



St. Monica Catholic School

Dear Parents:

Welcome to a new school year at St. Monica Catholic School! This handbook is designed to reflect the policies for the 2011-2012 school year. Please read this document carefully and sign the attached agreement. This agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of St. Monica Catholic School during the 2011-2012 school year. Our faculty and staff look forward to working with you this year to promote academic excellence and spiritual development of your child(ren).

Parents and extended family members play a critical role in the education of their children and in the success of our school. I encourage you to participate in school activities as they occur throughout the year and to support education in your home. Regular contact between parents and school personnel, effective communication and teamwork are essential components of student success, as well as St. Monica's overall success.

Thank you for your support, and I look forward to joining you in working toward the optimal achievement of all of our students!

God bless,

JoAnn Wood
Principal

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INTRODUCTION

This St. Monica Parent-Student Handbook is intended as a general guideline. Familiarization with these policies and procedures should increase understanding and assure uniformity throughout the school. Please be aware that this Handbook does not necessarily cover all policies and regulations of St. Monica Catholic School. The school administration reserves the right to modify existing policies or add new policies as circumstances make such decisions prudent or necessary. These guidelines replace any previous oral or written policies and practices regarding matters covered in this Handbook, and this Handbook supersedes all previous versions.

ACCREDITATION AND LICENSING

St. Monica Catholic School maintains the accreditation standards of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) through the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED). The school is a member of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA).

The Child Development Center (CDC) is licensed by the state of Texas and is inspected annually. The copy of minimum standards, the child-care center's most recent Licensing inspection report for a period of 12 months, and the procedures for parents to participate in the child care center's operation and activities can be found in the Annex office for review.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

St. Monica Catholic School affords students equal opportunity and access to all programs and activities without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, or gender.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of St. Monica Catholic School is to provide all students a challenging academic curriculum within a program where Catholic values reflecting God's love are taught, practiced, and ever present.

PHILOSOPHY

St. Monica Catholic School is committed to excellence in its educational ministry through the objectives of a strong academic program, personal

spirituality, social and physical growth, and community service in accordance with the policies of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

The St. Monica community embraces students of all faiths and is enriched by their presence. As declared by the Second Vatican Council, “While belonging primarily to the family, the task of imparting education requires the help of society as a whole.”

St. Monica School faculty and staff encourage students to strive for academic excellence. Instruction is based on the belief that students will progress to the best of their ability and make responsible choices. We believe the education and guidance our students receive today will help them become extraordinary citizens of tomorrow.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- A. **Age Early Pre-School:** student must be 2 1/2 years old by March 1 and toilet trained.
- B. **Pre-School:** student must be at least three years old by Sept. 1 of the current school year and must be toilet trained.
Pre-Kinder: student must be four years old by Sept. 1 of the current school year.
Kindergarten: student should be five years old by Sept. 1 of the current school year.
1st Grade: student should be six years old by Sept. 1 of the current school year. Exception may be granted in the case of a student who has completed Kindergarten in another state where the entering age is lower, provided there is also a written statement from the prior teacher that the student is ready for the 1st Grade, and that the student can demonstrate readiness for our program with testing. Any exceptions to the above must be made with the Principal’s approval.
- C. **Records** Before a student’s admission, the following records are required:
 - 1. Official birth certificate
 - 2. Baptismal certificate (when applicable)
 - 3. Current immunization record
 - 4. Proof of medical exam within 12 months preceding enrollment indicating student is physically able to participate in school program
 - 5. Verification of academic record (for transfer students)

6. Teacher reference letter (1st – 8th grade transfer students)
- D. **Testing** Kindergarten and 1st Grade students not currently attending St. Monica will be scheduled for placement testing. The results of this testing will serve as the basis for determining whether or not the student is ready for the St. Monica curriculum.

2nd – 8th grade students applying to St. Monica for the first time will be interviewed and tested for placement by the teacher. Should the student be accepted for enrollment, he/she will be placed on a six week probationary period, at the end of which time the teacher and principal will meet to determine whether or not the student's academic performance and conduct are consistent with our expectations.

Failure to complete any of the admission requirements will preclude a student from starting school on time.

ADMISSION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

St. Monica strives to provide the accommodations and/or modifications within the scope of their school's resources for students who are identified as having special learning needs. We will collaborate with parent(s), the public school, and appropriate agency and/or professional when providing school's services for the child.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Child Development Center (CDC) provides care for students who are enrolled in our monthly before and after school program, as well as during the months of June and July for our "Summer Fun" program. Drop in care is available for students not enrolled in CDC program for an hourly charge.

The CDC opens at 7:00 am and closes at 6:00 pm Monday – Friday.

Grades K-5 attend classes from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm Monday – Friday.

Grades 6-8 attend classes from 8:00 am – 3:15 pm Monday – Friday.

Early Pre-School, Pre-school, and morning Pre-Kinder students attend classes from 8:00 am – 11:00 am Monday – Friday.

Afternoon Pre-Kinder students attend classes from 11:30 am – 2:30 pm Monday – Friday.

INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

Weather conditions such as flooding, snow or icy roads may necessitate the delayed start or closing of school. Our policy is to follow the same procedure as Judson ISD. For information in case of severe weather, listen to the local television and radio stations.

Starting and closing times will be dictated by weather conditions and the safe travel of teachers, parents, and students. Because weather and road conditions can differ throughout our area, parents should use their best judgment to determine if travel is safe from their location. Do not jeopardize your safety.

HOLIDAYS & IN-SERVICE TRAINING DAYS

With some exceptions, St. Monica Catholic School follows the calendar for the Archdiocese of San Antonio Catholic Schools. Administration will send home reservation forms just prior to each holiday or in-service day. The CDC operates year round and is open most holidays and all in-service training days at an additional cost.

TUITION AND FEES

A. School fees must be paid in a timely manner and as determined by school administration. The amount and types of fees will be determined by school administration each year and may include, but not be limited to:

- Registration fees (non-refundable)
- Supply fees (non-refundable)
- Processing fee (non-refundable)
- Athletic fees (non-refundable)
- PTC dues (non-refundable)
- 3rd-8th grade technology fees (non-refundable)
- 8th grade graduation fee (non-refundable)

B. Child Development Center (CDC) fees will be charged to those students requiring “day care”, after school care, or drop-in care. Students signed up for monthly CDC will be billed on a monthly basis as part of their tuition bill.

When CDC is required for school holidays or staff in-service training days, CDC reservation forms will be sent home. Those students enrolled in the monthly CDC program will be charged a small extra per day fee, and all others

will be charged the current drop-in rate. **Once reservations are made, “no-shows” will be charged and students who come in without reservations will be charged double the rate, as CDC staff is scheduled based on the reservations.**

Students not signed up for monthly CDC who arrive to school earlier than 15 minutes prior to class start time or are not picked up within 15 minutes after release from school will be placed in CDC and incur a drop-in charge that will be added to the monthly tuition bill. (This also applies to students who are “waiting” for after-school dance, karate, or athletics.)

Students not picked up from CDC by 6:00 pm will be charged an additional fee, based on \$28.00 per hour.

C. Annual school tuition fees are divided into ten monthly installments. Students attending school for any part of the month will be charged the full month’s tuition. Bills are sent home via “backpack mail” with the oldest student in the family.

D. All tuition, CDC and other applicable fees are due no later than the 15th of the month for which they are billed. Post-dated checks will not be accepted. There will be a \$25.00 late fee assessed for any late payments, unless arrangements are made with the office before the 15th of that month. Accounts delinquent beyond the 20th of the month may result in the student’s dismissal from St. Monica.

E. Any non-sufficient fund (NSF) checks received by the school for payment will incur a \$25 handling charge. Prompt payment to clear the matter will be expected, or could result in the student’s dismissal from St. Monica. Future payment will need to be made in cash or by money order.

F. St. Monica does not offer scholarships or tuition assistance. However, there are agencies that do provide assistance based on need and availability. Please go to www.hopeforfuture.org for assistance.

G. Any student account that is delinquent or has accrued any fines throughout the year will not be issued a final report card until the account has been paid in full.

CAFETERIA SERVICE

The cafeteria staff prepares a hot lunch meal each regular school day using quality ingredients that meet or exceed the students' nutritional requirements. Hot lunch meals are also available during "Summer Fun" activities. A menu reflecting the hot lunch meal for each school day is sent home via "backpack mail" with the students prior to the beginning of each month. Each student will be billed on a monthly basis for any days they are served a hot lunch meal.

The cafeteria will be closed on all in-service days or holidays. A sack lunch will need to be sent with the students on those days.

St. Monica participates in a special milk program subsidized by the USDA through the Texas Department of Human Services. Milk is available and offered to all students daily without charge.

St. Monica does not provide snacks for the students. All morning and afternoon snacks must be provided by the parents each day. Parents should focus on healthy, nutritious items that will aid in their student's well-being and physical stamina throughout the course of the day. Energy drinks (i.e. Red Bull etc.) are prohibited on campus. If a student is in possession of an energy drink, it will be confiscated and thrown away.

Per Texas Dept. of Human Services standards, "a student in CDC for 5-9 hours per day shall have at least 1/3 of his/her daily food needs met. Students in care for more than 9 hours must have at least 1/2 of their daily food needs met." We ask that parents keep this in mind when packing lunches and snacks. If the state requirements are not met, the CDC staff is obligated to offer additional food and there will be an applicable charge on the monthly tuition bill.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS AND DRESS CODE

Uniforms are optional for the Early Pre-school, Pre-School and Pre-Kinder programs. A change of clothes for children enrolled in Early Pre-School and Pre-School is mandatory, as accidents can happen and we want to be prepared. Please provide them in a shoe box marked with the student's first and last name.

Uniforms are required of all Kindergarten – 8th grade students on each school day during normal school hours. St. Monica considers modesty, neatness, and pride in one's appearance as essential components for the

students' learning environment, and as such grooming should reflect the conservative aspects of uniform wear. Students out of uniform will be sent to the office to call their parents and will not be allowed back in the classroom until they are in proper uniform, have a valid written explanation from a parent, or have a note from a physician, exempting them for medical reasons. Information regarding the uniform vendor and pricing is available in the school office. The official uniform vendor is Parker Uniform.

Kindergarten – 5th Grades: navy shorts, pants, or skorts (for girls) with white polo shirts tucked in will be worn Monday – Thursday. Girls also have the option of the plaid jumper or skirt, and the white sailor shirt (which is not tucked in) with a navy or plaid tie in lieu of the white polo. Shorts or skorts should be no shorter than mid-thigh in length. On Fridays, the red monogrammed St. Monica polo shirt is to be worn tucked in with applicable bottoms. Solid white or solid black tennis shoes or black loafers are the required shoes. If loafers are worn, students must change into tennis shoes for P.E. class. White socks must be worn. Shoelaces must be white or black to match the shoes and appropriately laced and tied. No high tops, heels, sandals or “heelies” are allowed. Belts worn by boys or girls should be solid black. If a jacket is worn in class it must be from the selection offered at Parker Uniforms.

6th – 8th Grades: all of the above options apply, but they also have the option of khaki-colored shorts, pants or skorts.

During CDC, Summer Fun or on “uniform free days” we expect students to dress/groom themselves conservatively and in “good taste” with clothing that is neat and clean. Appropriate attire could include jeans, shorts no shorter than mid-thigh, capris, wind suits, etc. All shirts must cover the midriff and at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the shoulder – tank tops are not allowed. T-shirts may not contain inappropriate graphics, messages, or markings. Any torn/ripped clothing or extremely form-fitting clothing will not be acceptable. Sandals may be worn, but must have a heel strap – open back footwear and bare feet are not acceptable.

Hair must be clean and well-groomed. “Extreme” hairstyles, such as wedges, tails, Mohawks, or designs cut into the hair, are not acceptable. Hair treatments such as, but not limited to, color, highlighting, or tint are not permitted. Boys' hair should not fall below the shirt collar or below the eyebrows. Facial hair is not allowed. Students will be sent home until hair is within compliance with school standards.

Dangling jewelry, including rings and bracelets, can be dangerous during school activities and should not be worn at school. A simple chain with a cross or religious medal may be worn as a necklace under a shirt/blouse. Girls are allowed to wear one set of stud or post earrings on the earlobe – dangling earrings or cartilage piercing are not allowed. Boys may not wear earrings of any kind. Body piercing, body art and tattoos are not allowed.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Morning classes start promptly at 8:00 am. Any students in Kindergarten through 8th grade arriving after 8:04 am must sign in through the office to receive a tardy slip before proceeding to their classroom.

Regular and prompt attendance at school enables a student to make maximum progress in the curriculum. Texas State Law requires that a student is in attendance for at least 90% of the instructional days per year, or be required to repeat the grade. Therefore, 18 absences may result in a student in Kindergarten through 8th grade repeating that grade. When a student has accrued 10 absences, the parent/guardian will be notified by letter of the student's attendance status, and Administration will determine if any further action should be taken.

If any student will be absent, the parent/guardian should notify the school office by 9am. Any students in grades Kindergarten through 8th will be expected to make up any missed work or tests upon their return. Time limit for missed work is three days, or as determined by the classroom teacher. Homework assignments for Kindergarten-8th grades may be picked up at the school office after 3:00 pm, if prior arrangements have been made. It will be the responsibility of middle school parents to pick up the books needed to complete assignments, from the student's locker.

Any students who have been absent must, upon their return to school, bring a written note that contains the date(s) of the absence and the reason. If a student has been absent for more than 3 days for medical reasons, a doctor's note will be required upon their return, indicating their clearance to return to school. A student not physically present at school, whether excused or unexcused, is still marked absent and the absence counts against perfect attendance for the year.

Parents are asked to make medical appointments whenever possible outside of school hours. If appointments must be during school hours, parents must sign

students out and back in through the school office, and should bring a doctor's note as verification of the appointment. The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process. Missed assignments are the student's responsibility.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

A. **Illness** If a student becomes ill in school or CDC with an oral temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater, shows signs or symptoms of illness, or is vomiting or has diarrhea, the student will be cared for apart from other students and the parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the student immediately.

Please do not send your student to school ill. Students should remain at home when they exhibit the first symptoms of an illness. Parents will be advised when we experience many absences due to a contagious illness/disease. Depending upon the nature of the illness, students may return to school when fever free for 24 hours, symptom free, or have a written release from a physician that they are no longer contagious.

B. **Emergency Data** Emergency cards are kept for every student enrolled at St. Monica. It is imperative that this information is complete and up to date in case of injury or illness. Please keep the school informed of any changes in address, phone numbers, emergency contacts, health information, pick-up authority, etc. Additionally, the school will require up-to-date information on file to abide with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. Disputes will be resolved with an official copy of a court order and/or custody section of the divorce decree.

C. **Immunizations** All students shall be immunized against vaccine preventable diseases caused by infectious agents in accordance with the immunization schedule adopted by the Texas Department of State Health Services. A student who fails to present the required evidence shall not be accepted for enrollment.

D. **Injuries** If a student is injured during school hours, first aid will be administered and the incident will be logged. If the injury is serious, parents/guardians will be notified, and if/when necessary emergency medical services will be contacted.

E. **Medications** Only medication which is necessary for a student to remain in school will be given during school hours. The ***Medication Permission Request Form*** must be completed by the parent/guardian ***and*** the health care provider in order for any medication, including “over-the-counter medication” (including but not limited to acetaminophen, ointments, cold tablets, cough drops), to be given by school personnel. Medication must be prescribed by a licensed physician or dentist and labeled by a registered pharmacist. All medication must be in the original container labeled with the student’s name, Physician/Dentist name, date, name of medication, directions for administration, and duration of administration. Non-prescription medication must be in the original container, and labeled with the student’s name and the date the medication was brought to school. School administration must administer any medication as stated on the label directions and not after the expiration date. Whenever possible, parents/guardians should administer medication to students at home. School personnel will only return medication to the parent/guardian. ***Under no circumstances should a student ever possess on their person any type of medication, either prescription or non-prescription.***

F. **Medical Screenings** In accordance with State and local requirements, vision and hearing tests are performed on all students attending St. Monica by the school nurse. Additionally, students in 6th Grade are tested for scoliosis, and students in 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th Grades are tested for Acanthosis Nigricans. When a condition is found that could impair a student’s performance or cause additional medical concerns, parents/guardians will be immediately notified in writing.

SECURITY MEASURES

A. **Visitors** Security procedures have been implemented for the safety and well-being of our students, staff, parents, and everyone having a vested interest in our school. Prior to entering any school building or school grounds, parents/guardians will be required to sign in at the school office and obtain a Visitor’s Pass. They must sign out when leaving campus and return the Visitor’s Pass to the office.

B. **Loitering** For security reasons and to minimize distractions from the learning environment, visitors are not permitted in the classrooms or in the hallways outside the classrooms during normal school hours. Should you need

to pick up your student or drop something off for them during these hours, sign in through the office and follow the applicable procedures.

C. **Parking lot security** The south parking lot off of FM 78 is intended for parents who wish to personally escort their student(s) up to the building and into their classrooms, or personally pick them up after school. Parents must park in an appropriate parking space and walk up to the buildings accordingly. Parking, drop off/pickup, idling, etc. are not permitted in the Fire Lane of this parking area. Drivers should exercise extra caution when driving through this parking lot, due to the large number of pedestrians, and ensure a speed of no more than 10 mph when navigating through the area.

The north parking lot off of Legion Drive is intended for parents who wish to drop off or pick up their students through the “Carpool” procedure. Parents should join the carpool line at the campus entrance off of Legion Drive, by the red sign. **DO NOT attempt to “cut in” and join the carpool line via the parking lot entrance in front of the rectory!** The carpool line is also a Fire Lane, therefore drivers must remain behind the wheel of their vehicle with the engine running. Cautiously proceed at no more than 10 mph around the perimeter of the parking lot to the Student Drop Off/Pick Up Point by the Annex. Drop off or pick up your student with assistance from the St. Monica staff member monitoring the carpool process. Be respectful of the other parents in the carpool line and have your students “ready to go” when it is your turn to not hold up the line any longer than necessary. Carefully continue around the perimeter of the parking lot at no more than 10 mph, watching for pedestrian traffic in the parking lot, to the exit.

Parents may not, even for a short period of time, park in handicapped parking spaces in either parking lot without appropriate authorization (license plates or window decal).

If parents witness any unsafe practices in the parking areas (i.e. driving too fast, vehicles “cutting in” to the carpool line, handicapped parking violations, etc.) please notate the vehicle, license plate, date and time, and report the information to the school office. Remember that leaving a child unattended in a vehicle is a crime and will be reported.

D. **Release of students** For safety reasons and as required by the state, all students must be signed in and out of the CDC daily. Students will be released from the CDC only to an adult who has been authorized by the parent/guardian

to pick up the student. Anyone picking up a student from CDC must be prepared to show a picture ID to verify identity and for comparison against the authorization on file with the office. Additionally, under no circumstance will anyone be permitted to pick up a student during the school day without verification and authorization through the school office.

E. **Field trips** No student may participate in a school-sponsored field trip without prior written consent from his/her parent/guardian. Field trip permission slips are sent home well in advance of the planned activity to ensure adequate time for return of the signed slips. All students must travel to and from the field trip in the assigned school vehicle, and all students must return to campus at the completion of the field trip. Any exceptions must be requested in writing and approved by the Principal no later than the day prior to the field trip. Individual teachers, in consultation with administration, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct.

F. **Information Technology** Students in Grades 3-8 have access to and use a number of online resources, including the Internet. These resources are to be used in a responsible, ethical and legal manner in accordance with the mission of St. Monica, the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Catholic faith. Acceptable use is taught to the students and strict guidelines are enforced. Users and their parent/guardian must acknowledge their understanding of the general policy and its guidelines as a condition for using these resources by signing and returning an “Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy”. Students will not be allowed access until this form has been signed and returned to the school. Failure to adhere to this policy and its guidelines may result in suspending or revoking the offender’s privilege to use these resources and/or other disciplinary actions, up to and including expulsion from school.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

All personal belongings, including clothing items, jackets, lunch boxes, etc., must be well marked with the student’s name. “Lost and Found” items are in the Annex claim area; all unclaimed items will be donated to the St. Monica parish Thrift Shop.

Students are not authorized to bring personal iPods, MP3 players, CD players, CDs, electronic games, cameras, toys, etc. to school unless specifically requested by the teacher, or for “Show and Tell”. Any other personal items of

excessive value or items whose loss would cause inordinate sadness or hardship should not be brought to school and are also considered unauthorized items. Unauthorized and/or inappropriate items will be confiscated and brought to the office, and the parent/guardian will have to claim them.

Cell phones, pagers, or other electronic devices are to remain in the “off” mode during school and/or CDC hours, as they are not allowed on campus during these times. Students who disregard this policy will have the cell phone or pager confiscated, and the parent/guardian will have to claim it from the office.

Students should refrain from bringing money to school, unless it is needed for a specific activity or field trip that day. Care should be exercised in keeping it secure.

St. Monica Catholic School is not responsible for damage, theft, or loss of personal items or money brought to school.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are inspected by the teachers at the beginning of the school year. Students are responsible for keeping textbooks in good condition. Textbooks are not to be highlighted, written in, torn or damaged. In case of a damaged or lost book, a fee will be assessed and added to the student’s account.

GRADING POLICY

Progress reports will be sent home between grading periods. They must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned within 3 school days. Report cards are sent home at the completion of every 9 weeks. Report card envelopes must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the homeroom teacher within 3 school days.

The following grading system is used for Kindergarten - 1st Grade:

- “E” = Exceptional progress
- “V” = Very good progress
- “G” = Good progress
- “L” = Limited progress

The following grading system is used for 2nd – 8th Grade:

- 94-100 = Exceptionally high achievement

- 85-93 = High achievement
- 75-84 = Average achievement
- 70-74 = Low achievement
- 0-69 = Failure to master material

Conduct grades are as follows:

- “O” = Outstanding effort
- “S” = Satisfactory effort
- “I” = Improvement needed
- “U” = Unsatisfactory effort
- “N” = Not observed

PROMOTION POLICY

Kindergarten - 1st Grade: A student must have at least a “G” final average in Reading and Mathematics.

2nd - 5th Grade: A student must have at least a “70” final average in Religion, Reading, English and Mathematics. A student who fails Reading and Mathematics is not promoted.

6th - 8th Grade: A student must have at least a “70” final average in all core subjects - Religion, English, Reading/Literature, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. A student who fails more than 2 core subjects is not promoted.

Class ranking and GPAs are based on grades for the “core subjects”, Religion, English, Reading, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. A student who fails more than 2 “core subjects” will not be promoted.

ATHLETICS

St. Monica 6th-8th grade middle school students may participate in Archdiocesan Interscholastic Athletic League (AIAL) sports competition. Every middle school student has a right to try out for sports activities and to be evaluated fairly. While as many as possible will be allowed to participate, there is no absolute right or guarantee to play sports. Participation may exceed the number of available players’ slots available for certain sports, resulting in tryout evaluations of all student athletes based on their talent, sportsmanship and knowledge of the game. All in attendance will be fairly evaluated by using a rating system that will rank each athlete in several categories that pertain to

each sport tryout. Team selection results are considered personal in nature and will only be disclosed to St. Monica coaching staff and administration.

A student must have a 75 or above in all classes in order to participate in sports activities. All student athletes must sign the “Athletics Guidelines” prior to participation in a sport.

Although these athletic programs are competitive and St. Monica takes great pride in winning, at no time does our program condone “winning at any cost”. The athletic program is conducted as an educational activity of learning and promotes good sportsmanship and Christian character at all times.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Student development is enhanced through participation in a number of activities, such as field trips, Computer Club, Beta Club, Spanish Club, Yearbook Club, and AIAL competitions. Many of these activities are subject to academic requirements; poor academic performance or negative behavioral conduct may result in restrictions or probation from these activities.

Students must remain in good academic standing in order to participate in these activities. A student must have a 75 or above in all classes. Students will not be able to participate in the activity or practice while the academic deficiency exists. Ineligibility lasts until the deficiency is removed, as indicated by the progress report or report card.

Students must also exhibit appropriate behavior and conduct by maintaining at least an “S” in all classes in order to participate in extracurricular activities. Students receiving an “I” may not compete in the activity for 2 weeks, but may be allowed to practice. At the end of 2 weeks they may return only upon receiving written verification from their instructor indicating a change in conduct. Students receiving a “U” may only participate after the conduct grade has improved to an “S” as indicated on the progress report/report card.

MASS ATTENDANCE & SACRAMENTS

As part of our Religion curriculum, all students in Early Pre-School – Kindergarten will attend Mass on Wednesday mornings at 8:15 am. All students in Grades 1st - 8th will attend Mass on Friday mornings at 8:15 am. Additional attendance will occur on Holy Days of Obligation. Students in 2nd

Grade will prepare for the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion, and students in 8th Grade will prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation.

GENERAL RULES & DISCIPLINE

At St. Monica Catholic School the purpose of discipline is to create an environment for learning where each student feels secure and valued. Teaching and leading students to self-discipline is a necessary part of the school curriculum. The discipline system focuses on the encouragement of positive behavior for academic and spiritual growth. From time to time, students will make mistakes and will need direction and guidance. The administration, faculty and staff, to the best of their ability, will provide this help. Parents/guardians are expected to do their part in cooperating when informed of unacceptable behavior on the part of their student. Students must realize that their actions have consequences. Depending upon the severity of the offense, the consequence will be determined at the discretion of administration, faculty and/or staff.

Examples of inappropriate actions which may result in disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:

1. Disruptive behavior during class that interferes with the teacher's ability to teach and the students' abilities to learn
2. Damage, destruction or defacement of school property or facilities, or intentionally damaging another person's property
3. Abusive, profane or vulgar language (drawn, written, spoken or gestured)
4. Any form of dishonesty, including cheating, lying, forgery or stealing
5. Fighting, name calling, teasing, pushing, shoving, kicking, tripping, slapping, pinching, biting, hitting, bullying, etc.
6. Threatening, intimidating, coercing, or displaying blatant disrespect for any student, faculty or staff member, or parent
7. Inappropriate displays of affection on campus and during off-campus school activities.
8. Possession of any object used as a weapon or with harmful intent
9. Possessing, using, or attempting to possess, use or be under the influence of any controlled substances as defined by law
10. Throwing or handling objects that may cause injury to oneself or to others. Rock throwing is not permitted at any time.

11. Leaving school premises without authorized adult supervision, truancy or skipping class

Discipline will be consistent and based on the student's individual needs and development. Physical punishment will not be used. Positive reinforcement will be used whenever possible and good behavior will be recognized, encouraged and rewarded.

Examples of disciplinary actions include, but are not limited to:

1. Polite requests to discontinue behavior
2. Denial of privileges
3. Appropriate "time out"
4. Assignment of special tasks
5. Conference with student
6. Phone call and/or conference with parent/guardian
7. Referral to office
8. Detention, suspension, expulsion (in extreme cases)

HARASSMENT-FREE ENVIRONMENT FOR STUDENTS

Per Archdiocesan policy:

The schools within the San Antonio Archdiocese do not condone harassment of any kind. All students of the Archdiocese are to be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment in any form is prohibited. This prohibition against acts of harassment applies to all people engaged in all school sponsored activities: all students; all regular or temporary, part-time or full-time staff or faculty; substitute teachers; volunteers; or vendors.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's academic success or achievement of any other nature.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decisions affecting the student.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonable interference with a student's school performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment.

Verbal harassment may include derogatory remarks, jokes, slurs, and can include belligerent or threatening words spoken to another.

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

It is the responsibility of the school to:

1. Implement this policy through regular meetings with all administrators, including the Pastor in the case of a parish school, ensuring that everyone understands the policy and its importance.
2. Make all staff members, students and parents aware of this policy and the commitment of the school toward its strict enforcement.
3. Remain watchful for conditions that create or may lead to a hostile or offensive environment.
4. Establish practices designed to create an environment free from discrimination, intimidation, or harassment.

It is the responsibility of the student to:

1. Conduct himself or herself in a manner which contributes to a positive school environment;
2. Avoid any activity that may be considered discriminatory, intimidating, or harassing;
3. Consider immediately informing anyone harassing him or her that the behavior is offensive and unwelcome;
4. Report incidents of discrimination or harassment to the Principal. If he/she is not available, report incidents to another school personnel, for example a Team Leader or the Child Development Center Director.
5. If informed he/she is perceived as engaging in discriminatory, intimidating, harassing, or unwelcome conduct, to discontinue that conduct immediately.

The following procedures must be followed for filing and investigating a harassment claim:

1. The person may first choose to tell the individual causing the harassment that the conduct is offensive and must stop. If the objectionable behavior does not cease immediately, the person must report the harassment to the Principal. In the case of sexual harassment allegations, the person is free to raise the issue with another administrator if he/she prefers to do so.

2. If the complaint is against the Principal, the person must report the incident to the Pastor or the Superintendent of Catholic Schools with the Archdiocese.
3. As soon as the verbal report has been given, the school personnel must report the incident to the parent/guardian and the Superintendent.
4. The person alleging harassment will be asked to complete a formal, written complaint. The claim will be investigated thoroughly, involving only the necessary parties. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible.
5. The investigation will include a meeting with the person alleged to have harassed, sharing with that person the nature of the allegations as well as the name of the person bringing the allegation.
6. Once the facts of the case have been gathered, the Principal, in consultation with the Pastor and Superintendent, will decide what, if any, disciplinary action is warranted. The disciplinary action will relate to the nature, context, and seriousness of the harassment and can include disciplinary actions up to and including expulsion.
7. If the complaint is against a non-employee such as a parent, parishioner, volunteer or vendor, the school will take steps, within its power, to investigate and eliminate the problem.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN COOPERATION

In order to serve the best interest of all families who attend this school, an expectation of general cooperation between home and school must exist.

In matters of school discipline, the school, its staff and administration must be the final arbiters of student conduct that occurs during school hours and/or on school grounds.

Parents/guardians will be informed of and in some cases directly involved in the disciplinary process. This has 3 purposes:

1. to reinforce the partnership between the school and parent/guardian in the educational ministry of their student;
2. to keep parents/guardians informed of and to enlist their help in reinforcing this educational ministry; and
3. to give closure to parents/guardians and students in regards to an issue.

Because we recognize the value of each student and our role as an extension of the family, all 3 purposes are critical to the mission of our school and to our educational ministry. It is essential that the authority of the school and its

personnel be recognized and respected by both the students and by their parents/guardians.

Parental involvement in the life of the school is both desirable and encouraged. Parents/guardians are invited to seek clarification in matters both of schoolwork and of student discipline. The tone of such inquiry, however, should be in the spirit of cooperation and mutual support. It is expected that parents/guardians afford themselves the opportunity to correct issues by following school processes and seeking counsel from competent authority, whether that be the teacher or Principal. Not doing so and instead choosing to engage in idle speculation, gossip or the spreading of rumors can be destructive, is not conducive to a positive school environment, and has no place in our school.

If the student and/or parents/guardians have concerns about a grade or some other matter pertaining to a specific course, a conference with the teacher involved should be arranged. **Every effort should be made on the part of the parent/guardian, student, and teacher to satisfy all concerns.** If no satisfactory agreement is reached, the parent/guardian and/or teacher should contact the appropriate Team Leader or the Child Development Center Director for additional help in resolving the matter. If this resolution does not meet with the parent/guardian's satisfaction, a meeting with the Principal can be scheduled.

Parents/guardians who need to communicate with teachers should call the school office and leave a message, or send a note to school with their student. Calls or contact will be made when teachers become available. A school staff member will contact the parent/guardian to schedule a conference – “drop in” conferences are discouraged as the teacher is not prepared to give accurate reports without complete records. The same process holds true when attempting to schedule a conference with the Principal via the school office. Please note that child care/recess issues need to be directed to the Child Development Center Director.

Personal attacks, badgering, harassment, intimidation, abusive or discourteous conduct, and threatening behavior, etc. against faculty or staff by parents/guardians will not be tolerated. Any activity that could result in injury to a child, damage to property or damage to the reputation of St. Monica Catholic School will not be tolerated. Any such actions are not acceptable in a Christian environment. Such behavior may be grounds for dismissal of that parent/guardian's student(s) from school.

The education of a child is a partnership between parents/guardians and the school. If, in the opinion of school administrators, the partnership is irretrievably broken, parents/guardians may be required to withdraw their child from the school.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

LOCAL GRIEVANCE POLICY (NON-EXPULSION)

All complaints that do not result in expulsion or termination will be resolved at the local school level. The Archdiocesan Council of Conciliation will not hear these matters.

Grievances may be heard from individuals, and parents, but in all cases the opportunity to be heard shall be forfeited if the procedures outlined below are not followed precisely.

As used in this procedure a “grievance” shall mean a complaint regarding any action taken by a teacher or administrator toward a student in the enforcement of discipline, policies, and/or regulations.

OUTLINE OF REDRESS PROCEDURES: STUDENTS & PARENTS

Prior to the initiation of a formal grievance procedure, parents who seek redress for their child(ren) in matters of policy, regulation, or discipline MUST first confer directly (either face to face or by telephone), with the teacher, staff member or administrator complained against, for resolution of the situation.

If there is not a satisfactory resolution of the complaint, the following are steps in the formal grievance procedure.

- (1) A written statement of the complaint, including a brief summary of the issue, must be submitted within 5 school days of the initial conference.
- (2) Presentation of the complaint to the Principal. (If complaint is lodged against Principal go directly to School Council Secretary.)
- (3) If no satisfactory solution results, go to the School Council Secretary who informs the three member Grievance Council.
- (4) If aggravated party is not satisfied with the Grievance Council’s decision, an appeal may be made to the Pastor.

GRIEVANCE POLICY FOR STUDENT EXPULSION

This policy and procedure shall only apply to instances of student expulsion.

PROCEDURE

Prior to the initiation of a formal grievance, parents who seek redress for their expelled child must first confer directly with the Principal (“conference”) for resolution of the situation.

If there is not a satisfactory resolution of the complaint, the following are steps in the formal grievance procedure:

- (1) A written statement of the complaint to initiate grievance, including a brief summary of the initial conference must be prepared and filed with the School Council Secretary.
- (2) The School Council Secretary will inform and forward the grievance to the Local Grievance Council.
- (3) If the aggrieved party is still not satisfied with the decision of the Grievance Council, an appeal may be made to the pastor.
- (4) If the aggrieved party remains unsatisfied with the decision of the Pastor, the avenue of further appeal would be the Archdiocesan Council of Conciliation
- (5) Pending outcome of the formal grievance, only the Principal or Pastor may, with or without condition, abate the expulsion or the termination.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

St. Monica Catholic School has a School Council that consults with the Pastor and Principal in matters of finances, school enhancement, policy, development, and strategic planning. The School Council consists of elected, appointed and ex officio members as set forth in its Constitution. The School Council follows the Constitution and by-laws approved by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

PARENT-TEACHER CLUB (PTC)

The purpose of the PTC is to foster unity and understanding between the home and the school. St. Monica Catholic School receives significant financial and volunteer support from the PTC. All parents and teachers are automatically

members of the PTC and are strongly urged to become active in its mission and to support its projects which benefit all of the students in our school. PTC meetings are held 5 times a year on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm, and are announced in advance for all to attend.

The Archdiocese retains the right to conduct background checks on all volunteers along with requiring Sexual Misconduct Training. Volunteers can obtain the required information and forms along with the cost from the PTC Volunteer Coordinator.

St. Monica Catholic School is dependent upon parental involvement in all fund-raising activities, classroom parties, Fiesta Field Day activities etc. It is essential to have your help and cooperation in order to achieve future goals for our school.

Student name (please print)

Grade

ST. MONICA CATHOLIC SCHOOL POLICY HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

We have received a copy of the St. Monica Catholic School Parent/Student Handbook and have read it carefully. We understand the philosophies, policies, procedures and regulations of St. Monica Catholic School as stated in this handbook and understand the administration reserves the right to modify existing policies as circumstances make such decisions necessary.

We agree to abide by and uphold the philosophies, policies, procedures and regulations of St. Monica Catholic School and accept these conditions for the enrollment of my (our) child(ren).

Parent/Guardian signature

Date

Parent/Guardian signature

Date

Each child enrolled in St. Monica Catholic School must sign below indicating they have read or have been explained the information in the Parent/Student Handbook.

Student signature

Date

Grade

Student signature

Date

Grade

Student signature

Date

Grade

Please return this completed form to the school office.