it occurs, it will be dealt with in the same manner as the serious allegations are handled. Suspension and expulsion are possible penalties.

8. Remediation

Any student found in violation of this policy following a judicious review of the allegations may be subject to remedial action which may include referral to counseling, an oral or written reprimand, limited suspension from classes, expulsion, or referral to the criminal justice system.

9. Education and Assessment

This policy should be reviewed and updated regularly. Suggestions may be presented to the Administration by any member of the school community, including staff, students, and parents. Opportunities should be made available to all members of the school community to attend workshops,

seminars and other activities in order to raise the level of consciousness concerning those issues raised in this policy statement.

VII. TECHNOLOGY

The school provides electronic devices and/or computers in the classrooms, computer/technology labs, and libraries (where applicable) for the educational use of our staff and students. Some diocesan schools also permit students to bring their own device for instructional purposes. All who choose to use the school technology and/or use their personal device while at school are bound to observe the Internet, Technology, and Electronic Device Use Rules. Violation of the rules will result in disciplinary action.

A. Internet Use

Students are responsible for good behavior when utilizing the Internet during the school day. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. Access to the Internet is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Access is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, based upon the guidelines outlined in this policy, the school staff will deem what is inappropriate use and their decisions are final. Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools' administration, faculty, and staff may deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges at any time. The user is expected to abide by the following network rules of etiquette:

1. Internet use will be restricted to accessing instructional and reference material. This may include the use of e-mail.
2. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities, gestures, poses, inappropriate emoji, or any other inappropriate language. Sending or receiving offensive messages or pictures from any source will result in immediate suspension of privileges and disciplinary action.
3. Do not reveal the personal address or phone number of yourself or other students. Do not communicate any credit card number, bank account number, or any other financial information.
4. Do not use the network in such a way that would disrupt the use of the network by others.
5. Students may not download or install any commercial software, shareware or freeware unless they have written permission from school personnel.
6. Students who post inappropriate information, comments, or photos about students, faculty, staff, parents, or volunteers may be subject to the school's disciplinary actions.
7. Students are prohibited from accessing the Internet on any personal device before, during, and after school without permission from school administration, faculty, or staff.

B. Technology & Electronic Device Use Rules:

- Respect school property.
- Respect the school network - do not go to restricted areas.
- Do not spread viruses - no personal USB drive may be used unless scanned for viruses.
- Do not alter program settings.
- Respect your storage space within the school network - all school network folders will be emptied each summer.
- There will be no access to chat rooms, news groups or web e-mail.
- No downloading of files - in special circumstances, permission may be requested.
- Respect Copyright/Intellectual Property and Identity laws – All sources obtained for teacher and student work should be properly cited. Users are to respect the rights and intellectual property of others in accordance with Federal Copyright Law. Transferring copyrighted material to or from a school without express permission of the owner is a violation of Federal Law and could result in copyright infringement claims.
- Do not use the school network for personal business.
- Do not use the school network inappropriately - do not seek or publish any material that is abusive, profane, sexually offensive or against the faith and morals of the Catholic Church

- Respect State and Federal Laws - regarding pornography as well as the use, selling, and/or the distribution of illegal substance
- Respect school's technology acceptable use policy.

C. Electronic and Mobile Devices, Cell Phones, Wearable Technology

Please refer to section L under STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT (page 26).

D. Online Social Networking

In our commitment to safeguard the safety of our students, as well as the Diocese of Catholic Schools Office, their mission, names, reputations, established symbols, nicknames, and logos from misuse through material posted online and disseminated in a public manner, the following policies have been established and will be enforced.

The Diocese of Scranton, Office of Catholic Schools, defines an online social network as a commercially operated Internet website that allows users to create web pages or profiles that provide information about them and are available to other users by offering a mechanism for communication with other users, through a forum, chat room, email, blogging or instant messenger. Popular online social networks include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

A student's public Internet conduct, in word or image, that is inconsistent with the mission and philosophy of a Catholic school will be viewed as a violation of school policies and therefore, punishable by school authorities. In order to protect schools within the Diocese of Scranton, students are forbidden from using the Diocese of Scranton or the names of any specific diocesan Catholic schools, their images, logos, nicknames or symbols in establishing online sites, links or accounts.

This section refers to student personal use of social media sites such as, but not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Tumbler, Ask.fm, Snapchat, Discord, Twitch, LinkedIn, and TikTok.

Students are not to:

1. Use technology to threaten, harass, deceive, intimidate, offend, embarrass, annoy, or otherwise negatively impact any individual.
2. Post, publish, disseminate, or display any defamatory, inaccurate, violent, abusive, profane or sexually orientated material. Users must not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude or threatening language. Users must not knowingly or recklessly post or disseminate false information about any persons, students, staff, or any organization.
3. Use a photograph, image, video, including live-streaming, or likeness of any student, administrator, employee or volunteer without express permission of that individual and of the principal.
4. Create any site, post any photo, image or video of another individual except with express permission of that individual and of the principal.
5. Attempt to circumvent system security, blocked by sites or to bypass software protections.

VIII. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Bus Service

- Students are personally responsible for registering for bus service either in the Main Office or at the office of the School District in which they live.
- Good rules of safety should be observed in walking to and from the bus stop. When a student must walk some distance along traveled highways, he/she should walk facing traffic and remain off the traveled portion of the road.
- Students who wait for buses on private property should exercise respect for the property.
- While waiting for the bus, students should remain off the traveled portion of the roadway. Students should stay in place until the bus has come to a complete stop and then board the bus in single file.

B. Change of Address, Telephone, Parish

Change of address, telephone number, or parish must be reported immediately to the Main Office.

C. Crisis Drill Directions

This will be handled according to definitive procedure established for the safety of the students.

D. Fire Drills

In accordance with prescribed laws, it is necessary that fire drills be conducted periodically in the school. The following procedure is to be observed in such cases:

1. All members of the school community should be familiar with the fire signals, the directions posted in all rooms, and the routes to be taken to the exits.
2. All members of the school community are to walk quickly in a compact group. Absolute silence is to be observed throughout the evacuation, while waiting in the designated areas and during the return to the building. No one is to return to the building until the signal has been given.
3. Books are to be left in the rooms. Only valuables (pens, purses, etc.) are to be taken. Under no circumstances are students to go to their lockers.
4. No students, parents, visitors, teachers, or other personnel are to remain in the building during a fire drill. Provisions will be made to provide assistance to any member of the community who is in need.

E. Inclement Weather-School Closing

Students and parents will be informed of a school closing for inclement weather or emergency using the local media. Students and parents are encouraged to tune to the local TV stations for information regarding delay or closing.

If a student's local school district calls a delay or cancellation, the bus students will follow the time schedule for bus transportation set forth by the local district. (A two-hour delay means the bus will arrive two hours later than normal)

F. Lost & Found

All articles found on school premises are taken to the School Office. Any person who has lost an article should inquire at this office.

G. Personal Property

Students are personally responsible for their own books, clothing, and other personal property. Books should be covered and books and other personal items should be clearly marked with the students' name. The school cannot be responsible for missing personal property.

H. Posting Materials

Permission to post material must be received from the administration. No materials are to be posted on chalkboards, walls, windows, etc. It is understood that all signs will be taken down immediately after the event is over.

I. Student Insurance

All students while attending school or while engaged in school sponsored activities including sports, are covered by accident insurance maintained by the Diocesan School System. This insurance is considered the primary coverage up to the first \$100.00 in accident-related covered expenses. After the first \$100.00, all accident-related expenses would be submitted to the student's parent/guardian medical insurance carrier for payment up to the amounts payable by their insurance coverage. Related accident expenses not covered by the parent/guardian coverage would then be submitted for payment to the school's student accident insurance carrier payable to policy limits. If no other insurance is in force or the student is not covered by any other insurance, the student accident insurance becomes primary and accident-related expenses are payable to the limits of the policy in effect. All injuries must be reported to the School Administration, and claim forms must be completed and submitted for accident-related expenses to be eligible.

J. Telephone

In an emergency, a phone is provided in the Main Office for use by students. Students will not be allowed to take any incoming calls. Telephone messages will be delivered to students only in case of an emergency.

K. Traffic in Corridors & Stairways

Students should behave appropriately in the hallways and on the stairways; students are to move quickly without waiting for or consulting their classmates. Students should be especially careful of each other and all others on the stairs. Students who are excused from class are to move in a quiet, subdued manner to avoid distracting classes that are in session.

L. Visitors

Visitors who have legitimate business to conduct at any diocesan school will be admitted with a Visitor's Pass. All guests, regardless of their business, must first report to the main Office. Parents are always welcome. All visitors must abide by the health and safety protocols established.

M. Asbestos Hazardous Emergency Response Policy

In accordance with the Asbestos Hazardous Emergency Response Act (AHERA) of 1986 (40CFR Part 763), this information will serve as notification to all parties concerning the possibility of suspected/known asbestos containing materials located in the Educational Facilities throughout the Diocese of Scranton.

A comprehensive inventory of the suspected/known asbestos containing materials in each facility has been compiled and is available for review by contacting the individual Educational Facilities Administrative Office or the Administrative Offices of the Diocese of Scranton. Included in this information is the EPA approved Operations and Management Plan along with past inspections and correspondence pertaining to the program. This information is also used for monitoring the condition of inventoried materials following an approved management plan. Monitoring is done to ensure asbestos related health hazards do not exist within the Educational Facilities. Anyone needing further information concerning this program may contact the Diocese of Scranton Property & Risk Management Office at 570-558-4310.

N. NOTICE REGARDING REPORTING SEXUAL ABUSE OF A MINOR

It is the policy of the Diocese of Scranton to report any allegation of sexual abuse of a minor to law enforcement. If you are a victim of sexual abuse committed by a priest, deacon, religious or lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton, you are encouraged to immediately report the matter to law enforcement. If any priest, deacon, religious, lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton has cause or reason to suspect that a minor has been subjected to any form of abuse, including child sexual abuse, the matter will be reported to law enforcement.

It is also the policy of the Diocese to adhere to all civil and state regulations. To this end, the Diocese is equally committed to adhering to the norms of the Code of Canon Law and to upholding the tenets of the USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, which includes supporting victims of sexual abuse in their pursuit of emotional and spiritual well-being. As such, information regarding an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor should also be reported to the Victim Assistance Coordinator, Mary Beth Pacuska, at (570-862-7551) or to Diocesan officials, including the Vicar General, Father Shantillo, V.G., at (570-207-2269).

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE
ADDENDUM 6

DELINQUENT TUITION AND FEES POLICY

ADOPTED - JANUARY, 2015

RATIONALE:

The success of Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools relies upon the commitment of families to:

- Make Catholic education a financial priority.
- Be involved in the education of their child(ren).
- Make their tuition and fees payment(s) on a timely basis.

The Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools have annual budgets which are dependent upon the income received from parish assessments and tuition/fees from the Diocesan school families. The school relies upon tuition and fees for a substantial portion of the operational budget. The school must have the appropriate funds to meet its financial obligations (i.e. salaries, benefits, maintenance, etc...), as well as the funds necessary to operate excellent spiritual and educational programs.

When payments are not made in the manner agreed upon in the parent/guardian's registration/tuition agreement form the following steps will be taken:

POLICY:

1. At the time of re-registration for the following academic year, families who are financially delinquent will have their forms and registration fees returned. They will not be officially registered for the following year until all delinquent financial matters are addressed.
2. If the delinquent tuition balance at the time of re-registration exceeds one thousand dollars (\$1,000), the family must address this matter, in writing, to the Diocesan Secretary of Catholic Education or Superintendent of Schools. This correspondence must contain a detailed timeline and plan for bringing the account current.
3. In the event of a Diocesan School family's financial delinquency, where the responsible parent/guardian demonstrates a lack of cooperation in regards to the agreed upon plan, the student(s) will not be permitted to re-register at the same school, or at another Catholic school within the Diocese of Scranton.
4. At the end of the school year, if a family with a tuition balance greater than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) requests the tuition balance be "rolled-over" to the following year, that request must be approved by the Diocesan Secretary of Catholic Education or Superintendent of Schools. The request must be submitted in writing and should contain an explanation of the delinquency as well as a detailed plan for punctual future payments.
5. If a family owes a tuition balance and leaves the Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools for any reason, they must pay that balance. Failure to do so may result in the delinquent balance being turned over to a collection agency.
6. All financial obligations must be fulfilled before a transcript will be issued.

This policy is not meant to be punitive; however, in fairness to all families and our mission to educate, we expect our families to maintain current tuition accounts. The Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools have a history of working in good faith with families in need, but families must communicate with the school, commit to a payment plan that is acceptable to all parties, and fulfill the terms of the approved plan.