

**Guardian Angels Catholic School Parent/Student Handbook
2010 - 2011**

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GUARDIAN ANGELS CATHOLIC SCHOOL DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG

PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK

Welcome

This handbook is intended to serve as a manual for the parents and students of Guardian Angels Catholic School. Hopefully, it will furnish information that will assist the parents in understanding the operation of Guardian Angels. The development and implementation of rules and policies are the responsibility of the administrative team. All rules not covered in this handbook are delegated to the administrative team for definition and enforcement. Guardian Angels School is bound by the policies in the Diocesan Policy Handbook.

Please read the handbook with your children and help them to understand the basic concepts. Then sign and return the included form within five days indicating your compliance with school policies. As new policies are adopted, parents will be informed in writing. In some cases, inserts will be distributed to parents for placement in the handbook.

Guardian Angels School welcomes you to its community. It is our prayer that each of us will remain strong in our commitment to keep Guardian Angels Catholic School an outstanding Christian educational community.

Mission

Guardian Angels Catholic School, along with its four feeder parishes: St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Michael the Archangel, St. Luke and All Saints, is dedicated to providing excellence in education within a challenging, faith-filled environment. Founded in gospel truths and values, Guardian Angels Catholic School strives to nurture and celebrate the uniqueness of each child to become productive members of their church, community and society.

Statement of Beliefs

- ❖ The mission of Catholic Education at GACS is to proclaim the gospel message of Jesus, to build faith communities, to celebrate through worship, and to serve others.
- ❖ Parents are the primary educators of their children.
- ❖ Each student is a unique child of God and must be valued.
- ❖ Student spiritual, emotional, academic, and physical growth is a priority.
- ❖ Students should learn in a variety of ways and be actively involved in their learning.
- ❖ A safe and healthy learning environment promotes success and is everyone's responsibility.
- ❖ On-going evaluation and improvement of the curriculum is crucial to the development of a sound educational program.
- ❖ Commitment to creating confident, life-long learners that will become productive members of society is a necessity.
- ❖ Excellence in teaching Catholic truths, moral values, and academics must be fundamental in the school program.
- ❖ Mutual respect amongst and between the students, staff, and parents creates a wholesome, Christ-filled learning environment.

History of Guardian Angels Catholic School

In the autumn of 1990, a concerned group of parents from North Pinellas County approached Bishop Favalora requesting that the Diocese of St. Petersburg consider providing Catholic education for their children. After meeting with the pastors of four parishes, All Saints in Clearwater, St. Ignatius in Tarpon Springs, St. Luke the Evangelist in Palm Harbor and St. Michael the Archangel in Clearwater, the Bishop announced that Guardian Angels Primary School would open on St. Michael's parish grounds in August 1991. St. Michael's would serve as a temporary site for the school until a new site could be found and a permanent school built. Reverend James Russo was named the first school pastor.

Guardian Angel's Primary School opened its doors to 35 kindergarten and first grade children in August 1991. Sister Jean Marie Dick was sent by the Sisters of Notre Dame of Chardon, Ohio at the request of Father Russo to serve as the first school principal. Sister Jean Marie was joined by two lay teachers and a school secretary.

As a result of overwhelming interest evidenced by a dramatic increase in applications received for placement in 1992, the Diocese decided that Guardian Angels would expand from a primary school to a complete elementary school with grades kindergarten through eight. A capital campaign throughout the four parishes was begun to help finance this project. In the fall of 1995 Guardian Angels Catholic School opened its new school on Evans Road in Clearwater. A plaque and individual nameplates hang throughout the building to recognize donors who contributed various amounts to the building of the school.

The second phase of construction was completed in 1998 with the addition of a middle school building. This structure included six classrooms, two offices and a multi-purpose room. Plans for Phase III are in the developmental stage.

Guardian Angels Catholic School went through the initial phase of accreditation in 2001. The Florida Catholic Conference (FCC) granted full accreditation in June of 2001.

In the spring of 2004, the need of a chapel became a reality thanks to six generous donors. On September 21, 2005, ground breaking for this structure took place. Completion of the Kevin LaPlante Chapel is slated for August 2006. Also in 2006, a modular building for the Fine Arts program was added to the premises.

In June 2008, the FCC granted continued accreditation.

SECTION 100 ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Assessment

The assessment of student progress is an on-going process for teachers. A variety of assessment methods are used in determining a student's progress including standardized testing, written assignments, portfolios, tests, projects, and daily observation of student performance in the application of skills.

Awards

Throughout the school year, classroom teachers distribute awards to their students for academic honors, athletic participation and outstanding service.

Eighth grade graduates receive recognition at an Award's Night. There are three awards presented at the graduation service: the 'Religious Knowledge' award for academic knowledge of Religion as evidenced by the middle school Religion GPA and the score on the ACRE test, the 'Christian Example' award determined by the middle school teachers for the graduate exemplifying the faith during eighth grade, and the 'Guardian Angels' award based on school spirit, religious values, dependability, and leadership during the middle school years at Guardian Angels School.

Conferences

Parents are notified and can monitor their child's progress through Edline. If there are concerns, the parent should call the school office and request an appointment with the teacher. If the teacher(s) and parents are unable to reach a plan for improvement, it may be necessary to involve the administrative team and/or guidance counselor for additional assistance. Teachers may also request conferences with a student and/or the parents at any time. There will be parent - teacher conferences scheduled during the academic year. However, parents should schedule a teacher conference if they perceive a potential problem.

Curriculum

The curriculum of Guardian Angels is designed to meet or exceed both state and diocesan standards. A cycle is established to evaluate the objectives and materials used in each subject area regularly. Faculty members attend workshops and in-service programs in order to improve the curriculum.

The following subject areas are included in the curriculum:

- Religion/Family Life
- Language Arts
- Composition (Creative Writing)
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Art
- Information Technology
- Music
- Physical Education/Health
- Spanish
- Media
- Guidance
- Safe Environment

Dual Enrollment

Students who are dually enrolled for gifted and speech classes must have a record of this information in their cumulative file. The record should state the school, the program, the days of the week and times that the student will attend. This is coordinated with the guidance counselor so an accurate record of attendance is maintained. **This information must be updated annually.** Students dually enrolled will not be marked absent from Guardian Angels School when attending these classes.

Grading System

Report card grades are one method of communicating a student's progress in the course of a year. Grades are computed on daily class work, class participation, homework, and test grades. The grading system is listed on the grade card. Incomplete grades must be made up in a reasonable amount of time as determined by the teacher and the administration.

Former school grades are used for a new student who transfers to Guardian Angels with less than ½ of the grading period remaining. GACS will provide grades if the student is in attendance for more than ½ the grading period.

Homework

Homework is assigned in each grade according to the discretion of the teacher. All homework must be completed on the assigned date and is based on concepts the student has already been taught. It is a practice time to confirm, reinforce, and extend learning. Homework develops good study skills, responsibility, and a positive attitude toward school. Students will not be allowed to call home for forgotten homework after the first two weeks of school. Due to the fact that it is unpredictable to gauge the rate of daily educational material covered, no official homework will be given to students going on vacations. **Homework will be listed weekly on Edline.**

A reliable gauge to judge the length of time students spend on homework is about ten minutes per grade level. Projects and research papers may extend this time. If a student consistently uses more time to complete homework assignments, a meeting with the teacher is in order.

Honors

Principal's List:

1. Final Average of 90 or above and no 80's for the grading period
2. No negative comment, like unsatisfactory effort, or unsatisfactory behavior, etc.

High Honors:

1. Final Average of 90 or above with B's
2. No negative comment

Honors:

1. Final average of 85 – 90.
2. No negative comments

Any report card with a C automatically takes a student off ALL lists

Mathematics

Middle school mathematics is divided into groups based on teacher recommendation, fifth grade final average, placement test and standardized test scores. An on-going process reviews evaluation for class placements periodically. Students must maintain a 75% or better average to remain in an accelerated class. Any student falling below a 75% average after any grading period will be placed on academic probation for a period of four weeks. At such time, a determination of class change will be made.

In eighth grade, there will be two groups. One group will be taught Pre-Algebra, another group will be Honors Algebra. To qualify for the Honors Algebra, a student will have to follow the criteria put in place by the diocese which is a 90 %ile or higher ranking on the ITBS in Math for Grades 6 & 7, and 90% or better for final Math marks for Grades 6 & 7. In order to receive high school credit, the student must have a final average of 80% or above. Participation in algebra class does not guarantee placement in freshmen math classes or recognition of the credit earned. This decision will be made at the high school level.

Media Center

The school media center is essential to the curriculum. Grades K - 5 have a designated library period. Students may check books out for a one-week period and may renew them for another week. Overdue fines will be charged for late returns. Children are expected to treat media center books with respect and return them when they have finished reading them.

Students who lose books or in some way damage them are expected to pay for their replacement. Final report cards will not be issued until all media center materials have been returned or payment made.

The computer laboratory is also a part of the media center, and each grade has a designated computer class.

Placement

The decision to place a student with a particular classroom teacher in K – 5, as well as middle school mathematics class, is made by the administrative team.

Probation

All new students are on probation when they enter Guardian Angels Catholic School. In all grades, the probationary term remains effective for two complete grading periods, regardless of the first date of attendance. Probationary reports will be sent home mid-way through the first two quarters.

Promotion and Retention

In determining whether a student will be promoted or retained, the teachers and administration will consider how the needs of the student can be met most effectively. If the teachers and administration feel that it is not in the best interest of the student to advance to the next grade, they will seriously consider retaining the student. In such cases, communication will take place between parents and the school staff at the beginning of the third grading period. Parents will be given ample opportunity to express their ideas in regard to the academic needs of the student. The decision of the administrative team will be the deciding factor. The school follows the diocesan guidelines for retention.

Diocesan Guidelines for Retention

The core subjects in the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of St. Petersburg are Religion, Math, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies. A student enrolled in a Catholic school who fails one core subject must participate in a remedial program. Failure of two core subjects will result in remediation or retention at the discretion of the principal. Failure of three or more core subjects will result in retention.

The following criteria must be met with regard to the remediation process:

1. Remediation must take place in one of the following ways:
 - A remediation program in a Catholic school within the DOSP
 - By a teacher certified in the subject area contracted by the parent and approved by the principal
 - In a remediation program which has been approved by the principal
 - Neither the student's current teacher nor any teacher who presumably will be the subject area teacher in the future may tutor/provide remediation for a student.

Failure to meet remediation guidelines will result in retention.

2. The following documentation guidelines will be followed after meeting remediation guidelines:
 - The original failing grade is recorded on the permanent record and may not be altered.
 - Proof of proficiency in the subject area must be recorded separately on the permanent record card.
3. Prior to the beginning of the next school year, the principal must receive:
 - Validation of attendance
 - Proof of proficiency in the subject area(s) including work samples and test scores
4. Failure to meet remediation guidelines will result in retention.
5. **TRANSFER RULE:** Any student who fails one or more core subjects must meet the remediation guidelines of the originating school

After these criteria have been met, further assessment may be administered by the school principal to ensure proper placement.

NOTE: Situations involving students with an existing Student Support Plan will be reviewed individually utilizing the student support team process.

Report Cards

Report cards will be issued following the completion of each grading period. Parents must review their child's progress and contact the teacher if there are questions regarding grades. The last report card will be distributed or mailed directly to the parents. Report cards will be held until all fees are paid, including but not limited to Extended Day and Alternative Lunch.

Request for Records

All requests for academic records, questionnaires from physicians, therapists, or counselor must be requested through the School Counselor or the Data Processing Specialist. Guardian Angels requires up to **five (5)** school days to complete the necessary information and return it to the qualified professional requesting the information. Neither completed forms nor copies will be returned to the parents. Parents are required to complete a "Confidential Release of Information" form before any information will be shared with outside agencies.

School Books and Equipment

Books are loaned to students and are to be treated with respect. Books must be covered and are not to be marked by students. Prior to the closing of school, all books must be returned in their issued condition to the classroom teacher or librarian. Report cards will be issued to students when all school materials have been returned, including media center materials, and payment for any damaged books.

Study Skills

A parent can help his/her child become aware of skills and techniques making learning easier and more enjoyable. The following are student guidelines for achieving good study habits:

- 1) Come to class prepared with pencil, paper and other necessary materials.
- 2) Be an active participant in class.
- 3) Listen well.
- 4) Ask questions to clarify problems.
- 5) Plan the day and schedule time for homework.
- 6) Use what is learned and apply it to new situations.
- 7) Strive to do the very best work possible. (Just "getting by" is not a worthwhile goal.)

Students With Disabilities

The initial application for enrollment in Guardian Angels includes a question about the student's history of testing for special needs and qualification for an Individualized Educational Plan (I.E.P.). If the parent indicates a history of testing, then the administrative team will determine whether or not the Guardian Angels School staff can accommodate the specific needs of the student.

Guardian Angels will provide reasonable accommodation for a student who has experienced a temporary physically disabling condition (e.g. broken leg). Guardian Angels will not provide an accommodation which may present a situation of further potential harm to any person, require an exorbitant financial expense, or is just plain unreasonable. The administration may consider relocating the student in a classroom or office that offers the student a safe environment in which supervision and class work completion can be accomplished. In certain situations, it may be necessary for a home-bound placement.

When a GACS student is suspected – by parent, teacher, or administrator – of having a learning or behavioral situation the following procedure will be followed.

1. Parents should contact the School Counselor to request evaluations for specific services for their child (e.g.-speech or learning disability)
2. The adult explains the specific problem (with examples) to the School Counselor.
3. The School Counselor confers with the principal about the student’s suspected need.
4. If the decision is made to investigate the concern, the School Counselor explains the suspected concern to the parents and secures their written permission for the initial screening. The student’s teacher may participate in the discussion with the parents at the discretion of the School Counselor.
5. Following the initial screening, the counselor meets with the parents to explain the screening results and possible options available. Although it is not required, it is suggested the teacher and administrative team participate in this meeting. If necessary and acceptable, additional assessment may be suggested through the Admissions Diagnostic and Placement Team (A.D.A.P.T.) from Pinellas County Public Schools. ADAPT furnishes a separate referral process. The results of the test will be sent to the parents, to GACS, or to both. Recommendations will be used in the “Student Support Plan”.
6. Parents also have the right to have a private assessment made by a known professional.
7. Once the data is received, the parents, the counselor, the teacher, and the administrative team meet to discuss the results of the tests and determine the best plan for the student. The final decision will be made by the child’s parents.

Possible outcomes may include: no change; a formal Individualized Educational Plan (as determined by ADAPT); enrollment in the home zoned public school; enrollment in GACS with a disclaimer for services; a formal I.E.P. with dual enrollment; a formal I.E.P. with enrollment in Morning Star Catholic School; accommodations at GACS; or tutoring.

When a student with an I.E.P. or 504 Plan enrolls in GACS, the school has a responsibility to provide accommodations and practices and expectations for students with special needs. Since GACS does not have a special education department, it may be impossible to provide all of the services required by the I.E.P. or 504 Plan. If this is the case, and if parents continue to want their child enrolled only in GACS, the parents must schedule a review with ADAPT to disclaim services.

A written list of accommodations GACS is able to undertake is made and communicated to parents. The list should be updated annually or revised as necessary. Guardian Angels does not have a special education department and many requirements stipulated by the I.E.P. may not be able to be fulfilled and parents must agree to these restraints to allow for continued enrollment of their special needs child. The School Counselor will coordinate agreed upon academic accommodations and will serve as the resource teacher in implementing accommodations included in the “Student Support Plan”.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires from physicians must first be turned in to the School Counselor who will forward them to the teacher for completion. The teachers will return the questionnaire to the School Counselor who will then return it to the physician. A **Confidentiality Release Form** must be signed by parent/guardian. Guardian Angels requires up to five days to complete the necessary information and return it to the qualified professional requesting it.

Guardian Angels Catholic School does not complete questionnaires for extra-curricular activities or sports.

SECTION 200 ATHLETIC PROGRAM

The Guardian Angels Catholic School athletic program provides athletic activity, training, and competition for the students enrolled in the school. The purpose of the athletic program is to provide athletic experiences for as many of our students in the fifth through eighth grades as possible and to promote well-rounded students. To this end, the guidelines listed below serve the students, their parents, and the coaches with a program consistent with the mission and philosophy of the school.

Participation is the measure of the program's success. Winning is a desirable outcome of effort, hard work, skill development, and fair play. Losing offers opportunities to learn from mistakes, to plan, to make adjustments, and to improve concentration.

Conference Affiliation

Guardian Angels Catholic School is a member of the Pinellas Youth Conference and will abide by its guidelines and rules unless noted.

Organization

Teams are identified by grade level, gender, and sport. The fifth and sixth grades make up one level of competition and are designated as Junior Varsity. The seventh and eighth grades make up another level of competition and are designated as Varsity.

The following sports are offered:

Boys may participate in:

- Baseball
- Basketball
- Bowling
- Golf
- Soccer
- Track & Field
- Volleyball

Girls may participate in:

- Basketball
- Bowling
- Golf
- Soccer
- Softball
- Track & Field
- Volleyball

A Flag Football Jamboree is also offered to our 7th and 8th grade students. Although not an interscholastic athletic activity, cheerleading is included as an athletic club activity.

In order to provide as much participation as possible, more than one team may be organized at either the varsity or junior varsity level. When sufficient interest exists to organize more than one team, the coaches and director of athletics will determine the make-up of these teams.

Playing time must be appropriate and substantial. Coaches must work diligently to include all student athletes in all contests. Maintaining this participation goal may be difficult in specific athletic contests. Coaches must always be aware and concerned for the safety of the players.

Athletic Committee

The Athletic Committee offers advice to the director(s) of athletics about maintaining a Christian environment, as well as the purpose of the athletic program at Guardian Angels. The committee assists the director in:

- recommending policies and procedures to increase participation;
- improving communication between the athletes, their parents, and the school;
- promoting the Christian atmosphere of the program; and
- developing a booster organization to support the efforts of the S.A.B. Athletic Committee

Membership of the Athletic Advisory Committee will include but not limited to parents who have children in the fifth through eighth grades. It is recommended, but not mandated, that the membership includes a mixture of parents whose children participate in both boys' and girls' teams in these grades. Members are appointed by the Athletic Directors, who are chairpersons of the committee. It should consist of at least five parents.

Meetings should be scheduled before the beginning of the first season of the academic year and after the last season concludes. There should be meetings scheduled during the academic year. All meetings should begin with a prayer. The chairperson presides at all meetings.

Athletic Director(s)

The director(s) of athletics oversees the program, recruits coaches, and schedules competitions. The director(s) is/are the communication liaison between the teachers and coaches and between the coaches and the Pinellas Youth Conference.

It is the responsibility of the director(s) to communicate to the coach in a timely manner when students may not practice or play due to academic, behavior, or attendance problems. If a student is not eligible to participate in practice or an interscholastic competition, it is the responsibility of the director to notify the coach immediately.

Coaches

Volunteer coaches are recruited for their sincere interest in children. All coaches must either be a staff member or have children attending GACS. All behavior and language must be consistent with our faith and the purpose of the school.

Coaches must arrive on time for practices and competitions and are responsible for supervising the student athletes under their direction.

Coaches may not drive students to or from practices or competitions (with the exception of a parent-coach), and they may not leave an athlete unattended.

Coaches must inform the director of athletics by noon if they cannot attend and/or coach a scheduled practice or game. If they cannot contact the director, the principal must be notified as soon as possible.

All coaches must have a Level II background check on file, attend a diocesan ethics for coaches training, participate in the diocesan Safe Environment workshop and attend the mandatory pre-season coach meeting.

If high school-aged coaches are used, fraternization to any degree will not be tolerated.

Athletic Fees

A fee will be charged to every student who participates. The fee will be determined by the administrative team with advice from the athletic director(s).

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Athletic Forms

All parents and participants are required to complete the following forms: Diocesan Health Screening; Parents Code of Ethics; Player's Code of Ethics; and Athletic Contract. A licensed physician must complete the Diocesan Health Screening form. This must be done after July 1st of the year in which the student will be participating. All forms must be completed and turned in **PRIOR** to tryouts. Parents can get these forms from the office or download them from the website.

Participation

The number of participants will be determined by the number of coaches available in any given season. A student, who comes to the try-outs, makes the team and attends the practices will play as long as grades, behavior, and health permit. A student MUST attend tryouts to be considered for the team. A player must attend all practices and games.

As long as a sufficient number of qualified coaches are available to assure proper instructions and safe competition, every effort will be made to accommodate the number of participants. A limited number of coaches will limit the number of participants.

Athletic Eligibility

All participants and parents are required to sign, turn in and abide by the directives of the school's Athletic Contract, Players Code of Ethics and Parent code of Ethics.

Athletic eligibility depends on a number of worthwhile characteristics. These include, but are not limited to, a student's behavior, academic achievement, and attendance. All of these characteristics must be acceptable to the student's teachers, coaches, and athletic director to allow for participation in the Guardian Angels athletic program. Athletics is an extra-curricular privilege. Classroom requirements, i.e. homework, classwork, tests and projects must be successfully fulfilled in order to participate. In the event of absences from school, the make-up work must be completed prior to the student returning to the sport. Students can return to sports upon the discretion of the teachers with the approval from administration.

To ensure all student athletes are working to their potential in the classroom, grades will be monitored on a regular basis. If any student's current quarterly average in a core subject is 64 or below when the bi-weekly eligibility report is generated, the student is placed on academic probation and is not eligible to participate in any athletic competitions or practices. However, he/she may support his/her team by attending his/her sport competition.

If a student is deemed ineligible, this student's ineligible grade will be reviewed weekly. The athlete may regain eligibility as long as the subject average is acceptable and/or they show an upward trend in academic progress as determined by the administration. A student is placed on athletic probation after the first instance of ineligibility. In the event that the student is deemed ineligible a second time, he/she will be removed from the team for the remainder of that sport's season.

An eligibility report will be run the week before tryouts begin for each sport. If a student's academic progress is in question, a letter will be sent home informing the parent that the student may try out but will be in danger of athletic ineligibility if their grades do not meet the above mentioned criteria. If a student is deemed ineligible after tryouts, he/she will be placed on probation and the eligibility criteria will be followed.

If a student earns two cumulative F grades in the same grading period in any subject, the student is removed from the team. However, the student will be able to compete in another sport if the failing marks are brought up to passing grades.

If a child is deemed ineligible, the administration notifies the athletic director(s) who, in turn, notifies the parents and the head coach of ineligible students.

Students may **NOT** participate in practice or competition the days they serve a detention or suspension. They may not practice or compete if they must attend Saturday School until the penalty is served.

Students **cannot** participate in any extra-curricular activity on a day when they have been absent.

All incidents of misbehavior may be addressed with the Code of Conduct.

Coaches have the ability to issue verbal warnings, temporarily and/or remove a player from practices or games. If a coach removes a player from a practice or a game, the coach **MUST** contact the Athletic Director who, in turn, may contact the parent. The director of athletics with the assistance of the administration and the Discipline Committee may issue a detention, or other disciplinary action, if necessary.

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Transportation

Parents are encouraged to drive to all athletic events.

All students who play athletics must have transportation to and from the games, either by his/her parents, or by carpools that have been previously arranged by each parent. Parents will be responsible for arranging transportation to and from each athletic event. Parents may not drop their child off at practice or game site. They **MUST** remain at the practice or game site until the coach arrives.

If a child is in Extended Day, the parent must arrange for the child to be taken back to Extended Day if no other arrangements have been made. The athletic director, staff and coaches cannot be responsible for arranging transportation to and from each athletic event. Parents need to be respectful of the coach's and athletic director's time and arrive on time to pick up their child from both practices and athletic competitions.

Cancellation of Sporting Events

Emergency cancellation of any sporting event will be communicated to the athletes' parents via Honeywell Alert. Please make sure that your Honeywell Alert is configured correctly.

Athletic Awards

Athletic certificates are presented to student athletes at the bi-annual award assembly.

Awards may include:

- ❖ Plaques to eighth grade students listing name, graduation year, and sports participated in while at Guardian Angels;
- ❖ Christian Athlete Award, Most Valuable Player Award and **Team Hustler** Award to one athlete voted by teammates from each team.
- ❖ Certificate of Merit to all athletes who participate in the athletic program listing level of participation and the sport.

Finances

All monies, revenues and expenditures, must flow through the school bookkeeper. There are no exceptions to this policy.

SECTION 300 ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL- STUDENTS

Arrival

Students may enter the buildings at 7:25 and must report to their classrooms or homerooms. Guardian Angels School begins **promptly at 7:50**.

Dismissal

Students are dismissed at two times. All K – 5 students who do not car pool with the 6 – 8 grade students will be dismissed at 2:25. All students in grades 6-8 and those in K – 5 who car pool with students from grades 6 - 8 are dismissed at 2:50. Students who are not picked up punctually will be placed in Extended Day and a fee will be charged.

Students who car pool must know the name of the designated family name used by the car pool, regardless of which family is driving on any particular day.

Early Dismissal

A planned Early Dismissal also dismisses students at two different times. The K – 5 section dismisses at **11:30** and the 6 – 8 group and those students carpooling with 6-8 dismisses at **12:00**. Car pool drivers for the second dismissal should not arrive before **11:50**.

Leaving School Early

Parents should report to the St. Gabriel office and sign out the student whenever the student must leave school before the scheduled dismissal time. The student will be called to meet the parent in the office. Parents may not go to classrooms. Students in grades 6-8 will be dismissed early from the main office in St. Gabriel. **Parents should not ask for a student to be dismissed after 1:45.**

Emergency dismissal due to cancellation of school takes place only during extraordinary circumstances such as extreme weather, equipment failure, or public crisis. The administrators and the Office of Catholic Schools and Centers (OCSC) are aware of the hardship which can be caused by an abrupt cancellation. Therefore, school will not be cancelled unless a significant safety risk has been created by unusual circumstances.

In case of any school emergency, The Honeywell Alert System will be utilized. All students must have transportation from school and supervision at their home before being released from school.

Loitering

Students must leave the school and school grounds promptly after classes or activities are dismissed for the day. Non-students are not permitted on campus at any time unless they have been approved by the administration and registered as official guests in the main office.

Release of Students

Students may only be released to those individuals specified on either the Student Medical Emergency Form or Carpool Information Form. It is the parent's responsibility to update this information, **in writing**, throughout the school year as necessary. For daily changes in transportation, a note **MUST** be received in the office before a student will be released to another driver. Parents are RESPONSIBLE to update their Honeywell Alert information to reflect changes in daily routines for release of children. (i.e. vacations, business trips, etc.)

Tardiness

Classes begin at 7:50 promptly. If the student arrives after 7:50, he/she is considered tardy. Students must be in their homeroom before 7:50 to avoid being tardy, so that the student is ready to begin the day's work by 7:50. The student will report to the office for a tardy slip in order to be admitted to class after 7:50. Please refer to the Attendance and Code of Conduct sections for additional information concerning excessive tardiness.

SECTION 350 ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL - PARENTS

350

Morning Drop Off

All parental instructions, hugs, kisses, backpack checks, lunch bag checks, etc. must be completed before leaving home. Waiting until drop off to complete these activities only irritates other drivers, backs up the car line onto Evans Road, and delays the entire process. An unexpected situation may require the driver to park in the parking area to take care of the problem.

Drivers enter the driveway from Evans Road, turn right at the first chance in the parking area, and drive around the periphery of the parking area until the vehicle is parallel with the sidewalk in the front of both buildings. Vehicles arrive in “waves” to safely drop off their student passengers. The lead drivers in each “wave” must precede the length of the sidewalk to the entrance of St. Raphael (middle school) before passengers exit the vehicles. Students usually are not dropped off directly in front of their building. After the student passengers exit the vehicle, the driver continues around the periphery of the paved parking area, turns right onto the driveway, and exits from the driveway onto Evans Road.

Parents who have business in the office must first drop off their student passengers in the usual drop off procedure, park their vehicle, and then walk to the office. **Walkers must wait until the vehicles stop in each “wave” before crossing traffic using the designated crosswalks.** It is important that drivers do not pass other vehicles in the “wave,” in order to maintain a safe condition for drivers and student pedestrians.

All students who walk to school must have a parent written permission letter to do so on file in the school office.

Afternoon Pick Up

All K – 5 students not car pooling with the 6 – 8 grade students will be dismissed at 2:25.

All 6– 8 grade students and those who car pool with families from grade 6 – 8 are dismissed at 2:50.

Drivers who pick up students at 2:25 should not arrive before 2:15. Second dismissal pick up drivers should not arrive before 2:35.

Vehicles enter the driveway from Evans Road and proceed to either the east or west student loading zones depending on the family’s last name or the designated family name for those who car pool. Drivers or car pool names beginning with A –J will use the east loading area. Driver’s or car pool names beginning with K – Z will use the west loading area. The east – west designations may change due to the number of vehicles in each area.

At the entrance of the St. Gabriel building, vehicles split into two lanes. The east lane includes the A – J names and the west lane includes the K – Z names. The last vehicle in each “wave” must clear the main driveway.

Vehicles that do not fit into the loading zones in the paved parking area will be directed to enter the field close to Evans Road. Vehicles in the field continue in single file through the traffic aisles until the exit close to the paved parking area. **Drivers will wait in their vehicles in the field until directed to drive from the field into the student loading zones.**

351

Students carpooling must know the name of the family's car pool. Students who consistently ride in the same car pool should consistently wait on the same loading zone side for pick up. This is the reason drivers in the car pool select one family name and keep it for all drivers in the car pool.

All drivers should print the family name or designated family name (for car pools) on an 8 1/2 x 11 cardstock paper and include it in the passenger side for the east-loading zone and in the driver's side for the west loading zone.

Drivers should keep their driver's side door open to indicate that the passengers have not yet boarded. The door should be closed to indicate the vehicle is ready to exit. Only the vehicles in the loading zones will be loaded.

Once loaded, the vehicles will remain parked until directed to exit. If passengers are not available from one vehicle and the line is ready to move, the driver should exit in the line and then enter the loading zone again.

All students who are not picked up at either dismissal time are escorted to Extended Day.

All students who may walk home are required to have written permission from their parents on file in the office.

Animals

At no time is it permissible to bring animals into the school building or on school grounds. Nor is it acceptable to bring pets to school-sponsored events including sporting events. The first violation will result in a warning. The second violation will result in a designated consequence. This does not include animals brought in by an approved outside agency for educational purposes.

Early Dismissal

Planned Early Dismissal days dismiss students at 11:30 (K -5) and 12:00 (6-8). Drivers who pick up at 12:00 should not arrive before 11:50.

The field area is available for diagonal parking for inside dismissals and many school events. The traffic pattern will remain one way for all activities and dismissals.

- ❖ Students may not be removed from school the last 45 minutes of the scheduled day, 1:45 for the regular dismissal time and 11:00 for the early dismissal. Please make medical and dental appointments accordingly.
- ❖ Drivers must remain in their vehicles at all times.
- ❖ Drivers should open their car doors until they have all children in the vehicle.
- ❖ Drivers must wait until they are directed to drive.
- ❖ Drivers must demonstrate Christian charity toward other drivers at all times.
- ❖ Cell phones should not be used when driving vehicles during dismissal.
- ❖ Car pools use one family name regardless of which family is responsible for pick – up.
- ❖ Names should be visible to those loading students

Inside Dismissal

Parking for inside dismissal should be **single** file so that there is the ability for flow and/or room for emergency vehicles. If weather permits, drivers should utilize the maze. Please reserve the area in front of the covered walkway for drivers with infants. **Always show courtesy.**

SECTION 400 ATTENDANCE

400

Florida state law requires that children between the ages of 5 and 16 attend school. Unless a child is ill, a child is expected to attend school daily. All absences **MUST** be reported to the school office by 8:00. This will allow the office to report the daily attendance to the Office of Schools and Centers (OCSC) as required by the superintendent.

If a child has contracted a contagious disease, a doctor's note may be required before the child can return to school. In the event that the child is absent for five or more consecutive days, a certificate of illness from a licensed physician may be required.

When students miss school for any reason, such as illness, medical or dental appointments, or family vacation, they miss the dynamics within the classroom. This is a loss at any grade level, but it becomes a greater loss as students move into the upper grades. Test materials go beyond the information contained in the textbooks and students who are absent from class are never completely prepared since they have missed the classroom discussions, **interactions** and activities.

When a student misses school there is a false notion that reading the textbook assignments and completing homework will be sufficient to a child's understanding of the content missed during the days of absence. Although the assignments are vital to a basic understanding of the content, they are not complete. As a result, grades are usually not up to par for a student who is absent.

The GACS policy is to permit students to leave school for family vacations and medical and dental appointments. Illness is a given. The vacation and appointment absences are by choice.

If a student will be absent from school for fifteen (15) days or longer due to a medical or psychiatric condition while hospitalized or homebound, the parents must utilize the homebound school program provided by the public schools. When the student is able to return to school, as determined by the administration of the county public school homebound program and the student's physician, the student may then resume attendance at Guardian Angels. The homebound program should not be confused with "home schooling".

Make Up Work

No homework will be assigned for students going on vacations. The student will be responsible for making up any work or tests upon return. If the vacation lasts more than three days, the student will be given three days to make up missed assignments; otherwise it is one day per day missed for the first two days. **In the case of illness, missed class work can be requested after a two-day absence.** Parents should call before 9:00 a.m. on the 3rd day to request work. Often times, contacting a fellow student and/ or checking Edline are efficient ways to be kept updated.

After an absence due to illness, the student must arrange with teacher(s) for any make up work. Students have the same number of days they were absent to make up their work except in the instance of some long-term assignments (a student has ten school days to complete the long-term assignment). However, if a long-term assignment has been assigned prior to the absences, the project is due the first day the student returns, unless administration determines there are mitigating circumstances and approves an extension. Parents are responsible for checking Edline for current and updated assignments.

401

When a student is not homebound or hospitalized and accrues more than eight absences in a semester or fifteen days in a school year, it is considered excessive. Students with a history of excessive absences will be referred to the School Counselor or administration.

For information regarding absences in relationship to sports participation, refer to the Section 200 in the Handbook.

Students absent three hours are considered absent the entire day. On early dismissal days, students absent for two hours are considered absent for the entire day.

A student, who is tardy, due to a medical/dental appointment, must provide the school with a “Return to School” slip from the physician in order for it to be excused. Four (4) unexcused tardy arrivals within a grading period result in a detention for Grades K – 8. Excused tardy arrivals are recorded on the student’s record providing proper documentation is received by the office.

SECTION 450
BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

450

As a school community, we will continue to allow our students to celebrate their birthdays during the school day. In order to maintain instructional continuity, we ask that the parents send in a small treat to be shared at lunch with their child's classmates. It is strongly suggested that miniature candy bars, cupcakes and/or other individually wrapped treats be provided for this occasion. Cake, ice cream and popsicles are not acceptable.

On occasion, classroom teachers may have specific guidelines regarding birthday celebrations. Please consult your grade level information for these guidelines.

No student deliveries, such as but not limited to, flowers, pizza, etc. are accepted. Limousines cannot be used for student pick up or at any school-sponsored event.

SECTION 500
CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND/OR TELEPHONE NUMBER

500

For the safety of the children, it is very important that every parent update their **Honeywell Alert** account immediately as changes occur. **Please notify the school, in writing**, immediately if there is a change of address, phone, or cell phone number.

Reminder: Please use user names and passwords that can be remembered.

SECTION 600 CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

600

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct is based on the respect we give one another as members of God's family. Our Catholic faith, Church leaders and mission require us to live the Gospel message in our everyday lives. While we appreciate and recognize individual differences in students, provision for individual growth is encouraged. Self-discipline is a characteristic of a Christian community. As the school builds community, it develops in the students the awareness that sensible rules serve to safeguard the individual's freedom. These rules must be reasonable, well known and administered fairly. Demonstrated respect for each individual, whether student or staff member, fosters a spirit of mutual respect in which orderly behavior flourishes. As followers of Jesus, students gradually understand that the greater good is more important than individual expectations.

While the emphasis on Gospel values is continuous and constant throughout the grade levels, there are times when situations arise which come in conflict with our Code of Conduct. Parents have a responsibility to investigate why their child has difficulty with following the rules. The code of conduct will not be modified or disregarded to accommodate individual behaviors, which are in conflict with the Guardian Angels Catholic School family.

When students fail to act according to our expectations, consequences for their misbehavior will follow. Consequences for misbehavior may be initiated and enforced at any level of the plan; that is, it is possible for an initial misbehavior to result in expulsion. The Discipline Committee consisting of faculty members from all grade levels may have input to various situations; however, the administrative team has the final recourse for all disciplinary situations.

Verbal Warning

At any time, any teacher, noticing a student's misconduct, will give a verbal warning. Students are expected to modify their behavior immediately.

Temporary Removal from Class

Removing a student from class for misbehavior may or may not be preceded by a verbal warning. The teacher who takes into consideration the misbehavior and the age of the student determines removal. This is only used when suitable supervision can be maintained. An Office Referral form will be issued to the child upon leaving the room.

If the temporary removal from class does not correct the misbehavior, the teacher will contact the parents by telephone or in writing. It may be necessary to schedule a meeting between the parents, teacher and administration to develop a plan to correct the student's misbehavior.

Personal Note or Notice of Concern

A personal communication or a Notice of Concern form is used primarily to communicate any inappropriate student behaviors to parents. The purpose of these notes is informational, as well as requesting parental support to the behavior indicated.

After-School Detentions

As misconduct becomes more serious in frequency or degree, detention is used as a more serious consequence. Detentions will also be given for tardiness. If a child is late four times within a grading period, a detention will be issued. After-school detentions are served for the designated time following dismissal.

Parents will be notified on the appropriate form before the after-school detention is to be served. This form is to be signed by the parent and returned to the teacher by the next day. Three after school detentions in a single grading period will result in a Saturday school.

Misbehaviors that **may** result in detention include, but are not limited to:

Four tardies in one grading period

General misbehavior

Classroom interruptions

Fighting

Forgery

Inappropriate language (both oral and written) and/or gestures

Inappropriate use of equipment, materials or facilities

Irreverence

Defacing property

Pushing, shoving, elbowing, kicking, biting, etc.

Possession of electronic equipment or inappropriate toys

Inappropriate use of computer technology

Loss of temper

Lying

Possession of beepers, cameras, recorders, electronic games, cell phones, iPods, Etc.

Disregard or disrespect toward others including but not limited to verbal, physical and/or non-verbal

Stealing

Defiance

Cheating, plagiarizing, copying, and allowing any work to be copied

Inappropriate use of cell phone during the school day or school-sponsored events. (see Section 1800)

Throwing or tossing objects in a manner which might affect the safety of others

Leaving designated premises without permission

Three Uniform or Dress Code violations in one grading period

Conduct outside of school that is detrimental to the Guardian Angels Catholic School reputation

The severity of any offense may require more than a detention

Disciplinary Probation

When needed, a child may be put on disciplinary probation, following a meeting with administration, appropriate staff, School Counselor and parents.

On-site Services

Service can be utilized in situations where additional consequences are deemed appropriately by administration.

Suspension from School Activities (Field Trips, Extracurricular Events and Activities)

A more serious misconduct or the third behavioral detention in the same grading period will result in a suspension from activities for up to 45 school days. This suspension may extend into the following school year.

Saturday School

A more serious misconduct or the third behavioral detention in the same grading period will result in a Saturday School assignment. This also includes a suspension from activities. The assigned date and time of day is not negotiable. Students may be assigned work or study time or both.

Saturday School begins promptly at 8:00 AM, and students will not be admitted after that time. The fee for Saturday School is \$100.00 for the session. Payment must be made by check when the child enters the Saturday session; Saturday School will not be served without payment at the student's entrance. A fee of \$25.00 will be charged to parents who do not pick up their child promptly at 11:00.

Parents will be notified in writing about the date of the Saturday School before the penalty is scheduled. The principal **may** meet with the parents to discuss possible solutions to the student's behavior problems, either before or after the Saturday School is assigned.

A demerit system and disciplinary probation begin with the assignment of Saturday School.

A Disciplinary Advisory Committee has been organized to assist the administrative team in determining the consequences necessary for student behavior. The committee is made up of five Guardian Angels School teachers who serve a one-year term. This group is neither a hearing board nor an appeals board and does not meet with parents or students. The administration team may, with good cause, override the recommendations of the committee and assign a different consequence. The principal will notify the student's parents in writing about the penalty.

Misbehaviors that earn from 0 to 6 demerits may include, but are not limited to:

Consistent profanity, swearing, and/or improper gestures

Possession or use of tobacco products

Vandalism

Possession of pornographic material

Possession of prescribed or non-prescribed drugs, drug utensils or paraphernalia, or look alike (counterfeit) substances

Ingestion of any substance, object, or item not intended or commonly used as a food.

Verbal harassment such as but not limited to derogatory comments, belligerent slurs, threatening words, or baiting (Section 1275)

Physical harassment such as but limited to unwanted touching or contact, deliberate impeding or blocking movement, or intimidating interference with movement (Section 1275)

Visual harassment such as but not limited to demeaning, derogatory, or inflammatory writing, drawing, or gesturing (Section 1275)

Sexual harassment such as but not limited to improper or immoral touching, sexually degrading written or spoken or gesturing language, pictures, or objects (Section 1275)

Possession of any weapon that may inflict harm including guns and explosives

Assault

Failure to serve Saturday School will lead to a suspension.

When the student's misbehavior has escalated to include Saturday School the principal, based on the recommendation of the Disciplinary Advisory Committee, may request or require guidance or counseling. If it is a required condition of continued enrollment, the guidance or counseling services working with other supports must produce an acceptable change in the student's behavior.

The Disciplinary Advisory Committee will advise the principal of the appropriate demerits to be assigned and if any further action is necessary. After review, the Disciplinary Advisory Committee may recommend a student's accumulated demerits be reduced following improved behavior for a period of time.

Suspension from School

Suspension from school is a very serious penalty. As a guide, the Disciplinary Advisory Committee may recommend to the principal a suspension from school based on the number of demerits assigned. The suspension from school includes all activities during the suspension, including graduation for the eighth grade students.

Students may be suspended from school as the consequence for the first incident of misbehavior. Upon the decision of the administrative team, suspensions may be served in or out of school.

When the administrative team issues a suspension, the school pastor and the student's pastor are notified before the student's parents. After the pastors are notified, the principal will schedule a meeting with the student's parents. The student will be suspended from school at the time determined by the principal and the student will not return to school until the parents meet with the principal (even if the suspension has been served).

Students who are suspended from school must make up all tests, quizzes, reports, and projects due during the suspension. They must be completed within the time determined by the administration.

Withdrawal and Expulsion

A more serious misconduct or an accumulation of 6 demerits as a student at Guardian Angels Catholic School may result in either voluntary withdrawal or expulsion, as recommended by the Disciplinary Advisory Committee and acted upon by the principal.

Before the principal makes a final decision about voluntary withdrawal or expulsion, the principal must discuss the situation with the child's pastor and the pastor of the school. The child's parents and child will meet with the principal after the principal discusses the situation with the child's pastor and the pastor of the school. When a student is expelled from GACS, the expulsion is not accompanied with any type of recommendation.

In some cases, the Disciplinary Advisory Committee may recommend an option of voluntary withdrawal with expulsion if the option of withdrawal is not used. In other cases, the option may not be recommended.

It is important to understand that the decision to ask parents to voluntarily withdraw their child or to expel a child is the decision of the principal. Even though the principal may consult the School Advisory Board, the Disciplinary Advisory Committee, the assistant principal, and the pastors, the final decision is determined by the principal. In almost all instances of misbehavior there is a failure to treat people as a creation made in the image of God. If everyone treated others the way they would want to be treated, there would be fewer disciplinary problems and more time developing Gospel values in our children.

Eighth Grade

Any serious discipline problems with an eighth grade student may result in the forfeit of any or all 8th Grade activities including the Graduation Ceremony. This decision is left up to the discretion of the Administration Team. Parents will be informed in writing of the decision.

Extent of Code

Infractions of civil or criminal law, on or off site, within or outside the academic year, may result in disciplinary action.

Due Process

The due process of students is reserved for serious disciplinary actions, expulsion, and not for less serious behavioral problems or academic situations. The due process procedure is available from the school office only after a student has been expelled.

The Middle School Bank of Discipline

Each quarter, the student receives 8 Angel Dollars. Infractions, as listed below, require different monetary amounts as a consequence for a particular action. Each dollar correlates to one point in an 8-point system, which renews each grading period.

These Dollars are used for the management of everyday infractions that while disruptive to the respectful learning environment we are all striving for, are not so serious in nature as to warrant an after school detention or different consequences imposed by the disciplinary committee.

An Administration Intervention form will be used after four (4) Angel dollar deductions or two Multi-teacher deductions. A lunch detention will be assigned after the Administration Intervention form has been issued and signed by the parent.

Dollars are not directly linked to after school detentions, however, if a child has lost all of his/her dollars and another infraction occurs, it then will cause him/her to serve an after school detention due to behavioral misconduct. The occurrence of a second infraction after having been out of money will result in another after school detention. If the child made yet another poor choice, the discipline committee would then meet to discuss what action to take next so that the child take responsibility for his/her actions, learn from their mistake, and realize that there is a consequence to every decision. The discipline committee could opt for an in-school suspension, an out of school suspension, Saturday School or expulsion depending on the gravity of the situation. Loss of money is not the only thing that can lead to an after school detention as serious infractions may call for an after school detention right from the start.

In this system, the students would be motivated to retain as much money as possible for the following reasons:

- In order to participate in any “extra” activities, i.e. dances and field trips, the student must have at least ONE dollar.
- At the end of each quarter, an activity will occur for qualified students. Ineligible students will complete mandatory classroom assignments.

Detentions issued for infractions other than those listed on the Middle School Discipline Plan (next page) will impact the student’s ability to participate in the activity. Upon the receipt of the third detention within a grading period, the student becomes ineligible to participate.

“Earn Back “ System

Students may earn dollars back for significant improvement in the teacher’s classroom from whom they lost the dollar(s) initially. This “Earn Back” system is appropriate for disrespect, defiance and disruption violations only. The teacher will initiate this process when deemed appropriate. Multi-teacher daily dollar deductions do not qualify for the “Earn Back” system.

After-school detentions will also be assigned after (3) dress code violations and four tardies in one grading period.

Documentation of this program will be available for the parents in the discipline section of Edline.

SECTION 700 ENROLLMENT PROCESS

700

Initial Application for Enrollment

Parents make the initial application to enroll their child in Guardian Angels Catholic School during January of the academic year before the child begins kindergarten. When students transfer from another school with a K-8 program parents should make the initial application as soon as possible anytime during the calendar year. If the class is filled, parents may include their child's name on the waiting list after the initial application for enrollment has been completed.

Children entering kindergarten must be five-years-old by September 1 of the year they begin. Grade placement for transfer students and home-schooled students will be determined by placement at the previous school of enrollment or by the principal of Guardian Angels Catholic School after consulting with parents, former teachers, and the current Guardian Angels staff.

Pastors of the four feeder parishes determine the priority order for those to be accepted at all levels. The waiting list is determined primarily by the order of initial application and may be modified at the discretion of the school pastor. Catholic school transfers and siblings do not have priority movement to the top of the waiting list but they do receive consideration. Catholic students from the four feeder parishes will have priority, followed by students whose parents are registered in area parishes other than the four feeder parishes. Non-Catholic students are included at the end of the waiting list. Parents who will be moving into the area should request a letter from their current pastor, which indicates the level of parish participation and whether their children were enrolled in the Catholic school.

Parent Checklist For The Initial Application For Enrollment

- ❖ Contact the school for a tour.
- ❖ Pick up application packet from parish office.
- ❖ Make an appointment to meet with the pastor.
- ❖ Meet with the pastor.
- ❖ Return the completed forms to the school office with a non-refundable application for enrollment fee per student.

Annual Re-Registration

Parents re-register their children for continued enrollment in Guardian Angels Catholic School annually. This process begins in January for the academic year beginning in August. The parents must complete the "ANNUAL RE-REGISTRATION FORM" and pay the annual family registration fee to maintain placement for their child or children.

Withdrawals

When parents wish to withdraw a student from Guardian Angels Catholic School, it is the responsibility of the parent to provide written notification indicating the date of withdrawal and the receiving school. School records will be sent only at the written request from the receiving school. All financial responsibilities must be settled and all books returned before any school records will be sent to another school. All records are sent from Guardian Angels Catholic School directly to the accepting school.

Guardian Angels Catholic School does NOT release student's discipline records to other schools (High School or transfer)

Recommendation for admission or placement to any schools will be written or completed by GACS staff. Records will be sent upon written request from the receiving school. All high school placements come through the School Counselor's Office. Copies of all original documents will be sent to the accepting school. GACS keeps the original records a minimum of ninety-nine years. Guardian Angels requires up to five days to complete the necessary information and return it to the qualified professional requesting it. It is the parent's responsibility to enroll eighth grade students in the high school of their choice. Parents should contact the high school of their choice directly for the school's specific registration requirements. Parents need to get a student ID number assigned and/or go to the high school to register. (Public schools)

When a student is withdrawn from school prior to the end of the academic year, the family will be responsible for paying an early withdrawal fee. The fee will be equivalent to two months tuition. If tuition is paid monthly, the family is responsible for paying the remainder of the current month in addition to the withdrawal fee. If tuition is paid annually or semi-annually, there will be a prorated refund less the withdrawal fee.

SECTION 800
EQUIPMENT USAGE

800

Guardian Angels Catholic School contains a variety of educational, safety and maintenance equipment. Students should not use or handle equipment unless they have been specifically authorized to do so and properly supervised. When school equipment is damaged through negligence or unauthorized use, the party at fault is held financially responsible.

SECTION 900 EXTENDED DAY

Guardian Angels Catholic School operates an Extended Day program only for its students. It begins at dismissal and ends at 6:00 PM on all the days students are in attendance with the exception of the following: the last day of student attendance before Thanksgiving; Christmas; spring; and summer vacations. It is also available on Early Dismissal days. On these days students are required to pack their lunches since no Alternative Lunch is available.

Extended day offers students a variety of activity areas including games, reading, art, homework, listening, crafts, and outside play. Snacks from home must properly be packaged and contained.

Security is an important concern. Parents must list the names of all drivers who have permission to pick up children from the extended day area

The registration fee is \$10.00 per family. The application process includes payment of the fee and completion of the registration form. This process must be completed before students attend the extended day program. All parents are encouraged to register their students in case of an unexpected need or emergency. The cost for students enrolled in the program full time is \$165.00 per month for the first child, \$130.00 per month for the second child, \$100.00 per month for the third child, and \$80.00 per month for the fourth child. To take advantage of the monthly fee, all payments must be made before the beginning of the month.

Parents who use extended day on a regular basis, but not for the full amount of time every month, may also pay for the month in advance. This will avoid having to write a daily check.

Parents who use the service on an occasional schedule must pay by check daily. A one-day voucher may be issued, instead of payment, but this must be paid by the next school day. If the office does not receive this, the student(s) will not be able to use the service until it is paid.

The cost for all students enrolled on a daily or occasional schedule is:

1. \$ 5.00 from dismissal until 4:00 pickup;
2. \$15.00 for the first child from dismissal until 6:00 pickup;
3. \$ 5.00 for each sibling from dismissal until 6:00 pick up.

These charges include students who must go to extended day because their drivers were not available at the 2:45 dismissal. These rates reflect full school day schedule.

On Early Dismissal days the following rate schedule is applied for all students enrolled on a daily or occasional schedule:

1. \$10.00 from dismissal until 4:00 pickup;
2. \$15.00 for the first child from dismissal until 6:00 pickup;
3. \$ 5.00 for each sibling from dismissal until 6:00 pick up.

An additional fee of \$5.00 per five minutes will be charged for pick-up after 6:00 p.m.

When parents plan for their child to attend extended day on an occasional basis, they must inform the office before noon the day the service is requested. If parents wait until the afternoon, especially after 2:00, their request may not be communicated.

ALL PAYMENTS MUST BE MADE BY CHECK.

Participation in the Extended Day program is a privilege. The Student Code of Conduct and/or Middle School Bank of Discipline is in effect. Continued disregard for the rules may result in severe consequences as deemed appropriate by administration.

SECTION 1000
EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

1000

All school clubs and organizations must be officially recognized and approved by the administration in order to enjoy the privilege of using school facilities or its name. Every club requires either a faculty member or approved volunteer advisor.

Students who participate in the extra-curricular activities at Guardian Angels Catholic School must be currently enrolled in the school.

Students can **NOT** participate in any extra-curricular activity on a day when they have been absent **or are serving an after-school detention**

No questionnaires from extra-curricular sources will be completed by the school.

For specific information regarding Athletics, see Section 200.
For specific information regarding Discipline, see Section 600.

SECTION 1100 FAITH AND WORSHIP

1100

Faith Sharing Committee

The Faith Sharing Committee is a volunteer group of parents who hope to create an environment to inspire all those who participate in the school (parents, faculty, and students) to grow spiritually. The D.R.E. along with the administrative team are responsible for determining activities and responsibilities

Non – Catholic Students

Non – Catholic students fully participate in the both classroom religion curriculum and liturgical celebrations. Non – Catholic students are invited to receive a blessing. They may not receive Reconciliation or Eucharist.

Religious Celebrations

Since Guardian Angels Catholic School is an inter-parochial Catholic school, pastors from the four feeder parishes: St. Michael the Archangel, St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Luke and All Saints provide religious celebrations to the students and staff of Guardian Angels

Religious Education

Guardian Angels Catholic School exists because we believe religion is the foundation of education and the purpose of our lives. Religion is integrated in the curriculum from kindergarten through the eighth grade. The staff believes in religious instruction, as well as a living faith.

Retreats

❖ Eighth Grade Retreat

The eighth grade students participate in special retreats during the school year. Parents are responsible for providing transportation to and from both of these retreats.

❖ Middle School Retreats

The Middle School classes will participate in full day on-site retreats during the year.

Sacramental Preparation

❖ Confirmation

Each parish established their own Confirmation program according to diocese guidelines. Parents and their children will be expected to participate in the activities and meetings of their respective parish.

❖ Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist

Students in Grade 2 will be prepared for the first reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist. Students and their parents will be expected to participate, as instructed by the pastor of their local parish, in the activities/meetings prior to the reception of the sacraments. The first reception of these sacraments takes place in the family parish.

SECTION 1200 FIELD TRIPS

1200

Field trips to nearby points of interest are scheduled by teachers throughout the school year. These excursions are designed to enrich the curriculum and introduce students to the resources of our community. Parents will receive notice of scheduled field trips well in advance of the trip date and will be required to sign the official field trip permission forms. **Only the official diocesan permission slip is acceptable.** A **non-refundable** amount of money will be requested from each student.

At the request of the teacher, parents are encouraged to attend field trips with their Guardian Angel's student as chaperones. All chaperones need to have their Level II background check filed in the office, as well as attend the diocesan Safe Environment training.

Commercial bus transportation is used for field trips.

Field trips are a privilege not a right. Appropriate daily behavior determines a student's eligibility to be invited to attend the field trip. Students who exhibit a pattern of inappropriate behavior and/or insufficient academic responsibility may be prohibited from participating in field trips.

Students not invited are required to attend school. They will be given appropriate assignments to complete. In the case of a student absence, the assignments **must be** completed within the timeframe determined by the classroom teachers and/or administration.

SECTION 1225 FUND RAISING

1225

Eighth Grade Gift

The eighth grade class leaves a gift to the school upon graduation. An eighth grade gift committee consisting of a parent representing each eighth grade homeroom, eighth grade homeroom teachers, assistant principal, and the president and vice president of Student Council. The goal of the committee is to select gift ideas and organize fundraisers to purchase the gift. Final gift selection and fundraising ideas are presented and approved by the principal and school pastor. The cost of the gift should not exceed a designated amount per student. All monies for the gift will be raised by the students.

Parent-Faculty Association (PFA)

The Parent – Faculty Association organizes several major fund raising activities every year. These include but not limited to the gift-wrap paper sale, the annual auction and the Classroom Angels Sponsorship Program. The PFA also provides social and community-building activities throughout the year.

Requests

Fund raising activities must receive approval from the administration in conjunction with either the First Vice President of the PFA or the Advancement Committee. All suggestions must be submitted in a timely fashion on the appropriate form available in the school office. After review, the committee will inform the presenter suggesting the fundraiser whether or not it will be included in the fundraising schedule.

SECTION 1250 GUIDANCE

1250

School Counselor

Counseling and initial screening services are available for students. These services require parental permission.

Classroom and small group sessions may include, but not limited to the following topics. Classroom teachers may suggest other pertinent topics.

Grades K-1:	Academic Skills	Social Skills
	Listening	Sharing
	Following directions	Self-esteem
	Following rules	Conflicts
Grades 2-3:	Staying on task	Respect others
	Homework	Self-control
	Completing assignments	Friends
	Setting Goals	Peer pressure
Grades 4-5:	Following directions	Communication
	Motivation	Stress Management
	Study skills	Manners
	Time management	Values
Grades 6-8:	Team Building	Conflict resolution
	Study skills	Prayer
	Academic success	Anger management
	Time management	Teen spirituality
	Communication	Peer relationships
	Careers	Self-esteem

Limited individual sessions are available. Students are encouraged to initiate contact with the school counselor. The initial contact is used to determine the nature of the situation and may be initiated by the student, teacher, parent, counselor, or principal. The school counselor is available to provide support as needed. The counselor will not meet with any student whose parent has submitted a written request for no contact. In some cases, referrals will be made as the situation warrants.

School counseling is not psychological, but rather academic, behavior and social. Parents may request testing services for intellectual and/or academic achievement. These assessments may be used as screening tools for further evaluation or to qualify for gifted programs.

Student cumulative records are maintained by the Data Processing Specialist.

Counseling Services

1. Testing Services

Individual testing services are available to all students. Testing can be requested by the parent or the classroom teacher.

- ❖ Individual intelligence testing
- ❖ Individual achievement testing

These testing services are a useful screening tool before requesting formal testing either privately or through ADAPT. The Pinellas County Public Schools accept this individual intelligence testing as part of their requirement for application to the Gifted program.

2. Referral Services

All referrals and questionnaires for private and public school testing or evaluation are coordinated through the school counselor **as the** Director of Student Support and/or the Student Intervention Team. The counselor **as** Director of Student Support will also secure any required consent to release confidential information. All requests require the parent to complete and submit the Consent to Release Confidential Information form.

3. Coordination

- ❖ Student Support plans and team meetings as needed.
- ❖ Dual enrollment for any EP or IEP services with the Pinellas County Public Schools

SECTION 1275 HARASSMENT

Guardian Angels Catholic School, Clearwater, Florida strives to establish a Christian, professional and supportive educational community for administrators, faculty and staff, parents and students. The diocese of St. Petersburg has adopted and promulgated a harassment policy for its schools/centers that addresses behaviors that interfere with fulfilling the school's mission. We, at Guardian Angels Catholic School, condemn any form of harassment. Concerns should be reported directly to the school/center administrator. All credible allegations will be addressed to the Diocesan Policy.

Harassment and Reporting Procedures

The Diocese of St. Petersburg has policies and procedures to address harassment situations in schools and early childhood centers. The complete policy is available for review in the school office of each entity.

Explanation of Harassment

Harassment can result from a single incident or from a pattern of behavior involving verbal, written or physical conduct or communication.

Harassment encompasses a broad range of behaviors, which could include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical, mental or verbal abuse
2. Insult, jokes or derogatory slurs based on one or more of an individual's protected status(es)
3. Unwelcome sexual advances or touching
4. Implicit or explicit requests for sexual favors
5. Unwanted sexual comments (serious or humorous)
6. Unwanted sexually suggestive telephone calls, letters, e-mail, etc.
7. Comments or jokes based on issues of modesty and developing social awareness
8. Unwanted forced involvement in activities (e.g. physical, religious, etc.)
9. Coercion of religious styles or personal beliefs upon a participant
10. Intimidation in front of a group or forced personal sharing in groups
11. Inappropriate media or music use which would violate this policy

Reporting Procedures

1. If an individual believes (s)he is being harassed or feels uncomfortable with the actions or comments of another, or observes harassment of another person, the individual, individual's parents or guardian must report his/her concerns **in writing** to the principal. A diocesan form covering all of the necessary information is available.
2. The principal or pastor determines the credibility of the allegation in light of the policy definitions.

3. Once a report of offensive comments or actions is determined to be credible, it will be promptly and carefully investigated.
4. The cooperation by all individuals involved in a complaint is necessary to properly and equitably conduct the investigation
5. If a complainant does not wish to file a complaint of harassment with the principal/director the complainant may inform the pastor and/or the Diocesan Superintendent to determine whether or not the complaint will be sent to the school/center principal/director for investigation.
6. Individuals who engage in behavior which violates this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion and any legal consequences.
7. Individuals should recognize that knowingly and willfully bringing false accusations of harassment or discrimination can have serious effects on innocent individuals and may subject such individuals to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The right of confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected to the extent possible, but will be consistent with legal obligations and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.

SECTION 1300 HEALTH

Accidents and Illness

Every serious accident in the school building, on the school grounds, and at school athletic sessions must be reported immediately to the person in charge, who in turn, must report it to the school office. The school will make every effort to inform parents if an accident or illness occurring at school needs care or observation at home. Students will not be sent home unless a responsible adult is present in the home. Please refer to Medical Emergency Procedure in this section.

Parents must keep contact phone numbers updated so the school can notify them in a timely manner. If a student becomes ill during school hours, he/she must notify the teacher before going to the school clinic which is located in the office area.

Guidelines Regarding Allergies

Guardian Angels Catholic School (GACS) will work reasonably with its staff, students, parents and physicians to minimize the risks associated with allergies with a goal of providing a safe environment for all students.

Parents' responsibilities:

1. Complete an Allergy Authorization and Consent Form signed by a physician documenting all allergies and treatment plan if reaction occurs. This form can be downloaded from Edline.
2. Provide, in writing, an update if other allergies occur, or recommendation for treatment changes.

School's responsibilities:

1. Reasonably inform staff of students' allergies.
2. Educate and train staff on effective emergency response to allergic reaction situation.

In case of an emergency, the Medical Emergency Procedure found in Section 1300 in the Parent/Student Handbook will be followed.

Communicable Disease Reference Chart

The Pinellas County Health Department, Health Information Management, has recommended the following absences from school for the diseases listed on page 1302. Students may return to school earlier with written approval from a physician. Students coming in contact without symptoms need not stay home unless advised by a physician.

Contagious Disease

Any student who has or has had a contagious disease must present a note from a physician stating that he is well enough to return to school. In the case that a child becomes ill at school, it will be the responsibility of the parents or guardian to pick the child up in a reasonable amount of time. When the school has official notification of a contagious situation, the school will, in turn, inform the parents involved.

Health Appointments

Parents are encouraged to schedule all doctor and dentist appointments outside of school hours. When emergency demands, the appointment should be made as early or late in the school day as possible. If you know in advance that your child has an appointment, please send the office a note prior to the absence. Please pick your child up in the school office. The student must make up all work missed due to appointments.

Health Examinations

Parents must submit a copy of a health examination conducted by a physician on or before the first day of attendance. The health examination must have been made within one year of entry. Annual health examinations are also required for all students in Grades 5 – 8 participating in sports. This must be done after July 1st of the year they wish to participate.

1301

Head Lice

Children get lice at family gatherings, social events, athletic contests, group activities, and school. Lice do not cause disease and pets are not carriers. Lice cannot live without human contact for more than 48 hours. The best treatment is to use shampoo specifically formulated to kill lice, wash all combs and brushes with the shampoo, and wash any clothing worn in the last 48 hours. School personnel or a doctor should check students returning to school after treatment.

Immunization Records

The State of Florida requires each student, upon his entrance into school, to present a certification of immunization for prevention of communicable diseases. Children entering kindergarten are required to have completed the hepatitis B vaccination series and the varicella (chicken pox vaccine) or a physician's verification of chicken pox. A second dose of measles vaccine (preferably MMR) is required of children attending grades K through 5. Children entering grade 7 are required to have completed hepatitis B vaccination series, a second measles vaccination (preferably MMR) and a tetanus -diphtheria-persussis booster. (Tdap)

Failure to comply with this policy will require the student to remain out of school until the appropriate documentation is presented to the school.

Insurance

Student insurance is provided for all students. This policy runs from the first day to the last day of student attendance. The accident must be reported to the school office promptly following the accident in order to file an insurance claim. Claim forms are available in the school office and must be completed and returned to the school for mailing to the insurance company within 30 days of the accident.

Medical Emergency Procedure

In case of a medical emergency, the following procedure will be followed:

- ❖ First aid will be administered on site and if deemed necessary, 911 will be notified.
- ❖ Parent/guardian will be notified.

Medication

Please be sure to contact the classroom or homeroom teacher if your child has any unusual health problems. **No student is to carry medication of any kind which includes non – prescription drugs.** For students taking prescription medicines, a medication permission form signed by a physician and the parent or guardian must be on file in the office. Over-the-counter medicines only need a medication form signed by a parent or guardian. Please note that all medication must be brought to the office by the parent/guardian and must be in its original container. Medication will be taken independently by the student in the presence of school personnel. Children may carry inhalers and epipens at all times.

Pandemic Awareness Plan

In an effort to be proactive instead of reactive, a well – defined plan has been developed for the current health concern known as the H1N1 Flu, or “Swine Flu”. This plan has been developed so that staff, parents, and students will be well – informed. This has not been developed to create panic, but quite the opposite. A clearly defined plan will enable us to remain calm and implement the necessary precautions should it become necessary to do so.

Parent Responsibilities

- ❖ KEEP SICK CHILDREN HOME! In the case of a fever, your child MUST be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school.
- ❖ Parents must call the school when your child is going to be absent. You will be required to give the school secretary the nature of your child's illness. Please be prepared to give the symptoms, the course of treatment, if you have seen a doctor, etc.
- ❖ Be prepared to take your child to a doctor at the request of the administration. Download Physician's Form for the return to school from Edline.
- ❖ Update Emergency Contact information in the office if it has changed since the beginning of school.
- ❖ Make sure your Edline and Honeywell (Emergency and High Importance specifications) accounts are updated with any new contact information. These two communication systems will be utilized to convey important information to all parents and staff.
- ❖ Develop a child care plan in the event that we would need to close for a period of time.
- ❖ Review proper hygiene habits with your child; proper hand washing techniques, sneezing into a tissue or sleeve, sharing water bottles, etc.

Safety

Fire drills are held in order to ensure that the children are prepared in case of emergency. Tornado and other types of emergency drills are held periodically. Visitors in the school building during an emergency drill are required to participate.

Safety Patrols are provided before school in order to help with the arrival procedures. Children are encouraged to respect the patrols and follow whatever direction they are given.

Smoke Free Environment

Guardian Angels School is a smoke free campus. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the premises.

DISEASE	INCUBATION	RETURN TO SCHOOL
Chicken Pox	14-16 days; sometimes 10-21 days	6 days after onset of rash or if lesions are crusted
Common Cold	12-72 hours	Rest at home with temperature or too uncomfortable at school
Head Lice	Louse egg 6-10 days	When child is nit free
Hepatitis A	25-30 days avg.; 15-50 days	Excluded for one week after onset of illness
Hepatitis B	120 days avg.; 40-160 days	Symptom free or note from physician
Impetigo	1-10 days common	24 hours after treatment with topical or oral antibiotic; sores covered
Influenza	1-3 days	5 days after onset of symptoms; when signs of illness are no longer present
Measles	16-18 days usual; 14-21 days possible	7 days after onset of rash
Meningitis	Varies	Physician's approval
Mumps	16-18 days avg; 12-25 days possible	9 days after onset of swelling
Pink Eye	24-72 hours	Isolation unnecessary
Ringworm	Unknown	Ringworm of scalp requires note from physician
Whooping Cough	7-10 days avg. 6-20 days possible	5 days after initiation of erythromycin therapy
The return to school times mentioned above is recommendations involving uncomplicated cases.		

SECTION 1400
LUNCH

1400

All students must bring a lunch from home or purchase an alternative lunch. Beverages may be purchased with a packed lunch or an alternative lunch.

Alternative lunches are ordered electronically on a monthly basis. All orders **MUST** be completed by the designated date. Menus are available on-line at the time of ordering.

If a student forgets a lunch, the student must report to the school office. If the lunch is delivered by the student's parent, it will be given to the student before lunchtime. If the lunch was not delivered, a voucher for an alternative lunch will be given to the student. The student's parent will be charged **\$3.00** for each voucher. The forgotten beverage charge is \$1.00. Voucher payments will be added to the lunch account and should be paid by the end of the month. No lunch vouchers will be issued to students if an outstanding bill exists. Students will not be allowed to telephone home for forgotten lunches.

Failure to keep your account up to date may result in academic records and report cards being held until the entire balance is paid.

Parents must notify the school office in writing if their child is allergic to specific food items. This information will be kept on record.

SECTION 1500 OFFICE

1500

Check Writing

Checks must be written for every payment; that is, one cover-all check for milk, alternative lunches, tuition, the capital campaign, field trip fees, and so forth, will not be accepted. Such a process places an impossible bookkeeping task on our secretary and bookkeeper; therefore, a separate check must be written for every payment. A fee of \$25.00 will be charged for returned checks.

Interruptions

If there is an emergency, a message may be given to a child through the office. Students will not be called to the phone.

Lost and Found

Lost and found articles are kept for a brief time. Articles that remain for more than four (4) weeks are given to charity, disposed of, or kept for the uniform exchange. **Please mark your child(ren)'s belongings with his/her name to prevent Lost and Found from becoming overloaded.**

Office Hours

The main office located in St. Gabriel, will be open from 7:30 until 3:30 every day students are in attendance. A summer schedule of office hours will be given to parents prior to school closing in June.

Telephones

Children will not be allowed to call home to secure forgotten items (including homework). Responsibility for these things is the child's. A child should be made to accept the consequences if he/she comes to school unprepared either with the day's work or the day's materials. Please remember that the office and hall telephones are business phones and should be used only in emergencies. Students engaged in after school activities may bring cell phones to school. They are to be off and kept in their backpacks at all times. (See Section 1800 for cell phone guidelines) Failure to abide by these guidelines will result in a consequence.

SECTION 1600
OFF-LIMIT AREAS

1600

Guardian Angels Catholic School is maintained and operated for the benefit of our students. However, common sense and safety considerations dictate the designation of a few off-limit areas where students are not allowed. These include storage areas, teachers' work areas, teachers' lunchroom, maintenance areas, construction zones, and trash areas. Students are expected to cooperate and refrain from playing or visiting in these areas.

SECTION 1700
PARENT-FACULTY ASSOCIATION

1700

The purpose of the Parent Faculty Association is to cultivate positive relationships between home, school, parish and the community. It provides financial assistance to the school by directing school fund-raising programs and also provides a system of service hours for the association to aid the program. Opportunities for guest speakers and educational programs for parents are offered.

There are at least three (3) general meetings during the school year. All parents are encouraged to attend. Appropriate issues, as determined by the PFA president and school administrator, may be addressed by any parent at a board meeting or general meeting. In both cases, the request must be submitted to the President, in writing, no less than two weeks before the meeting in question.

SECTION 1800 PERSONAL PROPERTY

1800

Every personal item such as clothing, lunch items, books, etc., must be labeled with the child's name, grade, and room number. If all adheres to this regulation, there will be no need for a lost and found.

Expensive articles (such as jewelry, CD players, iPods, electronic equipment, etc.) hazardous to the safety of others and/ or interfere with school procedure are not permitted on school grounds. Items that are a distraction to a teacher or a class will be taken from the child and returned only to the parent on request.

Cell phones are permissible for students involved in the after-school extra-curricular programs. Students must abide by the cell phone guidelines outlined below.

Cell Phone Guidelines for Students

In order to insure a safe environment and an optimal learning environment, it is necessary to establish some guidelines for cell phone usage by students. Some issues of concern are the use of cell phone for illegal purposes, the disruption of the learning environment and the invasion of privacy.

The following are some suggested guidelines for establishing a policy for cell phone usage for students:

1. Cell phones must be kept in the off position from 7:25 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
2. No cell phones may be used for picture taking.
3. No harassment or threatening of persons via the cell phone is permitted.
4. Cell phones may not be used for game playing, internet or e-mail access, text messaging, gambling or making purchases of any kind at school or school-sponsored events.
5. For students attending Extended Day, their cell phone must remain off until they are picked up from Extended Day.
6. Those who violate any of the rules regarding cell phones will have the phone confiscated until a parent can claim it. Students will forfeit the privilege of bringing a cell phone to school if there is a second violation. Repeated violations will be handled within the school's disciplinary code.
7. Where appropriate, infractions will be handled within the published code of conduct.

SECTION 1900
PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION AND RULES

1900

School staff will supervise the playground during morning and afternoon recesses. At least two adults are on the playground during regularly scheduled breaks. The playground is not supervised after school and students are expected to leave for home immediately following dismissal. For the sake of safety and order, students must obey all playground rules. The playground is provided solely for enrolled students of GACS.

SECTION 2000 RESOLVING PROBLEMS

2000

A fundamental principle of Catholic school education is that parents are the primary educators of their children. Catholic schools exist as extensions of that parental responsibility.

Confusion sometimes develops about the role of the Catholic school and the relationships that exist between parents and the school. A Catholic school is not a public institution; most of the “rules” of public schools do not apply to Catholic schools. A Catholic school is not a private facility; it is neither exclusive nor pretentious. A Catholic school is not a family of its members; it is more of a community of Catholic families who are interested in an education invested with faith.

Guardian Angels Catholic School, with leadership provided by the school pastor and the Office of Catholic Schools and Centers of the Diocese of St. Petersburg, serves four parishes. This inter-parochial concept flourishes in faith when parents, students, teachers, and administration understand that the school is a ministry of four parishes. It is not a substitute for faith nurtured and developed in the parish. It is a ministry of parishes, which provides academic subjects to be learned with faith as the foundation.

Parents and guardians who experience problems or are confused about something regarding their child’s education at Guardian Angels are asked to first learn the reasons behind a policy or procedure before forming an opinion. Those who are not satisfied with what they have learned are asked to approach administration to investigate the matter.

Parents and guardians are asked to follow these guidelines for expressing concern about a school situation.

1. If a problem involves routine procedures such as homework, class assignments, classroom behavior, or student-to-student problems, **the parent must contact the teacher first**. The best way to approach a teacher is through a phone call to the school to have the teacher contact the parent with a return call. Parents should never bring up difficult or serious matters within hearing range of other students or parents.
2. If the problem is more serious, the parent must inform the principal in writing or by telephone. Only signed notes or callers who identify themselves will be seriously considered. Due to school responsibilities, the principal may not be immediately available. Patience in scheduling an appointment or waiting for a return call is requested, as other children may be requiring more immediate attention.
3. We attempt to give prompt attention to problems, privacy in discussing all matters, professional courtesy and respect when problems are presented. There is always a sincere effort to resolve problems in a Christian manner. Your children are our concern and we make decisions based on the spiritual, academic, physical, and psychological welfare of all of our students.
4. Parents and guardians are expected to demonstrate the same concern and respect for all Guardian Angels parents, students, teachers, non – certified staff, and administration. We will not tolerate assaults or harassment of students, parents, or member of the Guardian Angels staff. Nor will we tolerate intimidating or verbally abusing any member of the Guardian Angels community in person or in writing.

2001

5. Commission of any of the above acts on the part of a staff member will result in appropriate disciplinary action. Likewise, misconduct on the part of a parent, guardian, or family member may result in one of the following actions:

- a) Limiting or refusing permission to enter or use school grounds or facilities;
- b) Asking someone other than the person exhibiting poor behavior represent the child's interest in school matters;
- c) Refusing to allow the child to re – register;
- d) Initiating the withdrawal of the child from school.

Although problems will continue to occur, the process listed above will help to provide a Christian resolution.

Conflict Management Plan – 5 Step

Students need to learn how to manage conflict in a productive and age-appropriate way. Giving them guidelines on how to proceed with conflict management is vital. Therefore, the following Conflict Management Plan until the assistance on a designated staff member will assist them in learning how to recognize and resolve conflicts. This Plan will be used in all grade levels so that a consistency will evolve.

1. **Define the problem.** Ask each other the question: “How do you see the problem?” State facts in your communication - do not place blame. Then listen to each other's answer.
2. **Consider asking for help.** Sometimes it helps to ask a third person to work with you to solve the problem. Choose someone who will listen to both of you and not take sides. This may be an adult or a classmate.
3. **Think of alternative solutions.** Think of as many ideas for solving the problem as you can. It may help to write them down. This step may also be called brainstorming. Again, you may ask your classmates for their suggestions.
4. **Evaluate the alternatives.** Ask yourselves, “What will happen if we try this solution?” Think of the possible outcomes you may achieve with each possible alternative. Be very honest with yourselves and each other.
5. **Make a decision.** Choose the alternative that looks like it has the best chance of working. Consider combining parts of two or more alternatives. Stick with your decision for a reasonable length of time to give it a chance to work. If it doesn't work, get together and choose a different solution. You may want to involve an adult or a classmate if you need help assessing your outcome

SECTION 2100 SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD

The School Advisory Board (SAB) is consultative in nature and function. It consists of 12 voting members and 8 ex-officio non-members. Four of the voting members are elected and the other eight are both a parent and a non-parent representative appointed by the pastor from each feeder parish. The eight ex-officio, non-voting members consist of the pastors from each of the four feeder parishes (St. Ignatius, St. Luke, All Saints and St. Michael), principal, assistant principal, teacher representative and the president of the Parent-Faculty Association (PFA).

The members assist the administrative team in the areas of planning, finances, policy, technology, physical plant, advancement, athletics, communications and evaluation in school's functioning. Recommendations in these areas may be formulated by this council and presented to the school pastor for his consideration and approval as local policies.

The administrative team is responsible for implementing local diocesan policies.

The School Advisory Board will ensure that such recommendations follow the intent and spirit of policies determined at the diocesan level.

The School Advisory Board meets periodically during the academic year.

SECTION 2200 SECURITY

Communication

The bi-weekly Parent Newsletter indicates schedule changes, field trips, planned activities, special programs, and so forth to parents and teachers to keep everyone aware of planned activities. This newsletter is posted on Edline.

Monitoring Service

GACS subscribes to a monitoring service for the security system in all buildings.

Supervision

Supervision is the most important element of security for our students. When students enter the building they move directly to their assigned supervised areas. In most cases, students move about the buildings with adult supervision. In the instances when this is not possible, students use the "buddy system" to move within or between the buildings. At the end of the day, students exit the buildings and move to the pick-up area under the supervision of teachers.

School Schedule

Students must not arrive at GACS before 7:25. They cannot be supervised before this time. They must be picked-up at the scheduled dismissal time unless they are serving a detention, being tutored, or participating in extracurricular activities. Students who are not picked up at the dismissal time will be taken to the Extended Day site. All outside doors will be locked at 3:30, with the exception of the front door in St. Raphael.

Volunteers and Visitors

Volunteers and visitors must sign in on the computer in St. Gabriel, print the visitor identification tag, and enter through the security door in St. Gabriel and proceed to their destination. Volunteers and visitors must wear the tag conspicuously. The exception to the tag requirement includes parents who come to see their children perform; visitors who are escorted by the secretaries, teachers, or administrators; and properly identified trades people who are on site to deliver items or repair facilities. When leaving GACS, sign out on the computer. Our students will be quick to notify their teachers if a volunteer or visitor is not properly tagged.

Extended Day

To improve security, attendance is taken when a student enters and exits the extended care facility. The time of the student's exit and the name of the person picking the student up are noted.

No student will be released to an adult who is not listed on the parent-approved list which had been provided to GACS by the parents/guardians.

No student will be unsupervised at any time during the Extended Day hours

Lighting

Lighting surrounding the building will be checked monthly and maintained regularly.

SECTION 2300 TUITION AND FEES

Providing a Catholic elementary school education for our children is a lifelong gift. A solid academic program infused with Catholic values delivered in a safe environment is fundamental to our mission. The Guardian Angels Catholic School Advisory Board recommends to the school pastor policies concerning tuition to insure financial resources are available for the school and that tuition remains affordable for parents.

Annual Registration Fee

Parents will pay a non-refundable annual registration fee. This is in addition to the initial enrollment fee for new students. Neither fee is considered part of tuition. The annual registration fee is paid at the time of re-registration, or the time of initial acceptance.

Book/Material Fee

Parents will annually pay a book/material fee per child at the designated time. If students lose/damage books or materials, parents will be billed for additional materials.

Tuition

Tuition includes the instructional fee and supplies the student will use during the year. It is payable over a ten or eleven-month period beginning in July and ending in April or May through the FACTS plan. Tuition payments made in the office at the designated time either by the semester or by the year. Tuition does not include beverages, meals, book clubs, field trips, special programs, uniforms, transportation, calculators, etc. **All parents must complete and sign a Tuition Agreement Payment Preference form and submit it to the Bookkeeper by the designated date.**

Methods of Payment

ANNUAL AND SEMI-ANNUAL TUITION OPTIONS INCLUDING FEES ARE LISTED BELOW

2301

FACTS MANAGEMENT MONTHLY PAYMENT INFORMATION

- ❖ Facts Management offers a 10 or 11-month debit system and begins July 5th or 20th of 2010.
- ❖ The last debit is either April 5 or 20th, 2011 for the 10-month debit and May 5th or 20th 2011 for the 11-month debit. There are no debits in June.
- ❖ The cost for this service is an **annual debit of \$38.00**, and will be debited from the designated account.
- ❖ A Peace of Mind insurance supplement is available through FACTS for \$12.00.
- ❖ All parents who are *new* to Guardian Angels or *new* to FACTS Management will receive a FACTS Tuition Management pamphlet that explains the monthly payment plan in more detail.
- ❖ Parent(s) who indicate they intend to use FACTS Management for the first time may log onto the GACS web site special FACTS link to register.
- ❖ The book and material fee for each student is \$250.00.
- ❖ You may continue to add the book and material fees to your **monthly** “FACTS Management Agreement” only if applicable.

A. FULL PAYMENT: Full payment for tuition is made by June 1 for the coming academic year. This payment is made directly to Guardian Angels Catholic School.

B. SEMESTER PAYMENTS: A two equal payments plan is available when parents pay one-half of the tuition by June 1 for the coming academic year and the remaining half by December 15.

C. MONTHLY PAYMENTS: Parents who use this plan sign an agreement with FACTS Management Co. to debit their checking or savings account over a ten or eleven month period beginning in July and ending in April or May. Parents authorize their bank to make automatic payments to FACTS on either the 5th or 20th of each month. There is a fee for this service.

Please keep in mind all fees, fines, and charges, including tuition payments and surcharges, must be paid in full by June 2 or one week before graduation for eighth grade students. Failure to make the payment will result in forfeiture of the privilege to participate in the graduation liturgy for eighth grade students. Failure to make payments in full for students in all grade levels by June 2 may include forfeiture of enrollment for the coming year. Cumulative records will not be sent to any accepting school until all debts are paid.

Policy Regarding Early Dismissal

When a student is withdrawn from school prior to the end of the academic year the family will be responsible for paying an early withdrawal fee. The fee will be equivalent to two months tuition. If tuition is paid monthly, the family is responsible for paying the remainder of the current month in addition to the withdrawal fee. If tuition is paid annually there will be a pro-rated refund less the withdrawal fee.

Tuition Assistance

A. **PARISH SUBSIDY:** With approval from our pastors, students receive a substantial reduction in their tuition as a gift from their respective parish. This payment is made directly to Guardian Angels Catholic School.

B. **TUITION ASSISTANCE SCHOLARSHIPS:** Whenever students are awarded tuition assistance scholarships, parents will be refunded the awarded amount when Guardian Angels Catholic School receives notification of the award from the source. It is common practice to receive the award in two installments. Parents who use the FACTS Management Co. monthly payment plan will benefit from reductions in the amounts debited from their accounts.

C. **GIFTS:** Whenever an anonymous or stated gift is received for a student's tuition, the amount will be credited to the parents' account.

D. **SISTER DEBORAH SCHOLARSHIP FUND:** Application through FACTS Tuition Aid and Assistance provides the verification of need for this scholarship. Information pertaining to this scholarship can be obtained through the school office.

Tuition Delinquency

All parents experiencing financial difficulty, who cannot pay tuition according to the agreement with their pastor, must meet with their pastor to determine a fair course of action. If parents are unwilling to make an alternative agreement with their parish pastor or, according to the pastor's judgment, do not offer valid rationale for not being current in their tuition payment, they will be informed to seek another education system for their child or bring their accounts current immediately.

Parents must be current in their payment of tuition:

BY AUGUST 1, or students will not be admitted on the first day of school;

BY DECEMBER 21, or students will not be admitted on the first day of class in January.

SECTION 2400 UNIFORMS

All Students

1. All parts of the uniform, except shoes and socks **MUST** be purchased from the approved uniform vendor: **Risse Brothers, 1710 N. Hercules Ave. Clearwater**
2. Shirts and blouses must be tucked in at all times.
3. Heels may not exceed 2 inches. No boots, sandals or sneakers may be worn with the daily uniform.
4. No non-uniform jackets may be worn. The uniform sweater, sweatshirt or jacket may be worn.
5. Leggings or sweatpants may not be worn under jumpers or skirts instead of tights.

Due to lack of changing facilities, students will be permitted to wear their physical education uniforms on the days they meet for physical education classes. (K-5 will meet two days each week; 6-8 will meet three days each week) On all other days, the regulation or religious service uniform must be worn.

Boys' Regulation Uniform for Grades K - 5

Navy trousers or shorts with dark leather belt
White knit shirt with logo, long or short sleeve (grades K-5)
School sweater, school sweatshirt or school jackets
White, dark navy or black socks
Vinyl or leather, low top, black or brown solid colored shoes

Boys' Regulation Uniform for Grades 6 - 8

Khaki trousers or shorts with **an appropriate** belt
White or navy knit shirt, long or short sleeve with logo
White oxford shirt with monogrammed collar (Optional for daily wear)
School sweater, school sweatshirt or school jacket
White, dark navy or black socks
Vinyl or leather, low top, black, brown, tan solid colored shoes

Girls' Regulation Uniform for Grades K - 5

Navy skort, walking shorts and/or long pants (belts with short and pants)
White knit shirt with logo, long or short sleeve
School sweater, school sweatshirt or school jacket
White socks (white, navy or black tights for cold weather)
Dress dark navy, black or brown (no patent leather or "chunky" heels)

Girls' Regulation Uniform for Grades 6 – 8

Khaki walking shorts and/or long pants with belt
White or navy knit shirt, long or short sleeve with logo
School sweater, school sweatshirt or school jacket
White socks (white tights for cold weather)
Dress dark navy, black, brown or tan shoes (no patent leather or "chunky" heels)

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Religious Service Uniform

Girls: Plaid school jumper (grades K-5) Khaki skirt or khaki long pants (grades 6 – 8)

White Peter Pan style blouse with monogram (grades K-5)

White oxford blouse with monogram (grades 6-8)

Boys: Trousers, no shorts, white oxford shirt with monogram, uniform tie

Physical Education Uniform

Navy shorts (from Risse's) with gray tee shirt with logo

Gray or navy sweatpants with the gray sweatshirt with logo for cold days

White or navy socks

Sneakers: conservative style (excludes lights, characters, bold or flashy colors)

Hair Styles

All students are expected to have a regular or conservative hairstyle. Boys' hair should be kept neatly trimmed above the eyebrows in the front, above the collar in the back, and not below the ears. All students: tails, coloring, severe haircuts, lines cut in the hair, shaved areas, or any style associated with values contrary to the philosophy of the school are not permitted. Students should be clean –shaven at all times.

Baseball caps are not part of the uniform and may not be worn in the building.

Jewelry

K-5

Jewelry is not to be worn with the uniform.

Exceptions: wristwatch, chain with small religious medal or cross, identification bracelet for medical or emergency purposes, small matching pierced earrings for girls (no hoops and nothing below the earlobe)

Only one earring per ear is permitted and no earrings for boys. Tattoos are not permitted. Makeup and nail polish are not permitted.

6-8

Jewelry: wristwatch, one bracelet, one ring, chain with small medal or cross, identification bracelet for medical or emergency purposes, small matching earrings for girls (no hoops and nothing below the earlobe) Only one earring per ear is permitted and no earrings for boys. Tattoos are not permitted. No make-up is permitted. Light pink or natural colored nail polish is permissible for middle school girls.

SECTION 2500 VOLUNTEERS / REQUIRED SERVICE HOURS

The PFA requires families to work 10 hours (5 for single parent families) per year for the school. **Please note: Divorce does not constitute single parent if custody is shared.** Each family is required to volunteer in the lunchroom for at least one day during the school year. To fulfill this lunchroom obligation, the volunteer must arrive no later than 11AM on the day they are scheduled, and work until the last lunch period is complete, approximately 1PM. This will account for two of the required service hours. In the event, a school parent cannot volunteer for the lunchroom, they may find a substitute who will complete the required hours for them. The additional traditional volunteer hours can be met by helping with various PFA events, fund raising, on-site opportunities and coaching. In addition to the above stated service requirement, an additional 5 hours per family must be used on one of the major fund raising events.

Parents who transport athletes to and from practice and game sites are considered to be doing so for the convenience of the students' parents. Driving time is not part of required service hours.

Contributed hours may not be credited to any other parent to satisfy their required responsibility except for the lunchroom requirement.

In the course of required work, confidential information about students, teachers, support staff, or parents may be learned. This information must remain confidential in any setting inside or outside the school, just as one would wish their privacy to be respected.

The PFA is authorized to administer the program. If you are unable to serve or fulfill your commitment, you will be charged according to the following guidelines:

Lunchroom requirement	\$50.00 (\$25.00 per hour)
PFA Service Requirement (Excluding lunchroom)	\$15.00 per hour
Fundraising Requirement	\$25.00 per hour

Student records including report cards and/or transcripts can be withheld until service hours obligation is fulfilled.

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERING

LEVEL 1

Level 1 volunteers are defined as volunteers who will be working on fundraising activities, at – home volunteer activities, and activities that do not require the volunteer to assume the care, responsibility and supervision of children. Volunteers who work in the library, technology classes, middle school reward activities, and lunchroom are considered Level 1 volunteers. Parents who volunteer outside of school, either working on at – home projects for teachers or with the PFA on the various functions need not complete an application. Guardian Angels will follow the following procedure to screen Level 1 volunteers:

- 1) The volunteer will complete a Volunteer Application and return it to the school office as soon as possible. If both parents wish to volunteer, a separate application packet must be completed for each parent.

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- 2) If possible, attend a diocesan approved Safe Environment Training. While this is not mandatory for Level 1 volunteers, it is strongly recommended in the event that a volunteer wishes to volunteer at a Level 2 situation at a later time. This training is offered through the school and also at the parishes at various times throughout the year. A copy of the class certification should be provided to the office.

LEVEL 2

Level 2 volunteers are defined as volunteers who will or may be left to care, supervise or assume responsibility for children. Volunteers who fall into this category are classroom volunteers, room parents, coaches, and field trip chaperones. Guardian Angels will follow the following procedure to screen Level 2 volunteers:

- 1) The volunteer will complete a Volunteer Application and return it to the school office as soon as possible. If both parents wish to volunteer, a separate application packet must be completed for each parent.
- 2) Diocesan policy requires that all volunteers in this category have a Level 2 Background screening. This screening will take place at an approved screening site as determined by the diocese. The volunteer must submit a check made payable to Guardian Angels Catholic School for \$50.00 to cover the cost of the screening. The volunteer will be required to be rescreened every five years.
- 3) A Level 2 volunteer **MUST** attend a diocesan approved Safe Environment Training. This training is offered through the school and also at the parishes at various times throughout the year. Failure to attend this class will prohibit the volunteer from working with children. A copy of the class certification must be provided to the office. If you have taken this class previously, proof of attendance at the training will satisfy this requirement.

All visitors and volunteers are required to sign in and print out an identification badge from the computer in the foyer of St. Gabriel Building.

It is the responsibility of the teacher or administrator to request a volunteer to provide service.

Criminal Acts

Any volunteer who is arrested will not be permitted to volunteer in any capacity until administrative and pastoral approval is granted.