

St. Nicholas Academy 2018-2019 Family/Student Handbook

INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been prepared to clarify questions parents sometimes have regarding the philosophy and procedures at St. Nicholas Academy.

Parents have the first right and obligation in the education of their children. The teachers, professionally trained in the psychology of learning and techniques of teaching, wish to assist parents in this all-important work. The school is usually one of the first experiences of Christian Community that children have outside of the family.

The respect, communication, and cooperation that parents, teachers, and administrators exhibit among themselves should, therefore, model Christian Community for the children. Equally important, is the respect, communication and cooperation shown toward and expected from children as part of that Community. If children perceive this mutual respect as a shared authority of parents and teachers, they will be able to participate fully in their education.

We hope this handbook will help to foster cooperation between home and school. Parents are asked to study this handbook **with their children** and to keep it at hand for reference. **There is a paper to be signed by the student(s) and parent(s)/guardian(s) and returned to school at the end of this handbook.**

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. Nicholas Academy, as a Catholic elementary school, is to work as a community of disciples who think, act, learn, pray, and walk with one another, following in the steps of Jesus.

Belief statements:

We believe:

We are called to be disciples who share opportunities for liturgy, prayer, sacramental preparation, and community service.

We are called to assist children entrusted to us in their total formation, following the customs and traditions of the Catholic Church, the engagement of parents and guardians, and the best practices of elementary education.

Each child is unique and can reach their academic potential through a variety of instructional opportunities that support individual learning.

Families are the primary educators of their children. Through cooperation and open communication, we strive to develop self-disciplines and personal responsibility, leading to positive relationships and mutual respect among students, faculty, families, and the greater community.

HISTORY

St. Nicholas Academy opened its doors to welcome students in August, 2007. The formation of this first interparish Catholic elementary school in the Cincinnati area began with a vision and a reality. The reality was the difficulty of maintaining a parish school with increasing costs and declining enrollment. The vision was to collaborate in the creation of a new model for Catholic elementary education. This collaboration began when the pastors and a core of parish members from two parishes, St. John the Evangelist and Holy Trinity, met and determined that together, we could provide what we could not do separately.

What is different about our school model is that it is not a consolidation or a merger. It is an interparish school, formed by a covenant relationship between the parishes and the school itself. This model has met with great success in several other U.S. dioceses and was introduced to us through Rev. Joseph Atcher, Vicar for Education of the Archdiocese of Louisville.

The School was located in the former St. John the Evangelist School, 7131 Plainfield Road, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45236 until the end of the 2009-2010 school year. During the 2009-2010 school year, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish made the decision to join St. Nicholas Academy for the 2010 school year and St. Nicholas Academy made the decision to relocate to the OLSH campus. On July 1, 2010 St. Nicholas Academy relocated to 170 Siebenthaler Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio 45215. Our program includes before and after school care, a full day kindergarten, and grades one through eight.

We have a fine arts program, including art instruction, music, introduction to the Spanish language, and a library program. We have weekly liturgies with the children and a strong religious education program, including sacramental preparation.

An important part of our history is the formation of a parent group called PLAN (Parents Looking Ahead Now). This group formed independently and with encouragement of the pastors to act as a catalyst with other school parents and parishioners. They met frequently with parent groups, principals, and pastors encouraging them to work together rather than separately to ensure a viable Catholic school for this area of the city. Without their hard work and dedication, St. Nicholas Academy would never have come to birth.

RIGHT TO AMEND

The Principal and the Administrative Staff retain the right to amend the Parent/Student Handbook for just cause. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

PHILOSOPHY OF ST. NICHOLAS ACADEMY

St. Nicholas Academy strives to cooperate with the family, church, civil society and community in the total education of the child: moral, physical, and intellectual. While sharing in this task of education, the school recognizes its primary responsibility to guide the intellectual development of the student. With proper emphasis given to Catholic Christian Doctrine, this development encompasses the areas of Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics, so that the pupil may grow in love and knowledge of God. In this way, St. Nicholas Academy attempts to help the students develop both their capabilities and proper attitudes.

Existing as it does in a time of change, the school desires to guide the children so that they may readily adapt to the changes in the Church and in the society in which they live. St. Nicholas Academy wishes to instill in its students a respect for the individual, regardless of race, creed or ethnic background.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of St. Nicholas Academy are:

1. To become a community of Faith by sharing with the Church and family in providing for the students' spiritual growth by affording opportunities for participation in the Mass, reception of the Sacraments, and the practice of daily Christian behavior.
2. To impart a basic knowledge of the doctrines and Gospel values and to encourage practical application of this in each student's faith convictions and daily life.
3. To help the students develop self-discipline, personal responsibility, values, and standards of behavior that come from within and are consistent with the Christian community, and to help students internalize the reasons behind the rules.
4. To develop in the students a deep respect for the dignity, rights, feelings, and opinions of others in addition to developing respect for all authority - Church, civic, home, and school.
5. To provide guidance through the classroom teacher, with the aid of support staff, in order that the students may develop their capabilities and aptitudes in a way that will benefit them personally and society in general.
6. To develop the critical, creative, and logical thinking of each student by providing challenging opportunities.
7. To provide opportunities for development of the students' capacity to appreciate beauty in literature, art, music, and nature.
8. To encourage proper attitudes in health and physical fitness.
9. To cooperate with the home in encouraging the practice of courtesy and etiquette within the school and daily environment.
10. To develop good study habits and effective use of time.
11. To cooperate with the Church and family in combining religious and intellectual education, so that the students can live and work cooperatively with all God's creatures for the common good.

PART I – POLICIES

I. ACADEMIC POLICY

A. OPTION C

St. Nicholas Academy uses Option C for grade reporting, attendance, parent/teacher conferences, conduct, and other “housekeeping” items. Parents have access to Option C to view grades and other information that concerns their student(s). Please contact the main office to get your username and password to Option C.

B. PROMOTION/PLACEMENT/RETENTION

Students are promoted to the next level on an annual basis if they make satisfactory progress. If a student does not make satisfactory progress, he/she may be placed in the next grade conditionally or retained in the current grade. Parents are kept informed of the student's progress through graded work provided in the "HOME FOLDER", interim reports, report cards, and parent/teacher conferences. Any promotion/placement/retention possibility will be communicated as early as possible. All are at the discretion of the teacher and administration.

1. Guidelines used in considering retention are:

- a. Kindergarten and first grade- The teacher will make a recommendation to the parent(s)/guardian(s). If the parties cannot agree, the final decision will be made by school administration.
- b. A student in grades 2-3 who, for the year, averages a failing grade (U) in the two major subject areas (Reading and Math)
- c. A student in grades 4-8 who, for the year, averages a failing grade (F) in three or more major subjects (Religion, Reading/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies)

C. REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued at the end of each Trimester for students in Grades K-8. Report cards will be sent home with the students after Trimester 1 and 2 and should be signed by the parent/legal guardian and returned to school **immediately**. Trimester 3 Report cards are mailed home. Report cards will be given only after all financial obligations (including tuition, fines, fees, etc.) are up-to-date.

Kindergarten and first grade use a standards-based report card. For the other grades, an explanation of the grading system can be found on the report card. Emphasis is placed on progress according to the individual child's ability. The criteria for conduct, behavior, and/or attitude is listed on the report card. The grading system used at St. Nicholas Academy is in compliance with the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

D. MIDTERM REPORT

Midterm reports are issued halfway through each trimester to keep the family informed on the student's progress in terms of grades and behavior. The purpose of the midterm is for students to be able to correct any issues before the end of the trimester. The midterm report must be signed by the parent/legal guardian and returned to school the following day.

Beginning in the second trimester, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students will receive their midterm digitally through Option C only.

Parents/guardians may also view student grades and progress by accessing Option C (except Kindergarten for the first trimester). A password for each student and their family is issued at the start of the school year. If parents need assistance with accessing the Option C grade book, they should contact the SNA Office Manager.

E. HONORS

The purpose of the honors program at St. Nicholas Academy is to acknowledge students who have achieved excellence in academic performance. Honors will be awarded to students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades each trimester.

The letter grades from the 6 core subjects – Religion, Literature, English, Math, Social Studies, and Science/Health – will be used. Letter grades will be given numerical values as follows:

A+, A, A-	=	4
B+, B, B-	=	3
C+, C, C-	=	2

Honors will be calculated in the following manner:

1. First honors – a student must achieve a total of 22 points with no grade in ANY subject below B.
2. Second honors – a student must achieve a total of 18 points with no grade in ANY subject below C.
3. Spirit honors – A student is working to their ability

F. HOMEWORK

Homework is given as a help to the students. Assignments evolve out of class experiences. They are geared to the needs, interests, and abilities of the students. In addition to the value of helping students further explore or reinforce material presented in class, another value of home assignments is to help students develop good study habits. Homework teaches self-discipline: students must learn to budget time and to exert themselves realistically to meet deadlines.

With homework assignments, students are expected to do research and rewrite and/or rework papers. Homework, however, is not always written. Students are frequently expected to review notes taken in class, work on projects, read books, watch a specially assigned TV program, memorize needed facts, or study for a test. Parents need to check **all** home assignments as faithfully as they usually check on the more traditional written homework.

The amount of homework varies according to grade level, the nature of the assignments, and the ability of the student. Every attempt is made to see that the amount of time spent is reasonable. Please consult with the teacher if you observe, over an extended period of time, that your child is spending an excessive amount of time on homework, or if your child claims he/she has no homework.

G. TESTING/ASSESSMENT

The following assessment programs are in place at St. Nicholas Academy in compliance with Archdiocesan and state policies and professional standards:

- Students in Grades 3 – 7 take a standardized test (currently the Iowa Test of Basic Skills - *ITBS*) in the spring. This test measures each student's ability to learn. Achievement is measured in relation to that student's ability as reported through the testing. All students in grade 3 take the reading promotion test.
- Students in grade 2 take the Cognitive Abilities test (*CogAT*) and grade 5 takes the Cognitive Abilities Test (*CogAt*) in conjunction with the *ITBS*. The *Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)* measures students' learned reasoning abilities in the three areas most linked to academic success in school: Verbal, Quantitative and Nonverbal. Although its primary goal is to assess students' reasoning abilities, *CogAT* can also provide predicted achievement scores when administered with The Iowa Tests.
- Students in Grades 5 and 8 take a standardized Religion test (currently *ACRE*) generally given during beginning of the second semester.
- Students receiving the EdChoice Scholarships will take the tests mandated by the State of Ohio for their grade level in the winter and/or spring of the year.
- Throughout the year, teachers will use other forms of assessment. Examples of assessment include

projects, reports, quizzes, chapter/unit tests and exams.

H. ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

Students who are failing two or more core subjects (Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Religion) will not be eligible to participate in athletics. Grades will be reviewed after the first month of school, at Mid-Term, and at Report Card time for this purpose. When a student is deemed ineligible to participate in athletics, the Athletics Council President will be notified. The student will not participate in athletics until grades are reviewed after an agreed upon period of time.

II. ADMISSIONS POLICY

St. Nicholas Academy is an Interparish school, administered by a Board of Limited Jurisdiction with the Archbishop of Cincinnati reserving certain rights.

St. Nicholas Academy, through the recommendation of the Board of Limited Jurisdiction, admits students on a space available basis. Class size is limited to 24 for Kindergarten and 28 children per class at all other grade levels. In an emergency situation, this number may be adjusted.

A. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

St. Nicholas Academy admits students of any gender, race, color, national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admission policies, athletic and other school-administered programs, and in hiring teachers.

B. ADMISSION PROCEDURES

After registration is complete:

1. School office must receive necessary records.
2. Students must interview with the principal.

Administrative regulations are established concerning student admission to determine the appropriateness of our school program to meet the individual needs of a student. These regulations will change to keep pace with school law, Archdiocesan policy, local and community needs, and the welfare of our students.

Transfer students will be admitted after completing registration, a review of the students' records from previous educational institutions, and an interview with Administration. All students entering St. Nicholas Academy, except those entering Kindergarten or Grade 1, are placed on probation. Kindergarten and Grade 1 students whose registration is not complete by the start of the school year may be placed on probation. Probation lasts a minimum of one trimester and will be reviewed periodically following these guidelines for full admission:

- The student will have no disciplinary incidences involving the student code of conduct.
- The student consistently turns work in on time and fulfills all academic requirements.
- The student maintains acceptable grades and demonstrates progress in academic studies.

C. REGISTRATON FEE

A registration fee which is determined each year by the Board of Limited Jurisdiction and the application are required in January of the preceding year. For the 2017-2018 school year, the Registration Fee is \$100/family.

III. ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS/ABSENCE POLICIES

Parents/legal guardians should see that their child's attendance at school has priority over all other activities. Regular attendance and promptness are vital for successful academic progress. A child who is ill or contagious and must be absent may return to school only after being fever and symptom free for 24 hours.

On any day when a student is absent from school, he/she may not participate in any extracurricular activities. (Emergency exceptions will be considered.) Please do not bring a sick child to school for social activities.

No student is permitted to leave the school premises during school hours without written consent from parents. Any child leaving school before dismissal must be signed out through the office.

Excessive absence/tardiness interferes with the students' learning process. Excessive absence/tardiness can result in the need for summer tutoring, summer school, or possible retention.

A. TARDINESS

Students are considered tardy if they are not in their homeroom at 7:45 a.m. When a student is late for class and/or Mass, he/she must stop in the office and receive a tardy slip. The student will not be admitted to class without the tardy slip. Excessive tardiness will result in a report to the Hamilton County Educational Services Center. *For the purpose of filing with HCESC, four (4) unexcused tardies to school will equal one (1) day unexcused absence.*

Students are marked tardy – excused if they have a written note from a parent/legal guardian explaining the reason for the tardiness with a valid excuse, such as the following:

- A. Personal illness.
- B. Serious illness or death of a family member.
- C. Funeral.
- D. Medical and dental appointments that cannot be arranged during non-school hours.
- E. Unusual or emergency situations at home.
- F. Religious holidays and activities.
- G. Authorized school-sponsored activities.

2. Students are marked tardy - unexcused when there is no valid excuse for being late. "Sleeping in" and "running late" are NOT valid excuses.

3. This school year, 4 unexcused tardies will be the equivalent of 1 unexcused absence.

B. ABSENCE

Missing school for other than health needs is strongly discouraged. When a student is absent, a parent must call the school office at 513-686-2727 before 8:00 AM.

According to Ohio Revised Code section 3321.04, parents must send any child of compulsory school age to school for the full time school is in session. The school realizes, however, that there are occasions when a student must be absent from school. State law stipulates that an absence from school may be approved for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness of the student (see below for verification policy).
2. Illness in the immediate family.
3. Quarantine of the home.
4. Death of a relative (absence for this reason is limited to three days unless reasonable cause can be shown to grant an extension).
5. Observation of a religious holiday.
6. Emergency or circumstances that are considered, by the school, to be sufficient cause for absence.

When a student returns from an absence, he/she must present a note to the homeroom teacher, signed by

the parent, **stating the reason for the absence**. The absence note and phone call are required by the State of Ohio. If a student misses three or more consecutive days, a doctor's note may be required. If there is no written note, the absence is counted as unexcused.

When a student is dismissed from school for a doctor, specialist, or dentist appointment, a signed note from the doctor, specialist, or dentist must be presented to the homeroom teacher upon the student's return to school. Please arrive at the time you specify when picking up or returning children during the school day.

Students who are tardy or not present in school are responsible for getting their assignments and completing them. The student must arrange an appropriate timeline with the classroom teacher. **Books and assignments for children absent from school may be requested when calling in the absence and may be picked up by a sibling or other family member between 2:30 PM and 2:45 PM; work will NOT be available before that time period. Requests for work made after 10:00am may not be honored due to time constraints.** Students who do not make up work will be required to take a grade of "incomplete" for that grading period. Students are given the same number of days to complete the work that they were absent, For example, if the student was absent for two days, then they have two days to complete the work that was missed. If a student is absence for over a week, alternative arrangements for make-up work will be made by the teachers.

C. VACATIONS

Students are encouraged to limit vacations to scheduled school holidays. If a student will be gone for 3 or more days, one week's notice must be given to the school. Only available assignments will be given to the student the last day classes are attended and the work must be completed and turned in by the date specified by the teacher. Arrangements for make-up tests and the completion of additional missed work must be made by the student/family with the classroom teacher. Standardized tests are scheduled during October, March, and April as indicated on the school calendar. Please refrain from taking children out of school at these times.

D. EXCESSIVE ABSENTEEISM

Excessive unexcused absences and tardiness to school will be referred to the Hamilton County Educational Services Center. The following guidelines are prescribed by the state of Ohio:

1. Habitual/Unruly are students who have missed 5 days consecutive, 7 days in a month, or 12 days for the year.
2. Chronic/Delinquent are students who have missed 7 days consecutive, 10 days in a month, or 15 days for the year.

Once a student or students have been referred to HCESC, their representative will handle their case. The school principal will provide the HCESC representative with all attendance records and whatever information is requested.

IV. COMMUNICATION POLICY

A. SCHOOL

Generally, all school information and/or communication will be sent via email on Wednesdays. If a family does not have an email address, then a hard copy will be supplied. Please inform the office.

All organizations supplying notices to be sent home MUST supply a copy attachment on an email to cdunham@stnacademy.org by Tuesday afternoon in order to have it sent home via email on Wednesday. All submissions will be sent in the same email if possible.

Administration, teachers, and staff may also communicate concerns directly to all concerned parties.

1. PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Scheduled conferences will be available during two grading periods, one in October and the other in March. Other conferences may be scheduled according to need at any time during the school year at the request of a parent or teacher.

B. PARENT

Unless a teacher or staff member specifically requests to be called at their home phone number, all phone calls should be made to the school. The only exception would be the need to convey information about an emergency that would affect a student's physical or emotional well-being, such as a serious problem, accident, illness, or death in the family. This information can also be left on the school voicemail and the message will be delivered to the appropriate parties.

Communication may also occur via e-mail with those teachers who have listed their e-mail addresses on the school website. Teachers are not expected to return emails over the weekend.

1. FAMILY ISSUES:

The school office should be informed **as soon as possible** of **any** circumstances that might interfere with your child's performance or completion of work. This information will help those who work with your child to assist compassionately with needed interventions and will be held in confidence.

Anything sent home requiring a parent signature must be signed by the parent/legal guardian. Please keep your signature as clear and consistent as possible to avoid confusion.

Parents who are planning to be away need to notify the school in writing and include the following information: the dates when they will be away and the name and phone number of the person(s) in charge of the child. If special circumstances require a signature of notification or written permission before parent/legal guardian returns, the signature of the person designated in writing by the parent will be accepted.

Sometimes parents are unavailable due to emergencies. The person left in charge of the children needs to inform the school of this situation with a phone call and in writing.

2. ADULT/CHILD SCHOOL VISITS

For the safety and welfare of students and faculty, unscheduled parent visits to their child's classroom during the day or after school are not permitted. Any adult who is around the students **MUST** have the proper VIRTUS training AND background check. Children other than those who are considering transferring to St. Nicholas Academy may not visit during school hours. **Everyone** (parents, visitors, and others), entering the building must first report to the school office before, during, or after school. If it is necessary to bring a forgotten item such as lunches, homework, gym clothes, etc., the item must be labeled with the student's name and homeroom and taken to the office **only**. Please do not interrupt class for this purpose at any time.

3. MULTI-CUSTODIAL FAMILY POLICIES

The office needs, in writing, all current, dated information regarding custody and visitation rights. A copy of the appropriate section of the divorce decree should be sent to the school office. This school 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, the school will provide the non-custodial parent access to the academic records and to other school related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

When conferences and/or meetings are scheduled for an individual student, all legal guardians must be present as there will be only **one** meeting scheduled. If the student's legal guardians wish to share information discussed in

the conference with other concerned parties, they will be responsible for doing so.

4. SCHOOL ISSUES

In the event of a question regarding teaching or disciplinary practices involving a specific teacher or teachers, ethics and common courtesy require that parents/legal guardians first approach the appropriate teacher to attempt resolution. Parents are asked to contact the teacher through written communication, voice mail, or e-mail requesting the teacher contact them to discuss the situation. Should the problem remain unresolved, parents may then contact the school principal to request an appointment with the principal and/or teacher/teachers involved.

C. PARISH/SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

In an effort to promote better communication the following policy is in. The success of this policy depends on the cooperation of all those dedicated to the goodwill of St. Nicholas Academy, and the parishes of Holy Trinity, St. John the Evangelist, and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

1. EVENT SCHEDULING:

Before any event in the name of St. Nicholas Academy is scheduled in a parish building, the person/group responsible for the event must meet with:

- 1) The principal of St. Nicholas Academy for approval.
- 2) The parish Office Staff regarding calendar scheduling.

If these guidelines are not followed the School and/or Parish Staff reserve the authority to cancel the event.

2. PARISH

Before submitting written parish information to the principal of St. Nicholas Academy for distribution, any Parish Group or individual of St. John, Holy Trinity Parish or Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, must first obtain parish approval. This must be done at least 10 days prior to the date of distribution.

St. John: Submit to Carolee or Laura in the Parish Office for approval by Fr. Tim Bunch and/or a designated member of the parish staff.

Holy Trinity: Submit to Sandy in the Parish Office for approval by Fr. Ray and/or a designated member of the Parish Staff.

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart: Submit to the Parish Office for approval by Fr. Matt Robben and/or a designated member of the parish staff.

Individual copies of approved notices/flyers must be made at the Parish expense either in the Parish Office or by the Committee submitting the request.

School personnel are not responsible for separating information destined for parents of a particular parish or for making copies.

Approved notices, to be distributed through school to families of a specific Parish, must first be individually marked with the name of the youngest child of each parish family before being delivered to the S.N.A. Office for distribution.

St. Nicholas Academy

Likewise, any group or individual representing St. Nicholas Academy, wishing to promote or advertise an event or fundraiser through St. John, Holy Trinity or Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish, must first submit a written copy of notice or insert to the Principal at St. Nicholas Academy for approval. This must be done at least 10 days prior to the publication date.

Individual copies of inserts are the responsibility of the group or individual submitting the notice. The parishes of St. John, Holy Trinity and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart are not responsible for making copies of S.N.A. notices.

V. DRESS CODE AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE POLICY

At St. Nicholas Academy, emphasis is placed on modesty, cleanliness, and good grooming. We expect our students to be presentable and representative of high standards. Uniforms should be clean, in good repair, and the appropriate size. For any regulation to be effective, it must be observed by all. Complete cooperation is expected. If, for serious reason, the student cannot comply with the dress code, a **written** excuse must be sent to school **each day**. The parents will be notified if a student does not comply with the dress code.

The teachers enforce the dress code and the principal is the final judge. If a student violates the dress code, a uniform from the uniform exchange will be provided for the day. If no uniform is available, the parent/legal guardian will be requested to provide the appropriate clothing for the student so that the student may return to class.

A. UNIFORM AVAILABILITY

St. Nicholas Academy uniform items are available at SchoolBelles. You can purchase items online at www.schoolbelles.com, by calling 1-888-637-3037, or visiting their brick and mortar store at 5718 Harrison Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45248. Please use code **S2597** when ordering to ensure the correct uniform options.

Uniform items may also be purchased from other stores. Very often stores such as Kohl’s, Kmart, Meijer, and others have our pants, shorts, and polo-style shirts. The jumper, skort, and skirt should only be purchased from SchoolBelles to ensure the correct plaid. Please contact the office with any questions.

B. UNIFORM POLICY

It is generally accepted by educators that the manner in which children are dressed influences both their behavior and their performance. There is a long tradition of uniform dress in Catholic Elementary Schools and its positive aspects are accepted facts. The Dress Code at St. Nicholas Academy is an effort to maximize the advantages that can be derived in this regard. All uniform clothes must be in good repair – NO HOLES. Students may wear sweatshirts with hoods, but the hood may NOT be on while in the building.

Grade	Item	Material	Color	Restrictions
All Students	Slacks	Cotton/polyester, NO JEANS or jean-like material	Khaki or Black	Plain, no label, belt worn if loops
All Students	Blouses/shirts	Poly-cotton, oxford cloth, knit with collar	Burgundy or White	Plain, no visible label, and worn tucked in
All Students	Socks – knee- high (girls), crew socks, sport socks		Solid-colored White, Burgundy, Gray, Black, Spirit wear socks with exception of Knights written on back	

All Students (Optional)	Walking shorts (March 1 to December 1)	Cotton/polyester, NO JEANS or jean-like material	Khaki or Black	Plain, no visible label, belt worn if loops
All Students (Optional)	Indoor use plain or school logo only sweatshirt, or fleece, v-neck sweater vest	100% acrylic knit or fleece	Burgundy or Gray	No hoods up in the building. No sports teams or names of students mentioned
K-4 Girls	Uniform jumper OR skort (Order from Schoolbelles)	School plaid	School plaid	No shorter than 3 inches above floor when kneeling
4-8 Girls	Uniform skirt OR skort (Order from Schoolbelles)	School plaid	School plaid	No shorter than 3 inches above floor when kneeling

All Grades:

BOOK BAGS: Students should avoid book bags that are on wheels.

GYM UNIFORM: The P.E. uniform consists of Spirit Wear t-shirt and plain solid black mesh gym shorts. Gym uniform is NOT required for grades K and 1. All gym uniform shorts and t-shirts must fit appropriately. Gym shoes MUST be worn for P.E. class.

HAIR: Boys: Hair must be clean and well groomed, out of the eyes. NO colors or highlights. Boy's hair length should not reach below the collar line of the shirt. No designs or words are permitted – including mohawks. Final determination will be made by the administration in consultation with school staff.

Girls: Hair must be clean and well groomed, out of the eyes. NO EXTREME colors or highlights.

The administrator will determine if any hairstyle is inappropriate and needs to be changed. All are required to comply with that directive **within two days** (unless an alternative arrangement has been made with the principal.)

HATS: Hats are not permitted to be worn during the school day.

JEWELRY: MUST be school appropriate and non-disruptive to the normal activities of the school day. ONE earring may be worn in each ear and not extend past the earlobe (including large “hoops”). No “mouth” jewelry may be worn. Boys may NOT wear earrings.

LEGGINGS/TIGHTS: Girls are permitted to wear tights under the uniform jumper or skirt when extra warmth is needed. They must be full length to the ankle and solid color - burgundy, gray, or black.

MAKE-UP: Make-up is NOT permitted to be worn. No artificial fingernails.

SHOES: MUST be appropriate and safe for school activities, completely enclosing the foot. NO CROCS, Heely's, slippers, OR BOOTS OF ANY KIND. Boots are NOT to be worn during the school day – INCLUDING UGGS. If it is a snowy or rainy day and students wear boots to school, they MUST have appropriate shoes to change into when they arrive at school.

SPIRIT WEAR: Spirit wear polo-style shirts, sweatshirts, fleeces, pull-overs, and socks may be worn as uniform at any time - **EXCLUDING ITEMS with school teams or personal names.**

UNDERSHIRTS: Any shirt worn under the regular uniform shirt must be SOLID WHITE with no designs or words.

PROHIBITED: TATTOOS, RADICAL HAIR STYLES AND COLORS, BODY PIERCINGS AND ANY NEW FADS.

DRESS CODE IS ENFORCED BY TEACHERS/PRINCIPAL. VIOLATIONS OF THE DRESS CODE ARE AT THE DISCRETION OF STAFF AND ADMINISTRATION. THE FINAL CALL IS MADE BY ADMINISTRATION.

VI. FINANCIAL POLICY

- A. No refunds will be issued when a student loses the privilege of attending a class activity or a class trip. Any money collected by the class or by individual students for class activities or trips would have been deposited into a fund to defray costs.
- B. A fee of \$25.00 will be charged for all checks returned by a financial institution for any reason.
- C. When a financial institution has returned a check, payment must be made with cash or money order.
- D. Late fees will be charged when deadlines for financial payments have not been met.
- E. No report card will be issued if there are outstanding cafeteria charges, library late charges, book fines, extended care, band fees or other fees.
- F. St. Nicholas Academy reserves the right to charge an administrative fee when the school is penalized due to individual late payments.
- G. St. Nicholas Academy Refund Policy is prorated to the end of the quarter in which the student is withdrawn. All fees, including the registration fee, are nonrefundable. There is no refund for consumable books. No refunds will be issued until all textbooks and/or other school materials are returned and all outstanding charges are paid.
- H. Records of students who are withdrawing from St. Nicholas Academy will be released upon written request by the parents/legal guardians **only** if all financial obligations to the school have been met as determined by the administration.

VII. HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

A. IMMUNIZATIONS

Any child not in compliance with the immunizations, which are required by law, will not be admitted to school until proof of immunization is provided. All students at St. Nicholas Academy will have immunizations. The St. Nicholas Academy nurse will review health records, provide basic screening services (including vision, hearing and scoliosis), and assist in the control of communicable diseases. Please note that all students at St. Nicholas Academy will have completed the immunizations recommended by Ohio State law.

B. EMERGENCY MEDICAL FORMS

An Emergency Medical and Authorization Form must be on file in the school office. This form is confidential and for the use of authorized personnel only. This form needs to be submitted to the school office within the first week of school. Children may not be permitted to come to school if the forms are not on file.

Any student who becomes ill or has an accident will be observed by the school nurse or designated personnel. Emergency care that may legally be given will be administered as necessary, and the parent will be notified to pick up the child if the child cannot return to class. If the parent cannot be reached, instructions on the Emergency Medical Form will be followed. **It is important that we know where parents or legal guardians can be reached. Please promptly notify the office regarding any changes in emergency information.** A child who is ill or contagious and must be absent may return to school only after being fever and symptom free for 24 hours.

C. MEDICATION

In accordance with state law, any medication (prescription or over the counter) to be administered to a

student must be brought to the office in the original container (which contains name of medicine, dosage, times of administration, and possible side effects) with a permission form signed by the physician and the parent along with specific instructions for administering the medication.

This includes topical medication such as ointments or lotions. NO medication including aspirin or aspirin substitute will be administered unless the above procedures have been followed. **Please refill prescriptions that are given daily in a timely manner.**

D. LICE/NITS

Head lice outbreaks have become common in schools and do not reflect upon a person's living conditions. Head lice do not care if they are on a clean head or a dirty one; they do not discriminate between classes. All lice care about is finding a warm head on which to live. They spread easily among school children as they may transfer from head to head or from clothes or personal items such as combs, brushes and hats. St. Nicholas Academy practices a no nit policy to control the spread of head lice. When head lice are identified on children in school, the school will take preventative measures to ensure school facilities are lice free. When a student has been screened for head lice and lice and/or nits (eggs) are found, the student's parent is called and is asked to pick up his/her child. The parent is instructed as to the procedure for lice and nit removal. The parent is informed at this time that his/her child is excluded from school until all the nits have been removed. The student will be checked by the school nurse, his or her designees, before the child can return to the classroom. If nits or lice are found, the student will again be sent home. (courtesy of www.peasd.org/cms_files/resources/Head%20Lice%20Procedures.pdf.)

VIII. LIBRARY POLICIES

Parent volunteers staff the library.

1. Students visit the library weekly.
2. All books checked out may be kept for two weeks. Books may be returned early.
 - a. Students in Grades K & 1 may check out 1 book.
 - b. Students in Grades 2-7 may check out 2 books.
 - c. Students in Grade 8 may check out 3 books.
3. Students who have an overdue book may not take out other books. Fines are 5¢ per book per school day.
4. Children who are absent are not charged for those days, but must return the book immediately upon returning to school. If a student has significant book fines, lending privileges will be suspended and report cards will not be issued until they are paid.

IX. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Religious education is the primary purpose of St. Nicholas Academy. In this way, the covenanted parishes aim to assist parents/legal guardians in their task of guiding the moral and religious development of their children. It is important that parents/legal guardians and teachers keep this as their primary goal. Non-Catholic students are expected to attend both religious and non-religious functions.

Weekly attendance at Mass is a privilege for students in Grades K-8. Special liturgies are also prepared for important observances in the Church liturgical year. Parents/legal guardians are asked to join the school in the spiritual formation of their children by regular participation in the liturgical life of the Parish, primarily through participation in the Saturday evening or Sunday morning liturgy. Families are welcome to attend the 8:30 a.m. weekly school Mass each Friday. In addition to regular Mass attendance, the school and covenanted parish

communities join together to celebrate and share our faith journey on occasions such as First Communion, May Crowning, and Confirmation.

A. Rules in Church:

1. Show reverence.
2. Participate!
3. Fold hands while processing to receive the Eucharist and when returning to your seat.
4. Be as quiet as possible.

X. STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

A. COURTESY

Students are to consider it a matter of personal honor to show courtesy at all times to every member of the faculty, office, cafeteria and maintenance personnel and to all guests and visitors as well as to each other. Parents are encouraged and reminded to cultivate the virtues of kindness, thoughtfulness, politeness and refinement in their children.

B. CODE OF CONDUCT

The goal of excellence is dependent upon the existence of an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. This environment exists in all areas of the school building including church, playground, cafeteria, hallways and classrooms. St. Nicholas Academy has a primary purpose – the education of the whole person in a truly Christian atmosphere. In order to achieve this purpose, each student is expected to observe certain basic rules of conduct.

The principal in consultation with the Board of Limited Jurisdiction has devised a standard discipline code for the school. Though standard throughout the school, age-specific adaptations may be made by grade level. Each teacher will have a classroom code reflecting the standard policy and these grade specific plans are listed in this procedure.

Every individual at St. Nicholas Academy is entitled to respect and a safe learning environment. Therefore, discipline offenses and consequences include, but are not limited to, the examples listed in the Handbook.

It is the policy of St. Nicholas Academy NOT to discuss disciplinary actions except with the parents or guardians of the students involved.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Student Responsibilities:

- a. Come to class prepared – have necessary books, supplies, and assignments.
- b. Fill in the homework notebook if applicable.
- c. Exercise self-control and be accountable for his/her personal actions.
- d. Know and observe all school and classroom rules.
- e. Participate!
- f. Try your best.
- g. Show respect for yourself, for others, and for school and others' property.
- h. Use materials in ways that avoid waste, litter or damage.
- i. Keep textbooks covered and in good condition.
- j. Keep hands, feet, etc. to yourself.
- k. Be a Christian example in all you say and do.

2. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

- a. Encourage and support your child.
- b. Be sure your child attends school daily and is on time.
- c. Make sure your child is dressed appropriately.
- d. Teach your child, by work and example, respect for the law, for school rules and regulations, and for the rights and property of others.
- e. Encourage and support all school personnel.
- f. Provide a time and a place for homework and assist when appropriate.
- g. Read the homework notebook daily.
- h. Assist your child in having the necessary materials for class.
- i. Keep the lines of communication open with your child and with the school.
- j. Be sure your child's lunch meets his/her nutritional needs.
- k. Be a Christian example in all you say and do.

3. Teacher Responsibilities:

- a. Be prepared for class.
- b. Establish and maintain a challenging environment where all may learn and achieve.
- c. Work with students to establish classroom rules.
- d. Enforce school and classroom rules.
- e. Communicate child's progress and behavior to parent/guardian.
- f. Use materials in ways that don't waste, litter or damage.
- g. Be a Christian example in all you say and do.

4. Administrator's Responsibilities:

- a. Work in collaboration with students, teachers, and parent/guardian to improve the school.
- b. Support teachers and students in their efforts.
- c. Provide instructional leadership.
- d. Enforce school rules.
- e. Communicate with parent/guardian if administrator's involvement is required in child's discipline.
- f. Organize and supervise the work of teachers and staff.
- g. Ensure adherence to St. Nicholas Academy policies.
- h. Be a Christian example in all you say and do.

D. SCHOOL RULES

For all to contribute to the Common Good, each student should strive to:

1. Be on time and consistent in school attendance. Be in your homeroom by 7:45 a.m.
2. Respect teachers, staff, school property and other students' property.
3. Be responsible for his/her own learning. Students are expected to behave in a manner that allows other students to learn. Behavior that distracts or disrupts the class or teacher is not acceptable.
4. Keep hands and feet to oneself. Students are not permitted to throw objects, push other students, or act in a manner that may bring harm to another individual.
5. Behave in the cafeteria in a manner that allows others to enjoy a pleasant atmosphere in which to eat the meal.
6. Be silent and walk in the halls.
7. Never use profanity or inappropriate language or actions.
8. Be in proper uniform at all times. Obey all elements of the Dress Code Policy.
9. Do not engage in unsafe or inappropriate activities.
 No handling, throwing or kicking of snow, rocks, sticks, etc.
 No gum chewing **anywhere in the school or on the grounds**.
 No martial arts or gymnastics activities on the playground.
10. Behave properly in church. Church is a place of prayer. Students' conduct reflects their respect for the Lord and for others present.
11. Obey teachers' directions. Defiance or refusal to obey is extremely serious.
12. Do not engage in violent behavior.

13. Do not destroy or steal school property or the property of others.

E. PARENTAL SUPPORT

As corrective measures are taken to ensure appropriate behavior in the classroom, it is critical that the staff, teachers and administrators have the full support of parents/guardians in an effort to ensure an environment that promotes access to education. Without this support, the efforts of the staff, teachers and administration to maintain discipline may be severely hampered.

F. PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students may not bring items such as toys (unless requested by teacher or brought in for use at recess only), Pokemon or related cards, games, etc. to school. There will be a warning given for these items the first time and then any time after that, they will be confiscated. For electronic items (cell phones, e-readers, etc.) please see the **Electronic devices and related items** section in Part II of this handbook.

G. DISCIPLINE POLICY

Children at St. Nicholas Academy are expected to observe the classroom rules as detailed in section D above. At St. Nicholas Academy the children's growth in age and maturity is expected to be reflected in their behavior. Please read the classroom rules and behavior plans which apply to your child's age carefully and discuss them with your child. Support your child's teacher(s) throughout the school year by reinforcing these good behavioral habits.

All "inappropriate conduct" cannot be listed in any behavioral code. The school Administration reserves the right to take disciplinary action as needed in a particular situation.

Students' behavior outside the school day that negatively impacts the reputation of the School or school programs is unacceptable – including sports. These issues can be dealt with by school disciplinary measures.

1. Grades K-3

The teachers in Grades K-3 may use a variety of discipline techniques. Each classroom will have a set of rules for that room. Teachers are expected to post the rules in the classroom and clearly explain the classroom rules during the first day of the school year. Classroom discipline techniques could include cards, charts, or any other means the teacher believes is best. When the teacher has exhausted all options in a particular situation, the Principal will be called upon to help in whatever capacity is needed.

2. Grades 4-8:

Every student will be issued a Behavior Card. A master copy of every student's Behavior Card will be maintained by his/her homeroom teacher. When an inappropriate behavior occurs, the supervising teacher or staff authority will issue a demerit and mark the student's Behavior Card accordingly. Students are expected to bring their Behavior Card to ALL classes, including the Fine Arts classes so that staff members can mark the Behavior Card when needed. Parents/Guardians should check the Behavior Card daily.

Demerits are issued in the area of homework, organization, and behavior. Demerits issued for homework and organization will not accumulate or count against a student with regard to detentions, possible suspension, and/or expulsion. Behavioral demerits will accumulate each trimester and follow the procedure outlined in the handbook

When a student receives enough demerits to warrant a detention, a Conduct Slip will be sent home. The Conduct Slip must be signed by the parents/guardians and returned to school the next day. Failure to return a signed Conduct Slip will result in an additional demerit being assigned to the student's Behavior Card.

Homework (Organization) = 1 demerit

- A. Missing
- B. Late
- C. Other

Organization = 1 demerit

- D. Prepared for class
- E. Noncompliance
- F. Books not covered
- G. Academic folder
- H. Other

Behavioral = 1 demerit

- I. Gum/candy/food during class
- J. Running in the hall/classroom
- K. Speaking at inappropriate times
- L. Other

Behavioral = 2 demerits

- M. Inappropriate language/behaviors/or gestures
- N. Disruption in any class
- O. Rowdiness/Scuffles
- P. Not following classroom rules
- Q. Irreverent during Prayer/Church
- R. Other

Behavioral = 5 demerits

- S. Use of a cell phone, Ipod or digital device during the school day
- T. Blatant disrespect to authority or peers
- U. Cheating (Call from teacher to parent, also subject to academic penalty)
- V. Engaging in inappropriate displays of affection
- W. Bullying another student/harassment
- X. Defacing school property
- Y. Forgery

Behavioral = 20 demerits

- AA. Serious Fighting
- BB. Leaving school premises without permission during school hours
- CC. Altering School Record
- DD. Other

Behavioral = 30 demerits and automatic probation

- EE. Deliberate vandalism
- HH. Assaulting a school employee or other person
- JJ. Other

The following is the demerit system disciplinary action:

5 Behavioral Demerits - Detention after school until 3:15 PM – Thursday afternoon as scheduled by teacher

- 10 Behavioral Demerits** - Detention after school until 3:15 PM – Thursday afternoon as scheduled by teacher
- 15 Behavioral Demerits** - Detention after school until 3:15 PM – Thursday as scheduled by teacher + conference
- 20 Behavioral Demerits** - Suspension/Conference with principal parents/guardians and student
- 25 Behavioral Demerits** - Two day suspension. Meeting with principal, parents/guardians and student
- 30 Behavioral Demerits** - Three day suspension and probation

After **30 Demerits** in one trimester, the student will be on **probation**. Any further disciplinary action will result in the parent's/guardian's option of withdrawing their child from St. Nicholas Academy or the Principal instituting expulsion proceedings.

31 Demerits – Withdrawal or Expulsion (Principal's Discretion)

This system will work on a trimester basis. Each trimester the student will start over and receive a new Behavior Card. However, discipline is always cumulative as previous behavior is a consideration in determining consequences.

H. SUSPENSION/EXPULSION DEFINITIONS

Suspension or expulsion of student requires the action of the School Principal. All responsible alternatives should be considered. The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary matters.

1. IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION:

The student is kept in school but is assigned to a designated, supervised area outside of the departmental setting. Academic work is assigned and will be graded by teachers. Students may not participate in extracurricular activities during the suspension.

2. OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION:

In certain situations that are extreme or not provided for in the demerit system, the administrator may find it necessary to issue an out of school suspension. The administrator will determine the terms of and the length of the out of school suspension and notify the parents/guardians in writing. Before a student may return to class, the student and his/her parents/guardians must meet with the administrator. Any work missed for a suspension must be completed and turned in at the teacher's discretion.

3. EXPULSION:

A student may be removed from the school community.

I. OFFENSES RESULTING IN IMMEDIATE EXPULSION

A student is liable for immediate expulsion from school for the following reasons:

1. Possession, use, or sale of illicit drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, or other hallucinogenic substances on school grounds or at school sponsored events.
2. Physical assault or verbal harassment of any student, member of the staff, or other person in authority.
3. Possession of firearms, knives, explosives, or other dangerous objects and any facsimiles thereof.
4. Arson.
5. Bomb Threat
6. Gross Misconduct

J. EXPULSION PROCEDURE

1. The case will be discussed with relevant staff, parents/guardians.
2. The parents/guardians and student will meet with the administrator.

3. Written notice will be sent to the parents/guardians stating the reasons for the student's expulsion.
4. The student's withdrawal/expulsion will be reported to the Attendance Department of the student's local public school district.
5. A report will be sent to the Archdiocese Superintendent of Schools on each student dismissed from St. Nicholas Academy.
6. A student who has been expelled from St. Nicholas Academy cannot return for the following school year.

The administrator is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive or impose a disciplinary action for a just cause. Notification will be given in writing to the parents/guardians of the disciplined student.

K. VIOLENT AND/OR THREATENING BEHAVIOR:

Threats of physical violence or emotional intimidation will not be tolerated at St. Nicholas Academy. Students exhibiting any behavior considered threatening, overly intimidating, or violent in nature will be subject to immediate disciplinary action. Disciplinary action is at the discretion of the administration.

Indefinite suspension or expulsion may result as a consequence of such behavior.

Any student falsely reporting a threat of violence, for the purpose of harming another student, will be subjected to a minimum one-day suspension from St. Nicholas Academy.

L. SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY:

Sexual harassment is any activity of a sexual nature that is unwanted or unwelcome, including but not limited to, unwanted sexual touching, patting, verbal/written comments of a sexual nature, sexual name-calling, pressure to engage in sexual activity, repeated propositions, and unwanted body contact. The school's normal disciplinary procedures will be followed in determining the appropriate consequence for the sexual harassment. In the event that administration recommends suspension or expulsion as a result of the conduct, due process will be afforded to the student in accordance with the school's suspension/expulsion procedures.

Students who engage in sexual harassment on school premises or off school premises at a school-sponsored activity will be subject to appropriate discipline, including suspension or expulsion.

Any student who believes he/she is being sexually harassed needs to report such behavior to a parent, teacher, or the administrator.

M. BULLYING AND TEASING POLICY:

Everyone at St. Nicholas Academy is committed to making our school a safe and caring place for all students. We will treat each other with respect, and we will refuse to tolerate bullying in any form at our school. Our school defines bullying as follows: Bullying is unfair and one-sided. It happens when an individual or group of individuals keep(s) taunting, hurting, frightening, threatening, excluding or isolating a targeted student. This includes bullying in a face-to-face manner or bullying that is done by phone, text, social media, or any other technology. Bullying is considered very serious and will be dealt with immediately. Students are expected to let a staff member know if they are the victim of bullying or have witnessed bullying. When bullying occurs, it must be brought to the attention of the teacher as soon as possible. The sooner we can intervene, the sooner the behavior can end. Online behavior related to bullying may result in consequences at school.

N. GENDER IDENTITY POLICY:

In Catholic schools, all curricular and extra-curricular activity is rooted in and consistent with, the principles of Catholic doctrine. Catholic schools:

- Support students with gender dysphoria by treating them with sensitivity, respect, mercy, and compassion.
- Requires that participation on school teams be according to biological sex.

- Requires that names and pronouns be in accordance with the person’s biological sex.
- Designate Catholic sex education, uniforms and gender appropriate dress, bathrooms, locker rooms, showers, and sleeping accommodations on trips according to biological sex.
- Maintain names in school records according to the student’s biological sex.
- Provide reasonable accommodation to a private bathroom for use by any student who desires increased privacy.
- In case of a specific request, consider in a compassionate way, on a case-by-case basis, the physical and psychological needs of a student based on the following questions:
 - i. What is the specific request of the student and/or parents?
 - ii. Is the request in keeping with the teaching of the Catholic Church?
 - iii. Is the school reasonably able to accommodate the request?

XI. TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Technology within the school building is provided, at great expense, as a privilege to students. Time spent using this technology is to enhance student learning and provide a quality educational experience. The use of any technology must occur only with teacher permission and supervision. Students in grades 5-8 have a laptop they are assigned to at the beginning of the year, and they are responsible for that laptop all year long.

A. TECHNOLOGY USER RESPONSIBILITY

The user shall access the school’s technological resources for educational purposes only. Each user is responsible for information that is sent and received under his/her personal and/or school Internet account. Passwords are to be guarded and not displayed nor shared with others. The user must strictly adhere to copyright laws. In addition, unethical and/or illegal uses of electronic devices will not be allowed. Unauthorized access, including hacking is strictly forbidden. The user agrees to not submit, publish, and/or display any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, racially offensive or otherwise illegal material, on or off school property; nor shall the user encourage the use, sale, or distribution of controlled substances. Any use in violation of any local, state, or federal law is prohibited and is a breach of the terms and conditions of this policy. Also, any commercial use is strictly forbidden.

B. TECHNOLOGY DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The school may take disciplinary action against school personnel, including students, who violate the Responsible Use of Technology Policy or other school or Archdiocesan policies by means of inappropriate use of technology. Disciplinary action may also be taken against those who use telecommunication devices to cause mental or physical distress to other members of the school community, whether these incidents take place on or off the school property. Disciplinary action taken by school authorities may include revocation of access to technological resources, suspension, expulsion, and/or possible legal action.

Note: St. Nicholas Academy reserves the right to modify this policy as needed.

C. TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT USE

1. All students and parents/legal guardians must read and sign the Student Laptop Contract before access to the laptops is granted.
2. Students are assigned specific equipment and are responsible for its well-being.
3. Irresponsible use of equipment will result in students losing the privilege of use. They will also be held financially responsible for any damage incurred.
4. Students should keep food and drinks away from all equipment.
5. Students should never change any settings or properties on any equipment.
6. Computer media (disks, CD’s, etc.) from home is not permitted for use in school computers.

7. When printing at school, students should first preview and proofread their document. Students may select only necessary text for print. Permission to print must be given by the supervising teacher before sending document to printer.

D. INTERNET USE

The Internet is a valuable resource and beneficial tool in students' education. Care must be taken to ensure that the Internet is used appropriately and the students are protected from any dangers. For this reason, the following guidelines for student use of the Internet are in effect at St. Nicholas Academy.

1. All students and parents/legal guardians must read and sign the *Archdiocesan Internet Acceptable Use Policy Statement* before access to the Internet is granted.
2. Internet access and activities in the school or on school computers are strictly limited to educational use and must always be teacher supervised and monitored.
3. Students must follow the rules of network etiquette, which include appropriate language and polite responses.
4. Students are not permitted to access personal accounts (e-mail, IM, etc.) from school or school computers.
5. Students must not visit chat rooms from school or school computers unless the chat room is associated with an educational resource and the educational activity is teacher supervised.
6. Students must never give out personal information (name, home address, telephone number, e-mail address, name and location of school, etc.) without parent/legal guardian and teacher permission.
7. Students must inform the teacher ***immediately*** if they access any site that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
8. Students must not download any material from the Internet onto the school network, school computer, or any floppy disk. Students must not upload anything to the Internet from the school network or any school computer.
9. Students must not attempt to bypass the security of the St. Nicholas Academy network or interfere or disrupt the network, services, or hardware.
10. Students' access to school computers is limited to school hours on scheduled school days only. Access needed outside those hours requires written request from the parents/legal guardians and notification by the supervising teacher to the technology coordinator in order to temporarily remove the restrictions.

Violation of any of the rules will result in a consequence in relation to the offense. This includes, but may not be limited to, loss of computer and/or Internet privileges and detention.

E. SCHOOL WEBSITE

www.stnacademy.org

The faculty and staff of St. Nicholas Academy maintain a website for informational purposes. The current school year calendar, news from the office, and a current supply list for all grades is available.

XII. TUITION POLICY

Families have the option of paying tuition in full by July 31st or of arranging to pay tuition in installments through the St. Nicholas Academy Business Office. Payment options are for 12 months, 10 months, quarterly and semi-annually. Payment dates are the 5th or 20th of the month. The Board of Limited Jurisdiction will determine the tuition for the school each year.

A. ACTIVE PARISH MEMBER STATUS

Active Parish Member status in one of the covenanted parishes is determined by the individual parish and a form must be signed by the parish priest and returned with the school registration.

B. TUITION ASSISTANCE

To be considered for tuition assistance, a family must complete an application that is evaluated by a third party company (FACTS). Applications will be available in December and must be completed by mid January.

Pastors of the covenanted parishes will determine the amount of assistance each family will receive. The Board of Limited Jurisdiction will determine the amount of assistance to be made available each year.

C. ST NICHOLAS ACADEMY DELINQUENT TUITION POLICY

St. Nicholas Academy exists to provide students with a quality Catholic education and the Board of Limited Jurisdiction (board) will strive to be fiscally responsible to do so. Tuition, fees and other student expenses must be paid promptly to enable the school to meet its financial obligations.

In order to accomplish this, the board has adopted this policy to assure timely payments. It will be the responsibility of the Tuition Administrator or others designated by the Principal to implement this policy under the supervision of the Principal.

It will be the responsibility of the school family to keep the Tuition Administrator informed of their need to make any changes to the payment schedule. School families failing to pay tuition according to this agreement, maintain an alternative payment plan, or have been unwilling to maintain their alternative payment arrangements, will be notified of any actions in accordance with this policy. This policy does not apply to any approved alternative payment plan that is current.

For the purpose of the policy, send/sent, contact/ed, notification, or communication will be by one or more of the following, unless otherwise designated: U.S. Postal Service, telephone, email, or weekly student packet.

A statement will be sent to every family prior to the due date of their payment who has registered for an extended payment plan.

Families may be assessed a late charge as designated in the tuition policy for payments not received by the due date.

Delinquent Accounts less than 30 days

1. A reminder notice will be sent to each family that is delinquent within 10 calendar days after the payment due date listing the tuition payment amount due and late charges.

Delinquent Accounts over 60 days or no response to a maximum of two (2) attempts to contact the family by phone, email, or mail. The following actions will occur after consultation and approval from the Principal.

1. Family will be contacted to remind them of a delinquent payment.

The following actions will occur after consultation and approval from the Principal.

1. Report Cards and Progress Reports will be held.
2. Teacher conferences will not be permitted.
3. Parental Internet access to student progress will be denied.
4. For any of the above, a warning notice will be communicated to the parent/guardian before implementation. That notification will be documented.

5. Upon approval for any or all of the above, the Tuition Administrator will contact the parent/guardian accordingly.
1. The student/athlete will be suspended from participating in athletic events sponsored by St. Nicholas Academy, until an alternative payment plan as been established and a payment history of that plan has been established for 60 days.
2. Any suspension of a student/athlete from participating in sporting events will be sent to the parent/guardian by U.S. Postal Service, through the weekly student packet, and/or email. No reply to the Tuition Administrator will constitute acceptance of suspension. The Principal will notify the President of the Athletic Association of such action, who will implement this suspension. All details pertaining to the suspension will be kept confidential.
3. When the student/athlete is reinstated, parent/guardian will be notified.

Graduation Eighth Grade Student

1. An eighth grade student will **NOT** be permitted to participate in any graduation ceremonies until tuition (as well as other school fees such as cafeteria, books, lunch, etc.) is paid in full **seven calendar days** prior to the graduation date. Notification in writing will be made prior to graduation ceremonies.

Delinquent Tuition – Student Suspension

1. If all attempts to collect tuition have failed, the Tuition Administrator will send a letter (by U.S. Postal Service and student weekly packet), signed by the Principal informing the family of the final deadline and payment amount that will ensure their child/children's continued education at St. Nicholas Academy. If no payment or payment arrangements are made within the letter's deadline, the student(s) will no longer be permitted to attend classes at St. Nicholas Academy until the account has been made current.

Delinquent Tuition from Prior Years

1. All previous unpaid tuition must be paid by August 1st if a student is to be readmitted on the first day of school. Payments are to be made directly to the school. If payment is not possible, suitable arrangements must be made with the Tuition Administrator.

Collection Accounts

1. If determined by the Tuition Administrator that tuition will not be collected, the Principal may authorize that account be turned over to a collection agency. Families making subsequent payments must do so with the collection agency except those required by law.

Student Records

1. When tuition is delinquent or other fees due, no student records will be forwarded to another school or given to the parent/guardian.

XIII. WELLNESS POLICY

St. Nicholas Academy has a current, written, Wellness Plan as required by the federal government through the passage of Public Law 108: Section 204.

This plan provides for the integration of nutrition and physical education throughout the school day. It encourages the availability of nutritious meals and snacks to the members of the school community. It also encourages daily physical activity as an important part of student health. St. Nicholas Academy has created and implemented this plan with input from health professionals. Copies are available upon request.

PART II - PROCEDURES

Accreditation – St. Nicholas Academy is accredited by the Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association (OCSAA), a division of the Ohio State Department of Education.

Automated Call System – St. Nicholas Academy uses One Call Now to contact all families in case of closings, delays, and emergencies. One Call Now will be used when it is necessary to call off school. Please provide a number or numbers for a morning call and a daytime call should school be called off early. **PLEASE UPDATE THE OFFICE WITH TELEPHONE NUMBER CHANGES THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL YEAR.**

Bicycles – Students are permitted to ride their bicycles to school. Bicycles must be locked to the metal bike racks next to the school building. **Also, for safety reasons, bicycles may never be ridden anywhere on the school property during school hours - 7:45 AM – 2:45 PM.**

Cafeteria – A nutritious hot lunch is offered daily during the school year. The cost of hot lunch is \$3.00. Orders must be placed and paid for in advance. Money is collected in the homeroom on a daily basis. You may pay for any number of lunches or drinks at that time. The monthly menu will be posted on the school website. Milk, ice cream, and snacks are sold in the cafeteria. Students are not permitted to bring carbonated or caffeinated drinks (tea/coffee, etc). Parents are not permitted to bring a fast food lunch to school for their child. Please pack nutritious lunches for your child. For the protection and safety of our students, all students are required to eat lunch at school.

The cafeteria utilizes a system called Meal Magic and EZPay. This is a computer based system that allows the cafeteria to become automated. **THERE WILL BE NO MONEY EXCHANGED IN THE CAFETERIA AT LUNCH TIME.** Parents will be able to load money into a student's account online or by sending a check to the homeroom. This system facilitates the need for all students to stay IN LINE until the end so they can be checked out by the cafeteria staff. Students will not be permitted to leave the line without being checked out. Families are encouraged to sign up for the EZPay system to be able to deposit money when needed AND to be able to track student spending and what is purchased. If you would like more information, please contact the Cafeteria Manager.

St. Nicholas Academy offers the Federal Lunch Program. Students who are eligible according to the established standards may receive a free or reduced price lunch. Registration forms for this program are sent home at the start of the school year and are available throughout the school year from the school office should a family status change. Please fill out these forms, even if you think you may not qualify.

Cafeteria Rules:

1. Be courteous while moving through the lunch line.
2. Do NOT leave the line until you have been checked out by cafeteria staff.
3. Do not yell, shout or scream.
4. Use appropriate table manners.
5. Eat your food only in the cafeteria.
6. Keep your hands to yourself and do not touch other students' food.
7. Remain seated until dismissed.
8. Clean your place and leave it in an orderly fashion when dismissed.

Cell Phones – Students may not use cell phones during the school day. Please see the **Electronic devices and related items** section below.

Class Parties – Student birthday treats may be brought to school with prior approval from the teacher. These should be simple, individually packaged, and easy to distribute at the end of the day or at noon. Carbonated/caffeinated drinks or gum are **not permitted** as a birthday treat. Make sure you do check with your child's teacher as some of our students have very serious allergies.

Invitations to parties held outside of school may only be distributed on school grounds if an entire group is invited, such as all of the boys, all the girls, or the entire class.

Parties for holidays will be planned between the homeroom parents and the classroom teacher. Halloween, Christmas, Valentines' Day, the teacher's birthday, and an end of the year party are usually celebrated by all of the classes.

Crisis Response Plan – In conjunction with local safety and emergency personnel, St. Nicholas Academy has a current, written Crisis Response Plan that covers a variety of emergency situations ranging from severe weather to other situations that threaten the safety of students. As a part of this plan, parents/legal guardians are asked to provide a list of responsible adults to whom the school is permitted to release their children in the case of an emergency when the parents/legal guardians cannot be reached.

The Crisis Response Plan also addresses mental health issues that could arise from these or other scenarios. Please inform school personnel if any circumstance arises in which this type of support would be needed or beneficial.

As per our Crisis Response Plan, emergencies must be dealt with in an expedient and convenient manner in order to ensure the safe dismissal of all students. This dismissal could come as a result of severe weather, utility failure, directives from civil defense officials, etc. Depending on the situation, this dismissal may be from school/parish grounds or an off-site safe area. This dismissal plan may need to be put into effect before, during or after regular school hours depending on the emergency/crisis.

Every attempt will be made to dismiss the students to the parent/legal guardian. In the event the parent/legal guardian cannot be reached, each family is asked to list a maximum of 8 adults with whom their child/children) may be dismissed. These adults will be required to bring identification and to sign a dismissal form before the school will release student(s) to their care. If verification is not available, we will rely on student recognition of the adult.

This list will be kept on file for the entire school year and will be updated each school year.

Curriculum – Our curriculum is the Graded Course of Studies issued by the Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. It includes Art, Health, Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Religion, Science, Technology, and Social Studies.

Dismissal – At 2:25, the afternoon announcements and prayer will be made. After announcements and prayer, the bus riders will be asked to proceed to their assigned area as their bus pulls to the front of the line. Walkers are also asked to leave and go to their assigned areas.

At 2:30, the office rings the bell and the car riders are then permitted to leave the building. Parents who pick up their students park in the double rows of marked spaces facing the school building and Church starting at the "Learning Center" opposite the school entrance and circling around to the Church entrance. Since buses have already left this area of the parking lot, there should be no traffic moving at this time in the area where students are walking to their cars. Late arrivals should park in front of the Church. If no one is in the parking lot to pick up a child right at dismissal, those students return to the school entrance area to wait for their ride.

The faculty member in charge then dismisses the filled cars by rows. By this time, walkers have cleared the circle by the flag pole and moved onto the sidewalks along Siebenthaler Ave., buses have moved out, and cars can leave the grounds via the one – way drive near the gym.

No student may remain in or return to the school premises after the dismissal bell unless with permission and under the direct supervision of a teacher or other authorized person. Written consent from a parent may be required. For safety and security reasons, students or adults who enter the building after dismissal must first sign in at the office.

Students who are participating in after school activities (non-athletic related) are not permitted to leave and come back into the building. They must remain with the group until the activity is completed and they are released by the supervising adult. School personnel cannot be responsible for the supervision of students who remain on school grounds after dismissal, including those waiting for a later scheduled function (Scouts, athletics, etc.). If a student is not picked up on time, they may be sent to After School Care, or to the Reading police department, and the family will be responsible for the cost.

Electronic devices and related items - Hand-held video games, radios, cell phones, e-readers (Kindles, iPads, etc.), MP3 players, etc. are not permitted during school hours and may not “be visible”. These items will be taken and delivered to the principal if they are used during school time. The first violation will result in the student picking up the item after school from the office. The second violation will result in the parent/guardian picking up the item from the office and multiple infractions of this policy will result in the item being confiscated by administration and returned at the end of the school year. **St. Nicholas Academy will NOT be held responsible for any lost items.**

Emergency Drills

Tornado drills are practiced periodically as required by state regulations. In the event of a tornado watch, the weather will be monitored. In the event of a tornado warning, students will leave their classrooms and go to their designated places remaining there until the warning is lifted. **Parents are asked not to come to school during tornado warnings for any reason.**

Fire drills are conducted as required by state regulations. Annual inspections by local and state officials ensure that the school procedures and building meet state and local fire codes. For the safety of all, the students must proceed in an orderly and quiet manner when evacuating the building during a fire drill.

Lockdown and **Shelter In Place** drills are also conducted as required by state regulations.

Emergency/Weather Related Closings – If for any reason, such as bad weather, classes must be canceled or delayed, an announcement will be made through the local media AND by a One Call Now message. **PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL.** If classes are cancelled, there is also no before or after school care. At this time, we have 3 busses – 2 are operated by Cincinnati Public Schools (1 Norwood and 1 Deer Park), 1 bus is operated by Princeton. If either CPS or Princeton are delayed, those busses will also be delayed. **FAMILIES ARE NOTIFIED OF ANY CLOSURE OR DELAY THROUGH THE ONE CALL NOW SYSTEM AND LOCAL MEDIA STATIONS.**

Extended Day Programs – St. Nicholas Academy provides child care before and after school. Parents/legal guardians may use the before school care for free as needed, but must register for Extended Day. Registrations are taken on a first come, first served basis, with priority given to those who register for the entire year.

If openings are still available, registrations for particular days of the week and occasional use registrations will be accepted. The before school program runs from 7:15 A.M. – 7:35 A.M when students are then escorted to their classrooms, and from 2:30 P.M – 5:30 P.M. for Extended Day when school is in session.

Information about this program can be obtained from the school office or from the Extended Day Director.

Field Trips – The teacher, in consultation with the principal, will arrange field trips that relate to specific units of study or provide for the enrichment of the students. The teacher or homeroom parent will make arrangements in the event chaperones are needed to assist with supervision. Written permission from parents/legal guardian is required before any student can accompany the class on a field trip. Students generally wear school uniforms unless the nature of the trip calls for another type of dress that follows our out of uniform policy. There usually is a charge to cover transportation and entrance fees.

Field trips are privileges afforded to students; no student has absolute right to a field trip. Students can be denied participation in the field trip if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements. If a student has forfeited the privilege of participating in a field trip, the student is still required to attend school. Parents will be

informed of their child's loss of the field trip privilege and the reason for such action.

Lost and Found – Students' names should be on everything they bring to school. If you notice something is missing, ask your child to get permission to check the Lost and Found. At the end of each quarter, unclaimed and unmarked articles are donated to the St. Vincent de Paul Society. **St. Nicholas Academy is NOT responsible for any items that are lost or become missing at school.**

Morning Arrival

Walkers – Students arriving prior to 7:30 A.M. should go directly to the cafeteria when arriving at school. A teacher will be on duty from 7:15 A.M. until the time of the bell.

Riders – Students should be dropped off in the carpool line and proceed directly to the cafeteria when arriving before 7:30 A.M. After 7:30 A.M., students proceed directly to their classrooms.

Bus – Students will be dropped off in the parking lot and proceed to the cafeteria when arriving before 7:30 A.M. After 7:30 A.M., students proceed directly to their classrooms.

Classes begin at 7:45 A.M. and students may enter homerooms at 7:30 A.M. Students are considered tardy if they arrive to homeroom AFTER 7:45 A.M.

Motorbikes and Mopeds – Students may not ride motorized vehicles to St. Nicholas Academy.

Phone – No students may use any phone at any time without permission from teacher/supervising adult. Phone calls will only be permitted for **true emergencies**. If a parent must speak to a child in case of emergency, please call the school office.

Physical Education Class – If a student will be in school but may not participate in Physical Education classes due to injury or illness, a parent note is required. If more than 2 consecutive Physical Education classes are missed due to illness or injury, a doctor's note is required. If a student has suffered an injury that requires a doctor's attention, we must have instructions from the doctor regarding participation in physical education class.

Playground – Students must conduct themselves properly on the playground, or they will lose playground privileges. Students may not leave the playground without the permission of a supervising adult. Only students from St. Nicholas Academy should be on the playground during recess and lunch times. Infants and preschoolers may not be sent to the playground unsupervised by an adult.

Playground Rules:

1. Stay in designated area.
2. Make proper use of the equipment.
3. Be concerned for the safety of others.
4. Play fairly.
5. Try to make sure everyone enjoys recess.

Probation – Any student admitted to grades 2-8 at St. Nicholas Academy is admitted on a Probationary status. This probation lasts for AT LEAST the first trimester of the school year. For further information about probationary status please see page 6 under "Admissions Procedure".

PTO – The Parent Teacher Organization is a vital link of communication between home and school. Parents are urged to join and to take an active part in this very important group. Through volunteer efforts, fundraisers, and other activities, the PTO gives support to the faculty and principal and provides special programs, field trips, and materials for our children. PTO meets once every two months. Please watch the "HOME FOLDER" or Principal communication for specific months and dates. All are welcome.

Roller blades and Skateboards – Roller blades and skateboards are not permitted on school/parish grounds.

School Day – The school day is 7:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

School Office – We want to be welcoming, but we also want to be respectful of other’s privacy. The school office is a place of official business. The school office is NOT a place to loiter and just “hang out”. Administration requests that office visits be for official business only.

Sports – The school handbook and its policies shall override all other rules and regulations set forth by the sports programs.

Student Property Inspection - “School administrators may inspect any student’s property at any time for any reason without prior notice. This property includes, but is not limited to, desks, computers, and lockers. Additionally, any personal items are subject to inspection at any time and for any reason, without prior notice, as a condition of bringing them onto or taking them from the school’s premises. Such items include, but are not limited to, motor vehicles, packages, lunch boxes or lunch bags, containers, backpacks, duffel bags, book bags, brief cases, purses, and pockets. An inspection does not imply wrong-doing by the student being inspected. A student and his or her parent or guardian’s consent to inspection of personal items is a condition of enrollment and attendance at the school. Refusal to consent may result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, even for a first refusal.” (*Catholic School Office – 12/1/04*)

Supplies – Each class has a supply list posted on the school website. Supplies need to be replenished during the year.

Textbooks – Books that are not the students’ personal property and are used from year to year are expected to be covered at all times. Students are required to honor individual teachers’ requests to have the consumable books covered. The student is responsible for any loss of or damage to the textbooks and all other instructional materials. Report cards will not be issued until textbook damage fines are paid. A durable book bag is recommended for carrying books to and from school.

Transfers/Withdrawals/Change of Address - Parents/guardians are asked to come to the school and sign a Withdrawal Form when they are withdrawing their child from St. Nicholas Academy. The school will forward student records when we receive a signed request from the receiving school or the parent/guardian. As a matter of Archdiocesan policy, no material or records of any kind will be transferred without written consent of the parent/guardian. Please inform the school office of the school your child will be attending. Your child should take his/her personal possessions home on the last day of attendance at St. Nicholas Academy. Report cards and school records will be released only if your child’s tuition is paid in full to the date of withdrawal and all other fees are paid or some arrangement has been made.

If families move during the school year, **PLEASE SEND YOUR NEW ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE AND TO THE TEACHER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**, as your address determines your child’s eligibility for “yellow bus” transportation.

Visitors – All people visiting the school for any reason must sign in at the office and receive a visitor’s badge.

Volunteers – Volunteers are welcome and an integral part of St. Nicholas Academy. Volunteers should park on the street or behind the cafeteria, never on the playground. All volunteers must sign in at the school office and wear a volunteer badge.

All volunteers are **required** by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati to show evidence of attendance at a **VIRTUS** training workshop and to have a background check performed by www.selection.com. VIRTUS workshops are available throughout the school year at sites specified on the Archdiocesan website or at www.virtusonline.org. Volunteers AND coaches MUST have these done before they can be around the students. Please refer to the Archdiocesan website at www.catholiccincinnati.org for more information.

CONCLUSION

Children are, in the most real sense, a special gift of God, our greatest responsibility, and the most significant contributing factor to the world in which they will live as adults. Parents, teachers, and administrators have an immense responsibility to these children and to God. At St. Nicholas Academy, it is believed that this responsibility can best be met by working together in close communication and in realization of our goal: A Catholic Christian Community.

Most parents find a level of school involvement with which they are comfortable. Very few parents in any school are really comfortable if they have no involvement at all with the community in which their children spend most of the day. It is the hope of the faculty and staff of St. Nicholas Academy that the years spent here by parents and students will result in growth toward more meaningful Christian lives. Catholic Christian education is the goal. Supportive collaboration and deep mutual respect are the primary means that help promote this goal at St. Nicholas Academy.