

ST. HELENA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Student Policy Handbook

2024 - 2025

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Contents

St. Helena Catholic Faculty	5
St. Helena Catholic School Organizational Chart.....	6
St. Helena Catholic School Board	7
Members.....	7
Ex-Officio	7
Admission and Retention Policies	8
Admission	8
Probation	8
Termination.....	9
Withdrawal of Students.....	9
Due Process.....	9
Moral Issues.....	9
Non-Discrimination Policy	10
Registration	10
Registration Fee	10
Current Students	10
New Students.....	10
Health Records	11
Immunizations	11
Tuition	11
Rates and Fees.....	11
Payment Policy.....	11
Annual Payment	11
Monthly Payments - FACTS.....	11
Late Payments.....	12
Monthly Payments – FACTS	12
Scholarships	12
Academics.....	12
Testing.....	12
Report Cards.....	13
Awards and Honor Roll	13
Parent – Teacher Conferences	13
Promotion and Retention Criteria	13

General Screening Plan	13
Length of a School Day	14
Student Responsibilities and Expectations	14
Internet Use	15
Expectations of Students	15
Curriculum	17
Textbooks	17
Library Media Center	17
School Supplies	17
Homework and Late Work Policy	18
Policy on Make-Up Homework for Excused Absences	18
Homework Policy for Unexcused Absences	18
Policy on Late Work	19
Attendance	19
Absence and Tardiness	19
Absences	19
Excused Absences	19
Unexcused Absences	20
Conduct	20
Minor Offenses	20
Major Offenses	21
Parent Responsibility	22
Disciplinary Action and Consequences	22
Suspension	22
Probation	22
Dismissal and Expulsion	23
Harassment/Bullying	23
Drug Abuse Procedures	23
Child Abuse	23
Custody Situations	23
Pre-K Program	24
Federal Programs	24
Arrival and Dismissal Procedures	24
Morning Arrival	24

Pre-K Arrival.....	24
K – 5 th Arrival	25
Pre-K Dismissal	25
K-5th Dismissal	25
Early Dismissal.....	26
Safety in the Parking Lot	27
Bad Weather Days	27
School to Home Communication	27
Change of Address/Phone/Emergency Contacts	27
Lunch Policy	28
Lunchroom Rules:	28
Penalties for breaking lunchroom rules are:	28
Lunchroom Schedule:.....	28
Visitor Policy	28
Emergency Procedures	29
Fire	29
Tornado	29
Bomb Threat.....	29
Missing Child.....	29
Code Red	29
Health Procedures	30
Chronic Problems and Allergies.....	30
Communicable Diseases	30
Illness Criteria	30
Procedures for In-School Health Problems.....	31
Supervision and Liability	31
Circle of Grace	31
Parent School Association (PSA)	31
Parent Participation.....	32
Search and Seizure Policy	32
Procedure	32
Activities	32
Assemblies	33
Contests	33

Field Trips	33
School Parties	33
School Facilities	33
Communications	34
School/Home Communications	34
Chain of Command	34
Concerns and Complaints	34
Student/Teacher Conflicts	34
Items from Home	34
Uniforms.....	35
Ordering Information	35
Uniform Policy and Dress Code	35
Uniform Detail.....	36
Dress Code Guidelines	36
Grooming.....	36
Boys.....	36
Girls.....	36
Accessories	36
Uniform Holiday	37
Field Trip Attire	37
Uniform Responsibility and Consequence.....	37
Parent/Volunteer Dress Code.....	37
Right to Amend.....	38
Confidentiality	38
Student Records.....	38
Access to Student Records	38
Forms	39

St. Helena Catholic Faculty

Administrator

Ms. Estela Carillo

Secretary

Mrs. Mayra Brown

Front Office

Mrs. Monika Botello

Computer Lab Teacher and Librarian

Ms. Vanessa Aldavaz

Custodian

Mrs. Antonia Ramirez

Instructional Aide

Ms. Janie Gonzalez

Instructional Aide

Ms. Melissa Morales

Instructional Aide

Mrs. Matilde DeLaRosa

Preschool Director & Teacher

Mrs. Rosa Torres

Kindergarten Teacher

Mrs. Elizabeth Guajardo

First Grade Teacher

Ms. Delfa Tercero

Second Grade Teacher

Mrs. Celia Burrows

Third Grade Teacher

Mr. Michael Lujan

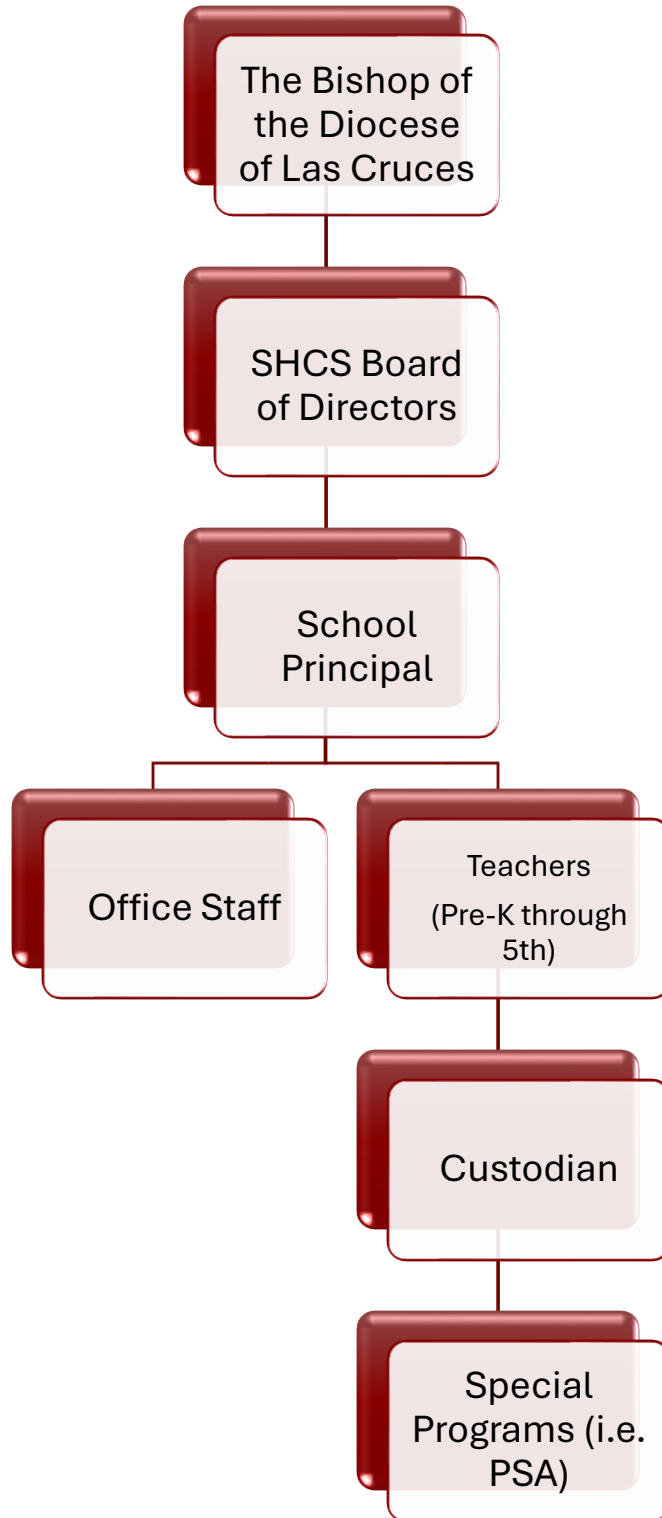
Fourth Grade Teacher

Mrs. Sara Miller

Fifth Grade Teacher

Mrs. Sandra Salas

St. Helena Catholic School Organizational Chart



St. Helena Catholic School Board

Members

POSITION	CONTACT NAME
President	David Murillo
Vice President	Hector Sepulveda
Treasurer	Yvonne Gomez
Secretary	Jessica Beaver
Bookkeeper	Erica Carmona
Member	Miranda Hinojos
Member	Lynn Fons
Member	Veronica Arguello
Member	Kamie Rivas
Member	Sammy Tovar

Ex-Officio

POSITION	CONTACT NAME	PHONE NUMBER	E-MAIL
Pastor of St. Helena Catholic Church	Fr. Joseph Pacquing		joep_smgc@yahoo.com
Principal/Administrator	Estela Carrillo	575-318-7774	principal@sthelenaschool.net

St. Helena Catholic School Board Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month in the SHCS Cafeteria. If you wish to attend, you are welcome. If you wish to be on the agenda, please notify the principal or a board member before the first Tuesday of the month. If you are interested in becoming a board member, please contact the Board President.

Admission and Retention Policies

Admission

1. Parents/Guardians and students must agree to uphold the Catholic Christian values which form the basis of education at St. Helena Catholic School and to abide by the policies and regulations of the school. The policies include the participation in prayer and in the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. New and transfer students will be interviewed with their parents by the principal and may be required to meet with a faculty committee to determine the appropriateness and compatibility of this school for each student. Students transferring from local schools and students who's academic and/or discipline records from a previous school appear ambiguous will be placed on nine (9) weeks of probation. Student must be in good standing for admittance.
3. The student can benefit from the educational program offered by the school.
4. There is space available according to the established policy of class size.
5. The parents/guardians of the student(s) to be admitted agree to pay tuition and other required fees recommended by the School Board and agree to participate with the school in their child's/ren's education by providing thirty (30) hours of service per school year. Seven and a half (7.5) service hours must be completed at the end of each 9-week grading period. Report cards will be held at the front office for all service hours not up to date. For every service hour not completed by the end of the school year, a \$20 per hour charge will be assessed and added to tuition fees.
6. The State of New Mexico requires that pre-school classrooms have an open-door policy and are supportive of family involvement. As per state regulations, we invite children three to five years of age (who are toilet trained) to be part of the program.
7. Kindergarteners must be five (5) years of age by Sept. 1st of the current year.
8. The Board of Directors approves the guidelines, rules, and regulations implemented by the faculty, administration, and staff of St. Helena Catholic School. St. Helena Catholic School reserves the right to deny admission and/or continuance to any student who cannot in good faith demonstrate that they will comply with values, academic processes, policies, or rules and regulations of the school.
9. The principal will make the final decision of admission.

Probation

Probation is a specified time during which the student will be observed as to his/her willingness and ability to follow the behavioral and academic norms of the school

- Probation applies to:
 - A student who is having difficulty following the school's code of student behavior.
 - A student transferring to the St. Helena Catholic School.
 - A student who has become academically deficient in most or all areas.
- During a period of probation, all requirements, outlined in writing, of the probation must be met.
- The decision to recommend withdrawal or allow the student to continue will be made at the end of the probation period based on the recommendations of teachers and the Administrator.
- Based on these recommendations, the student:
 - May be removed from probation status.
 - May continue for one more quarter (but no longer) on probation.
 - May be asked to withdraw from the school.

- A decision of withdrawal can be reconsidered only in the instance of a student who leaves due to academic failure. If the student wishes to reapply to St. Helena Catholic School later, he/she must have done well for at least two semesters elsewhere before his/her request will be reviewed.

Termination

Termination is a final decision. It represents the end of a series of attempts to assist the child to alter his/her behavior as it concerns a complete and continual disregard for the school's philosophy, values, and rules and/or his/her failure to do the required schoolwork. The decision for termination will take place after a conference like the one for suspension. If parents/guardians fail, without cause, to attend the conference, the Administration will reach a final decision. This decision will be non-negotiable at any future time.

Withdrawal of Students

If parents/guardians plan to, or are required to, withdraw student(s) prior to the end of the school year, a withdrawal form from the school office must be circulated among the teachers and staff to obtain grades and fees/charges owed. All textbooks, library books, and other school property must be turned in. *Tuition/fee issues will be settled with the school office before records or report cards will be released.*

Due Process

Parents/guardians and students have recourse to due process which allows a hearing about decisions made. It gives those concerned the opportunity to defend themselves and a chance to appeal a decision against them. The procedure is as follows:

1. The request for a due process hearing must be made in writing and sent to the president of the St. Helena Catholic School Board.
2. A date will be set for a hearing by the School Board.
3. The parties concerned must appear in person at the hearing before the School Board and make their plea.
4. The School Board will consult together privately and make their decision, which will be given in writing to those who made the appeal.
5. The decision of the School Board will be binding. It is the expectation of St. Helena Catholic School that parents and guardians will be supportive of actions taken, concerning their children. Such actions are not taken lightly.

St. Helena Catholic School expects parents and guardians to be supportive of actions taken by the school concerning their children. Such actions are not taken lightly by the school. The first and primary response to a child is one of negotiation and counsel, with the hope that the child can grow in responsibility and maturity.

Moral Issues

The St. Helena Catholic School Board adopted the following procedures in handling moral issues:

- When the principal believes there is a question of morality, suspension of five days from school will begin immediately.
- A meeting will be called with parents, teacher, and principal; thereafter, the principal will meet and make the final disciplinary decision.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The schools of the Diocese of Las Cruces admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. They do not discriminate based on sex, race and color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of their educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and other school-administered programs.

Employment of school personnel will be dependent upon a person's qualifications for the job, regardless of sex, race, color, and national or ethnic origin.

These government regulations will be observed in all areas except when in conflict with a specific tenet of our Faith.

Registration

Registration Fee

To process registration, all school fees, payments and service hours must be up to date. The registration fee is non-refundable and due at the time of registration. Registration fees are used to cover the following costs:

- Religion textbooks and worship resources
- Library/Networking costs
- Processing of student records

Current Students

Parents/Guardians must register to readmit their child/ren each year in April to reserve class space. State statutes govern class size for each elementary grade.

The following information is required for registration of current students:

1. The registration fee is due at the time of registration. The registration fee is per student and is non-refundable.
2. Health records must be updated and current.
3. Current parent/legal guardian's address(es) and telephone number(s) must be provided.
4. Current emergency contact information must be provided.
5. All prior debt to the school must be eliminated before current registration can be accepted.
6. Proof of service hours—completed and/or purchased—must be provided. 7.5 hours are due each quarter and 30 hours must be completed by the end of the school year.
7. The student's teacher has made a positive recommendation for continuation at SHCS.

New Students

All new students registering MUST bring their ORIGINAL and CLEAR COPIES of the following documents

1. Birth Certificate
2. Current Immunization Record
3. Baptismal Certificate (if Catholic)
4. First Holy Communion Certificate (if Catholic)

5. Grades/Academic Record from previous school (if transferring)
6. Report of Special Education Testing (if applicable)
7. Decree of Custody in case of divorce, adoption, etc.
8. The new student's registration fee per student, which is non-refundable and must be paid at the time of registration/enrollment.
9. Online registration/enrollment completed

Final registration will take place in August. Students may not be enrolled if there is an unpaid balance from the previous year.

Families who are currently enrolled are given Letters of Intent in April. The responses to these letters help the School Board and the Administrator make plans for the following school year.

Health Records

It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school officials and the child's teacher about any health problems such as epilepsy, asthma, intestinal problems, migraine headaches, etc. which affect their child. Please put this information in writing with specific instructions. This information should be written and regularly updated.

Immunizations

The State Health Department mandates that all students have their immunizations up to date. A copy of the immunization record is mandatory upon registration and update as necessary each year. Students without proof of immunization records or without updated records will not be allowed to register.

Tuition

Rates and Fees

Tuition and fees are set each year by the School Board. Please obtain the current tuition rate schedule and list of fees from the school office.

Payment Policy

Annual Payment

Under this plan the entire amount of tuition for the school year is made in one payment directly to the school on or before the first day of school.

Monthly Payments - FACTS

This plan is an automatic payment plan made through your checking account, savings account, or credit card. Those choosing this plan will complete a FACTS agreement form to authorize the automatic monthly payments. There is a \$43.00/year per family charge for using this option. A monthly service report from FACTS is provided to the school which will be checked by our secretary to confirm each month's withdrawal. Please check your bank balance each month to confirm that the payment has been deducted.

**Neither FACTS nor the school will have direct access to/or any knowledge about your bank or credit card account. **

Late Payments

It will be the responsibility of each family to keep the principal informed of any personal difficulties in making tuition payments. Any special arrangements for tuition payments will have to be made with the principal.

Monthly Payments – FACTS

Families who miss a monthly payment due to insufficient funds will be assessed a \$30.00 missed payment fee by FACTS and may incur a fee from their own financial institution. The missed payment will be reattempted by FACTS within 20 days. St. Helena Catholic School may withhold report cards, diplomas, and/or take other action necessary for financial delinquencies until financial obligations have been met. Accounts that are not up to date by the end of the first semester will be evaluated individually. Student attendance may not be permitted the second semester if the account is not current. If tuition is not paid the student will be dis-enrolled.

Scholarships

Scholarships are available for students in grades Kindergarten through 5th Grade.

Every family wanting to apply for a scholarship must complete the application and submit their financial documents to FACTS. No awards will be granted without a completed application. Once FACTS has all the information, they will make a recommendation to St. Helena Catholic School.

All financial decisions regarding awards will be based upon these recommendations. There is a \$40.00 fee (payable to FACTS) for applying and applications must be submitted electronically. Applications are found on www.factstuitionaid.com.

No financial application will be considered unless the School Registration Fee is paid in full at the time of the application.

For every year, if a student attends our school, a new application must be completed.

Academics

- Religion
- Science
- Mathematics
- Language Arts
- Social Studies
- Health
- Fine Arts

Testing

St. Helena Catholic School utilizes a series of assessments to monitor student performance and growth.

1. Every child in first grade and above is given a pre-test at the beginning of each school year. This test assesses the cumulative curriculum standards in each core subject. Each child is given the same test as a post-test at the end of the year to determine growth.
2. STAR 360 Tests are administered at each teacher's discretion. STAR tests are computer adaptive, which means that they adjust to each answer the student provides. This helps teachers get the best data to help your child in the shortest amount of testing time (about one-third of the time other tests take). Your child may take a STAR test for early literacy, math, reading, or other subjects of their teacher's choice. The benefits of this, for your child is that the assessments will pinpoint exactly what your child knows, and teachers can personalize your child's practice to keep them growing. Plus, short test times ensure your child spends more time learning and less time testing.

- Curriculum unit assessments are given throughout the school year as students progress through the curriculum.

Report Cards

Report cards will be distributed after each nine-week period if all tuition, fees, and fines are paid.

Pre-K - Kindergarten	Grade's 1st – 5th
E = Excellent	A = 100% - 93% High Quality Performance
G = Good Performance	B = 92% - 83% Good Performance
S = Satisfactory	C = 82% - 73% Acceptable Performance
N = Needs Improvement	D = 72% - 63% Unacceptable Performance
	F = 62% - 0% No Performance; must be improved to insure credit

Awards and Honor Roll

An awards assembly will be held after each grading period. Students in grades 1st – 5th grade will be eligible for AB Honor Roll with at least a B in conduct. Students in grades 1st – 5th earning an A in all subject areas, including conduct, will be eligible for the A Honor Roll. Grades Pre-K through 5th grade will receive awards for perfect attendance, Most Improved, and Light of Christ. These awards will be given during our Awards Assembly at the end of each quarter grading period. Parents will be notified of these events.

Parent – Teacher Conferences

Required parent/teacher conferences are held at St. Helena Catholic School during the school year. Teachers may request additional conferences with parents/guardians as needed. Parents/guardians are free to call the school office for additional conferences with specific teachers; however, we ask that the teachers be contacted only at school, and during working hours. If parents would like additional conferences they can be scheduled if the Administrator or the teacher deems it necessary.

NOTE: Please do not phone or text teachers while they are at home.

Promotion and Retention Criteria

A student may be promoted to the next higher grade upon satisfactorily completing all requirements and 80% attainment of the benchmark for the grade level presently enrolled. Failure to achieve the above criteria may result in retention of the student in the present grade level. Other factors will also be considered, such as: social and mental maturity, the teacher’s evaluation of the student, test scores, and remediation programs.

Retention in the same grade shall be for no more than one school year. A parent or guardian must be advised in advance of any plans of retention. A conference including the principal may be requested. A parent may sign a waiver indicating that a child’s promotion is against the specific advice of the teacher or principal.

General Screening Plan

General Screening is a process for identifying the needs of students to determine appropriate educational programs for them. It is the beginning of a process which occurs prior to the determination of need for in-school tutoring which precedes referral for special education through Hobbs Municipal

Schools. When a student need is suspected, a parent/teacher can initiate the process by informing the principal. The teacher in turn will call for and facilitate an initial student assistance team meeting. The student assistance team will be composed of teachers and principal and may consist of professionals from other disciplines if the team determines this to be beneficial.

The aims of the General Screening Plan and Process are:

- To identify at the earliest academic stage possible reading deficiency, limited English proficiency, speech, psychomotor, or social/behavioral difficulties experienced by children in our school.
- To explore and utilize alternatives within the school setting to meet the needs of each student referred for special need.
- To provide the least restrictive alternative for each student referred.
- To expedite the process leading from initial referral to placement in special services beyond the school's capabilities

Although referrals are generally made by the school to outside resources such as Title I, Special Education, Speech, Counseling, etc., some referrals may be made by parent/guardian or the students themselves by contacting the Hobbs Municipal School's Special Services Division, Lea County Guidance Center, Parish Priest (spiritual counseling) or a Children at Risk social worker.

Length of a School Day

1st through 5th grade will attend school from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. While Pre-K and Kindergarten levels will attend from 8:00 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Student Responsibilities and Expectations

1. Students must complete their schoolwork, follow the rules, and fully participate in the learning process, which includes coming to school with paper, pencils, books, and completed homework assignments.
2. In the spirit of Christian love and charity, students must try to get along with and be considerate of others, be responsible for their own behavior, and do everything possible to contribute to a positive learning environment.
3. Students must listen to and follow directions.
4. Students must respect school property and the property of other students. This includes taking care not to disturb, write upon, or take anyone else's property.
5. Please leave music/audio equipment, video games, hard balls, toys, knives, etc. at home. **Cell phones may not be used during school hours.** Any of these devices found in use during school hours will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day. If this behavior continues, parents will be required to pick up confiscated items. (Jump drives may be used, with permission, for academic purposes only.)
6. Students should refrain from engaging in verbal or physical fights and are prohibited from hitting, striking, kicking, choking or in any other way harming another person. Bullying, hazing, or harassment in any form will not be tolerated. SHCS has a **ZERO TOLERANCE** policy for harassment/bullying in any form, by or towards employees, students, volunteers, parents, or guardians.

7. All students must always use appropriate language. Cursing and swearing are unacceptable.
8. Always use bathrooms assigned for students, only. Do not use the staff bathroom or lounge area at any time for any reason.
9. A student must never approach a loiterer at school but report the presences of strangers to the most immediate adult supervisor in the vicinity.
10. Students must always use courtesy and good manners, including extracurricular activities. Remember to make visitors feel welcome and greet them with kindness and respect.
11. Always remember to be a positive role model for younger students.
12. Students should show concern for the physical and mental health of themselves and others and never knowingly possess, transmit, or be under the influence of a drug not specifically prescribed for them by a licensed physician.
13. If any student needs to contact a parent/guardian in a non-emergency situation, he/she must obtain permission from the office, and the call will then be place by a staff member.

Internet Use

Expectations of Students

The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use or violation of any of the following standards will result in serious consequences and could result in expulsion from the school.

1. Use of the computer at school is limited to school-related activities. Internet users are expected to behave responsibly in accessing viewing information that is pertinent to the mission of the school.
2. Vandalism and other infractions of school policy while using the Internet will result in immediate cancellation of privileges along with disciplinary action.
3. Home Access requires students to follow the same student expectations as stated in the “Discipline Code for Student Conduct” and “Harassment Policies” in the student handbook.
4. Students must abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette both inside and outside of school.
5. Students are responsible for their explorations on the Internet and are subject to the consequences of the school’s discipline policy.
6. Students must sign a contract indicating their understanding and acceptance of the school’s guidelines (see parent/student handbook).
7. Parents must give their permission for their child to use the Internet for educational purposes as an individual by signing the Contract Form once conditions are clearly understood. Parents also have the option of denying permission for their child to use the Internet independently at home.

When using computers (whether Chromebooks, Classroom Laptops, or library desktops) students must always:

- Be courteous and respectful in your messages to others.
- Use appropriate language. Do not use vulgar, harassing, obscene, threatening, bullying, abusive, or sexually offensive language, or make any statements that are slanderous or disparaging of any students or adults.
- Never visit inappropriate or offensive websites.

- Never download materials in an inappropriate, vulgar, or sexually offensive manner on any website or via e-mail, either in pictures or videos.
- Never expose yourself in an inappropriate, vulgar, or sexually offensive manner on any website via e-mail, either in pictures or videos.
- Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
- Do not reveal your home address or phone number, or that of other students or staff.
- Electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. People who operate the system do have access to all mail. Messages related to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- Proofread your message before you send it.
- Never agree to get together with someone you “meet” on-line.
- Only public domain software (“shareware”) can be downloaded.
- Copyright laws must be respected. Do not make unauthorized copies of software and do not give, lend, or sell copies of software to others.
- Do not use the Network/Internet for illegal activities.
- Software applications and games from home may not be used on school equipment without proof of licensure and prior approval of appropriate school personnel.
- Do not reveal personal passwords, use or try to learn other’s passwords. Do not copy, change, read or use another user’s files without prior permission from that user. Do not attempt to gain unauthorized access to system programs for computer equipment.
- Do not post personal messages on bulletin boards “list servers or social media platforms.” Send personal messages directly to the person to whom you want to write.
- Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network for other users.
- Do not waste or take supplies such as paper or printer cartridges, which are provided by the school.
- Talk softly and work in ways that will not disturb other users. Keep computer work areas clean and do not eat or drink in the computer lab/around Chromebooks/the classroom laptops.
- If students encounter material on a network/bulletin board that is not appropriate (vulgar jokes, statements of belief that some might consider immoral, etc.,) the student is responsible for not pursuing this material and reporting the matter to appropriate school personnel.
- The use of cellphones, camera phones, or other digital media is prohibited during the school day. Cellphones, camera phones, or other personal electronic devices will be confiscated until the end of the school day if students use them during the school day without permission, and the student will be sent to Correction and Direction. Repeated infractions will result in principal intervention and more severe punishment.
- Technology Use outside normal academic hours and/or off school grounds (including but not limited to cell phones, e-mail, text messages, camera-phones, cameras, iPads, iPhones, etc., are subject to the same guidelines as previously cited in the “Discipline Code for Student Conduct,” “Harassment Policies,” and the “Summary Statement.”)
- The school reserves the right to seek financial restitution for any damage caused by a student or other user. The system administrators will deem what is inappropriate use, and their decision is

final. The administration, faculty, and staff of the school may request the system administrator to deny, revoke, or suspend specific privileges. Violation of the rules and code of ethics described above will be dealt with seriously.

- *Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited.* This includes, but is not limited to copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret. The use of school computers and networking resources for commercial activities is not permitted. Their use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.

The use of electronic devices must be appropriate to the educational setting, and may not distract the student, other students, or the class during the school day and after school. Students are discouraged from bringing cell phones to school. If a student must bring a cell phone to school, it must remain powered off and in the student's backpack for the entire school day, including recess. Students cannot bring tablets or other devices not issued by the school to class, unless the device is part of an IEP accommodation.

Inappropriate use of any electronic device may result in serious consequences as stated in the school's Technology Use Policy.

Curriculum

As part of the effort to ensure academic excellence for every child, St. Helena Catholic School has adopted the Common Core Standards. Parents can rest assured knowing that their child is being taught exactly what they need to learn for their age to academically successful now, and in the future. More information on Common Core can be obtained through their internet website. These standards were chosen since:

1. We are a feeder school to the Hobbs Municipal Schools who use Common Core
2. The ACT and SAT are based on Common Core Standards

Textbooks

Students are to take proper care of their books, which are to be kept always covered. Textbooks must not be written in or defaced in any way. If a book is lost or damaged, parents must pay the full cost of a new book.

Library Media Center

The library provides books as a supplement to the curriculum and provides books for enjoyment. Library skills will be taught at all levels. Students are responsible for books in their possession. Students are expected to return books on time. Books are checked out for a one-week period and may be renewed for a second week. Fines are levied at \$0.10 per school day at the discretion of the librarian. Lost or damaged books or other media must be paid for or replaced by the end of each quarter, or a report card will not be issued.

School Supplies

Students are given a list of school supplies at the time of registration or prior to the commencement of school. These supplies are to be obtained and labeled by the first day of school and maintained as needed throughout

the school year. Individual classroom teachers may require additional supplies after the beginning of the school year.

Homework and Late Work Policy

Good study habits include developing memorization skills. Students need time to learn and practice reading fluently, to learn the basic math facts, spelling words, etc. A busy school day does not always permit such time.

To encourage better study habits, it is suggested that parents set aside a definite study time each school night when the TV, radio, etc. are off. As a minimum time, we recommend 30 minutes for primary students (grades 1st – 3rd) and 45 minutes to an hour for students in grades 4th – 5th.

All homework must be completed on time. Failure to complete assignments by the due date will result in the student losing recess until the work is finished.

Parents can assist the homework process by:

- Checking each child's homework assignment
- Providing a quiet study place at home
- Setting aside regular study time each evening
- Restricting the use of electronic devices during homework periods
- Checking in on your child periodically, or sitting down with your child while they complete their homework
- Praising and rewarding your child upon their completion of a job well done

Policy on Make-Up Homework for Excused Absences

If a child is absent for only one day, all make-up work will be given to the student when he/she returns to school the following day. **We will not provide make-up work on the date he/she is absent for the following reasons: If a child is too sick to come to school, he/she should be resting and recuperating.** Reading is always a standing assignment and should be done every day when possible. Much of missed work is not replicable in the form of homework and must be adjusted by the teacher. Again, this is best done when the child returns. We will make sure that missed homework is given when the child returns. **If a child is absent for an extended period (at least 2 days), homework can be sent to the office for the parent to pick up at the end of the school day (3:00 p.m.).** We will no longer send homework to other classrooms for siblings to bring home, and homework cannot be picked up in the office during the school day. It is too disruptive to our instructional day.

Homework Policy for Unexcused Absences

No homework will be sent home in advance for unexcused absences.

Grades K-1: Extra credit which is given for completed homework assignments will not apply to homework assignments that are due during an unexcused absence.

Grade 2: All missed tests and quizzes will need to be made up within 2 days of the student's return to class.

Grades 3-5: All missed tests should be made up the day the student returns to class. There will be 5 points taken off class work, book reports, and projects due during the unexcused absence.

Questions? Please do not hesitate to contact any of us in the office should a question arise. We are here to help and enjoy working with you every day.

Policy on Late Work

Work that is not turned in on time will not receive full credit. For each day, an assignment is turned in late, 10 points will be deducted from the final grade. After 3 days, the assignment will no longer be accepted, and the student will receive a zero. Every effort should be made to avoid a zero.

Attendance

1. The school year requirement, according to New Mexico State Law, must equal a minimum of 1,140 instructional hours per school year.
2. The school office is open from 7:45 AM to 3:15 PM, including the lunch hour. All registrations and other business transactions will be handled through the school office during these hours, unless otherwise specified.
3. The first bell rings at 8:00 AM. Classes begin at 8:05 AM. Students will be dismissed at 3:00 PM and must be picked up by 3:10 PM.
4. Students must be signed in and out at the front office by a parent or guardian to enter or leave school grounds after 8:00 AM or before 3:00 PM.
5. In case of bad weather, we will follow the decision of the Hobbs Public School system regarding the closing of school. Parents should listen to the local radio broadcasts for information, check email and phone messages, and look for updates on the website.
6. Regular attendance at school is essential for all students. The school adheres to the official school calendar.

Absence and Tardiness

Absences

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education-to benefit from teacher-led and school activities, to build each day's learning on the previous days, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Parents are discouraged from taking students from their classes before dismissal time. This is a disruption to the learning process for all students.

1. For your child's protection, we request that parents notify the school office between 8:00 AM and 8:30 AM of the student's absence on any given day. Upon the student's return to school a written note must accompany the child and be given to the office.
2. Medical, dental and other appointments during school time are strongly discouraged, except in cases of emergency.
3. Consistent absenteeism adversely affects a student's work and is discouraged. School related and sponsored functions and are counted as excused absences.
4. Attending school is required by law whether the school is public, parochial, private/independent or in a home setting. There are only two types of absences – Excused and Unexcused

Excused Absences

- Student's illness or injury
- A quarantine issued by the Health Department
- Death in the immediate family

- Child's medical or dental appointment (please try to schedule outside of school hours)
- Court or administrative proceedings if student is party to the action or under subpoena
- Educational opportunity which is required by a student's curriculum

*Even if an absence is excused it will still be considered an absence and will be recorded as such.

Unexcused Absences

This covers every other absence from vacation to oversleeping to family celebrations or occasions to not wanting to get out of bed in the morning.

The Importance of Attending School

We only have a certain amount of time to cover an extremely comprehensive curriculum. As with any good school, our teachers do not teach straight out of a textbook. They prepare demonstrations, outside learning experiences, experiments, activities, and discussion groups as well as different exciting interactive strategies to help our students master their course work. Most of these experiences cannot be duplicated when a student is absent, so good attendance is a must if each child is to succeed at his or her highest level.

- For your child's protection, we request that the parents notify the school office between 8:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. of the student's absence on any given day
- Excessive tardiness and/or absences will be addressed by the principal. The school reserves the right to withhold grades and credit from a student whose absences reach or exceed eight in a semester. Truancy reports will be made after ten unexcused absences and may result in withdrawal from the school.
- Students are not excused from tests or assignments. They must be completed.
- **Students arriving after 8:15 a.m. or 12:15 p.m. must be escorted by parent or guardian and check in at the office.** Three tardies will be counted as one absence and affect perfect attendance.
- Do not pick up your child up until the time of dismissal unless you have a valid medical or dental appointment or an emergency.
- Absences whether excused or unexcused affect perfect attendance.

Conduct

Student behavior at school must be such as not to disturb the general order of the school or classroom. Thus, students are required to keep silent in the hall and restrooms during the school day so as not to disturb classes in session. When leaving the building for recess, students will be silent until outside the building.

St. Helena Catholic School has a zero-tolerance bullying policy that includes no acceptance of physical and verbal abuse. The intentional act of isolating a specific child is also considered bullying, as are threats. Fighting will be punishable by in-school suspension, which means no classes, recess, or lunch with the other students. The student must complete all assignments on time.

Minor Offenses

1. Excessive, unexcused absences and/or tardiness
2. Failure to abide by the Dress Code. **Procedure will be the following:**
 - a. Call parents/guardians to drop-off proper uniform attire.
 - b. School will attempt to provide proper uniform.
3. Any behavior which demonstrates inappropriate physical affection within the school environment.

4. Failure to follow cafeteria and playground rules.
5. Inappropriate behavior in Mass or during religious devotions.
6. Use of foul and/or obscene language, profanity, and/or name-calling.

Consequences: Minor offenses are those actions which directly involve only one individual student. The consequences of these actions can include loss of “Uniform Holidays”, isolation, lunch detention, exclusion from activities, and if continued, SUSPENSION and PROBATION.

(See full Disciplinary Referral Form)

Major Offenses

1. Habitual misconduct which upsets the learning process of the school, the safety of students and staff, or the moral well-being of the school.
2. Making threats, bullying, insolence, rudeness, and/or disrespect towards any student or adult.
3. Mistreatment of or damage to the school building or property, or destruction of textbooks or other learning materials.
4. Engagement in any activity or conduct which is in serious violation of Roman Catholic teachings or morals, and which attempts to promote teachings contrary to those of the Roman Catholic Church. In this regard, any rings, jacket emblems, t-shirts, or any other items which incorporate satanic symbols are never permitted and parent will be responsible to retrieve these items from the school.
5. Refusal to obey the reasonable directives, rules, and regulations of the school as established by the Board of Directors and administration, and which are contained in this HANDBOOK.
6. Insubordination and/or failure to respond to the directives of a teacher, the Administrator, or any staff personnel, including school secretaries, the librarian, and the custodians.
7. Fighting which may have, or does, result in bodily injury to another person, student or adult.
8. Theft of property, or deliberate misplacement of someone else’s property even if done as a prank.
9. Violation of any penal law or ordinance, or adjudication by a court as a delinquent child.
10. Possession, use, or transmission of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or any harmful substance on school premises will result in immediate termination. Even the PRETENSE of the use or transmission of drugs or other harmful substances is prohibited.
11. No student at the school shall bring a weapon onto school property, nor carry or keep ANY weapon on school property, or while attending or participating in any school activity, including during transportation to or from such activity. Possession of ANY weapon will result in immediate termination and any other discipline required under the law.
12. **Inappropriate Use of Technology: Students are prohibited from sending or posting electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another’s reputation or illegal. This prohibition applies to conduct off school property if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.**

Consequences: Major offenses are actions that affect the well-being of others and the school. The consequences of these actions can include the academic loss of classroom time, suspension, probation, and possible termination depending on the seriousness of the offense or the endangerment of others.

(See Disciplinary Referral Form – beginning at step four)

Notes:

- *Corporal punishment is not permitted in the schools in the Diocese of Las Cruces.*

- *Students with repeated suspensions, for whatever cause, will be terminated or asked to withdraw from the school.*

Parent Responsibility

If something has happened in school and a problem seems to exist, it is your responsibility to contact the teacher. A teacher cannot possibly call you every time your child is disciplined. We strongly encourage you to find out the facts by hearing all sides of the situation. The teacher should be approached first. If you do not feel the problem has been resolved, then talk to the principal. If you still feel there is a problem, you can contact the priest or the school board.

Disciplinary Action and Consequences

Discipline is as fundamental in Catholic education as it is fundamental in Catholic life. Correct training in discipline for the young child means that the child must learn to act in conformity with controls imposed by those in authority with the aim of cultivation personal responsibility for one's actions as well as self-control.

Suspension

Suspension is the barring of the student from school entirely for a specified period, but no longer than 10 days. Suspension is for a continued minor or major offense. This will take place after the principal contacts the parents giving the reasons and the effective dates for the suspension.

Suspension is invoked to prevent disruptions of the school environment or to assist the affected pupil in overcoming a disciplinary problem. A written notice of the suspension will be given to the parents; a copy is also kept in the student's file. Parents/guardians must meet with the principal before the student can return to school. Teachers involved will participate in this conference and the student will be present. Repeated suspensions for whatever the cause will result in the student being asked to withdraw from St. Helena Catholic School.

Probation

Probation is of two kinds: Academic and Behavioral

Probation applies to:

- A student who is having difficulty following the school's code of student behavior
- A student transferring to St. Helena Catholic School whose conduct/academic performance has been deficient at his or her previous school
- A student who has become academically deficient in most or all areas

At the end of the probationary period, all requirements that had been previously written down and agreed upon must be met. The decisions made at the end of the probation period determining whether a student will continue their education or terminate at St. Helena Catholic School will be based on the recommendations of teachers and the principal. Based on these recommendations the child may be removed from probation status, may continue for one more quarter (not more) on probation, or may be asked to withdraw from St. Helena Catholic School.

A decision of withdrawal can be reconsidered in the instance of a student who leaves St. Helena Catholic School due to academic failure. If the student wishes to reapply to St. Helena Catholic School later, he or she must have succeeded for at least two semesters elsewhere before his or her request will be reviewed.

Dismissal and Expulsion

Dismissal and expulsion are a final decision. It represents the end of a series of attempts to assist the child to alter his or her behavior, and a complete and continual disregard for St. Helena Catholic School's philosophy, values, and rules. The decision for termination will take place after a conference like the one for suspension except the parent is notified and given the opportunity to participate in the conference. If parents/guardians fail, without cause, to attend the conference, principal (and teacher) will reach a final decision. This decision will be non-negotiable at any future time.

Harassment/Bullying

Harassment of or by students, teachers, supervisors, parents, or guardians is prohibited by both Federal and New Mexico State Laws and shall not be tolerated in the Catholic Schools of the Diocese.

Retaliation in any form against a student who exercises his or her right to make a complaint under this policy is strictly prohibited and shall itself be cause for a disciplinary action.

Drug Abuse Procedures

Although the school stands ready to work cooperatively with other agencies in the community in evolving programs for prevention and treatment of drug abusers, for the sake of the common good, the school will not provide a sanctuary to insulate its members from the consequences of illegal acts. Therefore, in case of someone found selling drugs, at school or at school functions he or she will automatically be expelled. The school will do all in its power to advise and warn students and other members of the school of the consequences of drug use. Having done this, the school expects that the individuals who choose to use, sell, or keep drugs in their possession must then be prepared to accept complete responsibility for their actions. These procedures apply to any student found possessing drugs or under the influence of alcohol.

- If the student is ill, parents/guardians and medical personnel will be contacted. The student will be separated from the student population and appropriate authorities will be notified.
- The student will be suspended by the principal for a period not to exceed five days. During this time, the student and parent may request a conference with the principal to discuss further outcomes.

Child Abuse

State Law requires teachers and all school personnel to report all suspected child abuse and child neglect cases. In the case that a report of suspected child abuse has been filed with legal authorities, (either by the school or other outside person or group), the school must by law allow social services to speak with the child in question without parent consent. Afterwards, a representative from social services will contact the parents followed by a call from the principal of the school.

Custody Situations

At the time of registration, the parent/guardian is to make known the custodial status of the child (ren). It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide the principal with a copy of all legal documentation relative to custody of the child (ren). The Court Order declares who is the custodial parent and decision-maker for the child (ren). The custodial parent determines whether the other parent can pick the child (ren) up from school, sit in on the child's classes, eat lunch with the child (ren), etc. Such information about the child (ren) must be shared with the appropriate people: the child (ren)'s teachers, school secretary, and other supervisors. The Court Order must be followed by the school. A motion is only a request for the order and is not binding as is the Court Order.

Non-custodial parents may request reports from the school on their child (ren)'s progress but may not use the school for increased visitation. Paying the child (ren)'s tuition does not give the non-custodial parent any rights beyond the Court Order.

For each child in a legal custody situation, the documents of custody and clear procedures for the custody plan must be on file in the principal's office. These documents are kept confidential.

Pre-K Program

St. Helena Catholic School provides an all-day Pre-K program. The program follows the New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines: Birth through Kindergarten, produced by a collaborative effort of the New Mexico State Children Youth and Families Department, Department of Health and Public Education Department. The children are actively engaged in learning, and provided with opportunities to make choices, to experiment and explore. Play is fundamental in learning as well as social and emotional development at these levels.

Children must turn three years of age and be completely toilet trained before being accepted into the program. A child's clothes may be changed, if necessary, thus giving them time to acclimate to the program. If it appears that the child is not completely toilet trained, they may be asked to wait a couple of weeks to give parents an opportunity to work with them before returning to the program or parents may be given the opportunity to come to the school and according to their condition, either take them home and bathe them or change their clothing here at the school. St. Helena Catholic School's Pre-K Program is licensed under CYFD.

Federal Programs

- Title I – ESEA Funds
- Title II – Funds for Math and Science
- Title IV – Funds for Safe & Drug Free School

Please see the Administrator for additional information

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

For the safety of our children and the convenience of our working parents, it is critically important that the drop off and pick up procedures be followed strictly. Please read the procedures below. If you have any questions, please contact the school office for clarification.

Morning Arrival

All children in grades Pre-K – 5th may be dropped off at school from **7:45 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.** through their current grade level designated doors. If your child arrives after 8:00 a.m. you **MUST** escort the child inside and sign them in at the office.

Pre-K Arrival

Turn onto St. Anne Street from Fowler Road and PARK, see **DIAGRAM 1** below.

- Form one lane, close to the sidewalk, starting at the mailbox.
- Parents will need to walk to and enter the school building with their child and drop off in the classroom.
- If there are siblings to Pre-K students, they may enter through the Pre-K Drop Off point.

- All cars will exit by driving east towards Dal Paso Street. Absolutely NO U-Turns at any time.

K – 5th Arrival

Enter through Bender Blvd. entrance only. Exit through Fowler St. See **DIAGRAM 2** below.

- Drop off: Form five (5) lanes in the cafeteria parking lot. Lanes are designated with orange cones.
- All grade level students will wait for a staff member in their vehicle to exit and walk them to the cafeteria doors.
- All cars exit at Fowler Road only.
- All children who arrive after 8:00 a.m. must use the St. Anne Street entrance and check in at the office. Going directly to the classroom with your child after the 8:00 a.m. bell is not allowed: office staff will take your child to his or her classroom.

Important DO NOTS:

- **Do not** drop children off and drive away.
- **Do not** enter the west/Fowler Road exit.
- **Do not** make U-turns or back up in the parking lot.
- **Do not** leave vehicles unattended to speak with other parents or to do school business. Pull forward out of lanes to keep traffic flowing.

Pre-K Dismissal

Turn onto St. Anne Street from Fowler Road and form a lane close to the sidewalk. See **DIAGRAM 1** below.

- Form one lane, close to the sidewalk, starting at the mailbox.
- Parents will need to enter the school building and sign out their child.

All cars will exit by driving east towards Dal Paso Street. Absolutely no U-Turns at any time.

K-5th Dismissal

Afternoon dismissal will go just like morning drop off for Grades K-5. Please stay in your cars and a teacher will escort your child to you. If you want to pick up your child personally, please park in the church parking lot, and walk to the school to pick your child up.

Pre-K and Kindergarten dismissal is at 2:45 p.m. every day.

1st – 5th grade dismissal is at 3:00 p.m. every day.

Important DO NOTS:

- Do not make U-turns or back up
- Do not leave vehicles unattended to speak with other parents or to do school business. Pull forward out of lane to keep traffic flowing.

DIAGRAM 1

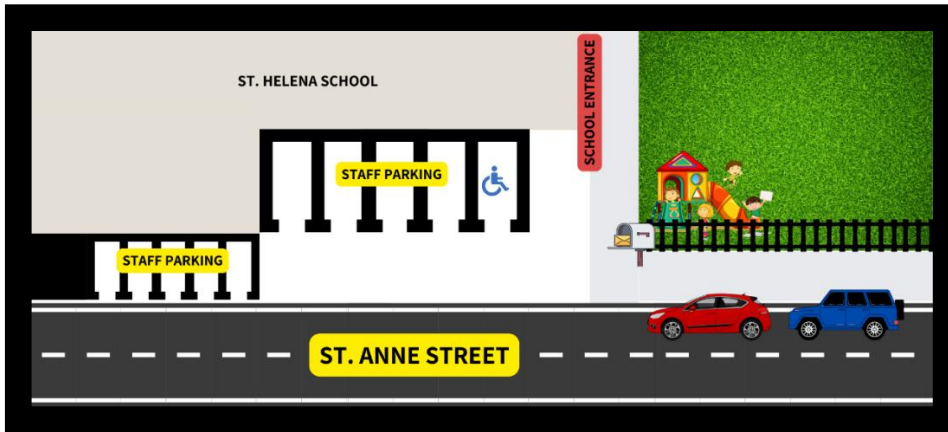
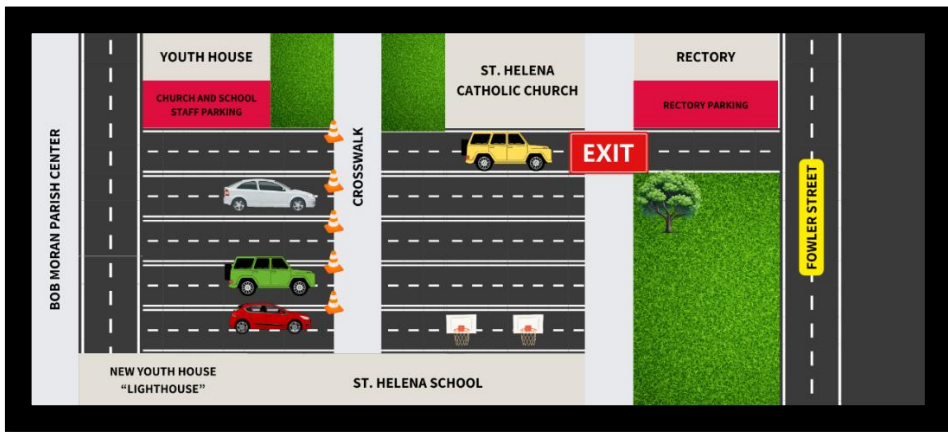


DIAGRAM 2



Early Dismissal

Students needing to leave school before the day is finished or who must leave for scheduled appointments must follow the steps below:

- The parent/guardian must physically present themselves at the office to request the student be dismissed.
- The parent/guardian will obtain from the school office a form indicating the time of departure, the person taking the child, and the office person who completed the form. Excused or unexcused will be determined and documented.
- Office personnel will present the written permission for early dismissal or release to the student's teacher. If any other person besides the legal parent or legal guardian is picking up the child, the office must be notified by the legal parent/guardian by phone or in writing.

If legal authorities wish to pick up a student, the following procedures must be followed:

- The school administrator will be notified immediately.
- The legal authorities will identify themselves and provide the proper identification. This will be checked by a call to their supervisor.

- The parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to come to the school, if appropriate. The only exception allowed in New Mexico is in case of suspected child abuse by parent/guardian, in which case, authorities may remove a child from school premises without parent notification.

Safety in the Parking Lot

Safety for our children must be the primary concern of everyone in the parking lot. Please make sure that these instructions are given to all the adults who pick up your child from school. One car not following the directions can cause chaos in the parking lot. We appreciate your willingness to comply with our Security Policy and your patience as we continue to improve it.

Bad Weather Days

In case of bad weather, listen to the local radio stations: KZOR 94.1 or KLMA 96.5 for school reports. St. Helena Catholic School will follow the public-school decisions regarding cancellation or delay of the school day.

School to Home Communication

All communication from the school office will be done through notes from the school office. It is each family's responsibility to remain informed.

Each child is required to have a school to home folder. These will be provided by the school and will be paid for by the parent if it is lost or damaged.

Please check this folder daily for notes from the school or teacher, homework assignments and graded work.

Change of Address/Phone/Emergency Contacts

The school office **MUST** be notified if there is a change of address or phone number during the year. If you have an unlisted number, it will be kept confidential. It is necessary that we have a number where we can contact you. In case of illness, or of an emergency, it is essential that the school have the telephone number of a relative or friend who could be called if the parents cannot be reached.

Emergency contacts given to the school must be people who are:

- 18 years or older
- Regularly available
- Can be reached by phone
- Have transportation to come and pick up the child, when necessary

These three possibilities must exist before the names of emergency contacts are acceptable. If you plan to be away from home or your workplace on a given day, please tell your child, the school, and the emergency contact where you will be.

Lunch Policy

We do not serve lunch. Children must bring their own lunch to school, every day.

1. Lunch must be sent with the child each morning they attend school.

Teachers will take a lunch tally each morning and report children who do not have lunch to the office. Parents, guardians, relatives, or emergency contacts will be called to provide a healthy lunch.

2. Please make sure to pack a drink, spoons, forks, and napkins with your child's lunch.

3. Parents or guardians are more than welcome to come and eat lunch with their child. Please keep in mind that you must have gone through Safe Environment Training (VIRTUS) to do so.

4. Parents or guardians can pick up their child (ren) to take them to lunch any day.

We ask that you only do so within the lunch period so that your child does not miss instructional time. Students may not leave the school grounds to eat lunch unless they are checked out by a parent or guardian. Students in Pre-K must return to school by 11:30 a.m. and K - 5th Grade must return by 12:15 p.m. and be signed in, or they will be counted as tardy.

Lunchroom Rules:

- Children will use the restroom before lunch.
- Each classroom will say prayer before meals in their classroom.
- When in the lunchroom they will sit at the designated table assigned to their grade level.
- Prayer after meals will follow lunch time.
- Children will go back to class.

Penalties for breaking lunchroom rules are:

1. Child goes to bench and sits for the remainder of the lunch period.
2. Teacher will follow up with consequences.
3. Parents may be called.

Lunchroom Schedule:

Pre-K students will eat lunch at 11:00 a.m., go out to recess at 11:25 a.m. and be back in class by 11:45 a.m.

Kindergarten through 5th grade, will eat lunch at 11:30 a.m., go to recess at 11:50 a.m. and bell will ring by 12:15 p.m.

Visitor Policy

All visitors must check in at the office. It is important that we know who is always in our school, therefore it is mandatory that you sign in at the office and get a visitor tag before making your way through the building. Our doors are monitored by a surveillance system. We ask for your patience as we become acquainted with our families.

Parents may not interrupt class time to speak to a student or teacher. Messages may be left in the office, or you may make appointments for after school conferences. For safety reasons children should not be called to the office during recess. Teacher must always watch all children.

Parents or guardians of current students may visit the classroom. Classroom visits must not disturb the teacher or students and are to be no longer than one 30-minute class period, unless previously arranged with the teacher. Visitors are to sit in the back of the classroom.

Emergency Procedures

Fire

Fire drills are conducted for two purposes: (1) to train students to leave the building in an orderly manner and quickly in case of an emergency alarm; and (2) to teach self-control in times of emergency in later life. These aims can be accomplished with student cooperation. When an alarm is sounded, all students should immediately leave the room as directed by the teacher and proceed to the designated exit. They should walk in an orderly manner without talking or pushing. When the students reach the safety zone, they should turn and face the building while remaining in line. Each teacher will then take roll. Any child not accounted for is to be reported to the nearest fire officer or principal. Any child not with his or her class is to leave the building by the nearest door and report to his or her teacher promptly. The regular school bell will ring as a signal to re-enter the school.

Tornado

Most tornadoes in New Mexico occur in the months of April, May, and June. Most tornadoes occur from 12 noon through midnight, and 85% of them occur between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Approaching tornadoes sound like a continuous rumbling of thunder. Strict discipline will be enforced. During drills, students are to go to designated areas away from windows and doors. Students who are outside should go to designated areas. The proper position for students after reaching the designated areas is as follows: kneel on the floor, lean forward, and touch the forehead to the floor, then clasp the hands together behind the back of head. Teachers are to take roll and any child not accounted for is to be reported to the principal immediately. No child will be released from school for the duration of the warning of the tornado.

Bomb Threat

All bomb threats must and will be taken seriously. The same plan as that for a fire will be followed. This will become a matter for the police to handle.

Missing Child

The parents will be notified immediately as well as the police and a search of the grounds and neighborhood will begin at once.

Code Red

Lock-down drills may be conducted to prepare schools for emergency situations when students and staff may be in imminent danger of serious bodily injury. Classroom doors are closed and locked. Doors remain locked until the proper authorities and law enforcement deem it safe to open. If on the playground, children will be moved to the Bob Moran Parish Center. If the cafeteria, children will follow specific escape routes.

Certain situations may require releasing students from school or relocating them from the school site to another safer place (Bob Moran Parish Center) when parents expect their children to be in school. The principal, pastor, and/or superintendent of Catholic Schools will authorize such actions in times of extreme emergency. All attempts shall be made to notify parents about the situation.

In addition, after receiving authorization to relocate students or send them home early, the principal or authorized representative will notify the area radio and television stations to broadcast the prepared announcement which includes dismissal time, reasons for closure, traffic control, transportation plans, site of relocation, etc.

Health Procedures

No teacher may ever give any medication. If your child is directed by a doctor to take medication during the school day, a parent or legal guardian and student assume full responsibility. Medications must be kept in the office and labeled with the student's name, dosage, time, and parent's signature. Students may not keep any type of medication in their personal belongings. Only asthma inhalers and epi-pens may be kept in the school office for the student to use in the case of an emergency. These medications must be in the box and have the prescription label attached.

Parents/guardians must also have a current Medical Request Permission Form completed by the child's doctor and signed by both the doctor and the parent/legal guardian on file in the school office. Medications that are expired will not be used in the case of an emergency.

If a student demonstrates inability to breath or shows symptoms of a severe allergic reaction, and no medication is available at the school, if the correct documentation is not at the school, or if the medication held at the school has expired, paramedics (911) will be called first and the parent or legal guardian on file in the school office, second. Children will not be allowed to take medication that they have in their personal possession.

In the case of severe cough, cough drops may be kept in the school office. (Parent Provided) The child must come to the school office to get them when needed. Throat lozenges or other types of drops containing medicine will not be allowed.

Chronic Problems and Allergies

A doctor's request must be on file in the school office for any student to be excused from P.E. or recess.

Communicable Diseases

Any student or staff member having a communicable disease will be dealt with on an individual basis in accordance with the guidelines for the disease issued by both the State and Local Health Departments and the Center for Disease Control. Written authorization from a physician presented to the principal is required for readmission.

Illness Criteria

For the protection of all students, the following rules have been established. Whenever a student exhibits one or more of these symptoms, the child should be kept at home. If the following symptoms are exhibited after the child arrives at school, parents will be contacted, and the student will be sent home.

- Fever 99.6% or higher
- Suspected contagious disease, including but not limited to the flu virus
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Severe cold symptoms
- Discomfort lasting 30 minutes or longer

Procedures for In-School Health Problems

For cuts, scratches and minor playground accidents, emergency first aid in the form of cleansing and bandaging will be administered at the school. If a child becomes ill during the day, the teacher will send the child to the office with a note. The school secretary will call the parent, guardian, or emergency contact to come and pick up the child. This must be done immediately.

Supervision and Liability

Children will not be allowed to play outside of the school building during PSA meetings or any other school sponsored activities that take place inside of the school building, outside of school hours, since there will be no supervision of licensed personnel available.

Circle of Grace

Out of concern for all God's people and in response to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, we have a program for the safe environment education of children and young people supported and mandated by Bishop Peter Baldacchino.

Diocese/eparchies will establish 'safe environment' programs. They will cooperate with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children. Diocese/eparchies will make clear to clergy and members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in positions of trust about sexual abuse.

Article 12 – Charter for the Protections of Children and Young People

This program is called **Circle of Grace**. It is meant to supplement and be integrated into the excellent programs and curricula for the formation of children and young people in our schools and religious education programs. **Circle of Grace** aims to equip our children and young people by arming them with essential knowledge and skills grounded in the richness of our faith. This program helps children and young people to understand their own (and other's) dignity in mind, body, and spirit.

Parent School Association (PSA)

PSA officers are to coordinate the agenda with the administrator one week prior to each meeting and to coordinate with the office staff any communication needing to be sent to parents. All parents of students attending St. Helena Catholic School are members of the PSA which meets the second Tuesday of each month.

The basic goals for the PSA are:

1. To raise money through various fundraisers for the purchase of needed school equipment, renovation projects, library needs and school activities, and to offset the overall operational costs of the school.
2. To organize volunteer help for school parties, and various other events and fundraisers.
3. To provide a forum for communication for parents, students, and faculty.

Parent Participation

The minimum service hours required of ALL families Pre-K through 5th grade is 30 hours.

St. Helena Catholic School strongly believes in “parent power.” The greater the parent/guardian support the increased success we can achieve as a school. There is endless research that outlines the countless benefits of parent involvement in children’s education.

Each family is required to serve a minimum of thirty (30) service hours during the school year to ensure registration the following year. A total of 7.5 hours must be completed by the end of each quarter. Four (4) of the total hours **MUST** be worked at our annual Family Fair in the fall, and another four (4) at our Mardi Gras Fundraiser in the spring. All hours must be completed by May 9, 2025.

A cash fee of \$20 may be substituted for each service hour not served. Unmet obligations will be added to the family’s bill at the end of the year. Items may be donated such as water, Kleenex, wipes, etc. in lieu of service hours but a receipt must be turned into the office for the items donated. Items will be given credit towards service hours based on the receipt total.

Any scholarships granted to students will not cover service hour fees.

Although we would much rather have you volunteer your time, we realize many of you are extremely busy so there are many opportunities to meet the remaining balance.

Search and Seizure Policy

The school has the right to search a student, person, backpack, or other personal property to recover stolen property and/or to maintain a safe school environment.

Procedure

1. The search will be conducted in private by the Administrator or designee and an adult witness of the same sex, if the Administrator or designee has a reasonable suspicion that stolen property, weapons, or prohibited substances/materials will be found.
2. Strip searches are not allowed.
3. For the purposes of this policy, any one of the following is considered a weapon:
 - a. Any firearm, knife, explosive, or object, even if manufactured for a non-violent purpose, which has a potentially violent use.
 - b. Any object used in a threatening manner.
 - c. Any object able to inflict harm to person or property.
 - d. Look-a-like objects that resemble an object which has a potentially violent use.
4. Any person willfully possessing such items or engaging in related behaviors on school property or at school-sanctioned activities, will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including discipline under the law, suspension, probation, and termination.

Activities

Extra-curricular activities (dance, swimming, etc.) are not to be scheduled during the class hours for grades K-5. Such activities interfere with regularly scheduled classes which the student is required to attend; therefore, the children will not be excused.

Assemblies

Assemblies may be scheduled throughout the school year, with the primary aim to provide educational experiences that cannot normally be provided in a classroom. Since assemblies represent a part of the educational program, attendance is required of all students. Students will be supervised by teachers at assemblies. Students are expected to conduct themselves in keeping with school-wide expectations

Contests

Student participation in legitimate contests involving creative writing, speech, art, music, science, and the like are encouraged. Such contests give individual students an opportunity to develop their skills and often reflect credit on the school. St. Helena Catholic School participates in essay contests, county and any other contest deemed to be beneficial for student achievement.

Any student wishing to participate in a contest which will require his or her absence from the school during school hours shall obtain the approval of the principal prior to entering the contest. The principal shall consider the academic status of the student and the contest before issuing such approval.

Field Trips

Field trips are scheduled by the teachers or the administration with the permission of the administrator for the enrichment of the school program. Teachers must complete a Field Trip Request Form (see Staff Policy Handbook).

A release form is kept in the office. Notices of field trips will be sent home. Parental consent must be signed and returned. Any student failing to have consent will not participate.

Behavior during the trip must be such as to not cause disturbance or danger to self or others. Students who do not follow the rules will be returned to school and field trip privileges will be suspended.

At the end of the year, students in the Fifth Grade will take a special field trip. This is an annual event. If the graduating class is combined with another class, it will be at the principal's discretion whether non-graduating students will be allowed to attend the field trip.

School Parties

Each month PSA will have a birthday celebration to commemorate all the birthdays of the month. Birthday children will gather in the cafeteria for their birthday celebration.

- Parents are welcome to bring cupcakes or similar treats on their birthday. These may be enjoyed at 2:00 PM. Please notify the classroom teacher two days in advance.
- Home party invitations may not be passed out in school unless ALL members of the class are to receive an invitation.
- Balloons, flowers, and gifts are strongly discouraged, and will remain in the office until dismissal time.
- Holiday parties will be organized by the classroom teacher and the classroom parent. Administrative approval is required for any deviation from the regular school-day schedule.

School Facilities

Groups wishing to use the school for meetings must acquire permission from the school principal. The organizers will be responsible for the facilities and for acquiring the appropriate liability insurance

coverage. The facility must be left clean and in good order. The behavior of the group, if school age, must be monitored consistently. Children under the age of 18 must be always supervised by an adult.

Communications

School/Home Communications

At SHCS, the ordinary means by which the school communicates regularly with parents is through:

- Principal emails
- Remind
- Monthly calendars and newsletters
- PSA Meetings

Chain of Command

When communicating with the school, parents/guardians must follow the chain of command in the following order:

1. Teacher
2. Administrator
3. Board of Directors

Concerns and Complaints

Everyone at SHCS provides an excellent Catholic and academic education for students. Please contact your child's teacher during the teacher's working hours if, for any reason, you become dissatisfied with a procedure or event at the school. (Teachers' hours are 7:45 AM to 3:15 PM.) **Parents cannot go directly to the teacher's classroom unless approved by the front office and/or administration and must obtain a visitor's pass.** If you are not satisfied with your communication with the teacher, you may contact the Administrator. (Administrator's hours are 7:45 AM to 3:15 PM.) If, after communicating with the teacher and administrator, you feel that an adequate solution was not arrived at, your concerns should be brought to the Board of Directors. (Please refer to the Due Process section for instructions.)

Student/Teacher Conflicts

Should there be any questions or problems involving a student/teacher conflict, the parent/guardian should follow the standard communication chain of command. Please speak with the teacher first. If you cannot reach a resolution, please contact the Administrator. If you cannot arrive at a final resolution with the Administrator, bring your concern to the Board of Directors. (Please refer to the Due Process section for instructions.)

Items from Home

Students are not to bring toys, games, sports equipment, or electronic devices to school unless special permission has been granted. In case of special permission, only E-rated games will be allowed. Other electronic items, such as cell phones, should not be seen, heard, or used in the school building during school hours without permission. If a student violates this rule, the student is subject to disciplinary action, and the item will be held in the office until the parent/guardian can pick it up. St. Helena Catholic School is not responsible for valuables students bring to school.

Uniforms

The goal of having a dress code at St. Helena Catholic School is that students present themselves in a clean and neat manner as a representation of the school. While we recognize the uniqueness of each student and seek to develop individuality, it is also important for each student to understand the concept of appropriate dress for situations.

Uniforms must be kept clean and fit appropriately. Every effort should be made by the student to be presentable, and model good personal hygiene and be in a clean uniform.

Only school sweaters or a solid black jacket with the school logo may be worn while in the classroom or during Mass. Other jackets and coats may be worn outside during recess and to and from school.

All shirts must be worn tucked into pants.

Black dress shoes and black or white athletic shoes are required.

“No show” socks are not allowed.

Ordering Information

Dennis Uniforms:

- Online at www.dennisuniforms.com
- Our school code is ACS
- SHCS receives a percentage of all uniform sales
- The skirt and jumper must be a maximum of 2 inches above the knee

Uniform Policy and Dress Code

GIRLS	BOYS
Girls Basic Uniform (Casual) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plaid or khaki knee length skort or skirt (bike shorts <u>must</u> be worn under skirts) • Khaki knee-length walking shorts or khaki pants (no joggers, leggings, or jeggings) • Brown or black, plain belt (K-5th) • White, black, or wine polo shirt • ALL white or black tennis shoes 	Boys Basic Uniform (Casual) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Khaki walking shorts or khaki pants • Brown or black, plain belt (K-5th) • White, black, or wine polo shirt • ALL white or black tennis shoes
Girls Mass Uniform (Dress Uniform) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plaid or khaki knee length jumper, skirt or skort worn with a white Peter Pan blouse. (Bike shorts <u>must</u> be worn under skirts) • Plaid crossover tie • Wine sweater vest over white shirt is allowed for Mass • Brown or black dress shoes 	Boys Mass Uniform (Dress Uniform) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Khaki pants (no joggers) • White, button-down collar, oxford-cloth shirt • Brown or black, plain belt • Tie: solid wine or plaid • Wine sweater vest over white shirt is allowed for Mass • Brown or black dress shoes

Uniform Detail

1. Cold Weather
 - a. Wine jackets or sweaters may be worn in the classroom.
 - b. SHCS hooded sweatshirts may be worn in the classroom
2. Socks
 - a. Socks must be visible, above tops of shoes
 - b. Socks, knee highs, and tights are to be solid white, maroon, or black (No design of any kind is allowed)
 - c. Leggings of maroon color or white may be worn under dresses during the months of November to February (no designs allowed)
3. Shoes
 - a. Black or White tennis shoes must be always worn with uniform
 - b. No shoes with lights
 - c. Closed-toe dress shoes must be worn with Mass Uniform
 - d. No sandals, open-toe shoes, heels, or Crocs

Dress Code Guidelines

- Faded slacks, shorts, or shirts are not allowed.
- No cargo shorts or pants are allowed.
- Pants, skirts, and shorts are never to be worn below the waist.
- Boy's pants hem must cover the ankle.
- Skirts and skorts will fit properly at the waist and finished with a manufactured hem.
- Only SHCS jackets and sweaters or solid maroon sweaters may be worn in the classroom and to Mass.
- No outside jackets may be worn during class.
- No long-sleeved shirts under short sleeve uniform shirts. Long sleeve uniform shirts are available.

Grooming

Boys

- Hair must be neatly combed
- No fad style haircuts: mushroom haircuts, shaved heads, spiked, mohawks, buzzed in lines, etc.
- Hair length must be short, clean, and tapered/layered with bangs above eyebrows
- No colored hair
- No facial hair

Girls

- Hair must be neatly combed
- No fad style haircuts: mushroom haircuts, shaved heads, spiked, mohawks, etc.
- No unnatural looking colored or streaked hair (i.e. blue, red, green, etc.)
- No white tip nails, acrylic nails, or colored nail polish (clear polish only)
- No make-up may be worn

Accessories

- No purses in the classrooms or at lunch
- Scarves and gloves may be worn during colder weather outside only
- Bandannas and any fad accessories are not to be worn at any time
- Caps and hats are not to be worn at any time in the building (unless specified for a fun day)

- Students may wear the following jewelry:
 - A Christian religious symbol on a small chain around the neck
 - A watch or religious bracelet
 - One pair only of post (stud) earrings (girls only)
- Boys are not allowed to wear earrings
- No friendship bracelets or beaded bracelets
- Hair accessories must be white, black, maroon or plaid

Uniform Holiday

To reward those students who faithfully observe the uniform code, a Uniform Holiday will be given at the principal's discretion throughout the year. Students may wear the school uniform that day if they wish. Students who have violated the uniform code prior to Uniform Holiday will not be allowed to enjoy a day without uniform and must appear in their uniform.

If parents attend the monthly PSA meeting (usually the second Tuesday of the month) then their child(ren) will receive a Uniform Holiday ticket to be redeemed the Thursday of that same week.

The following play clothes are not permitted: cotton shorts, sport shorts, leggings (as pants), spaghetti strap shirts, and tank tops, cut off shirts, halters, sweat and wind suits. Slogan shirts and camouflage clothing are not allowed. Jeans can be worn, but may not have holes, rips, or be too big (slouchy on the waist) or too tight. Students may wear different colored athletic shoes, but cannot wear slippers, flip-flops, crocs, or sandals.

Field Trip Attire

Approved attire for field trips will be announced before each field trip depending on where the students will be going into the community.

Uniform Responsibility and Consequence

Responsibility and adherence to the uniform policy begins first at home with the parent and child and then at the school with the principal and staff. To ensure the consistent dress of all students, the principal and/or teacher will have a daily spot check. New families have one week to supply child (ren) with proper uniforms.

If student is not in full compliance with the uniform policy, the following consequences will result:

1. A Uniform Infraction Slip indicating the specific uniform infraction will be given to the student to take home. It must be signed and returned the next school day.
2. If the indicated infraction has not been made by the next school day, parents will be called, and students will not be able to return to class until they are in the Approved Uniform and they will not be able to participate in the next uniform holiday.

Any negative attitudes and behavior regarding uniforms will result in a parent and/or principal meeting and will be addressed considering the policy handbook and the signed agreement of compliance.

Parent will be given prompt notification in the event of any revisions to the school-policy handbook. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to enforce the uniform policy. Any questions about uniform infractions will be decided by the principal.

Parent/Volunteer Dress Code

Parents or volunteers coming to the school in a supervisory capacity must maintain a professional image and dress modestly and appropriately for the environment. Please do not wear casual clothing such as

old jeans or jogging suits. Please do not wear revealing attire, as it is important to set an acceptable example for the children of the school.

Right to Amend

This handbook is a means of communication. It is meant to provide you, the parent/guardian, with helpful information on how our school works. The office of St. Helena School of Hobbs, Inc., reserves the right to amend this handbook, as necessary. Parents/Guardians will be given prompt notification in the event of any revisions to the school policy handbook.

Confidentiality

School records including information such as grade reports, test scores, special services/needs, medical records, behavior issues, and financial information are kept in strict confidence. Permanent folders are kept in the school office and are available to authorized personnel only.

Registration forms containing personal information such as phone numbers, address, emergency contacts, and names of individuals authorized to pick up specific children are kept in the office and are shared with classroom teachers.

Student Records

Teachers are required to keep complete and accurate records of each student's attendance and academic progress. These records are kept by the school indefinitely on official forms called Permanent Record Cards. The principal has the responsibility to ensure that all required information is accurately and clearly recorded on these cards. This includes family information, standardized test score results, and changes of address. The Permanent Records are confidential. Cumulative folders containing correspondence between the school and the student's parents/guardians, disciplinary reports, psychological/Special Education reports, legal document of adoptions and custody, and all other documents of a personal nature are retained in separate student files in the principal's office. These are destroyed or forwarded according to regulations when the student transfers to another school or when they graduate. Health records are kept in the principal's office file.

Access to Student Records

Ordinarily written parental permission is required prior to releasing the record of a student eighteen (18) years or younger. Students' records may be given without a written release from a parent/guardian or eligible student:

- To principals, teachers, other qualified educational personnel who have a legitimate educational interest.
- To Federal or State officials for audit purposes or in connection with a student's application for receipt of financial aid.
- To health or safety personnel in extreme emergencies.
- To comply with a judicial order or subpoena. In this case, a written notice to parent or guardian must follow.
- Records will not be given if there is an unpaid balance. Records will be released as soon as this balance has cleared.

Forms

Acknowledgement Form – Parent Copy

FAMILY NAME (Please print): _____

The purpose of this Student Policy Handbook is to share and to provide important information concerning specific rules, policies and procedures related to the safety and operation needed to manage an excellent Catholic school. For the school to operate safely and efficiently, you and your student(s) must be familiar with and abide by the expectations, procedures and rules outlined in this handbook.

The student handbook summarizes policy and contains general guidelines and information. This handbook’s content may be changed from time to time throughout the 2024-2025 school year.

An up-to-date version will be maintained online at www.sthelenaschool.net. St. Helena Catholic School will provide notice of changes through email. It is the responsibility of students and parents to review such changes and to remain apprised of the current version of the handbook.

Please take some time to read this handbook over as a family, and then sign the bottom acknowledgment.

NOTE: Keep this form for your records. You will also be asked to sign a separate form to be returned to the school and retained in the office records.

TO: THE ADMINISTRATOR OF ST. HELENA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

My children and I have read the SHCS Parent/Student Handbook. We understand its contents and we pledge to uphold the school’s rules and regulations as contained therein.

Failure to sign or return this portion does not excuse the student, parent, or guardian from adherence to the policies and regulations as stated in the policy handbook.

Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Name

Student Name

Student Name

Student Name

St. Helena Catholic School

School Discipline Referral Form

Date: _____

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Teacher: _____

Offense Number: 1 2 3 4 5

Location

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom | <input type="checkbox"/> Church |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playground | <input type="checkbox"/> Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cafeteria | <input type="checkbox"/> Bathroom |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hallway | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Incident

Problem Behavior

Teacher Interventions

Administrative Actions

Minor

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate language
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical contact
<input type="checkbox"/> Insubordination
<input type="checkbox"/> Disruption
<input type="checkbox"/> Property misuse
<input type="checkbox"/> Uniform
<input type="checkbox"/> Tardy
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Redirection
<input type="checkbox"/> Student warning
<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of privilege
<input type="checkbox"/> Conference with student
<input type="checkbox"/> Recess/lunch detention
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent Contact
<input type="checkbox"/> Phone call
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent Conference
<input type="checkbox"/> E-mail
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Conference with student
<input type="checkbox"/> Detention
<input type="checkbox"/> In-school suspension
_____ hour(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent Contact
<input type="checkbox"/> Out-of-school suspension
_____ day(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
|--|---|---|

Major

- Abusive language
- Fighting/physical aggression
- Overt Defiance
- Harassment/bullying
- Truancy
- Other: _____

Others involved in incident:

- None
 Peers
 Staff
 Teacher
 Substitute
 Other: _____

Description of Incident: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

*All minors are filed with classroom teacher. Five minors equal a major.
 All majors require administrative decision and parent conference.*