

Saint Elizabeth
Catholic Academy
Family Handbook
2020-2021

Section 1- Letter from the Principal

September 2020

Dear SECA families,

We begin the 2020-2021 school year still living through the pandemic that closed schools in March; the start of this school year has a vastly different feel to the start of past years. We return with some of our students in the building while others are participating in fully remote learning. We return wearing masks and following distance rules; with the help of God, there will be an end to this pandemic, but until then, please be assured that the health and safety of all those in our buildings is my greatest concern. To those of you returning to St. Elizabeth, + back, I am so happy to see you again. To those who are new to our community, welcome, I hope you and your children will be happy in our school.

Sincerely,

Jeanne A. Shannon

Principal

Section 2- Introduction

St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy seeks to proclaim and teach the Gospel Message to its students. The religious education program strives to awaken in students an awareness and eventual internalization of, Christian values. Liturgies and the sacraments are made accessible to the students and help them to understand and appreciate the richness of the Church's worship and sacramental life. Principal, pastor, priests, teachers, and parents all share in the spiritual formation of the child. Each one helps the child acquire the skills, virtues, and habits of heart and mind required for effective service to others.

Administration and Faculty view teaching as a ministry and each student as unique in his/her abilities, talents, and positive attributes. Every effort is made to meet the academic needs of the individual child. The administration, teachers, parents, and outside agencies all work together to modify, adapt or enrich our curriculum and methodologies to better meet the needs of each child. We are committed to teaching within a Christian environment to better enable our students to develop to their full potential.

At St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy, children are taught that they are God's special and unique creation. The school's warm, nurturing and accepting environment makes children feel secure and

comfortable. Opportunities for success and achievement in academics, the arts, and service, all help students view themselves as valued members of the many communities to which they belong.

Students in the early grades are introduced to the basic skills, while the emergence of their special needs and abilities is planned for and noted. Older students strive for mastery of content with a greater emphasis on critical-thinking and abstract reasoning skills.

Since a most of our students remain at St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy for many years, the atmosphere is usually friendly and relaxed. Every effort is made to make new students feel comfortable and accepted. When differences do arise, students are encouraged and taught to seek peaceful solutions and to carry on in a spirit of Christian forgiveness. School and classroom rules are made known to students and families. Discipline is constructive and always preserves the dignity of the child.

Within our school environment students are taught to respect their bodies as God's gift. They are guided to form mutually supportive and cooperative relationships through daily classroom interaction and organized after-school activities. Older students have many opportunities to assist and work with children in the lower grades. Service projects encourage students to come together in a spirit of Christian kindness and charity.

Teachers, in their manner, language, dress and concern for others, are Christian role models for their students. Friendship, familiarity with school routines and procedures, and a commitment to quality Catholic education are reflected in a congenial, organized, and dedicated faculty. In addition to sharing ideas at meetings, workshops, and retreats, teachers support each other in times of sorrow and share each other's joys.

Parents are partners in the education of their children. Teachers are available to discuss parents' concerns and to learn more about the children entrusted to their care. Parents' ideas are given careful consideration and implemented whenever possible.

The office of Catholic Education of the Diocese of Brooklyn determines educational policies and the pastor, principal and faculty work together to implement these policies. The curriculum is mandated by the State of New York and the Diocese of Brooklyn. The teachers at St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy are trained Catholic educators who bring both academic expertise and an enthusiasm for learning to their students. Teachers organize their classrooms, plan daily lessons, utilize school materials, and choose the methodologies that work best with their class.

Evaluation of teachers and students is ongoing throughout the year. The dialogues, modifications and improvements that result from evaluation enable us to better meet the needs of our school community.

Section 3- School Overview

3.1 Brief History of the School

In 1885, Fr. Aloys Steffen purchased the Woodhaven Station of the Long Island Railroad and moved it to St. Elizabeth Church property at 87th Street and Atlantic Avenue. This building became the first St. Elizabeth

parish

school, opening its doors in September 1885. The teaching staff was made up of three nuns from the Dominican Order.

The converted railroad station was eventually too small to handle increasing school enrollment. In 1912 Fr. Gustave Baer authorized the construction of a new school building with 10 classrooms and a basement for meeting and recreational facilities. Fr. Baer also purchased 10 lots across the street from the school. Years later, a new 16 room school with library and administrative offices would be built on those 10 lots. The new school building was opened in 1962.

To accommodate pre-K and kindergarten enrollment, four classrooms in the old school building were renovated and modernized in 1986. Today that building can accommodate six PreK for All Classes along with two 3K classes: the auditorium and the cafeteria are housed in this building.

In 2011, we adopted a new governance model with a tiered hierarchy that includes the Board of Members, the Board of Directors and the Principal. This change required us to file for a new Charter from the State of New York and new incorporation papers; on August 31, 2011, St. Elizabeth School officially closed its doors and on September 1, 2011, St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy officially opened.

St. Elizabeth School Catholic Academy is located in Ozone Park, New York, a multi-ethnic, urban community, 30 minutes from Manhattan.

3.2 Mission statement

St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy empowers students to grow and develop values academically, emotionally and spiritually in a safe and disciplined environment.

3.3 Vision Statement

Saint Elizabeth Catholic Academy...

LEADS students to be disciples who know and live the Catholic Faith

INSPIRES a learning community to foster academic excellence

MOTIVATES young people to fulfill the two great Commandments of Jesus Christ by loving God and self in order to be responsible and give service to our neighbor.

3.4 Parental Expectation of Adherence to School Policy

Discipline in the schools should reflect the spirit of *Vatican Council II*, as expressed in *the documents on Christian Education and Religious Liberty*. Therefore, discipline should be geared to assist a child develop in the understanding of self as being made in the image of God.

....Education is integral to the mission of the Church to proclaim the Good News. First and foremost every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth (cf. Spe Salve, 4). This relationship elicits a desire to grow in the knowledge and understanding of Christ and his teaching. In this way those who meet him are drawn by the very power of God to lead a new life characterized by all that is

beautiful, good, and true; a life of Christian witness nurtured and strengthened within the community of our Lord's disciples, the Church....Dear friends, I wish to conclude by focusing our attention specifically on the paramount importance of your own professionalism and witness within our Catholic universities and schools. First, let me thank you for your dedication and generosity. I know from my own days as a professor, and have heard from your Bishops and officials of the Congregation for Catholic Education, that the reputation of Catholic institutes of learning in this country is largely due to yourselves and your predecessors. Your selfless contributions – from outstanding research to the dedication of those working in inner-city schools – serve your country and the Church. For this I express my profound gratitude.

Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to Catholic educators at the Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, April 17, 2008

Evidence of discipline exists in a school community when the students, teachers, administration, and parents/legal guardians work cooperatively to educate the whole child: spiritually, academically, socially, emotionally, and physically.

Section 4- Catholic Identity

The mission of Catholic Education is to form children in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ as celebrated in the Catholic Church, while providing a comprehensive academic education that will help them reach their full human potential and contribute to the common good of our nation and the world. Ultimately, the mission of all Catholic education is to lead those entrusted to its care to find salvation in Jesus Christ.

In *Catholic Schools on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (#11) Saint John Paul II wrote that Catholic schools are “...the privileged environment in which Christian education is carried out. Catholic schools are at once places of evangelization, of complete formation, of enculturation, of apprenticeship in a lively dialogue between young people of different religions and social backgrounds.”

Diocesan academies and schools strive to emulate the words of Saint John Paul II by:

- creating an evangelizing community, where people come to have a better and deeper understanding of Christ and His Church
- recognizing the importance of multi-cultural, multi-faceted, academically sound educational programs that meet the needs of the poor and the rich, the Catholic and the non-Catholic, the wise and the not so learned
- welcoming members to the school community regardless of culture, race, or religion and celebrating the diversity that exists within our communities, churches, and schools
- creating an environment that encourages young people to grow, not separated from others, but as part of a larger community, as part of the family of God
- not only promoting and encouraging academically sound individuals, but rejoicing with children who are spiritually, theologically, and liturgically enlivened and fulfilled

Section 5- Student Behavior

5.1 Conduct

The administration and teaching staff of St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy believe that recognition of student positive behavior is an effective element in creating an atmosphere conducive to learning. Every effort will be made to enhance this learning environment. Students will receive positive

reinforcement to heighten their self-confidence and to motivate them to achieve their full potential.

1. The teachers have established uniform rules of conduct for their own classrooms, using conduct books according to the specific needs of the various age groups. They are expected to keep parents informed of all rules required procedures. Students are also informed of the rules by their classroom teachers.

2. Teachers are to notify individual parents by phone, email or letter concerning excessive infractions of rules. Teachers in grades Kgn. -4 will make you aware of the types of behavior consequences students in those grades will receive for rule infractions. It is rare, but not impossible for a student in the lower grades to be suspended. In grades 5-8, rule infractions are recorded in a conduct book. For every 5 infractions, students receive after-school detention. Student who earn detention 3 times in the same trimester, will be receive an in-school suspension. Suspended students will be place in a classroom that is not their own and will be given suspension work; this work must be done each day. Failure to complete suspension work will result in further suspension. Please note, any student who is suspended more than twice in a school year is subject to expulsion at the discretion of the administration.

The following behaviors can result in conduct marks include, but are not limited to disruptive behavior in the classrooms, hallways, lunchroom, or gym, gum chewing, poorly done or undone homework, answering a teacher back, failure to get tests or homework signed, dress code violations, being unprepared for class, refusal to do work, eating in class, defacing school property, misbehavior during fire and other emergency drills, using bathrooms without permission, and leaving a classroom without permission.

Some behaviors may lead to automatic suspension or in severe cases, expulsion; those behaviors include, but are not limited to fighting on school grounds, or while in school uniform, cheating on tests, copying another student's homework, any violation of our Acceptable use policy, inappropriate use of our computers and/or tablets, using threatening or abusive language towards anyone in our school community, bullying as defined by our Bullying Policy, which appears later in this handbook, violation of our Cell Phone and Electronic Devices policy. Parents of students who engage in any of these behaviors will be notified immediately

Expulsion:

The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the school.

Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken. Expulsion in this case is a last resort. However, there are some circumstances that

may result in immediate expulsion, those include, but are not limited to illegal possession and/or use of drugs or alcohol, possession and/or use of any smoking substance which includes electronic cigarettes, bringing weapons or any object deemed a danger to school community members or to the school facilities.

The school administration has the final say in all disciplinary matters.

5.2 Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy administration recognizes that parents provide their children with cell phones for safety reasons. The Academy would prefer that students leave cell phones at home when possible. It is important that families establish appropriate cell phone use guidelines, as part of the responsibility for a student possessing a phone. Additionally, there are students who bring other electronic devices including, but not limited to iPads, Kindles, handheld gaming devices, Apple watches or

any device that provides internet access to students or the gives students the opportunity to send and receive text messages etc. to school. If a student brings a cell phone or any other type of electronic device to school, the

following conditions apply:

- Cell phones and all other electronic devices are to be turned into the homeroom teacher every morning: teachers will lock the phones in the closet and return them to students at the end of the day. This applies to students in every grade.
- Camera phones may not be used to take pictures on school grounds for the safety and privacy of our students and staff.
- Students may not use their cell phones to call, or text to request that their parents deliver a “forgotten” item (e.g. homework, permission slip, etc.)
- Cell phones that are seen during the day will be confiscated. A parent/ guardian will be required to come to school to retrieve the item.

Students who repeatedly fail to comply with the cell phone and electronic device policy are subject to disciplinary action which could include suspension.

5.3 Diocesan Anti-Bullying Policy

The school communities within the Brooklyn Diocese believe in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person. We believe that all students, school employees and volunteers have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. All members of the school community, in turn, have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance. Research shows that students who learn in a safe and supportive environment succeed academically. Students have a right to learn in an environment free of any harassment that substantially interferes with their education.

Bullying, bias-based harassment/intimidation are intentional, repeated, hurtful acts (physical, verbal, written) committed by one or more persons towards another person or persons. It usually involves an actual or perceived imbalance of power which can be physical, emotional or verbal. If not addressed, bullying can lead to the creation of a hostile, offensive or intimidating school environment and can affect a student’s educational opportunities. The behaviors include but are not limited to:

- *Physical:* physical violence, stalking, threats, aggressive or menacing gestures, exclusion from peer groups which is intended to humiliate or isolate the target (relational bullying).
- *Verbal:* taunts, teasing, derogatory language, derogatory jokes, name calling, slurs, spreading rumors
- *Written:* written or graphic material including graffiti containing comments or stereotypes that are electronically written and transmitted via internet, social messaging sites, blogs, instant messaging, text messages, cell phone, webcams. This would also include forwarding such messages if received. This generally constitutes cyber-bullying.

Reporting Procedures:

- The targeted student, parent/guardian of a student or other students in the school (bystanders), or any school staff who believe that bullying has occurred should report the incident to the principal.
- The principal needs to conduct an investigation by interviewing all parties separately.
- The parents of all involved students should be notified.
- If it is determined that bullying has occurred the child who bullied is to be subject to consequences per the school’s disciplinary code.
- Parents should be advised to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency if the situation warrants such a report.
- Referral to counseling should be made for all parties if deemed necessary.
- The principal must follow up to see that the offending conduct has stopped.
- All students should be notified that retaliation against anyone who makes a report will not be tolerated and those that retaliate will be subject to disciplinary actions.

5.4 Diocesan Cyber Bullying Policy

In accordance with New York State Law on Cyber-Bullying, inappropriate, defamatory, or content found to be injurious to an academy or parish school community member may result in disciplinary action, even if done outside of academy/parish school premises or using devices not owned or controlled by the academy/ parish school. All instances of such behavior must be reported immediately to the administration, who will investigate the matter and enforce the consequences deemed appropriate.

Violation of this policy in whole or in part may result in any or all of the following and will be issued at the discretion of the academy or parish school principal:

- Loss of use/privileges of school/academy technology.
- Disciplinary action including, but not limited to, detention, suspension, expulsion, and /or legal action by the school/academy, civil authorities, and/or other involved parties.
- Compensation for damages, both physical and punitive, incurred due to actions in violation of this policy

5.5 Diocesan Acceptable Use Policy

The use of technology is permitted on school premises under limited conditions as authorized by the Principal for the sole purpose of enhancing academic achievement while respecting the dignity and safety of all members of the St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy community.

In using the information and technology in safe, legal, and responsible ways, the following conditions of being a digital citizen within the Diocese of Brooklyn are expected:

Respect One's Self

- Public names should be appropriate
- Be mindful of any and all content you post including photos, personal views, comments, personal information, etc.
- Avoid seeking out and/or viewing inappropriate content
- Do not engage in potentially harmful activities such as communicating with persons unknown to you or internet challenges

Respect Others

- Be mindful of comments, posts, photos or any content directed toward or including others
- Refrain from engaging in inflammatory, harassing, or any other such disrespectful behavior
- Do not perpetuate inappropriate content by sharing it with or sending it to others
- Warn others of potentially disturbing or harmful content that should be avoided

Protect One's Self and Others

- Report any and all cyber-abuse committed against you or others to parents, teachers and/or administrators
- Keep groups with friends private to avoid potentially inappropriate or dangerous content and communications from unknown sources

Respect Intellectual Property

- Cite sources when using any content not originally authored by you

Members of Parish School and Catholic Academy communities must remember that when telecommunicating with individuals, groups, or institutions, you are doing so as an individual. You should not represent yourself, your views, ideas, questions, or actions as representing the Parish School or Catholic Academy you are associated with without the expressed permission of the principal.

Security of Technology

The schools and academies of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn assume no responsibility for the theft, loss, repair or replacement of any technology devices that are brought onto school/academy property, whether it is lost, stolen, damaged, or confiscated.

Security on any computer system is a high priority. If you believe you can identify a security issue, you must notify a system administrator, principal, or teacher and not disclose the problem to others in any way. Although there are safeguards in place to protect all users from inappropriate content, we are not responsible for failures in filtering that result in a bypass of our program and/or access to objectionable content. If any inappropriate content bypasses these safeguards, any parties involved should turn off the monitor and report the security breach immediately to a system administrator, teacher or the principal. Additionally, member of the school/academy community shall not:

- Use another's credentials for any reason
- Gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to Diocesan or school/academy computers or computer systems.
- Download or install any software application without prior authorization.

Administrative Rights (To monitor use of technology)

The school/academy reserves the right to monitor both student and employee use of technology and computer accessed content. Due to the evolving nature of technology, the Catholic Schools and Academies of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn reserve the right to amend or add to this policy at any time without notice.

Personal use of Social Media (Teachers, Students)

This section refers to the personal use of social media. This includes, but is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Tumblr, Instagram, Google+, LinkedIn, Snapchat or any other such medium. All references to school/academy personnel, students and/or any member of the school/academy community in technology related mediums such as web pages or email which is deemed to be conduct injurious to the moral tone of the school or academy are violations of this policy. Any communication with current students by faculty, staff or administration is strictly forbidden on any personal social networking site. Personal posts must use appropriately respectful speech, and refrain from harassing, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening or other inappropriate communications. Representation of the school/academy in whole or part on any personal posts and/or communication is prohibited.

Section 6- General Procedural Information

6.1 Dress Code

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn believes that clothes do not define a person. The wearing of a uniform allows everyone to be seen for who they are, not by what they have. The purpose of a uniform is a means of consistency in student dress, while keeping costs to a minimum. It also reduces the problem of competitive dressing. Students, unless otherwise notified by Administration, will wear the school uniform.

All students are expected to keep themselves well-groomed and neatly dressed at all times. A clean and healthy appearance is important. Any form of dress or hair style which is considered by the Administrations to be contrary to good hygiene or which is distracting or disruptive in appearance and detrimental to the purpose or conduct of the school will not be permitted. All clothing must be clean, neatly pressed, and in good repair. No ripped, torn, or defaced item may be worn.

Children are required to dress according to the uniform dress regulations every day that school is in session, from the time they leave their residence in the morning until they return to their residence in the afternoon. Parents are expected to make sure that children are properly dressed for school

when they leave home in the morning.

CODE OF DRESS

A. Uniform Dress for BOYS- Grades K-8

1. The uniform dress for boys consists of navy blue dress trousers, white shirt, school sweater vest, and school tie. During September-October and May-June the uniform blue knit shirt with St.

Elizabeth's Catholic Academy emblem may be worn.

2. Only a school cardigan sweater or gym sweatshirt may be worn in class.

3. Dark leather loafers or dark tie shoes (NO BOOTS) and navy/black or white socks may be worn.

Sneakers may be worn ONLY with gym uniform on gym days.

4. Boys' hair should be short, neat, and clean. Top of hair should not be too high. "Tails, Mohawks, Fauxhawks," and other outlandish styles are not permitted. Only natural colors for highlighted hair.

5. Boys ears should not be pierced during the school year. Boys may not wear earrings to school

6. Only S.E.C.A. distributed pins and religious emblems may be worn on school uniforms. Jewelry is not part of the school uniform.

7. On gym days November through April the regulation gym suit (sweats) is to be worn. No substitute sweats may be worn; students may, however, wear any SECA t-shirt they may have. If a student does not have a school shirt or pants then the regular school uniform must be worn and gym class forfeited for the day.

8. On gym days September-October and May-June the regulation gym shorts and T-shirts may be worn. Grades K-4 may wear the original style school shorts or the mesh. Grades 5-8 are to wear the mesh school shorts. Please note, on gym days students may wear any SECA t-shirt. If a student does not have a school shirt, pants or shorts then the regular school uniform must be worn, and gym class forfeited for the day.

Uniform Dress for GIRLS-Grades K-8

1. The uniform for girls in Grades K-5 consists of school plaid jumper, white blouse, and school plaid tie.

In Grades 6-8 school plaid skirt or skorts, blue weskit, and white blouse. Rolled up skirts are not

permitted. Uniform length should come up to the top of the knee never shorter. Navy Blue Pants may be

worn from November 1st through April 30th (Flynn & O'Hara) or (Ideal Uniform).

2. Only a school cardigan sweater or gym sweatshirt may be worn in class.

3. Dark leather loafers, oxfords, and penny loafers or dark tie shoes (NO BOOTS) and white, red or blue

socks or leotards may be worn. Girls in 5-8 may wear nylon pantyhose. Shoe heels must not exceed one and a half inch. Sneakers may be worn ONLY with gym uniform on gym days.

4. Girls' hair should be neat and clean. "Wild" or other faddish styles are not permitted. Only natural colors for highlighted hair.

5. For safety reasons large earrings which can get caught on objects are not permitted. Girls with pierced ears may wear posts or other small earrings. If student's finger fits in loop, it is too large and not

permitted. No other piercing is permitted.

6. Make-up is not permitted.

7. Only S.E.C.A. distributed pins and religious emblems may be worn on school uniforms. One tasteful necklace is allowed and wristwatch. No bracelets or rings. No inappropriate jewelry may be worn.

8. On gym days November through April the regulation gym suit (sweats) is to be worn. No substitute pants may be worn, but students may wear other SECA t-shirts they own. If a student does not have school shirt or pants, then the regular school uniform must be worn and gym class forfeited for the day.

9. On gym days September-October, May-June the regulation gym shorts and school T-shirts may be worn. Grades K-4 may wear the original style school shorts or the mesh. Grades 5-8 are to wear the mesh shorts. If a student does not have a school shirt or shorts, then the regular school uniform must be worn, and gym class forfeited for the day.

10. Girls knit white shirts may be worn during the winter months. This applies to girls in all grades.

C. Extremes in dress and grooming are not allowed. Final judgment in these matters will be left to the

discretion of the administration.

6.1a Dress Down Days

There may be occasions in which students are allowed to wear non-uniform attire. Students are reminded to dress with modesty. Students should adhere to the following attire:

- Appropriate length skirt, shorts or dress – no shorter than 3” above the knees
- No torn or tight jeans or pants
- No spaghetti strap tanks, midriffs, tube tops, etc.
- No logo type T-shirts
- No hats (unless specifically designated)
- No loose/baggy pants or shorts
- No make-up or nail polish (including gels/French manicures)
- No hoop earrings or excessive jewelry
- No jeggings, leggings or skinny jeans

6.1b Grooming Code

Hair must be its natural color, clean, neatly combed, not totally covering the ears or eyes, or falling below the shirt collar.

- Facial hair is not permitted
- Hair must be a natural color. Streaking, highlighting, lowlights, glints, etc. are not permitted.

Students are not allowed to wear make-up at any time. This includes eye make-up, nail polish, and acrylic nails. Only appropriate jewelry is allowed. Two bracelets may be worn at a time. One pair of small earrings may be worn by girls only. Necklaces must be tucked into the shirt. Tattoos and body piercings are not allowed.

6.2 Attendance Policy

St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy has developed our attendance policy in accordance with New York State Education Law Section 3205. This comprehensive attendance policy will help to uphold the philosophy and mission statement of our school/academy, as stated in our handbook.

Education Law of the State of New York mandates school attendance for all children between the ages of 6 and 16, but the responsibility for compliance rests with the parents/legal guardians. The school is required to keep an accurate record of daily attendance, absence and tardiness in the register of attendance in a manner approved by the Commissioner of Education.

- When a child has been absent, a written excuse is required from his or her parents/legal guardians. If a student is absent without an excuse, or if the school has reason to suspect the validity of the excuse, the principal will investigate the situation.
- When a student has been absent for five days without a satisfactory explanation, a report will be made to the attendance officer of the local public school district.
- Continuing illegal absences, totaling five or more days, will also be reported to the attendance officer at the local public school district office.
- Although each case is different, it should be noted that at 40 truancy days, retention is a strong possibility and principals will contact the local district office to alert the truancy officer.

6.2a Lateness

A student who arrives after the time set by the academy or the parish school for the beginning of the day will be marked late.

Excessive Late Pick-ups:

We understand that at times situations arise; however, if you are chronically late to pick up your child or children at dismissal, they will be placed in the after-school program and you will be charged the after school daily fee. Whomever picks up your child in that case will be asked to show photo ID before the child or children will be released.

Parents, please note that in some instances, chronic lateness and excessive absence are ACS reportable offenses because they are considered educational neglect.

6.3 School Calendar

New York State Law currently requires a school calendar to provide 176 days of instruction with 4 professional days and cites the following holidays when schools may not be in session:

New Year's Day	First Day in January
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Third Monday in January
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Columbus Day	Second Monday in October
Veterans Day	Eleventh Day in November
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Christmas Day	Twenty-fifth day in December

On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the feast of the patroness of the Diocese of Brooklyn, the academy or parish school will be closed. Academies and parish schools may also choose to observe other Holy Days. All advanced school closings will be indicated in the school calendar.

6.3a) School Hours

During the current COVID-19 crisis our hours are as follows:

Grades K-4: 8:00 am until 1:30 PM

Grades 5-8: 7:45 am until 1:45 pm.

These hours will be reconsidered at the end of the first trimester.

6.3b) Before Care & After Care

St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy has an Early Morning Drop Off program beginning at 7 am most mornings that school is open. There is a fee for the program, details are available in the Main Office. During the COVID-19 crisis while we are using an alternative schedule, we will provide after school care, free of charge from 1:30 pm until 3 pm.

Beginning at 3 pm, our paid after school program begins and is available until 6 pm. Details about cost are available in the Main Office.

6.3c) School Office Hours

During the school year, the Main Office is opened from 7:30 am until 3:30 pm.

6.3d) Early Release Schedule

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we are using the alternative schedule noted earlier in this document; dismissal will not take place before 1:30 pm.

6.4 Releasing of Students

Students are expected to be in attendance for the complete session each school day. If for any reason a student must leave the academy or parish school before the regular dismissal hour, a parent/legal guardian or a person authorized by the parent/legal guardian must come to the academy or parish school office to pick the student up and escort the student out of the building. Parents/ legal guardians must provide authorization for their child to be released to an individual other than a parent/ legal guardian.

6.4a Custody, Guardianship Orders

Parents must provide accurate custodial information to be kept on file at the academy or parish school. Non-custodial parents do have rights. The law protects non-custodial parents and maintains that parents do not cease to be parents when they no longer have custody of their children. The Diocese of Brooklyn abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school or parish academy will provide the non-custodial parents with access to academic records and other school information regarding his or her child. *If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide the school with a court certified copy of the court order.*

6.5 Field Trips

Written permission must be obtained from parents/legal guardians of students who wish to go on scheduled trips. Information to the parents/legal guardians will include the date, purpose and destination of the trip, the expense, the means of transportation, and probable time of return.

Adults who wish to chaperone must complete Virtus training and background checks prior to accompanying students. Please see section 9.4 for further information about this process.

6.6 Birthday Policy

Due to COVID-19, students may not bring food into the classroom to be shared with other students. To promote health and safety, students should consume only the foods that they have brought to school or have been provided by the school. Once the COVID-19 crisis has ended, the birthday policy will be reconsidered.

6.7 Lost and Found

Personal items that are found will be kept on the first floor in a box under the bench outside the Principal's Office.

6.8 Responsibility for Valuables

The academies and parish schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn are not responsible for valuables that are lost or damaged. It is strongly advised that students do not bring valuables into the school building including electronic devices such as tablets, phones, etc.

Section 6- Transportation

6.1 Bus procedures

St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy does not have bus service provided by the New York City Office of Pupil Transportation.

6.2 Use of Other Vehicles

Only a licensed public carrier that is fully insured should be used to transport students. Teachers or administrators should not transport students in their personal vehicles.

Parents/ legal guardians must provide authorization for their child to be transported by someone else. This includes transportation for dismissal as well as extracurricular activities.

Section 7- Student Records

7.1 Change of Address/Phone Number

For student safety, it is imperative that parents/ legal guardians alert the academy or parish school to any changes in address or phone number. Parents/ legal guardians must also provide the academy or parish school with an adequate number of emergency contacts (with up to date information).

7.2 Educational Records Requests

In the event of a student transferring to a different academy, parish school, or public school, the school will provide student records to the school of transfer. Requests can be made in writing by the parent/ legal guardian or by the school that the student will be transferring to. The school office is responsible for sending student records directly to the school of transfer. If records are not provided in a timely fashion, parents or legal guardians may contact the Office of the Superintendent to receive further assistance in this matter.

7.3 Authorization to Release Records

Academies and parish schools may not release the records of students without the written consent of the parents/legal guardians to any individual, agency or organization other than the following:

- Other academy or parish school officials who have legitimate educational interests.
- Officials of other academies or parish schools in which the student intends to enroll.
- Officials of the courts with lawfully issued judicial process, i.e., subpoena, court order, etc.
- Please note health records are the property of the Department of Health.

7.4 Review of a Child's Official Records

Parents/legal guardians have the right to inspect any and all material which is part of their child's permanent record. Academies and parish schools require parents/legal guardians to provide a written request prior to when they wish to examine their child's permanent record. At the time of inspection, the academy or parish school administrator, or qualified delegate, will be present.

Section 8- Health and Nutrition

8.1 Medical Requirements

The New York City Department of Health requires that all new students entering nursery through grade 12 show proof of having received a complete medical evaluation. Children who transfer from one school to another in New York City are not considered new students. These requirements may change from year to year.

New York State Law states that all students in Grades Nursery through 12 must be immunized as directed by the New York State and New York City Departments of Health. New students may enter school provisionally with documentation of **an initial series of immunizations**. Once admitted provisionally, a student has a certain amount of time to continue and complete the medical requirements. Students who fail to complete the necessary requirements within the appropriate time frame **must be excluded from school**. Parents must provide records of immunization to be kept on file at the Academy or parish school. Any exemptions to the immunization requirements must be approved by the Academy or parish school with documentation being kept in the student's health records. Only medical exemptions are permitted per New York State Law. Religious exemptions are no longer permissible.

- For nursery, pre-k, and UPK Programs--Between July 1 and December 31 of each year, all children between the ages of 6 months and 59 months and attending a group child care or school-based child care program must receive one dose of influenza vaccine.

8.2 Administering Medications at School

School nurses may administer over-the-counter-prescription drugs to students with written consent and medical authorization from a parent or legal guardian. School nurses may administer prescription medication that has been prescribed by a physician but must be provided with

- Medical authorization from the parent or legal guardian consenting to administering the medication
- A medical plan developed by the child's parents and health care provider detailing the proper administration of the medication, details regarding the child's medical concerns, and other pertinent details.

8.2a Administering Epinephrine

Parents or guardians will supply their own epinephrine auto-injector and must provide written consent and medical authorization for its use. The academy or parish school must have an up-to-date medical statement on file for each child in care. For a child with identified allergies or with special health care needs, the academy or parish school must have a copy of an individual health care plan developed by the child's parents and health care provider. Parents must make program staff aware of the individual health care plan on their child's first day at the program.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian of the student who is at risk of anaphylaxis:

- to notify the school that the child/student is at risk of anaphylaxis and is in need of the presence of epinephrine on school premises
- to indicate to the school if the child/student is capable of self-administration of the epinephrine device
- to supply the school with the epinephrine device* in its original packaging as received from the pharmacist
- to replace the epinephrine device when it expires, discolors or has been used

*It is recommended that two epinephrine devices be supplied, the second functioning as a back-up in case of malfunction or if an extra dose is necessary in accordance with medical documentation.

8.2b Administering Epinephrine on Field Trips

In the event of a school trip or school event conducted outside of the school premises, it is the responsibility of the parent (or a designated person who appears on the child's emergency contact list) to attend with the child/student for the purpose of epinephrine administration, if necessary.

8.3 City & State Health Services

The Education Law of New York State mandates that students attending nonpublic schools receive the same health services provided to students attending public schools. At St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy, we do have the services of Department of Health Nurses.

8.4 Limitations of Physical Activities

Students whose physical activity is limited should bring detailed information from their pediatricians noting the nature of the limitations and the time span of such limitations.

8.5 Breakfast/Lunch Program

St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy participates in the NYC School Food program; breakfast is always "grab and go." Students pick up breakfast upon entering school and eat in their classrooms. During the 20/21 school year, lunch will also be grab and go, which means a cold lunch for as long as the COVID-19 crisis lasts.

8.6 Wellness Policy

Students coming to school should be healthy. During the 2020-2021 school year, for as long as the COVID-19 crisis last, parents must submit a daily health check to school each morning via Option C. These checks are due at 7:30 am each day. Students should stay home if they have a fever higher than 100.0°. Students must be fever free for 24 hours without the aid of medication before returning to school. Additionally, no child is to come to school if they have experienced nausea or diarrhea before coming to school.

Section 9 Parental Obligations

9.1 Parental Involvement

Home is the first place where a child learns love and respect for God and neighbor. Parents/legal guardians, in choosing a Catholic school to continue the education begun at home; have responsibilities as well as opportunities to share in the continuance of their children's education.

Parental involvement consists of parents/legal guardians and staff meeting together because of common interest in the child. It is expressed in many ways such as sharing in student supervision in the lunchroom or playground or serving as library or teacher aide. In some instances, parents/legal guardians may be asked to assist in advocacy in all areas that would benefit the schools, including programs that request government assistance, in consultation with the Office of the Superintendent. The involvement of the total family is also a means of communicating the academy's and parish school's performance to the total parish community.

Parental support for the education of their children is of the utmost importance. Parents and legal guardians are also expected to uphold the behavioral expectations set forth for students and staff within the academy or parish school community. Failure of parents to act in a manner compatible with the values of the academy or parish school may result in student dismissal.

9.2 Fundraising

We have 2 mandatory fundraisers throughout the year – the Chocolate Sale and Raffle booklets. All other fundraisers are optional.

9.3 Parent Teacher Association (PTA) - Home Academy Association (HAA)

Every academy or parish school is encouraged to establish a Home School Association. Its purpose is the educational enrichment of parents/legal guardians and teachers. The goal of the Home School Association is to foster a clearer understanding of the mutual responsibilities of parents/legal guardians and teachers regarding the education of the students.

An added responsibility of the Home School Association will be to assist in the fundraising efforts of the academy or parish school. In the school, this is done in coordination with the administration. In an academy, it is done in coordination with the board of directors of the academy. No organization may hold title to accounts nor have access to funds raised for the academy or parish school. All financial transactions must be approved by the pastor/academy board of directors.

St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy does not currently have a Home Academy Association; however, we are looking for parents who would be interested in help with the formation of a Home Academy Association; details will be forthcoming.

9.4 Volunteering, Chaperoning & Virtus Training

Parent volunteers and chaperones are an integral part of the school community. All parents/ legal guardians/ other adults, must complete VIRTUS training, sign a Code of Conduct, and complete a background check.

- The VIRTUS program for adults is a three-hour live awareness session that instructs adults of the Church that to protect children you must have continuous awareness and vigilance. This awareness session helps trainees understand signs of child sexual abuse, the methods and means by which offenders commit abuse, and five empowerment steps to prevent child sexual abuse.
- The Code of Conduct is a document that acknowledges the importance of legal, professional and responsible conduct of all who work with children and young people. All clergy, employees and volunteers are required to read the Code of Conduct and to sign a Statement of Acknowledgement Form. The Code of Conduct is distributed at all VIRTUS sessions.
- All employees and volunteers are also required to have a criminal background screening completed before they start their employment or service. These forms are also distributed at all VIRTUS sessions. As of May 2010, all background screenings (employees and volunteers) will be done through the Safe Environment Office. The searches are done through LexisNexis (volunteers) or HireRight (employees). All information is kept confidential and if a positive result is returned, the pastor/administrator will be notified and appropriate steps will be taken. Background searches will be rerun every 3 years for employees and 5 years for volunteers

Section 10- Safety

10.1 Emergency Drills

Per New York State laws, academies and parish schools are required to conduct twelve emergency drills over the course of the school year. Four of these drills must be lockdown drills. Students are expected to follow all directives provided to them by schoolteachers and staff. Failure to comply or act appropriately during emergency drills will result in disciplinary action.

10.2 School Closings

The Diocese of Brooklyn will base their closings on the New York City Public School System. If the New York City school system closes due to inclement weather, the schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn are closed. Local academies and parish schools may also make decisions to close their individual schools based on inclement weather or other hazardous conditions (infrastructure issues, flooding, property damage, etc.). Parents will be notified as soon as possible. In the event of a closure during the school day, proper provisions will be made for students to return home or to be cared for in other premises until usual dismissal time.

10.3 Procedures for Visitors

All visitors must be admitted to the building by school staff. Visitors should proceed to the main office to sign in and receive a visitor designation (lanyard, sticker, etc.) if available. Visitors to the school are asked to remain in the office until they have confirmed their destination within the school. For the safety of staff and students, visitors should not walk about the school but should travel to their intended destination within the school. Prior to leaving the school, visitors should return to the main office, sign out, and leave through the main doors. Visitors should not exit through side doors to ensure that building security is maintained.

During COVID-19, we ask all parents and legal guardians to visit the academy or parish school only when necessary as well as to keep any visits as brief as possible. Appointments need to be made to visit the Academy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

10.4 Video Surveillance Cameras

Academies and parish schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn are authorized to use video camera surveillance on academy/ parish school property to monitor the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to the property, and to safeguard facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be placed in locations as deemed appropriate by the designated school administrators.

Violations of Diocesan policies, administrative regulations, building rules, or laws that images, video and audio capture through surveillance may be used as evidence that may subject students, staff, and visitors to appropriate disciplinary and legal action, including, but not limited to, disclosure to law enforcement.

Data from video surveillance is typically retained for a year. Data related to a known incident which involves injury to students, staff or members of the public or property, or which involves any potential violation of the law or Diocesan policies will be kept with reports of the incident until the incident has been appropriately resolved.

Section 11 Instruction

11.1 Grading Policy

At St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy, we follow the recommended guidelines for grading. Report Card grades are a combination of classwork, homework, and assessment. We use the following formula: Assessment – 50% of a student’s grade, with 25% of the grade being determined by classwork and 25% for homework. Progress Reports are issued in grades 1-8, three times per year, in the middle of the trimester. Report Cards are distributed three times per year.

11.2 Homework Policy

Homework is assigned most nights and it is expected to be completed by the student and signed by a parent each night. Homework is to be submitted on time – students will be penalized for late homework. Teachers will post homework on their websites.

11.3 Protecting Instructional Time

Maintaining school schedule and structure is of the utmost importance during the school year. As academies and parish schools make their calendar and schedules, their goal is to protect instructional time as much as possible. In protecting instructional time, parents are asked to refrain from removing their child during the school day for unnecessary activities. Appointments should be scheduled, when possible, before or after the school day in order to avoid disrupting student learning. Vacations and family trips should also be planned, when possible, for existing school vacation weeks. In the event of a necessary absence, parents should alert the school and classroom teacher as soon as possible. If an extended absence is known, parents should communicate with their child’s teacher to create a plan for making up missed work.

11.4 Reporting Student Progress

11.4a Progress Reports & Report Card Schedule

Parents/ legal guardians will receive report cards three times a year, at the end of each trimester. Parents/ legal guardians will also receive progress reports during each trimester prior to receiving the report cards. It is vital to a student’s progress that an open communication exists between parents/ legal guardians and their child’s teacher. Any concerns regarding a child’s progress should be addressed first to the child’s teacher.

11.4b Parent Teacher Conferences

Parents/ legal guardians will have the opportunity to attend parent teacher conferences at the end of the first and second trimester following receipt of student report cards. While these are formally scheduled conferences, parents are also encouraged to schedule meetings with teachers or other staff, when necessary, to discuss their child’s progress and learning goals.

11.4c NYS Testing

Students in grades 4, 6, 7, and 8 will participate in New York State Testing. Parents receive an Individual Student Report (ISR) which includes a breakdown of a student’s performance in different skill areas within ELA, Math and Science. This helps parents understand where their child is doing well and in what areas he or she may need additional practice. Parents can use these results to guide

a discussion with their child's teacher about additional supports or challenges that may be needed in the classroom, as well as ways to support learning at home.

There are no negative consequences when taking state tests as the tests are considered diagnostic. The ELA and math test results are not recorded on student permanent record cards or report cards. New York State law forbids the use of state test results as the determining factor in promotion.

11.4d TerraNova Testing

Students in grades 3-8 will participate in TerraNova Testing in the fall. TerraNova testing is a nationally- normed, standardized testing program. This series of tests is issued to diagnose student performance and develop student learning goals.

11.5 iPad Usage

Each child in grades K-8 is assigned a school iPad to be used for their work. Students will be permitted to take iPads home to do their homework. Students who take home their iPads are required to bring them back to school each day, fully charged. Students who repeatedly fail to comply with this policy will not be permitted to bring iPads home.

Section 12-Internet Use

12.1 Option C

The Option C Parent Portal allows parents to be involved in their child's academic life on their schedule and more efficiently. Rather than writing a note to a teacher to see how their child is doing on assignments, they can access the portal and see it in real time. They can communicate with teachers directly through Option C removing the issues of lost or blocked email messages. It allows teachers to contact parents directly and keeps a record of the interaction should it be necessary. As grades are recorded for student work, they can be shared with parents, giving any time up-to-date progress reports.

Option C's Parent Alert System is a flexible notification system that lets its audiences - parents, principals, and school staff - communicate quickly and reliably. Academies and parish schools may also create alerts to send to parents regarding fund raisers, events, drills, community affairs, school closings and any information they would like to communicate quickly. Users can decide how they want to be reached, either by voice, text or email, or any combination. Parents should check their settings on Option C to ensure that all contact information is up to date and all options are set correctly.

We also use Option C to submit Daily Health Checks, which are mandatory.

12.2 Communications with Teachers

Students benefit tremendously when an open line of communication exists between families and teachers. It is recommended that parents/ legal guardians communicate any concerns regarding their child. Parents/ legal guardians as well as teachers should always use Option C, school communication platforms (I.e. Google classroom), or a note sent directly to the teacher/ family. If needed, the parent/ legal guardian or teacher can schedule a follow-up meeting to address any further issue. It is also recommended that a parent communicate with a teacher regarding their concerns prior to involving the administration. Initiating an open communication with the teacher first continues a positive relationship between families and teachers.

It is strongly advised that parents and teachers do not use personal social media accounts or personal cell phones (texting) as a means of communication in regard to school related concerns.

Section 13-Finances

13.1 School Tuition Policies

The success of our Academy relies on the commitment of our families to make Catholic education a financial priority. The Academy has full-year contractual and financial obligations that must be met, such as teacher salaries, utility bills, building maintenance and improvements, and other expenses. Families that seek enrollment are required to satisfy the annual tuition by specified due dates.

These policies are not intended to deprive anyone of a Catholic education. It is our desire to maintain a fair approach to collection of tuition and to provide a sound financial policy for the overall welfare of our families. We encourage all responsible parties to maintain open communication with the business office to ensure a complete understanding of each family's financial obligations. The goal of our academy is to provide a Catholic education to every student who desires one, but only by mutual cooperation can we make certain that this goal is met. Parental non-payment or delinquency in meeting financial obligations creates an additional burden for the Academy.

- Tuition contracts specifying a payment schedule will be published and shared with families. All families must sign an enrollment contract that guarantees the family will be responsible for the full payment of tuition for the academic year.
- Academies will arrange for all tuition and fees to be collected through FACTS Tuition Management.
- Tuition payment schedule will follow the most appropriate schedule for the academy and parents: monthly, one payment, or three installments.
- A Tuition Assistance Committee will be in place at every school/academy

13.2 Tuition and other fee schedules

The academy or parish school will collect tuition and fees over a ten month period. This ten month period will typically extend from July until April. Tuition collection will begin prior to the start of the school year.

Academies and parish schools reserve the right to place severely delinquent accounts in the hands of a collection agency or its attorneys for collection. It is not our desire that any family should incur unnecessary legal fees or suffer further embarrassment or inconvenience in this regard. Again, we encourage prompt communication with the academy in an effort to avoid litigation.

In order to withdraw a student, the parent must submit written notice to the principal in advance of the withdraw date. This enables the academy to prepare necessary information and settle accounts. No student records will be forwarded to another academy or school until all accounts have been settled.

Following the terms of the enrollment contract, refunds will be made only in accordance with the stated guidelines and/or at the discretion of the administration. The refund must be requested prior to the start of the period for which payment would be made.

13.3 Resources for Tuition assistance

Catholic education is meant to be available to every Catholic family. Every family desiring a Catholic education for their child(ren) will participate to the extent capable in the cost of providing that education.

Each family in need of tuition assistance must complete a scholarship application through Futures in Education, which may currently be found at: www.futuresineducation.org/scholarships . The one exception is families returning to the Teddy Forstmann program coordinated by Children's Scholarship Fund.

If the family requests additional assistance beyond the awarded amount, the request will be forwarded to the Tuition Assistance Committee. The review will be completed as early as possible.

13.4 Tuition Assistance Committee

The Tuition Assistance Committee is an essential advisory body to the pastor/board chair and principal. It has a two-fold purpose.

- The Committee will have the responsibility of direct involvement in the monitoring and collection of tuition arrears from the families of its respective school or academy.
- The Committee will be empowered to recommend when needed a partial deferment of tuition for families that have demonstrated true financial need or face unforeseen extraordinary circumstances. Such a deferment will establish a fair and just tuition rate that will allow students to remain enrolled when even scholarship assistance is not enough. This discernment must be guided by an approved process that is fair, transparent and reasonable. Any recommendation made by the Tuition Assistance Committee must be approved by the respective pastor of a parochial school and the Board of Directors for an academy.

Should there be a concern regarding the tuition assistance process or if an appeal for discernment is requested, parents/guardians should present their concerns in writing. In the case of a parish school, the letter should be addressed to the pastor of the parish. In the case of a Catholic academy, the letter should be addressed to the chairperson of the Board of Directors. The response from the pastor or chairperson would be final.

13.5 FACTS

FACTS is a tuition management company designed to make tuition collection simpler for families as well as academies and parish schools. There will be one FACTS record per family, and each student must be listed separately. This provides valuable detail about the charges and discounts each student is receiving. In turn, this provides the academy better reporting. A major benefit of FACTS is the ability to process automatic drafts of the payer's bank account or credit card. There is a 2.85% convenience fee on credit card transactions. FACTS does offer an invoicing option as well. With this option, FACTS will send an invoice to the payer (via email or postal mail) 20 calendar days prior to the payment due date. The payer must then initiate payment either by using a credit card or bank account online, over the phone, or by mailing a check directly to FACTS. Families are encouraged to pay via automatic draft. FACTS also allows for flexible payment options. Common options are monthly payments, three trimester payments, and a payment in full.

13.6 Tuition Delinquency

- By standard practice, FACTS will send payment reminders prior to any due date, returned payment notices in the case of a failed payment, and will make automated phone calls to delinquent payers. Payers who fail to communicate with the academy and resolve the delinquency through a payment schedule approved by the academy will result in suspension of services for the student.
- Students will not be permitted to attend class at the start of the trimester should any balance be past due.
- No student will be permitted to begin an academic year unless all registration and other required fees are current. Registration and other required fees are paid through FACTS Tuition Management at enrollment. Enrollment for students whose families are not current in the registration or other required fees by June 30 may be cancelled at the discretion of the academy. In no event will students be permitted to attend class at the commencement of the academic year unless the delinquency is paid in full.

- In order to participate in graduation activities, all debts for eighth grade students must be cleared by the first Monday of May. Eighth grade transcripts will not be released to the high schools if the financial obligations have not been met.
- All fees must be paid in full before records or progress reports will be processed. It is the sole discretion of the academy to withhold trimester exams, report cards, transcripts, records, and diplomas until all financial obligations are satisfied in full.

Section 14-Safe Environment

14.1 Reporting Inappropriate Behavior with Children to Principal

All inappropriate behavior should be reported to the principal; the principal will take all appropriate actions.

14.2 Children reporting to their parents

If a child reports to a parent that inappropriate behavior is taking place in school, or after school via the internet or cell phones, parents are asked to notify the principal of the behavior so that appropriate actions may be taken.

14.3 Child Lures Prevention Program

The Child Lures/Teen Lures Prevention programs are presented to the children and youth who attend each academy or parish school. This program is tailored to different age groups and covers topics such as staying healthy and safe, kindness and respect, trusted adults, my body belongs to me, child luring, choosing grown-ups to help, children are special, and abuse is never a child's fault (topics will vary based on age level appropriateness). For older students, topics include sexual assault, harassment, dating violence, bullying/cyberbullying, sexting, identity theft, online luring, suicide and human trafficking with the goal of facilitating authentic conversations to bring awareness to the topics.

Each program provides teachers with the resources to facilitate appropriate conversations. Parents/legal guardians will also be provided with a link to access parent guides digitally to continue the conversations within their homes.

14.4 Alcohol and Drug Free Zone Policy

The New York City Tobacco Products Regulations Act of 1994 curtails exposure to tobacco use on school grounds. For the purpose of this legislation "school grounds" means the "buildings, grounds or facilities, or any part thereof, owned or occupied by public or private institutions for the primary purpose of providing educational instructions to students at or below the twelfth grade level." Tobacco use is not permitted on school grounds at any time. A "tobacco product" is any substance which contains tobacco including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, and chewing tobacco. New York City regulations are far more stringent than the regulations promulgated by New York State. However, schools subject to the rules of this municipality, as are the schools of the Diocese of Brooklyn, must follow the local laws. Thus, smoking is prohibited on ALL SCHOOL PREMISES AT ANY TIME.

For the safety of our students, alcohol is also prohibited from being consumed on school premises at any time.

14.5 Signs of Suicide (SOS) Prevention Program

SOS Signs of Suicide (SOS) is a universal, school-based prevention program designed for middle school (ages 11-13) and high school (ages 13-17) students. The goals of this program are:

- Decrease suicide and suicide attempts by increasing student knowledge and adaptive attitudes about depression

- Encourage personal help-seeking and/or help-seeking on behalf of a friend
- Reduce the stigma of mental illness and acknowledge the importance of seeking help or treatment
- Engage parents and school staff as partners in prevention through “gatekeeper” education
- Encourage schools to develop community-based partnerships to support student mental health

Through a video and guided discussion, students learn to identify warning signs of suicide and depression. At the end of the session, students complete a seven-question screening for depression (anonymous or signed – the school can decide) to further encourage help-seeking and connect students at risk with trusted adults. The curriculum raises awareness about behavioral health and encourages students to ACT (Acknowledge, Care, Tell) when worried about themselves or their peers.

Section 15- COVID-19

**All health related policies and procedures have been adopted from the regulations published by the NYC Department of Education in partnership with the NYC Board of Health.*

15.1 Hygiene and Health Requirements

First and foremost, students who are sick must stay home from school until they are well.

Anyone with a fever higher than 100.0° is not to come to school until they have been fever free, without the use of medication for 24 hours. Also, students experiencing nausea and/or diarrhea are not to come to school.

Daily Health Screenings are to be submitted by parents/guardians by 7:30 am; if forms are not submitted, students will not be permitted to attend class until the form is submitted.

15.1a Face Coverings

Students are required to wear face coverings when in the school building and maintain appropriate social/physical distancing. Students should bring an appropriate face covering from home. The school will have surgical masks available for students as needed. Students’ cloth face coverings should be clearly identified with their names or initials, to avoid confusion or swapping. Students’ face coverings may also be labeled to indicate top/bottom and front/back. Non-disposable mask should be washed daily.

All visitors to the school for any reason will always be required to wear a face covering while on school grounds or in the school building. Faculty and Staff are also required to wear masks

All masks for faculty, staff, and students are subject to approval by the principal and Office of the Superintendent of Schools. Masks should be plain and free of any objectionable statements or support for any group, product, political view, and so on, other than the name of their Parish School or Catholic Academy.

Students will be provided opportunities for short breaks to remove masks throughout the day, while social distancing, in addition to removing them during outdoor times and while eating.

15.1b Social Distancing

Classrooms and other school areas will be set up to ensure social distancing between students.

Students will also be required to maintain social distance when they are not at their desk. This is particularly important when students are not wearing face coverings such as while eating or during mask breaks.

15.2 Health Policies

If a student or staff members displays symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day, the following procedures will be followed:

- Each building will have a designated Isolation Room for students or staff who display symptoms

- A student showing symptoms of COVID-19 will be escorted to the Isolation Room by a staff member wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- The area where the student was showing symptoms will be immediately cleaned and disinfected.
- The student will be evaluated by the nurse/health professional in the Isolation Room.
- A family member or guardian will be contacted by a staff member and asked to pick up the student.
- Upon pick up, the nurse/health professional and school staff will strongly advise the family to visit a doctor and get the student tested for COVID-19
- Any student placed in the Isolation Room will be adequately supervised by a staff member during this time until the ill student can be picked up.

15.2a Health Screenings

Parents/ legal guardians will be asked to check student temperatures and screen students for symptoms prior to their arrival to school grounds. In the event that parents/ legal guardians are unable to do so, school staff members will be designated to complete health screenings. It is asked that all parents/ legal guardians are vigilant in temperature and symptom screenings for their children for the safety of other students as well as staff members. School staff will also perform random temperature screenings for both students and staff members using no-touch thermometers.

Symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- Fever of 100.0°F or higher or chills
- Cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing,
- Fatigue,
- Muscle or body aches,
- Headache,
- Loss of taste or smell,
- Sore throat, congestion or runny nose,
- Nausea or vomiting,
- Diarrhea.

15.3b Students Excluded from In-Person Learning

School-based staff and students cannot report to school if they have:

- Been knowingly in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19.
- Tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
- Experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, in the past 14 days.
- Traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days.

15.4 Returning to School after Showing Symptoms

Any individual (student or staff member) showing signs of COVID-19 can only return to school when the following conditions are met:

- Received a positive COVID-19 test AND
- Isolated for 10 days AND
- Presents clearance from a healthcare provider AND
- The individual has been symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

OR

- Received a negative COVID-19 test AND
- Presents clearance from a healthcare provider AND
- The individual has been symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

OR

- Never got a COVID-19 test AND
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms started AND
- Presents clearance from a healthcare provider AND
- The individual has been symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

If DOHMH or NYC Test & Trace Corps determine the individual is considered a close contact of a positive case, the individual can only return to school when all the following are met:

- The individual has completed a 14-day quarantine regardless of symptoms or COVID-19 test results since their last exposure to that case AND
- Presents clearance from a health care provider evaluation AND
- The student has been symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.
- Students in quarantine should participate in remote learning if feeling well enough.

15.3 School Closures

Academies and parish schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn will continue to work to provide in-person learning as long as it is safe to do so. Academies and parish schools will follow guidance from local Board of Health officials as well as directives from the City of New York to ensure student safety.

Per the New York City Department of Education “In order for schools to reopen and stay open, the percentage of positive tests in New York City must be less than 3% using a 7-day rolling average. Schools will need to close if the percentages of positive tests in New York City are equal to or more than 3% using a 7-day rolling average. It is important to note that the above threshold is just one trigger for closing schools but may not be the only trigger. For example, a decision to close schools would be made where there were recurrent, uncontrolled outbreaks of COVID-19 in schools, even if the overall case rates across New York City were to remain low.”

In the event of positive cases reported within the school community, the following procedures will be followed per NYC Test & Trace Corps and DOHMH Investigations:

Number of Cases	During Investigation (at least 24 hrs)	After Investigation
One confirmed case in a classroom	Close classroom with positive case, transition to remote learning	Classroom remains closed for 14 days; Students and staff in close contact with positive case quarantine for 14 days
At least two cases linked together in school, same classroom	Close classroom with positive cases, transition to remote learning	Classroom remains closed for 14 days; Students and staff in close contact with positive cases quarantine for 14 days
At least two cases linked together in school, different classrooms	Close school building, transition to remote learning	Classroom or each case remains closed for 14 days; Students and staff in close contact with positive cases quarantine for 14 days. Additional school members are quarantined based on where the exposure was in the school (e.g., the locker room)
At least two cases linked together by circumstances outside of school	Close school building, transition to remote learning	School opens after investigation; Classrooms remain closed for 14 days

(e.g., acquired infection by different setting and source)		
At least two cases, not linked but exposure confirmed for each outside of school setting	Close school building, transition to remote learning	School opens after investigation; Classrooms remain closed for 14 days
Link unable to be determined	Close school building, transition to remote learning	Close school for 14 days

15.4 Distance Learning

Distance learning that is facilitated by a Catholic Academy or Parish School within the Diocese of Brooklyn is bound by all parts of the Acceptable Use Policy. As distance learning requires the use of other mediums such as teleconferencing platforms, virtual classrooms, digital file transfer and online work, there are other factors that need to be addressed.

- Device Usage – The use of school/academy or personal devices for distance learning is allowed. It is recommended that all school/academy issued accounts only be used for schoolwork purposes and that those accounts are signed out of after work is completed. All usage is governed by this policy.
- Video/Audio Conferencing – Video or audio-conferencing platforms may be used to facilitate class meetings and communication between teachers and students for teaching and group work. When using these platforms, participants must remember to conduct themselves in a professional manner commensurate with behavior expected in a physical classroom. Entering meetings other than those you are explicitly invited to by the coordinator (teacher, principal, etc.) is strictly prohibited. Trying to circumvent the security of a meeting, “hijacking” a presentation or displaying any objectionable content during a meeting is a direct violation of this policy and subject to the disciplinary actions contained within. Recording of video/audio conferences is also prohibited.
- File Transfer/Submission – The transmittal of files may be required at times for teachers to provide and students to submit work. The willful transfer of objectionable material, malicious content or any other such transmissions is a violation of this policy.
- Learning Platforms – The use of learning platforms such as ThinkCentral, Learn360, Mathletics, Microsoft 365, Google Classroom and others is for the sole purpose of supporting and furthering the education of students. Any use of these platforms for any other reason may be considered a violation of this policy.
- Any use or misuse of the technology provided for distance learning that interferes with the education of students or the operations of the school/academy is a violation of this policy.

16.0 – Acceptable Use Policy for Technology

Parish Schools and Catholic Academies within the Diocese of Brooklyn

1. Purpose:

Throughout the years, the Catholic Academies and Parish Schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn have maintained a steadfast dedication to educational excellence and Catholic culture rooted in faith, service, and personal responsibility. The Diocese of Brooklyn is committed to provide programs that enable all students to develop effective communication skills while striving for academic excellence.

The Diocese of Brooklyn is dedicated to the utilization of technology today to produce moral, innovative, and creative leaders for tomorrow.

Existing and emerging digital technologies present new opportunities and challenges for our Catholic Academy and Parish School communities. The Acceptable Use Policy for Technology shall apply to all students, faculty, administrators, staff, and volunteers who are allowed access to school/academy technology resources. Outside or personal uses may be governed by this policy as well, where applicable.

The Superintendent delegates to the principals the responsibility for implementing regulations and procedures for the appropriate use of technology and internet resources that follow these guidelines.

1. All persons will use technology in a courteous, appropriate, respectful, and ethical manner in accord with our Catholic faith.

2. Students will use school/academy owned technology for appropriate learning purposes under the supervision of the principal and classroom teacher.

3. Students, employees, and visitors will use school/academy technology in accordance with all policies and procedures of the Diocese of Brooklyn.

2. Scope of Use:

The technology vision for the Catholic Academies and Parish Schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn is such that its use supports the Catholic Church's overall mission. We are aware that the digital world allows 24-hour access, anywhere, anytime. This policy applies to the use of technology inside school/academy but may in certain instances apply to personal use outside of the school/academy. When personal outside use of technology causes a disruption to teaching, harms or interferes in the rights of others in the school/academy community or otherwise violates all or part of this AUP, then these may be subject to disciplinary measures found within.

3. Definitions of Technology:

a. Technology is used as a general term for devices and software used in the creation, transfer, storage, reproduction, or other such interaction with digital or analog content. It also encompasses the communication protocols used in relation to such content.

b. This includes all existing, as well as emerging technologies. These include but are not limited to:

- Cell Phones, Smart Phones**
- Storage Devices (USB Flash Drives, External/Internal Hard Disk Drives, Cloud Storage)**
- Computing Devices (Laptops/Desktops, Tablets, Netbooks, Chromebooks, etc.)**
- Portable Entertainment Systems (gaming systems, audio/video players)**

- **Recording Devices (digital or analogue audio/video/photo capture devices)**
- **Any other convergent technologies (Social Networking, email, instant messaging, etc.)**

c. The Diocese of Brooklyn requires all schools and academies to publish the following statement on web portals, in student/parent handbooks, faculty /staff handbooks, agendas, etc.:

“The use of technology is permitted on school premises under limited conditions as authorized by the Principal for the sole purpose of enhancing academic achievement while respecting the dignity and safety of all members of the St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy community.”

4. Responsibilities of User:

The schools and academies of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn will make every effort to provide safe environment for learning with technology including internet filtering and safeguards in accordance with CIPA regulations. CIPA requires that schools and academies create a policy addressing the following:

- **Access by minors to inappropriate matter on the internet**
- **The safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communication**
- **Unauthorized access, including so-called “hacking” and other unlawful activities by minors online**
- **Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and**
- **Measures restricting minors’ access to materials harmful to them**
- **As part of this compliance, an Internet Safety Curriculum must be implemented in all schools/academies as of Fall 2018. All students are required to participate in this program to educate and empower them to make their internet experiences safe and responsible.**

Parish Schools and Catholic Academies within the Diocese of Brooklyn are also required to implement the Diocesan Cyber-Bullying Policy published in the Administrative Manual. The goal is to educate students on how to avoid dangerous, inappropriate, or unlawful online behavior and protect them from being the victim of such behavior as well. The students, faculty, administrators, staff, and school/academy community are granted the privilege of using technology. With this privilege comes the responsibility for appropriate use.

In using the information and technology in safe, legal, and responsible ways, the following conditions of being a digital citizen within the Diocese of Brooklyn are expected:

- **Respect One’s Self**
- **Public names should be appropriate**
- **Be mindful of any and all content you post including photos, personal views, comments, personal information, etc.**
- **Avoid seeking out and/or viewing inappropriate content**

- Do not engage in potentially harmful activities such as communicating with persons unknown to you or internet challenges
 - Respect Others
- Be mindful of comments, posts, photos or any content directed toward or including others
- Refrain from engaging in inflammatory, harassing, or any other such disrespectful behavior
- Do not perpetuate inappropriate content by sharing it with or sending it to others
- Warn others of potentially disturbing or harmful content that should be avoided
 - Protect One's Self and Others
- Report any and all cyber-abuse committed against you or others to parents, teachers and/or administrators
- Keep groups with friends private to avoid potentially inappropriate or dangerous content and communications from unknown sources
 - Respect Intellectual Property
- Cite sources when using any content not originally authored by you

Members of Catholic Academy and Parish School communities must remember that when telecommunicating with individuals, groups, or institutions, you are doing so as an individual. You should not represent yourself, your views, ideas, questions, or actions as representing the Catholic Academy or you are associated with without the expressed permission of the principal.

5. Security of Technology:

The Catholic Academies and Parish Schools within the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn assume no responsibility for the theft, loss, repair or replacement of any technology devices that are brought onto academy property, whether it is lost, stolen, damaged, or confiscated.

Security on any computer system is a high priority. If you believe you can identify a security issue, you must notify a system administrator, principal, or teacher and not disclose the problem to others in any way.

Although there are safeguards in place to protect all users from inappropriate content, we are not responsible for failures in filtering that result in a bypass of our program and/or access to objectionable content. If any inappropriate content bypasses these safeguards, any parties involved should turn off the monitor and report the security breach immediately to a system administrator, teacher or the principal.

Additionally, member of the school/academy community shall not:

- Use another's credentials for any reason
- Gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to Diocesan or school/academy computers or computer systems.
- Download or install any software application without prior authorization.

6. Technology Use Guidelines:

- a. Appropriate Use/Educational Purpose

It is the policy of the Catholic Schools and Academies of the Diocese of Brooklyn that technology be used to support learning and enhance instruction. Technology will be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner, consistent with the moral teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

b. Communications (Teachers/Parents/Students)

Electronic and/or Digital communication between teachers and parents should be conducted for educationally appropriate purposes and utilize only school/academy sanctioned communication methods.

These methods include:

- Teacher school/academy web page**
- Teacher school/academy email**
- Teacher school/academy phone #**
- Teacher created, school/academy approved, educationally focused networking sites**

Student addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses are provided to faculty solely for use in contacting parents about student academic performance. This information may not be used for any other purpose by faculty or staff without the explicit permission of the Principal.

c. Examples of Unacceptable Uses of Technology

Users are not to:

- Use technology to harass, threaten, deceive, intimidate, offend, embarrass, or annoy any individual. Refer to the Diocesan bullying policy.**
- Post, publish, reproduce, or display any defamatory, inaccurate, violent, abusive, profane, or sexually oriented material. Users must not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, or threatening language. Users must not knowingly or recklessly post false information about any persons, students, staff or any other organization.**
- Use a photograph, image, video, or likeness of any students, or employee without express permission of that individual and of the principal.**
- Create any site, post any photo, image, or video of another except with express permission of that individual and the principal.**
- Attempt to circumvent system security.**
- Deliberately visit a site known for unacceptable material or any material that is not in support of educational objectives. Students must not access social networking sites or gaming sites, except for educational purposes under teacher supervision.**
- Violate license agreements, reproduce or distribute copyrighted material, protected media or otherwise bypass licensing security.**
- Use technology for any illegal activity.**
- Use of the Internet for commercial gains or profits is not allowed from an educational site.**
- Breach confidentiality obligations of school/academy or system employees**
- Harm the goodwill and reputation of the school/academy or system in the community.**

- **Transmit any material in violation of any local, federal, and/or state laws. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, licensed material and threatening or obscene material.**

d. Administrative Rights (To monitor use of technology)

The school/academy reserves the right to monitor both student and employee use of technology and

computer accessed content. Due to the evolving nature of technology, the Catholic Academies and Parish Schools within the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn reserve the right to amend or add to this policy at any time without notice.

e. Personal use of Social Media (Teachers, Students)

This section refers to the personal use of social media. This includes, but is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Tumblr, Instagram, Google+, LinkedIn, Snapchat or any other such medium.

All references to school/academy personnel, students and/or any member of the school/academy community in technology related mediums such as web pages or email which is deemed to be conduct injurious to the moral tone of the school or academy are violations of this policy

Any communication with current students by faculty, staff or administration is strictly forbidden on any personal social networking site. Personal posts must use appropriately respectful speech, and refrain from harassing, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening or other inappropriate communications.

Representation of the school/academy in whole or part on any personal posts and/or communication is prohibited.

f. Vandalism

Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to damage and/or destroy hardware or software systems, or the information of any other user. This includes, but is not limited to, the creation, distribution, proliferation or conspiracy of malicious software. If equipment is damaged during actions taken by an individual, whether on or off campus use, that individual assumes all responsibility for any and all damages and associated costs thereof.

g. Technology Use Outside of School/Academy or School/Academy-Owned Devices

In accordance with New York State Law on Cyberbullying, inappropriate, defamatory, or content found to be injurious to a school/academy community member may result in disciplinary action, even if done outside of school/academy premises or using devices not owned or controlled by the school/academy. All instances of such behavior must be reported immediately to the administration, who will investigate the matter and enforce the consequences deemed appropriate. It is further recommended that administrators refrain from personal social media communication with students, parents, and school/academy staff, and teachers and school/academy staff with students, parents, and administrators. It is the professional responsibility of all educators to ensure that professional and personal activities are kept separate. Please consult your local handbooks for further policies and guidelines.

- a. For students to be able to take devices home, a parent/guardian needs to sign the consent form in Option C.
- b. Students/Families are responsible for the iPad when it is in their possession. Any damage incurred while the device is off school property will be the family's responsibility.
- c. iPads are to be returned to school daily, fully charged; failure to do comply may result in a lowered classwork grade on the Report Card.

7. Policy Violations:

Violation of this policy in whole or in part may result in any or all of the following and will be issued at the discretion of the school/academy principal:

- Loss of use/privileges of school/academy technology.
- Disciplinary action including, but not limited to, detention, suspension, expulsion, and /or legal action by the school/academy, civil authorities, and/or other involved parties.
- Compensation for damages, both physical and punitive, incurred due to actions in violation of this AUP

8. Distance Learning:

Distance learning which is facilitated by a Parish School or Catholic Academy within the Diocese of Brooklyn is bound by all parts of this AUP. As distance learning requires the use of other mediums such as teleconferencing platforms, virtual classrooms, digital file transfer and online work, there are other factors that need to be addressed.

a. **Device Usage** – The use of school/academy or personal devices for distance learning is allowed.

Only Academy issued accounts only be used for schoolwork purposes and that those accounts are signed out of after work is completed. All usage is governed by this policy. Students who sign in using an account other than their school account will not be admitted to class.

b. **Video/Audio Conferencing** – Video or audio-conferencing platforms may be used to facilitate class meetings and communication between teachers and students for teaching and group work.

When using these platforms, participants must remember to conduct themselves in a professional manner commensurate with behavior expected in a physical classroom. Entering meetings other than those you are explicitly invited to by the coordinator (teacher, principal, etc.) is strictly prohibited.

Trying to circumvent the security of a meeting, “hijacking” a presentation or displaying any objectionable content during a meeting is a direct violation of this policy and subject to the disciplinary actions contained within. Recording of video/audio conferences is also prohibited.

c. **File Transfer/Submission** – The transmittal of files may be required at times for teachers to provide and students to submit work. The willful transfer of objectionable material, malicious content or any other such transmissions is a violation of this policy.

d. Learning Platforms – The use of learning platforms such as ThinkCentral, Learn360, Freckle, HMH, Microsoft 365, Google Classroom, Pearson(Saava) Realize, iReady and others is for the sole purpose of supporting and furthering the education of students. Any use of these platforms for any other reason may be considered a violation of this policy.

Any use or misuse of the technology provided for distance learning that interferes with the education of students or the operations of the school/academy is a violation of this policy.

NOTE:

Students will not be given access to school/academy technology without an appropriately completed and signed acknowledgment form on file in the school/academy office.

Technology Use Outside of St. Elizabeth Catholic Academy on Academy-Owned Devices

- d. For students to be able to take devices home, a parent/guardian needs to sign the consent form on Option C.**
- e. Students/Families are responsible for the iPad when it is in their possession. Any damage incurred while the device is off school property will be the family's responsibility.**
- f. iPads are to be returned to school daily, fully charged; failure to do comply may result in a lowered classwork grade on the Report Card.**