

# Parent-Student Handbook

## 2021-2022

**St. Bernadette Catholic Academy**  
**1313 – 83<sup>rd</sup> St.**  
**Brooklyn, NY 11228**  
**718-236-1560**  
**[principal@stbernbk.org](mailto:principal@stbernbk.org)**

Dated: Nov. 17, 2021



# St. Bernadette Catholic Academy

1313 - 83<sup>rd</sup> Street, Brooklyn, New York 11228

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## WELCOME LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents, Guardians and Students,

Welcome to **St. Bernadette Catholic Academy** and the 2021-2022 school year! We are pleased to provide you and your children with a team of professionals dedicated to the highest standard of Catholic education and care of your child(ren).

As parents/guardians of children enrolled in the Academy, you also serve as a **partner** in education. As partners, parents, faculty and staff will work together to ensure the academic, social, spiritual, and emotional growth of your children while they attend the Academy. I trust that you are up to the task, and I welcome working with you to ensure the success of your child and all the students at the Academy!

In order to provide the best quality of education and safety, we ask that all parents/guardians and students adhere to the Academy's policies. This Parent-Student Handbook contains the Academy's policies and is intended to provide you with a guide. Please take the time to review this Handbook in its entirety. I hope the Handbook will answer questions you may have regarding the policies of the Academy, although you may always reach out to me or the Board of Trustees if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

This Handbook will be distributed as a hard copy upon request. It will remain accessible to you on the school website.

**At the end of this Handbook are various documents for you to review and sign, as well as an Acknowledgement of Receipt of this Handbook. Please sign and return all these documents by November 30, 2021.**

Thank you for your support and I look forward to working with you as we provide the utmost quality Catholic education to your children in a secure, safe and nurturing environment.

Sincerely,

Sr. Joan DiRienzo, MPF

Principal

*Accredited by the*



*Global Network*

## DIRECTORY

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**Pastor:** Rev. Msgr. Thomas G. Caserta

## **ACADEMY OVERVIEW**

### **A. Mission Statement**

The mission of St. Bernadette Catholic Academy is to educate the whole child, fostering and stimulating in students an awareness of their Baptismal gift of Faith, recognition of their own God-given talents, and to empower students to mature into successful Catholic Christian adult citizens.

### **B. History of the Academy**

St. Bernadette School is a Catholic Elementary School for students from Pre-Kindergarten (3 year-olds) through Grade Eight founded in 1953. In 1994 and 2004 our school was accredited and re-accredited by the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges. In 2008 St. Bernadette School was recognized by the Department of Education's No Child Left Behind Program as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. In September 2016, St. Bernadette School was recognized as St. Bernadette Catholic Academy, continuing our unique legacy. In 2019 St. Bernadette was selected to be among the schools in the Dioceses of Albany, Bridgeport, Brooklyn, Rockville Centre, and the Archdioceses of Hartford, New York, and Newark to receive this year's STEM Award from Fordham University! In 2021, St. Bernadette Catholic Academy was awarded the Cognia Global Network Accreditation.

Here at SBCA we strive to create a Catholic Christian educational community where teachers, students, and parents share knowledge in a spirit of freedom and love. Catholic Schools are Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service and St. Bernadette Catholic Academy demonstrates this sentiment in a concrete manner.

We guide each child to understand Jesus' threefold mission – the ministry of the Word, which proclaims and teaches; the ministry of Worship, which includes attendance at Mass and a prayer life; and a Sacramental Program, which leads to the ministry of service thereby encouraging an awareness of social justice, which has its roots in the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. Our students are taught to live the Law of Love through personal integrity, love of neighbor, and self-accountability, thus laying the groundwork for positive self-esteem and responsible decision making.

We believe that every aspect of life is important – Spiritual, Moral, Intellectual, Emotional, Social and Physical. Therefore, we provide an integrated program encompassing all these areas. The faculty attempts to meet the individual needs of our students and, at the same time, promotes and provides opportunities for teamwork and cooperative learning.

Knowledge is viewed as an essential component in a mature, critical-thinking adult. Therefore, each student is assisted in developing a positive attitude toward continued education, including the power to think constructively, to resolve problems, and to reason independently.

The Sisters of the Religious Teachers Filippini began educating the children of St. Bernadette School in 1953 and were joined by lay faculty members. Many years have passed since then, with thousands

of students benefiting from the educational foundation that is afforded every student that attends SBCA!

### **C. Parental Expectation of Adherence to School Policy**

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

...Education is integral to the mission of the Church to proclaim the Good News. First and foremost every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth (cf. *Spe Salve*, 4). This relationship elicits a desire to grow in the knowledge and understanding of Christ and his teaching. In this way those who meet him are drawn by the very power of God to lead a new life characterized by all that is beautiful, good, and true; a life of Christian witness nurtured and strengthened within the community of our Lord's disciples, the Church....Dear friends, I wish to conclude by focusing our attention specifically on the paramount importance of your own professionalism and witness within our Catholic universities and schools. First, let me thank you for your dedication and generosity. I know from my own days as a professor, and have heard from your Bishops and officials of the Congregation for Catholic Education, that the reputation of Catholic institutes of learning in this country is largely due to yourselves and your predecessors. Your selfless contributions – from outstanding research to the dedication of those working in inner-city schools – serve your country and the Church. For this I express my profound gratitude. Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to Catholic educators at the Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, April 17, 2008

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

### **I. PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK**

This Parent-Student Handbook (“Handbook”) is designed to provide important information regarding rules, policies and procedures relating to the operation and safety at our Academy. The Handbook summarizes policies and contains general guidelines and information. To the extent that anything in this Handbook conflicts with applicable law, the applicable law governs. Further, this Handbook may be changed from time to time during the academic year. An up-to-date version can be found in the Resource Document Section of the Family Portal on FACTS as well as on our school website, [www.stbernbk.org](http://www.stbernbk.org), and parents/guardians are expected to regularly check that version to be aware of any changes. If you have any questions on this Handbook or otherwise, please contact the Principal.

Parents/guardians are required to sign a form stating that they have read the rules and regulations outlined in this Handbook and that they agree to abide by those rules, and to ensure that their children abide by the rules. Students in grades 6-8 must also sign this form. Failure to sign the form will not prevent the Academy from enforcing its policies, but could result in disciplinary action being taken and/or the

prevention of the student from enrolling in the school. This form can be found at the end of this Handbook.

In this Handbook, the term “parent” refers not only to a child’s natural or adopted parent, but to a student’s non-parent legal guardian or to any person or agency authorized to act in place of a parent.

Finally, in light of the unique situations which may arise in the educational process, and because it is impossible to foresee all school issues, the Academy reserves the right to address and take appropriate action for any such situations not specifically referenced in this Handbook. And, in light of the unique and essential religious mission of the Academy, the Academy may take actions in cases where moral offenses occur which reflect adversely on the Academy, the Diocese of Brooklyn, or the Roman Catholic Church, or which interfere with the ability of the Academy to perform its religious mission or to effectively maintain the intimate working relationship of the Academy and the community of Faith.

## **II. CATHOLIC IDENTITY**

### **A. Catholic Identity**

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

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

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

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

## **B. Adherence to Catholic Doctrine**

The Academy is a Roman Catholic school located in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn (“Diocese of Brooklyn”), and is committed to providing quality Catholic education for both Catholic children and those of other faiths who share our commitment to Gospel values and academic excellence. Our goals include teaching Christ’s truth and fostering the formation of the Academy’s students by conveying the values rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As a religious organization of the Roman Catholic faith, the Academy, at all times, adheres to the doctrines, customs, tenets and teachings of the Roman Catholic church, and the curriculum guidelines in religion from the Diocese of Brooklyn. All students and parents, including those who are Non-Catholic, must accept and adhere to the standards, values, and religious tenets of the Roman Catholic faith. *All* parents/guardians are expected to support the Academy’s mission and commitment to Christian principles.

## **C. Inclusion of All Other Faiths**

The presence of students from other faiths provides a wonderful diversity, and the Academy welcomes students and parents/guardians of other faiths. However, as a Catholic school located within the Diocese of Brooklyn, the Academy is focused on the formation of children in the Catholic faith. Parents/guardians must accept the intentional Catholic values and tenets that are the underpinning of our Academy. All students, including Non-Catholic students, are expected to participate in the religious formation and education programs of the Academy, including, but not limited to, liturgies, religious functions, and religious classes. It is also expected that Non-Catholic students and parents/guardians participate as fully as they can in the liturgical and prayer life of the Academy. The teachers and administration at the Academy are also committed to teaching the fullness of revelation as it is taught by the Roman Catholic Church and the Diocese of Brooklyn. While our teachers, administration, and staff value the presence of students from other faiths and respect other faiths, they always teach and model within the context of the doctrines and tenets of the Roman Catholic Church.

## **III. ACADEMICS**

### **A. Academic Expectations**

The Academy expects its students to perform to the best of their ability. Teachers evaluate students’ progress on a regular basis with quizzes, tests, homework, presentations, participation, behavior in the classroom, and class presentation. After a test is graded, the grade is posted in the parent portal. If a parent wishes to see the test, the parent should request a meeting with the teacher.

### **B. Curriculum & Assessments**

#### **NYS Testing**

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

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

### **TerraNova Testing**

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

### **Policy for Students with IESPs (K-8) and IEPs (Pre K)**

Parents of students in Grades K-8 who require Special Education Programs or Related Services must have an Individualized Education Services Program (“IESP”) document.

Parents of students in Pre-K 3 & Pre-K 4, who require Special Education Programs or Related Services must have an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) document.

The IESP contains recommendations provided by the New York City Department of Education –Committee on Special Education (“CSE”) and the IEP contains recommendations by the New York City Department of Education – Committee on Preschool Special Education (“CPSE”).

The Committee’s recommendations are based on the results of their evaluation of the child. It is recommended that parents share these documents with the classroom teacher, in order for the teacher to be aware of the child’s strengths and limitations as reflected by the testing results.

In regard to Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) and Related Services, as suggested on the IESP: in grades 1-8, parents will utilize these services outside of the school day and outside of the confines of the school buildings.

In regard to Special Education Itinerant Teachers (SEIT) services for Pre-Kindergarten and SETSS services for Kindergarten students, these may be held in our classrooms.

Note: Students with testing accommodations on the IESP will be given these accommodations for all New York State Testing, standardized assessments, and wherever possible.

In the case of a Health Para, students who are ambulatory and require a Health Para, can have the Health Para in our school for the duration for which the Health Para is required.

### **C. Religious Education**

Religion is part of all that we see, teach and do at the Academy, and is a crucial component of students’ academic learning. The Academy adheres to the current Diocese of Brooklyn curriculum guidelines in religion. Non-Catholic students are expected to fully participate in all religious education and formation programs, including, but not limited to, religion class, liturgies, and religious functions.

## D. Homework

Homework is an essential part of the Academy's instructional program, as it reinforces learning and provides students with opportunities to practice what they were taught in class. Homework can come in many forms, including, but not limited to, projects, reports, and independent reading. Students are required to complete all homework, including when a student is absent. **Parent, guardian, or other adult assistance with homework is key to a student's academic success!**

ALL students are expected to read independently for 20 minutes per evening (or, in the case of lower grades, to be read to).

Additionally, the time allotments for other homework, not including reading, are *approximately* as follows:

<b>Grades One:</b>	<b>Twenty (20) to Thirty (30) minutes</b>
<b>Grades Two and Three:</b>	<b>Thirty (30) to Forty-Five (45) minutes</b>
<b>Grades Four and Five:</b>	<b>Sixty (60) to Seventy-Five (75) minutes</b>
<b>Grades Six, Seven, Eight:</b>	<b>One to Two Hours</b>

Please keep in mind that each child works at a different pace and the time frame for completing homework for one student may be different than that for another.

Homework must be done at home and may not be done at school, **with the exception of students who attend the After School program.**

## E. Grades

The determination of grades is the responsibility of each individual teacher. Parents/guardians and students must know and understand how grades are determined, and are encouraged to reach out to each student's teacher or teachers.

The following is an overview of grades at the Academy:

The academic code for grades one through eight is as follows:

A+	97 – 100	A	93 – 96
B+	89 – 92	B	85 – 88
C+	81 – 84	C	77 – 80
D+	74 – 76	D	70 – 73
F	Below 70		

Grades one and two receive letter grades; grades 3 - 8 receive numerical grades.

The progress code for grades one through eight is as follows:

- 1 = Does Not Meet Standard
- 2 = Approaching Standard
- 3 = Meets Standard
- 4 = Meets Standard with Distinction

X = Not Assessed this Trimester

The codes for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Report Cards are as follows:

X = Not introduced or assessed

1 = Not Demonstrated

2 = Beginning

3 = Developing

4 = Secure

### **F. Make-Up Work**

When a parent calls the school to report an absence, they may request to have school work and homework prepared for pick up at the end of the school day. Students are required to make up the work within a reasonable time frame. Make-up exams will be given according to the teacher's discretion.

### **G. Protecting Instructional Time**

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

### **H. Progress Reports & Report Card Schedule**

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

### **I. Parent-Teacher Conferences**

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

### **J. Admission Policies**

Roman Catholic schools in the Diocese of Brooklyn base their educational purpose and all their activities on the Christian teaching of the essential quality of all persons as rooted in God's love.

Requirements for incoming students:

Pre-K 3 students must: be 3 years of age by December 31 of the current year  
be toilet trained  
successfully complete school readiness assessment

Pre-K 4 students must: be 4 years of age by December 31 of the current year  
successfully complete school readiness assessment

Kindergarten students must: be 5 years of age by December 31 of the current year  
successfully complete school readiness assessment

Grade One students must: be 6 years of age by December 31 of the current year  
successfully complete grade one assessment

Grade 2 – 6 students must: present a copy of most recent report card and the most recent standardized test results  
meet with the principal for an interview  
successfully complete grade specific assessments

The school must be informed if a Child Study Team Evaluation Report and/or Individualized Education Service Plans are available.

All students require: Non-refundable registration fee  
Birth certificate  
Record of Immunization  
Baptismal Certificate

Registrants will be accepted as follows:

Siblings of students currently in the school  
Catholic students whose parents/guardians are active members of St. Bernadette parish  
Children of St. Bernadette School Alumni  
All other children

The process for admission to the Academy is as follows: parents/guardians must complete the Academy application form and provide all required documents. If necessary, an interview will be held. Following an interview (if held) and evaluation of the materials, the parent/guardian will be notified in writing about whether the Academy is offering the child a position.

### **K. Transfers and Withdrawals**

If a parent/guardian wishes to transfer his or her child(ren) out of the Academy, a transfer request form must be obtained from the principal's office. Before records are transferred to another school, all bills must be paid in full, all books must be returned and a request for records must be received from the new school.

When a student transfers from one school to another, or enters high school, the new school may request a copy of the permanent record and health card from the former school. The Academy may disclose a student's cumulative record (*i.e.* permanent record, attendance record, test results) to another school with a legitimate educational interest if a written request is made and when a parent/guardian has given written permission for the release of the child's records. Parent/guardian signature is required for release of a student's confidential file, which includes special education records, psychological reports, disciplinary records, and reports by a school counsellor.

At the discretion of the Principal, and in accordance with applicable law, the Academy has the right not to certify a student's graduation or provide transcripts of the student's academic record to third parties such as other schools, colleges, or employers, or to issue a diploma to the student, if there has been a breach of a material condition of the educational contract, such as failure to meet financial obligations, infractions against the school's code of conduct, anti-bullying policy or violations of the policies of the Academy and those set forth in this Handbook.

The Academy reserves the right to request that a parent/guardian withdraw his or her child from the school.

#### **L. Recommendation for Next Grade Level**

The Academy takes the decision whether to promote or retain a student extremely seriously. Sometimes, however, testing, diagnosis and actual performance may indicate that a student cannot follow the school's complete course of study. In accordance with NYS Education Law, Assessment and Performance, if a student is being considered for retention at the same grade level, teachers will discuss the possibility with the Principal. Although the teacher consults with the Principal, the final decision for retaining a student rests with the Principal. Certain criteria the Principal and teachers may take into account as they consider a recommendation for retention includes that the student has failed to pass major subjects on each grade level and/or has not demonstrated acceptable progress toward mastery of standards, including failure to complete assignments, or repeated low scores in several areas on a report card.

A student who receives a final failing grade in religion will NOT be promoted.

If a student completes all requirements for promotion or graduation, and there has been no recommendation or approval to retain the student, a parent/guardian or family cannot self-select that the student be retained.

#### **M. Graduation**

At the discretion of the Principal, the Academy has the right not to certify a student's graduation or to issue a diploma to the student, if there has been a breach of a material condition of the educational contract, such as failure to meet financial obligations, infractions against the school's code of conduct, anti-bullying policy or violations of the policies of the Academy and those set forth in this Handbook.

## **N. Distance Learning**

Distance (Remote) Learning is provided by the school through the Google Classroom platform. It is only provided to students who meet the following requirements:

- a student who tests positive for Covid
- a student who is quarantined due to exposure of a positive Covid case from school or home
- a student who is awaiting the results of a PCR test

Distance (Remote) Learning is also provided to students in the event of a classroom closure or a school shut down.

Distance (Remote) Learning may also be provided on Snow or Emergency Days.

Distance (Remote) Learning is not provided to students quarantined due to travel.

## **O. Extracurricular Activities**

The Academy offers various extracurricular activities. Like the After School program, students are expected to follow school policy while engaged in any extracurricular activity. Participation in these activities is a privilege, and students are expected to fulfill their obligations in the classroom as a priority to any extracurricular activity.

Students who participate in extracurricular activities are expected to be in good academic standing and comply with our disciplinary policy.

Failure or difficulty meeting academic or behavioral requirements will result in a student's suspension or dismissal from the activity. The Principal makes the final determination as to participation in an extracurricular activity.

When participating in extracurricular activities, including sports or otherwise, students must at all times demonstrate Catholic values. It is expected that students, coaches and fans display respect, civility and responsibility during all events, contests, and/or practices.

Students who do not abide by the Academy's policies will lose the opportunity to participate in any extracurricular activity.

If a student is absent from school during the day, he/she may not participate in an extracurricular activity on that day.

## **P. Recess**

With the exception of school-wide events, which may include Mass, daily recess will be provided. If weather permits, the students will attend recess outdoors. If not, the available indoor facilities will be used. If a student has any physical limitation which may affect his or her ability to engage in all recess activities, the Academy must be notified in accordance with the Limitations of Physical Activity policy below.

## **Q. Summer School**

In accordance with NYS Education Guidelines a student who has received a failing grade in reading, mathematics, and language arts in three marking periods of the report card will be required to attend mandatory summer school in the low performing content areas. Summer school may also be recommended due to poor performance on standardized tests or in the classroom. Excessive absences during the school

year may result in the child being required to attend summer school. The final determination as to whether a student must attend summer school rests with the Principal.

When available, the Academy will provide information about summer school options.

The summer school report card must be submitted to the Principal before September 1. Failure to attend summer school when required will result in retention at the same grade level or discharge of the student. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide documentation that summer school has been successfully completed. In cases in which tutoring is allowed for the remediation, it must be undertaken by a qualified teacher and approved in advance by the Principal.

#### **IV. GENERAL INFORMATION**

##### **A. Academy Calendar and Hours**

New York State Law currently requires a school calendar to provide 177 days of instruction with 3 professional days and cites the following holidays when schools may not be in session:

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

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

The Academic calendar can be found on the Academy's website. To the extent any changes are made, the website will be updated.

##### **B. School Hours**

Schools hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., with the exception of early dismissal days

##### **C. School Office Hours**

School office hours are from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon; 12:45 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

##### **D. Early Release Schedule – (Half Day)**

Half Day Schedule: Dismissal for Kindergarten through Grade 8 is 12:30 p.m.

These days, Pre Kindergarten classes have an accelerated schedule. AM classes from 8:30 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. and PM classes from 10:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

### **E. Before School Program**

The Academy offers a Morning Care program. This occurs **on school days, Monday through Friday, from 7:15 AM – 7:45 AM.** Advance notice will be given to parents for days when Morning Care is not available. The Morning Care program is an extension of the school day, and students are expected to follow all Academy policies and procedures during Morning Care. Directors of individual activities during Morning Care may also issue rules of behavior, which recognize the special nature of non-classroom activities. Morning Care program fees are expected to be paid in full upon being invoiced. Past due balances will result in a student not being allowed to participate in the program until the account is brought up to date.

### **F. After School Program**

The Academy offers an After School Care program. This occurs **on school days, Monday through Friday, from dismissal until 5:45 p.m.** Advance notice will be given to parents for days when After School Care is not available. The After School program is an extension of the school day, and students are expected to follow all Academy policies and procedures during After School. Directors of individual activities during After School may also issue rules of behavior, which recognize the special nature of non-classroom activities. In instances where students are picked up, parents/guardians are expected to make arrangements to pick up their children at the end of the program or activity. Students will be released only to a parent/guardian or a person previously specified **in writing** by the parent/guardian. After school program fees are expected to be paid in full upon being invoiced. Past due balances will result in a student not being allowed to participate in the program until the account is brought up to date.

### **G. Attendance**

The Academy has developed our attendance policy in accordance with New York State Education Law. This comprehensive attendance policy will help us uphold the philosophy and mission statement of our Academy.

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

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

Doctor or dental appointments should be scheduled for after regular school hours. Family vacations should not be planned for days when school is in session. Rather, students receive vacation time throughout the year. Teachers are not required to give assignments in anticipation of family vacations, and are not required to give make-up tests for absences due to vacation trips.

#### **H. Lateness**

A student who arrives after the time set by the Academy for the beginning of the day will be marked late.

#### **I. Arrival and Dismissal Policy**

Early arrival begins at **7:45 a.m.** Parents/guardians are to drop their children off at the designated school yard entrance with a teacher or staff member present. This is the safest place for children—with their peers and with an adult from the Academy present. We strongly encourage parents/guardians to drop their children off at early arrival time, as the additional time gives students more time to prepare for the day and socialize with their peers. For safety reasons parents/guardians and visitors are required to sign in at the Main Office.

At the end of the school day, the students will be dismissed at their designated location.

The Academy will not release a student to any adult that is not known to it as a parent, guardian, or custodian. If a parent/guardian sends another individual to pick up his or her child, the parent/guardian must notify the Academy in writing at least 24 hours in advance.

Students who proceed home on their own, either by walking, bicycle, or otherwise, must do so as safely and directly as possible and submit written authorization signed by the parent/guardian to the Academy. They must obey all traffic and trespassing laws, and cross at designated crosswalks. Students in grades Pre K through Grade 5 will not be permitted to travel home from the Academy without a parent, guardian or other authorized adult or another pre-arranged travel accommodation (such as a school bus). In the case of a younger student traveling home with an older student, such as an older sibling, the Academy must receive written authorization from a parent/guardian. The Academy reserves the right to not release the student(s) to travel home on their own, either by walking or otherwise, if it deems that is not in the best interest of the students.

#### **J. Early Release**

Students are expected to be in attendance for the complete session each school day. If for any reason a student must leave the Academy before the regular dismissal hour, a parent must submit written notification to the school. Upon picking up the student, a parent/legal guardian or a person authorized by the parent/legal guardian must come to the Academy office to sign the student out, pick the student up, and escort the student out of the building. Parents/ legal guardians must provide authorization for their child to be released to an individual other than a parent/ legal guardian. Please be advised that any early release of a student will result in a half-day absence.

#### **K. Use of School Grounds**

Unless students are formally registered for before or after school programs, including Academy extracurricular activities, the school does not have staff available to supervise students present on the school grounds outside the general school hours.

## **L. Dress Code**

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

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

Each child in grades Pre-K 3 through Grade Eight is required to wear the regulation school uniform to be purchased from **Flynn & O'Hara Uniform Company** (1-800-441-4122; 6719 18th Avenue, Brooklyn at 718-567-8593. Students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 are required to wear the regulation school shoes to be purchased from **Styl-O-Pedic Shoes, Inc.**, (2435 Hylan Blvd., Staten Island, NY; 1-718-987-4140). **Consistent disregard for this policy will result in consequences deemed appropriate by the principal.**

### **Boys**

#### **K - 8**

White short/long sleeve Button-down Collar Shirt w/Silk Screen on pocket

Green Plaid Tie

Navy Pleated Twill Pants

Black Leather belt (Optional K and 1)

Navy crew socks

Navy cardigan sweater or v-neck vest w/Logo

White Short Sleeve Polo with school logo (Optional summer use: **April 15 through Oct. 15**)

Navy Twill walking shorts (Optional summer use: **April 15 through October 15**)

School shoes:

K-1 - Black oxford, velcro, black soles

2-8 - Black oxford, laces, tan soles

Navy Polar Fleece Jacket w/Logo (Optional outerwear)

### **Girls**

White short/long sleeve Peter Pan collar blouse (K – 5)

Green plaid split front jumper w/emblem (K – 5)

White knit short/long sleeve banded waist blouse, with logo (6 – 8)

Green Plaid Wrap-Around Kilt (6 – 8)(**skirt hems must be no shorter than 2” above the knee**)

Navy Criss-Cross Girl's tie (K – 5)

Navy blue knee socks (K – 8)

Navy cardigan sweater (K – 5) (Optional)

Navy cardigan sweater or Navy V-neck vest (6 – 8)

Navy blue tights (K-8) (Optional winter use: **October 15 – April 15**)

Navy docker-style slacks (K – 8) (Optional winter use: **October 15 through April 15**)  
Navy walking shorts/skort (K – 8) (Optional summer use: **April 15 through October 15**).  
White knit shirt with school logo (K – 5) (Optional summer use: **Apr. 15 through Oct. 15**)  
Navy blue crew socks with skort/shorts – **April 15 through October 15**)  
School shoes:  
    K-1 - Black oxford, velcro, black soles  
    2-8 - Black oxford, laces, tan soles  
Navy Polar Fleece Jacket w/Logo (Optional outerwear)

### **Pre-K 3 and 4 Boys and Girls**

Winter – T Shirt, Sweatpants and Sweatshirt  
Summer – T-Shirt and Mesh Shorts  
**Velcro Sneakers** and white socks

## **Gym Uniform**

### **Boys and Girls K - 5**

The gym uniform for boys and girls in Kindergarten through Grade 5 consists of  
Sneakers (**Velcro sneakers strongly recommended for Kdgn and Grade 1**)  
white socks  
uniform sweatpants  
uniform tee shirt  
uniform sweatshirt

Uniform navy micro-mesh shorts and gold tee shirts may be worn from **April 15 through October 15**.  
Platform, open-back, or fashion sneakers are not permitted.  
Sneakers must be closed with Velcro or laces. Slip-on sneakers are not permitted.  
The gym uniform is worn to school only on gym days unless otherwise directed.

### **Boys and Girls Grades 6 – 8**

The gym uniform for boys and girls in Grades 6 – 8 consists of:  
Sneakers  
white socks  
uniform tracksuit  
uniform tee shirt.  
(Gym Uniforms not outgrown in Gr 5 may be worn by 6<sup>th</sup> graders.)

Uniform navy micro-mesh shorts and gold tee shirts may be worn from **April 15 through October 15**.  
Platform, open-back, or fashion sneakers are not permitted. Sneakers must be closed with Velcro or laces. Slip-on sneakers are not permitted.

The gym uniform is worn to school only on gym days unless otherwise directed.

## **M. Grooming Code**

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

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

Students are not allowed to wear make-up at any time. This includes eye make-up, nail polish, and acrylic nails. Only appropriate modest and safe jewelry is allowed. One pair of small earrings may be worn by girls only. Necklaces must be tucked into the shirt. No jewelry may be worn on gym days. Tattoos and body piercings are not allowed.

**Nothing in this policy is meant to prevent a student from attending school with an ethnic hairstyle in connection with his or her race, heritage, or national origin, including, but not limited to, braids, locs, or twists.**

Parents/guardians will be notified if a child comes to school consistently in an unkempt manner. If no improvement is noticed within a reasonable amount of time, an appointment with the parents/guardians and the Principal will be made.

## **N. Dress Down Days**

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

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

## **O. Field Trips**

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

Adults who wish to chaperone must complete Virtus training and background checks prior to accompanying students. Please see the section on Volunteering, Chaperoning & VIRTUS training for further information about this process.

Field trips are considered an extension of the school day and the code of conduct and anti-bullying policy will apply. All disciplinary rules pertaining to students equally apply to students during school field trips.

Students who engage in poor behavior on field trips may be required to be escorted by a parent/guardian for future field trips or may lose the privilege of attending field trips. Individual teachers in consultation with the Principal reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance, violation of the code of conduct or poor behavior, or violation of school policy.

All medications given on field trips must comply with the Administering Medication policy. For a student with prescription medication and/or medical necessary related treatments, a trained individual needs to be present on a field trip. This can include a parent/guardian, a designated family member to ensure care in the case of an emergency, or the school nurse *if* the nurse is attending the field trip. Given the needs of the Academy, the Academy cannot guarantee that the nurse will attend the trip. If a trained individual of the Academy cannot attend the field trip, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide a trained individual to accompany the student on the field trip. Any adult accompanying the student must complete Virtus training and background checks prior to accompanying the student.

The Academy reserves the right to cancel school-sponsored field trips at any time and for any reason, including inclement weather and safety risks.

## **P. Care of School Property**

Students will be held responsible for the proper care of all books, supplies, devices, accessories or equipment furnished to them by the Academy. Students who damage, lose, or deface Academy property shall be required to pay for the damage or loss.

Desks, lockers, and any other area on Academy property where students store items are Academy property and subject to searches by school authorities to protect the safety of all.

## **Q. Books and Supplies**

All assigned books must be properly covered. Contact paper is NOT to be used to cover any books obtained under the New York State textbook loan. Books that are not part of this loan and are soft-covered should be covered in contact paper. Each child is responsible for keeping his or her books in good condition. Books that are lost or defaced become the liability of the student and his or her parents. Students are responsible for providing supplemental materials listed on the yearly supply list for use in the classroom.

### **Book Bags**

A book bag is **required** for all students Pre K 3 through Grade 8. Book bags **should not** be decorated with all kinds of toys, etc. These are distracting and a cause for distress when they are lost. **Book bags or backpacks with wheels are permissible for students in grades 4 – 8 only**; however, the wheels may not be used in the school building. Inside the building, the book bag must be carried by the handle or as a backpack.

### **School Supplies**

All paper products (theme tablet and notebooks, etc.) must be purchased from the school. The cost of initial supplies is paid through the Activity Fee. Students will receive these supplies on the first day of school. Parents must purchase any additional supplies as they are needed throughout the year. Please

send the exact **change** in an envelope with the child's name, grade, and item(s) to be purchased written clearly on the envelope.

Please adhere to the following regarding school supplies:

- Pencil cases/boxes other than the one provided are not permitted.
- Toys, trinkets, gadgets, and the like are not permitted. These may be confiscated and returned at the end of the trimester/year.

#### **R. Telephone Use to Call Parent/Guardian/Custodian**

If a parent/guardian needs to reach a student, he or she must call the **Main Office**. Similarly, if a student seeks to call his or her parents, the student must make the request to the **Main Office**. **Under no circumstances should a parent/guardian or child call or text each other during school hours from a cell phone.**

#### **S. Personal Property**

The Academy is not responsible for valuables that are lost or damaged. It is strongly advised that students do not bring valuables into the school building including electronic devices such as tablets, phones, etc. It is recommended that any article of personal property be labeled with the student's name and grade.

#### **T. Announcements**

Informational announcements are handled through the Academy's P.A. system. Students must courteously listen when a message is presented over the P.A. system, especially when prayers are recited.

#### **U. Fliers and Informational Brochures**

Students may, upon approval by the Principal, distribute, at reasonable times and places, unofficial material, including petitions, buttons, or other insignia. However, all such material must be in accordance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Failure to comply will result in confiscation of the material and possibly disciplinary action. Further, any such material may not be obscene, libelous, contain indecent or vulgar language or content, advertise a product not permitted to minors by law, constitute insulting or fighting words the purpose of which is to injure or harass other people, or present a high likelihood of causing a disruption at the Academy. Further, parents/guardians may not distribute, either through their child or otherwise, any unofficial material.

### **V. STUDENT EXPECTATIONS AND BEHAVIOR**

#### **A. Student Behavior and Code of Conduct**

The Academy Student Code of Conduct is as follows:

Order is essential to the effective management of any school. It is maintained not only by a good teaching staff, an efficient administration and good educational programs, but also ***by the development of rational self-control in each child.***

St. Bernadette Catholic Academy students are expected to act appropriately at all times, within school and outside school. Students must understand that they represent St. Bernadette Catholic Academy to the public, whether traveling to and from school, communicating electronically through cyberspace, participating in sports events, or simply wearing a St. Bernadette Catholic Academy uniform. Courtesy is proper and expected, e.g., greeting people, holding the door for others, addressing students and adults properly.

**Purpose of discipline:**

- ◆ To produce good order
- ◆ To provide for the safety, health and general welfare of the students
- ◆ To teach respect for the rights of others
- ◆ To cultivate good character traits
- ◆ To give ample opportunity for the development of leadership
- ◆ To form the true Christian citizen
- ◆ To provide an atmosphere for intellectual activities

**Appropriate behavior dictates that a student would:**

- ◆ Respect all faculty and support personnel.
- ◆ Follow directions the first time they are given.
- ◆ Keep hands, feet and objects to oneself.
- ◆ Use appropriate language at all times.
- ◆ Respect one another.
- ◆ Wear proper uniform at all times.
- ◆ Respect school property.

**Appropriate expected behavior for the playground:**

- ◆ Follow the directions of the supervisor(s).
- ◆ Follow the instructions of the student play leaders.
- ◆ Use equipment properly.
- ◆ Play appropriately at all times.
- ◆ Speak courteously and respectfully at all times.
- ◆ Remain on school property at all times.
- ◆ Leave all food and beverages in the lunch bag, cafeteria or school building.
- ◆ Report incidents of injury or inappropriate behavior to an adult supervisor.

**Appropriate expected behavior for the cafeteria:**

- ◆ Follow the directions of the supervisors and staff.
- ◆ Speak in conversation tone; using “indoor voices”.
- ◆ Walk at all times.
- ◆ Clean up the table and floor space after eating.
- ◆ Remain seated while eating until dismissed.
- ◆ Raise your hand for any need.
- ◆ Only food and/or beverages in non-glass containers are permitted.
- ◆ Food and beverage is to remain in the cafeteria.
- ◆ Lunch should be brought in disposable containers or soft, collapsible lunch bags identified with the student’s name.

**Appropriate expected behavior for an assembly:**

- ◆ Wait quietly.
- ◆ Use good manners for a public gathering.
- ◆ Give full attention and cooperation to the presenter.

**Appropriate expected behavior for any drill:**

- ◆ Observe silence.
- ◆ Listen for directions.
- ◆ Walk quickly in single file.

**Consequences**

Each child has the opportunity to choose his or her own actions. At St. Bernadette Catholic Academy we laud appropriate behavior in many ways, among them, Caught Being Good and Disciple of the Month. However, at times students will choose to act contrary to school rules. The consequences for inappropriate behavior may include but are not limited to the following:

An after school detention may be issued for failing to follow the aforementioned rules. Additionally, teachers may assign detentions as a result of infractions of classroom rules. Lunch recess detention and before school detention may be assigned by classroom teachers.

**Three detentions for serious or repeated disciplinary offenses within one trimester may result in an in-school suspension.**

**Detention**

Students who are required to serve after school detention will remain with a teacher for an age-appropriate amount of time. Parents will be notified at least one day in advance of the detention. Parents should sign and return the detention notice, which is kept on file for one school year.

All students are expected to thrive toward excellent behavior at all times. Behavior problems include disrespecting authority, including teachers and staff, and other students, teasing, bullying, socially unacceptable behavior, or behavior contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church or the mission of the Academy. If behavioral issues persist, the Academy may request a conference with the parent. Failure on behalf of a parent/guardian to attend a conference may result in the child staying home until the parent/guardian and student attend the conference with the Academy.

**B. Anti-Bullying Policy**

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

Bullying, bias-based harassment/intimidation are intentional, repeated, hurtful acts (physical, verbal, written) committed by one or more persons towards another person or persons. It usually involves an actual or perceived imbalance of power which can be physical, emotional or verbal. If not addressed, bullying can lead

to the creation of a hostile, offensive or intimidating school environment and can affect a student's educational opportunities. The behaviors include but are not limited to:

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

*Reporting Procedures:*

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

### **C. Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy**

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

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

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

### **D. Alcohol and Drug Free Zone Policy**

The New York City Tobacco Products Regulations Act of 1994 curtails exposure to tobacco use on school grounds. For the purpose of this legislation "school grounds" means the "buildings, grounds or facilities, or any part thereof, owned or occupied by public or private institutions for the primary purpose of providing

educational instructions to students at or below the twelfth grade level.” Tobacco use is not permitted on school grounds at any time. A “tobacco product” is any substance which contains tobacco including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, and chewing tobacco. New York City regulations are far more stringent than the regulations promulgated by New York State. However, schools subject to the rules of this municipality, as are the schools of the Diocese of Brooklyn, must follow the local laws. Thus, smoking is prohibited on ALL SCHOOL PREMISES AT ANY TIME.

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

### **E. Impermissible Items**

Students must conduct themselves, at all times, in a courteous manner in accord with Catholic principles. To that end, and also in the interest of safety of the students and protection of the Academy’s property, the following items are NOT allowed at any time but not limited to the following:

1. White-out or any type of permanent marker
2. Spray cans, smoke bombs, stink bombs, powders/choking agents or chemicals or any kind.
3. Gum
4. Alcohol or drugs of any kind, and matches or lighters, and drug paraphernalia
5. Laser pointers, knives/box cutters, scissors, or any type of weapon
6. Any type of toy weapon
7. Nail files
8. Energy drinks and caffeine
9. Extreme jewelry, more than two wristbands or bracelets, dangling earrings, or hoop earrings larger than the size of a dime
10. Makeup of any kind, including lipstick and nail polish
11. No electronic devices other than the school-issued chrome book and a personal cell phone

The presence of any of these items can lead to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension. The presence of alcohol, drugs, or weapons is a criminal offense and the police will be notified.

### **F. Discipline Policy**

The Academy may need to involve disciplinary measures from time to time. The purpose of disciplinary measures are to provide structure to students and for them to learn self-discipline, which strengthens and promotes the values incorporated in our Catholic faith. Disciplinary measures should have as an end the development of the human person who respects one self, other persons, and those in authority.

At no time will corporal punishment be used against a child. Any perceived acts of corporal punishment or reports from a child of corporal punishment should be reported to the Principal immediately by the student and/or the parent/guardian.

By enrolling your child in the Academy, the parent/guardian agrees to be supportive of the rules and regulations that the Academy deems as critical in the spiritual, academic and behavioral growth of the child.

Teachers are the primary disciplinarians within the classroom and among students. Teachers will discipline students for minor classroom disruptions, such as not completing homework, minor verbal disputes with

other students, or not being in the complete uniform. To the extent a teacher finds it necessary, parents/guardians will be notified of classroom problems. As partners in education, parents/guardians should work with the teacher to ensure that inappropriate behavior is changed.

At times, however, teachers will refer classroom discipline issues to the administration of the Academy. This is likely to include chronic minor problems listed above, or major problems, including chronic lateness, verbal abuse of a teacher, signs of disrespect to a teacher or another adult on the staff, fighting, vandalism, stealing, physical, sexual, or verbal harassment or bullying of a fellow student, violent behavior, smoking, or the possession of drugs, drug paraphernalia, cigarettes, lighters, matches, stink or smoke bombs, chemicals/irritants, alcohol, dangerous items or a weapon. The administration will handle such matters in a variety of ways depending on the severity of the incident, up to and including suspension, police notification, and expulsion.

For serious acts of misbehavior, such as, but not limited to, fighting, stealing, vandalism and harassment, the student may immediately be suspended for a period of one to five days. In cases of vandalism, the parent/guardian must pay the full cost of the repair or replacement of the item before the child may return to school. In cases of theft, the item is either returned in good condition or the cost of replacement is borne by the parent/guardian before the child can return to school.

In cases where a child engages in a fight which causes injury to another child or adult, the police may be summoned and, then, the parents/guardians will be notified. Likewise, the possession of drugs or alcohol by a child may be reported to the police. The Academy reserves the right to expel the child due to such an offense.

In cases in which a child brings a weapon to school, the police are summoned, and then the parents/guardians are called. The Academy reserves the right to expel the child due to such an offense.

Police will always be called in the case of a weapon.

Individual-directed threats of violence or harm communicated directly or indirectly by any means, as well as building-directed threats of violence or harm communicated directly or indirectly by any means (e.g., shooting, bomb threats), or to harm students, employees, or visitors are taken seriously. Upon knowledge of the threats, the Principal will notify the Office of the Superintendent and call the parents. The administration will determine the course of action to be taken up to and including calling law enforcement, requiring a mental health referral, and/or expulsion.

It is the expectation of the Academy that student behavior is exemplary both on and off school grounds. A student always represents the entire school community. Therefore, the Academy reserves the right to discipline students for acts such as, but not limited to: stealing, fighting, vandalism, bullying or any other type of threatening or inappropriate misconduct (personally, via telephone, or the internet). Such misconduct could result in punishments including suspension and/or expulsion.

Lastly, a child's arrest for a crime on or off of school grounds, within or beyond the vicinity of the Academy, at any time could result in the child's suspension or expulsion. A child's conviction of a crime on or off of school grounds, within or beyond the vicinity of the Academy, will likely result in a child's expulsion.

## **G. Respect for Life**

A fundamental belief and tenet of the Roman Catholic faith is that human life must be respected and protected from the moment of conception. All students and parents are expected to live and follow gospel teachings and the Catholic faith in this area.

## **VI. EXPECTATIONS AND OBLIGATIONS OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

### **A. Parental Involvement**

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

Parental involvement consists of parents/legal guardians and staff meeting together because of common interest in the child. It is expressed in many ways such as sharing in student supervision in the lunchroom or playground or serving as library or teacher aide. At no time should a parent volunteer communicate with parents of the groups that he/she is supervising. Consequences of doing so may result in the parent volunteer being dismissed from their position. Any cause for concern for any child during the volunteer time should be directed to the teacher in charge or the school administration.

In some instances, parents/legal guardians may be asked to assist in advocacy in all areas that would benefit the schools, including programs that request government assistance, in consultation with the Office of the Superintendent. The involvement of the total family is also a means of communicating the academy's performance to the total parish community.

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

### **B. Proximate Preparation for the Reception of Sacraments**

Diocese of Brooklyn

Secretariat for Evangelization and Catechesis

Proximate Preparation for Reception of Sacraments Program

Handbook Format

**Proximate preparation** takes place during the Faith Formation year immediately preceding the reception of the Sacraments of Penance, Eucharist, and Confirmation. The Five (5) proximate preparation sessions offer the candidates and their families the opportunity to “deepen the life of faith, especially regarding knowledge of the sacraments of the Church.”

“The ‘Year of Renewal’ begins with the core of the mission of Catholic education — to form children in the love and knowledge of Jesus Christ as celebrated in the Catholic Church. By investing in our children, we are investing in the future of the Church. Education isn’t just in the classroom or the religious education room. It begins and is nourished in the family. ‘Year of Renewal’ provides an opportunity to highlight parents’ roles as primary witnesses of the faith and educators in everyday life... This is just the beginning, and it’s meant to be a spark of awareness that will grow, year after year.”

These words describe the “Year of Renewal for Catholic Education.” This Renewal is a combined effort to enhance Catholic Academies/Schools, Faith Formation Programs, and Parishes. It reflects the missionary call to all God’s people to evangelize and renew the face of the earth. In this Year of Renewal, it is most important that we, as parents and educators, once again familiarize ourselves with the Diocesan guidelines for the reception of sacraments.

“As a family of families, the parish remains the ideal home for Catholic families to join together”, to ensure the integrity of parish life, all constituents should review these guidelines and discuss the pastoral implications. Parents and children should be catechized as to the importance of returning to their home parishes for the reception of sacraments. It is the parish that confers a sacrament, not a Catholic academy or parish school.

**Can. 913** §1 For holy communion to be administered to children, it is required that they have sufficient knowledge and be accurately prepared, so that according to their capacity they understand what the mystery of Christ means, and are able to receive the Body of the Lord with faith and devotion.

**Can. 914** It is primarily the duty of parents and of those who take their place, as it is the duty of the parish priest, to ensure that children who have reached the use of reason are properly prepared and, having made their sacramental confession, are nourished by this divine food as soon as possible. It is also the duty of the parish priest to see that children who have not reached the use of reason, or whom he has judged to be insufficiently disposed, do not come to holy communion.

#### THOSE TO BE CONFIRMED

**Can. 889** §1. Every baptized person not yet confirmed and only such a person is capable of receiving confirmation.

§2. To receive confirmation licitly outside the danger of death requires that a person who has the use of reason be suitably instructed, properly disposed, and able to renew the baptismal promises.

**Can. 890** The faithful are obliged to receive this sacrament at the proper time. Parents and pastors of souls, especially pastors of parishes, are to take care that the faithful are properly instructed to receive the sacrament and come to it at the appropriate time.

**Can. 891** The sacrament of confirmation is to be conferred on the faithful at about the age of discretion unless the conference of bishops has determined another age, or there is the danger of death, or in the judgment of the minister, a grave cause suggests otherwise.

#### SPONSORS

**Can. 892** Insofar as possible, there is to be a sponsor for the person to be confirmed; the sponsor is to take care that the confirmed person behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations inherent in this sacrament.

**Can. 893 §1.** To perform the function of sponsor, a person must fulfill the conditions mentioned in **can. 874.** (**Can. 874 §1.** To be permitted to take on the function of sponsor a person must: 1/ be designated by the one to be baptized, by the parents or the person who takes their place, or in their absence by the pastor or minister and have the aptitude and intention of fulfilling this function; 2/ have completed the sixteenth year of age unless the diocesan bishop has established another age, or the pastor or minister has granted an exception for a just cause; 3/ be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist and who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on; 4/ not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared; 5/ not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized. **§2.** A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community is not to participate except together with a Catholic sponsor and then only as a witness of the baptism.)

**§2.** It is desirable to choose as a sponsor the one who undertook the same function in baptism.

#### **What this means:**

- All proximate prep must be done through the home parish of each student
- Families must participate in Proximate Prep
- Sponsors must be practicing Catholics

#### Session One (3 hrs)

#### **Preparation of the Candidates**

This first Session should be held at the beginning of the Faith formation Year (September, October). It should follow a Sunday Celebration of the Eucharist. The intention of the Session is to introduce the families to the importance of Faith formation, the Domestic Church, and parish life. The important personnel are the Pastor, Pastoral Staff, Catechetical Leadership, families, and candidates for Sacraments.

**Catechetical Formation:** It is the personal responsibility of the Parents, Pastor, and Catechetical Leadership to ensure the adequate catechetical formation of the candidates and to vouch for such preparation in the presentation of the candidates to the Bishop (in the Sacrament of Confirmation) and to the parish. Because of this presentation, it is not necessary or required to have a public presentation of the candidates during a Sunday Mass prior to the conferral of the Sacraments.

**Sacrament of Penance** It is important for the Reception of First Penance, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation that the candidates be “properly disposed” (**Canon 889**). *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains that “to receive Confirmation one must be in a state of grace. One should receive the Sacrament of Penance in order to be cleansed for the gift of the Holy Spirit...” (**no. 1310**). For the Sacrament of First Penance and First Holy Communion the Catechism states: According to the Church’s command, “after having attained the age of discretion, each of the faithful is bound by an obligation faithfully to confess serious sins at least once a year.”<sup>1</sup> Anyone who is aware of having committed a mortal sin must not receive

Holy Communion, even if he experiences deep contrition, without having first received sacramental absolution unless he has a grave reason for receiving Communion and there is no possibility of going to confession.<sup>2</sup> Children must go to the sacrament of Penance before receiving Holy Communion for the first time. -Candidates should therefore be expected to receive the Sacrament of Penance in proximate preparation for their Confirmation and be given the opportunity to do so. **(no. 1457)**

**Reception of Holy Communion** Candidates and sponsors should prepare to receive Holy Communion at Mass, including the Confirmation Mass. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states that it “is in keeping with the very meaning of the Eucharist that the faithful if they have the required dispositions, *receive communion when* they participate in the Mass” **(no. 1388)**. By receiving Holy Communion both the newly confirmed and their sponsors give witness that Christian Initiation is directed toward the Eucharist.

- “A person who is to receive the Most Holy Eucharist is to abstain for at least one hour before Holy Communion from any food and drink, except for only water and medicine.” **(Canon 919 §1)**.
- “The elderly, the infirm, and those who care for them can receive the Most Holy Eucharist even if they have eaten something within the preceding hour” **(Canon 919, §3)**.
- Family members and invited guests for First Communion should likewise understand the importance of the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist and be spiritually prepared to receive Eucharist.

**Universal Prayer:** The Pastor should encourage the parish community to pray for the candidates for First Penance, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation, especially with a petition in the *Universal Prayer* on the Sundays leading up to the date of the sacrament.

#### **What this means:**

- Weekly Sunday celebration in the home parish is expected
- Parents participate in the preparation of children for sacraments
- Families are known in the parish
- Children are prepared for specific sacraments: First Penance, Eucharist, and Confirmation

Session Two (3 hrs)

### **The Liturgical Calendar and Advent Season**

This second Session should be held on the first or Second Sunday of Advent. It involves a presentation on the Liturgical calendar and highlights the importance of Advent as a season of preparation for Christmas. The intention of the Session is to (re) introduce the families to the liturgical year, how the Domestic Church celebrates this season with Catholic cultural elements, and how the parish prepares for the coming of the Messiah. The important personnel are the Pastor, Pastoral Staff, Catechetical Leadership, families, and candidates for Sacraments.

## **Celebrating Christmas**

Advent is the period of preparation and waiting for the coming of the Lord. It begins the fourth Sunday before Christmas and it lasts until the 24th of December. As in many other Christian churches, Advent is observed in Catholicism too and is related to a range of preparatory Christmas practices.

Some of them are to make an Advent wreath, to keep an Advent calendar and pray a daily devotional, as well as to set up Christmas decorations and erect a Christmas tree.

Christmas is an extraordinary event for the Catholic Church. It signifies the birth of the savior who is coming (in flesh) to meet people in the world. The Catholic Church designates the four weeks preceding Christmas as Advent. It is a preparatory period of a major event where the Lord is coming as a King and Savior.

According to the Catholic tradition, Christmas is not a one-day celebration, but it is a longer festive period that can last up to 22 days. It is also connected to other holidays that are celebrated in the winter period of the year.

### **What this means:**

- Families will have a deepened understanding of the meaning of Advent/Christmas Season
- Families will participate in a parish-wide celebration
- A family Advent/Christmas project will be presented

Session Three (3 hrs)  
**The Liturgical Seasons of Lent/Easter/Pentecost**

This third Session should be held on the first Sunday of Lent. It stresses the importance of the Lenten practices of prayer, self-sacrifice, and charity as a means of preparing for the renewal of **Baptismal promises** at Easter. The intention of the Session is to present a liturgical/spiritual understanding of Lent, provide examples of how the Domestic Church may pray and sacrifice together, present cultural elements of the Easter celebration, and illustrate how the spirit of Pentecost is found in each sacraments candidates will receive. The important personnel are the Pastor, Pastoral Staff, Catechetical Leadership, families, and candidates for Sacraments.

### **Lenten Devotions**

Lent in the Liturgical Year is a time when families examine the Catholic customs of our heritage. The Catholic cultural traditions, especially in the types of **Easter foods**, can become a special treat and religious experience for the family, which can be handed down to the next generation, and to the next.

**Fasting** conveys a sense of self-sacrifice which is an important theme to teach our children. While Mother and Father may restrict their diet considerably, children should be encouraged to “fast” from desserts or sweets, using their mobile phones, and other electronic devices. References to the fasts in the Bible might be explained several times at dinner during Lent. All family members can also be encouraged to fast from gossip, unkind remarks, or any hurtful behavior. This has been a season of “giving up” things for Lent. Each family member might also be asked to choose one thing to give for every day of Lent. This may be helping someone, donating clothing or food, or some other act of charity.

### **Holy Week**

Holy Week is a serious, deeply religious experience. The week is filled with prayer—formal prayer and private prayer. Families should be encouraged to attend the special Masses and rituals of the week in their home parishes.

From noon till three on Good Friday, many families keep silent. Children should be encouraged to meditate or to say private prayers. Watching a video of the Sorrowful Mysteries of the rosary while saying the **rosary** or watching a video of the Stations would be appropriate while saying the Stations.

As His apostles today, we want to spread the message. Families may write “He is Risen” on different colored sheets of construction paper, and tape them all over the doors of the domestic church. Greet each other with “He is Risen!” In all these ways, make your family life mirror the life of the church. In that way, it will indeed become the domestic church.

### **What this means:**

- Families will have a deepened understanding of the meaning of Lent/Easter Season
- Families will participate in a parish-wide celebration
- A family Lent/Easter project will be presented

Session Four (1 1/2hrs)  
**Sacraments and Family Life**

This fourth Session should take place on a **weeknight** well before the ritual celebration of the sacraments. The presentation highlights the nature of sacraments, the role of sacraments in family life, and the role of the sacraments in the life growth plan of students. The intention of the Session is to present a liturgical/spiritual understanding of sacramental life in general, provide examples of how the Domestic Church may experience sacraments and present cultural elements of Eucharistic celebration. The important personnel are the Pastor, Pastoral Staff, Catechetical Leadership, families, and candidates for Sacraments.

Many Catholic families live their Faith only one hour a week by attending Sunday Mass. The rest of the week, the cares of the world impinge on the family, and the Faith is practically forgotten. We are called to lead lives worthy of our baptismal calling. We are to live with God as a constant part of our lives, especially by including Him in our family life. This proximate prep affords the opportunity to reflect on discipleship in light of the sacraments.

To be an authentic Catholic family, we must live a sacramental life. The sacramental life means not only the regular reception of the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist but also the daily practice of using sacramentals, to help us to live the life of prayer and to celebrate the feasts of the liturgical year.

### **Receiving the Sacraments**

Next to the Holy Eucharist, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is our biggest help in living the Catholic lifestyle. If we are really aiming to be the best possible Catholic family, it is important to stress the frequent reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Receiving the Sacrament of Penance frequently will make us concentrate on strengthening our virtues and ultimately improve our Catholic family life.

Parents must be encouraged to raise children to love all the sacraments. The sacramental life involves taking the children to observe the reception of the other sacraments, especially Baptism and Confirmation, and explaining their meaning. When possible, children may have opportunities to experience a wedding ceremony, have instruction concerning the deeper meanings of the sacrament of Matrimony according to their age level. When appropriate Children need to witness the Sacrament of the Sick.

### **Sacramentals**

While the Sacramental Life means frequent reception of Penance and Holy Eucharist, it also means the daily use of sacramentals. Sacramentals are a part of our Catholic cultural heritage. They can supplement the daily reception of the Holy Eucharist, and, in some cases, may be the only way to maintain the sacramental life for some families during the week between Sunday Masses.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines **Sacramentals** as “sacred signs which bear a resemblance to the **sacraments**. They signify effects, particularly of a spiritual nature, which are obtained through the intercession of the **Church**. Sacramentals are signs reminding us of God, of the saints, and Catholic truths. While sacraments were instituted by Jesus Christ as a direct means of obtaining sanctifying and sacramental graces, sacramentals were instituted by the Church to obtain graces for us.

Sacramentals embody and make alive Catholic traditions which have existed for centuries. The rosary, the scapular, the Advent Wreath, Miraculous Medal—these are not merely objects, but truly represent the Catholic way of life.

## **Living the Faith**

The sacramentals with appropriate prayers are best used in conjunction with the liturgical year. The liturgical year, starting with Advent, takes us through the history of mankind awaiting Jesus our Redeemer, and then through the life of Jesus Christ. (cf. Proximate Prep 2)

This is a wonderful way for us to grow spiritually, but best of all, a joyful way to teach our children how to live and practice authentic Catholic family life.

To be more specific, certain traditional Catholic practices can be started (or maintained) to help us better understand and love our Catholic beliefs. During Advent, the making of the Advent wreath is a very special event.

## **What this means:**

- Families will have a better understanding of the sacramental life of the Church
- Children will be given additional information about sacraments and their meaning
- Parents/Guardians will have the opportunity to address important issues in their adult faith formation

Session 5 (1 1/2hrs)

## **The Celebration of the Sacraments**

This fifth (final) Session should take place on a **weeknight** before the ritual celebration of the sacraments. The presentation highlights the nature of the particular sacrament to be celebrated. The intention of the Session is to present a liturgical/spiritual understanding of the particular ritual, explain the flow of the ceremony, and present cultural elements of Eucharistic celebration that may be particular to the Diocese or parish, **i.e.**, presentation of candidates, style of clothing acceptable for participants, and specific elements of conduct that are allowed.

## **The Celebration of the Christian Mystery**

Jesus Christ has made it possible for us to share in the divine nature by conforming to Him through the grace of the Holy Spirit imparted to us through the Sacraments.

The sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace. In Confirmation, the baptized is anointed with oil (a sign of abundance, joy, cleansing, healing, and strength) and is thereby consecrated, or imprinted, with the seal of the Holy Spirit. As Christ was marked with his father's seal, Christians are marked with the seal of the Holy Spirit of divine protection in the great Eschatological (end times trial). The primary effect of the sacrament is the (full outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost.” Confirmation brings an increase and deepening of baptismal grace; it unites us more firmly to Christ; increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit and renders more perfect our bond with the church, And gives us a “special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ...”

The sacrament of the Eucharist (from the Greek meaning “thanksgiving”) completes Christian initiation. The Eucharist is “the source and summit of the Christian life.” The other sacraments, along with all the work of the Church in her ministries, are bound up with and oriented toward the Eucharist. “The Eucharist is the efficacious sign and sublime cause of that communion in the divine life and that unity of

the People of God by which the Church is kept in being.” In short, the Eucharist is the “sum and summary of our faith.”

Jesus Christ is present to the church in many ways: in his word, in the church’s prayer, in the poor, the sick, the imprisoned, in the sacraments, in the mass, and the person of the minister. At the same time, he is most especially present in the Eucharist, in the body and blood of Christ under the forms of bread and wine. The whole of Christ, his body and blood together with his soul and divinity, is truly, really, and substantially contained in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist. This means that Christ is present in the fullest sense when the bread and wine are converted into his body and blood through the power of the Holy Spirit.

#### **What this means:**

- Families will have a better understanding of the liturgical aspects of the sacraments
- Parents/guardians will receive specific information about the ritual as it is celebrated in the home parish
- Children will have the opportunity to receive final instructions about the reception of a sacrament

#### **C. Parental Communication**

Regular communication between the Academy and parents/guardians is a crucial component of your child’s school experience. Scheduled parent teacher conferences allow teachers and parents/guardians to discuss student achievement as well as to develop means to assist students in areas of difficulty.

A parent/guardian may request a meeting with a teacher at any time by simply sending a note to the teacher in question and the teacher will arrange for this meeting outside class time at a mutually convenient time. The meeting should take place in the classroom or someplace that ensures privacy, and never in a hallway, on the street, or another public place. A parent/guardian who is refused such a meeting should notify the Principal. If a parent/guardian seeks to meet with the Principal, he or she must contact the Main Office to set up an appointment.

Additionally, the Academy may communicate with the parent/guardian in many ways, including:

- **Email, SMS, phone messages and posts through the FACTS Family Portal**
- **School Website and Social Media** The Academy website can be found here: [www.stbernbk.org](http://www.stbernbk.org). This website does not require a login and is accessible to the public. Various announcements may be made on the school website, such as emergency school closing, snow days, and other important information. The website will also contain various resources, such as the academic calendar. Social media sites are: Facebook: St. Bernadette School, Brooklyn, NY and Instagram: stbernadettebk.
- **Information Sent Home With the Children:** Occasionally, teachers or administration at the Academy will send hard copy information home with your children. Please check your child’s backpack *daily* to check for any information sent home by the Academy.

#### **D. Home Academy Association (HAA)**

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

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

#### **E. Homework**

As a partner in education, parents' role in homework is vital. Parents/guardians or another caretaker should remain available to assist students with homework and ensure that all homework is completed.

#### **F. Fundraising**

Fundraising activities are beneficial to the Academy and are often a quality way to involve students in furthering their school community. Any fundraising program should have the approval of the Principal, and should be organized and executed so that the Academy program is not interrupted.

Fair Share: This program of the HAA has served to organize our fundraisers. Each family is required to participate in this fundraiser. It is the only mandatory fundraiser where we require 100% participation by each school family.

All other fundraisers are voluntary and may include but are not limited to: Wrapping Paper Drive, Mothers Only Hanging Out, Thanksgiving Pie Sale, Christmas Gift Card Sale, Christmas Boutique, Mother Daughter Luncheon, Mother Son Brunch, Father Son Bowling, Father Daughter Luncheon, Ladies' Night Out, and Men's Steak Night.

#### **G. Volunteering, Chaperoning & VIRTUS Training**

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

- The VIRTUS program for adults is a three-hour live or virtual awareness session that instructs adults of the Church that to protect children you must have continuous awareness and vigilance. This awareness session helps trainees understand signs of child sexual abuse, the methods and means by which offenders commit abuse, and five empowerment steps to prevent child sexual abuse.
- The Code of Conduct is a document that acknowledges the importance of legal, professional and responsible conduct of all who work with children and young people. All clergy, employees and volunteers are required to read the Code of Conduct and to sign a Statement of Acknowledgement Form. The Code of Conduct is distributed at all VIRTUS sessions.
- All employees and volunteers are also required to have a criminal background screening completed before they start their employment or service. These forms are also distributed at all VIRTUS

sessions. As of May 2010, all background screenings (employees and volunteers) will be done through the Safe Environment Office. The searches are done through LexisNexis (volunteers) or HireRight (employees). All information is kept confidential and if a positive result is returned, the pastor/administrator will be notified and appropriate steps will be taken. Background searches will be rerun every 3 years for employees and 5 years for volunteers

- While volunteering during school hours, at no time should parents text, call, or send photos to other parents outside of school regarding their child. Communication to a parent regarding their child should only derive from a teacher or school administration.

## H. Custody and Guardianship Orders

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

## I. Contacts with Media

Throughout the academic year, the Academy may take pictures or videos and release personal information about students for promotional purposes. This might include:

- where a special event or program at the Academy is covered by a newspaper or television station, resulting in student interviews and pictures;
- award-winning students who may have their names and photos published in a local newspaper; or
- if the Academy posts pictures of school activities on webpages and social media.

Parents/guardians have the right to exclude their children from videotaping, audio recording, school pictures, other photography or participation involving printed materials or on the internet. If a parent/guardian chooses to exclude their child, the parent/guardian must provide written notification to the Main Office.

Parents/guardians who do not object must fill out the media authorization release form, attached at the end of this Handbook. Please be advised that, if a parent/guardian does not fill out this form, the child may be excluded from certain group photographs or otherwise taken in connection with the school day or other Academy functions. This also includes the student yearbook.

## **VII. HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

### **A. Medical Requirements**

The New York City Department of Health requires that all new students entering Nursery (Pre K 3) through grade 12 show proof of having received a complete medical evaluation. Children who transfer from one school to another in New York City are not considered new students. These requirements may change from year to year.

New York State Law states that all students in Grades Nursery (Pre K 3) through 12 must be immunized as directed by the New York State and New York City Departments of Health. New students may enter school provisionally with documentation of **an initial series of immunizations**. Once admitted provisionally, a student has a certain amount of time to continue and complete the medical requirements. Students who fail to complete the necessary requirements within the appropriate time frame **must be excluded from school**. Parents must provide records of immunization to be kept on file at the Academy. Any exemptions to the immunization requirements must be approved by the NYC Department of Health with documentation being kept in the student's health records. Only medical exemptions are permitted per New York State Law. Religious exemptions are no longer permissible.

- For Nursery (Pre K 3), Pre-K, and UPK Programs--Between July 1 and December 31 of each year, all children between the ages of 6 months and 59 months and attending a group child care or school-based child care program must receive one dose of influenza vaccine.

### **B. Health Services**

St. Bernadette Catholic Academy has a nurse who is provided by the NYC Department of Health on a daily basis.

### **C. Illness and Medical Conditions**

The following provides an overview of various medical conditions and illnesses, the Academy's policy on how it handles such illnesses and conditions, and parent/guardian requirements. This list is not meant to be exhaustive but rather explanatory. In the case of any other illness or medical condition, or if there are any questions, please contact the Principal. **The policies in this section may be altered or superseded by policies in light of COVID-19.**

**Parents are reminded of the NYC Department of Health Core Practices for reducing illness in school:**

- **Keep your child home if they are sick**
- **Practice good Hand Hygiene (wash hands )**
- **Practice good Respiratory Hygiene (cover coughs and sneezes)**

Allergies: Parents/guardians must notify the Academy of any documented allergies that a student may have.

Policy on nuts and other allergens: When applicable, the cafeteria provides a peanut free table for children who require it. In classes where a student has an allergy, and specifically an airborne allergy, the teachers are

informed accordingly and parents in the class are asked not to send in the products containing those allergens.

Asthma: Parents/guardians are required to notify the Academy of the medical needs and protocols of any student who has asthma or a related condition.

Clearance to Return from an illness: In certain instances, the Academy may require medical clearance for the child to return to the Academy. If requested, the medical clearance note must specifically state that the child may return to the Academy and resume all activities including gym and playground. Clearance notes will likely be required for severe illness, including hospitalizations and ER visits, surgical procedures, head injuries, cardiac/respiratory concerns, fractures, sprains, or significant changes in a child's health state which may impact physical activities. Contagious Illness: To the extent a child has a contagious illness, please notify the Academy as soon as possible so that we may alert others who came in contact with your child. We also may be required to notify the Department of Health. A student with a contagious illness should not arrive for school. This applies even if the parent/guardian has not received confirmation that the child's illness is contagious, but the child is exhibiting signs of a possible communicable disease, such as a suspicious skin rash, suspicious open wounds, redness of the eyes with intense itching/burning and a thick drainage, painful, reddened sore throat, and a constant cough accompanied by other symptoms. Students with a contagious illness should remain home from school until a doctor advises that he or she is no longer contagious and can resume normal activities.

Diarrhea/Vomiting: Students who are exhibiting vomiting and/or diarrhea should not arrive for school. Rather, they should stay home until they are free from symptoms for at least 24 hours.

Epinephrine: Severe allergic reactions leading to anaphylaxis are a life-threatening and time sensitive medical emergency. Therefore, and in accordance with New York State and City Departments of Health recommendations, Academies will work with local health providers to receive training on the administration of epinephrine. For more information, see the administering epinephrine policy below.

If a child is at risk of anaphylaxis, the parent/guardian MUST notify the school and inform it of the risk. Additionally, the parent/guardian must 1) inform the Academy whether the student can self-administer epinephrine, 2) supply the Academy with two epinephrine devices in its original packaging; and 3) replace the devices when it expires, has been used, or shows any other signs of defect, such as discoloration.

Fever: If your child has a fever of 100 degrees or over, he or she must stay home. Your child may not return to school until they are fever free *without* Tylenol, Motrin or Advil for at least 24 hours.

Lice: To the extent a student contracts head lice, he or she must stay home from school until the parent/guardian has treated the condition in accordance with the New York City Department of Health Regulations. This is to protect the health and safety of all students and staff given the highly likelihood that others can also contract head lice. In any cases where a student is infected, a letter will be sent out to the entire class. The student's name will not be revealed. If a parent/guardian becomes aware of a lice infection at home, do not send your child to school. Please inform the school via telephone. The Academy does not pay for lice treatment regardless of where exposure may have occurred.

Mobility: As a matter of safety, and in accordance with all applicable laws, the Academy may not be able to accommodate in-person learning for a child who is immobile, such as a child who is utilizing crutches or in a cast. The Academy will endeavor to provide a reasonable accommodation whenever possible, but must

ensure the safety of the student and all other students and be in accord with fire safety laws. Distance learning may be provided as an alternative solution.

#### **D. Administering Medication**

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

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

The Academy reserves the right to call 911 in any case of a medical emergency.

#### **E. Administering Epinephrine**

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

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

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

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

#### **F. Administering Epinephrine on Field Trips**

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

#### **G. City & State Health Services**

The Education Law of New York State mandates that students attending nonpublic schools receive the same health services provided to students attending public schools.

## **H. Accommodations**

Students requiring medical accommodations throughout the school day (including physical education, dietary conditions, physical limitations and medical interventions) must submit a statement from his or her licensed medical provider stating the need for such accommodation each academic year. The Academy will attempt to provide the accommodation in accordance with all applicable laws, and will inform the parent/guardian if it is unable to do so. If the Academy is unable to do so, it may withdraw the child's enrollment in accordance with law.

## **I. Emergency Services in the Event of a Serious Injury**

In the event of a serious injury, the Academy may call 911 and an ambulance may take the child to the hospital. The ambulance staff will determine the hospital based upon the severity of the emergency. A staff member will accompany the child in the ambulance and the parent/guardian will be notified to meet the child at the hospital. The Academy, its staff, and the Academy officials shall be held harmless from any liability, costs or expenses associated with any emergency services and such costs or expenses shall be the responsibility of the injured party or, if a student, the student's parents/guardians.

## **J. Limitations of Physical Activity**

Students at the Academy will be enrolled in physical education classes. To the extent a student has a physical disability or issue which may impair his or her ability to engage in the class, or which may make the class unsafe, the parents/guardians must notify the Academy at the beginning of the school year or as soon as the issue arises. A written doctor's recommendation may be required. Further, a student will be required to attend the physical education class for the instructional component and observation, and to complete an alternative assignment or to complete missed activities when physically able to participate.

## **K. Counseling Services**

St. Bernadette Catholic Academy is provided with the services of a counselor once weekly by the Program for the Development of Human Potential PDHP. The counselor facilitates classes in Life Skills and other topics as well as sees individual students in need of assistance.

## **L. Wellness Policy**

The Academy meets minimum federal and state standards for goals of physical education, nutrition and healthy environments in schools.

## **M. Lunch Program**

A hot lunch is available (outside of Covid) in the cafeteria on Tuesdays and Fridays that are full days of school for a fee per lunch paid on a monthly basis. All order forms and checks made payable to **St. Bernadette Catholic Academy** must be in the office by the deadline date noted on the form.

Students have the option of bringing their cold lunch in reusable lunch **BAGS** to school or paper bags. Please do not send a reusable lunch **box**. Only send reusable lunch **BAGS**,

**Food or beverages in glass containers are not permitted for safety reasons.** Water and paper napkins are provided to all students, if needed. **No food or beverage may be brought to the schoolyard from the cafeteria.**

If a child *forgets* his/her lunch, the lunch is to be **brought from home by the parent or other designated person to the office** in a well-marked bag. Parents should not meet their child in the schoolyard or come to the cafeteria with a forgotten lunch. ***Children should be encouraged to be responsible to bring their lunch with them to school upon arrival.*** Please don't bring McDonald's, hot pizza, Burger King and the like to your children at lunchtime. It is unfair to those who have followed the acceptable lunch procedure, which is for a child to bring lunch with him/herself upon arrival. Please consider the effects that not adhering to school procedure in this regard have on the feelings of other children.

No child may go home for lunch or leave school grounds at lunchtime without expressed written permission from a parent/guardian.

During lunch, whether in the classroom or, if the case may be, a lunchroom, each child is expected to remain in his or her seat until dismissed. Each child is also responsible for keeping his or her area clean. Respect and obedience are to be shown at all times to those who are supervising lunch.

#### **N. Accident Policy**

If a student is seriously injured, the parent/guardian will be notified by the Academy as soon as reasonably possible, taking into consideration such factors as the apparent severity of the accident/injury and the priority of providing assistance to the student.

If an accident results in a medical condition/injury, the Academy is authorized to render reasonable first aid if such direct medical assistance would, in the opinion and judgment of the Academy, minimize the severity of the student or injured person's condition. The Academy may secure a professional diagnosis and/or treatment if such action, in the opinion and judgment of the Academy, appears to be reasonably warranted. The Academy, its staff, and the Academy officials shall be held harmless from any liability, costs or expenses associated with any treatment of first aid provided (including, but not limited to the cost of transportation), and such costs or expenses shall be the responsibility of the injured party or, if a student, the student's parents.

### **VIII. TECHNOLOGY**

#### **A. Acceptable Use Policy**

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

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

*Respect One's Self*

- Public names should be appropriate

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

*Respect Others*

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

*Protect One's Self and Others*

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

*Respect Intellectual Property*

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

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

*Security of Technology*

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

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

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

*Administrative Rights (To monitor use of technology)*

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

Students in grades 3-8 require the use of one-to-one Chromebooks to be used for daily educational use. Each family is required to pay the technology fee and each student is responsible for the appropriate use and care for their device. Upon receipt, each student receives a Lease Agreement and Handbook to outline the specific details of our Chromebook Program.

#### *Personal use of Social Media (Teachers, Students)*

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

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

Parents/guardians for all students must sign this Acceptable Use Policy which effectively gives permission for their child to use the internet and the Academy's technology resources for educational purposes and also understands and accepts the Academy's guidelines.

The acknowledgement of the Acceptable Use Policy to be signed by parents/guardians and, where applicable, students, is attached to the end of this Handbook.

### **B. FACTS Family Portal**

The FACTS Family Portal will be your one-stop destination to view student academic information, school announcements, and school calendar. You will conveniently be able to access all this information in one centralized location, eliminating the need for multiple log-ins. Once the FACTS Family Portal is set up your child(ren)'s school will notify you with some simple instructions on creating log-in credentials. Once you create your user profile, you will be able to access the FACTS Family Portal from any device, including your smartphone whether it is an Apple or Android device.

### **C. Communications with Teachers**

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

**Parents and teachers should not use personal social media accounts or personal cell phones (texting) as a means of communication in regards to school related concerns.**

## **D. Electronic Devices**

Electronic devices, although useful and helpful tools in many ways, must only be used appropriately by faculty, administration, staff and students. The use of electronic devices by faculty, administration, staff and students must be appropriate to the educational setting, and may not distract the student, other students, or the class as a whole during the course of the school day and after school. (i.e., cell phones, Chrome books, iPhones, Smart Watches and other personal electronic devices). In the event an electronic device, including a student cell phone, is believed to contain evidence of a violation of Academy policy and/or a threat to the school community, the individual possessing the electronic device is obliged to grant the administration of the Academy access to the device and the information on the device to ensure compliance with policy and the safety of the school.

**Inappropriate use of any electronic device may result in serious consequences.**

Schools are not responsible for the loss, theft or damage to electronic devices.

## **IX. SAFETY**

### **A. Commitment to Safety**

Safety of the students is the Academy's number one concern and we maintain a high standard of safety. This requires that the Academy complete periodic drills and exercises and that all members of the community are trained in our safety standards. In order to maintain a safe environment, the Academy requires cooperation across the board including the administration, teachers, staff, and, of course, parents. We must ensure safety is practiced in hallways, when passing during class, while on staircases, when using restrooms, during recess and physical education, during after school programs and extracurricular activities, when outside the school building, during arrival and departure, and in connection with parent parking.

### **B. Emergency Drills**

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

### **C. School Closings**

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

#### **D. Crisis/Emergency Information**

Should a crisis require evacuation from the school building, the students will be brought to a safe place located at St. Bernadette Church (if possible) or if necessary, Torregrossa Funeral Home on 13th Ave. Parents/guardians should meet them at that location. The Academy utilizes FACTS to notify parents/guardians directly about the crisis.

#### **E. Reporting Concerns Regarding School Safety**

Students, parents/guardians and staff must report all dangerous and potentially dangerous situations and/or events directly to an administrator at the Academy.

#### **F. Visitors**

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

During COVID-19, we ask all parents and legal guardians to visit the Academy only when necessary as well as to keep any visits as brief as possible.

#### **G. Video Surveillance/Photographs**

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

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

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

The Academy recognizes that parents/guardians will often want to document their student's life at the Academy, including by taking pictures or video recordings. The Academy asks parents/guardians to exercise caution, however, and be mindful of not taking pictures of other children without the express consent of those children's parents/guardians. **Parents/guardians and students are not permitted to take pictures or video recordings on school grounds without express consent of the Principal. Parents/guardians and students are not permitted to post pictures or video recordings on social media without the consent of school administration.**

## **X. SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

### **A. Safe Environment Protocol & VIRTUS training**

All teachers, staff and volunteers must complete VIRTUS training and a background screening which is administered by the Diocese of Brooklyn.

There are additional steps parents/guardians can take to keep their children safe, which we recommend parents/guardians consistently and regularly review with their children. This includes:

- Students should never go home with strangers.
- Students should never talk to strangers.
- Students should never take things from strangers.
- If students are approached by strangers and are still near the Academy, they should be encouraged to return to the Academy and immediately inform a staff member.
- Young students should be escorted to and from school.
- Older children should be encouraged to walk/travel to school in groups whenever possible.

The teachers at the Academy will also remind students of the importance of not responding to strangers and actions each child should take if approached by a stranger, including reporting it to responsible adults.

### **B. Child Lures Prevention Program**

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

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

### **C. Child Abuse Laws**

Under NYS law, teachers are all **mandated reporters** and are legally required to report any suspected case of child abuse or neglect to the proper agency. The teacher will make a judgment that the child may be presenting signs of abuse or neglect. If the mandated reporter makes such a judgment and suspects abuse or neglect, in addition to reporting to the proper agency, the reporter must also notify the Principal.

### **D. Confidentiality**

There is a professional, legal and moral ethic that requires all persons to safeguard all student information of a privileged nature. However, if a teacher learns of something that could impact the health or safety of a student or any person, the teacher has the responsibility to share the information with the Principal. Further, school officials are required to report when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child coming before them in their professional or official capacity is an abused or maltreated child.

## **E. Sexual Harassment**

The Academy is committed to providing for its students an atmosphere and school zone free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature, or unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is a direct violation of the Catholic faith as it signifies a lack of respect for other persons.

Any student who believes that he or she is being sexually harassed, or a parent/guardian who was informed by their child that the child was sexually harassed shall immediately report this information to the teacher and to the Principal. A student/parent who is uncomfortable reporting the alleged harassment to a teacher or Principal may report it directly to the Office of the Superintendent (718-965-7300). Any information shall be treated as confidential, to the extent permitted by law. All claims of sexual harassment will be investigated in an appropriate manner under the supervision of the Office of the Superintendent. No student will be subject to any retaliation or disciplinary action on the part of the Academy for reports of sexual harassment made in good faith.

No student is to sexually harass another member of the school community. Any student who engages in sexual harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

## **F. Child Reporting Abuse to Parents**

If a student reports any form of abuse at the Academy to his or her parent/guardian, the parent/guardian must notify the Principal. Any information shall be treated as confidential, to the extent permitted by law. This will permit the Principal to investigate the situation and will ensure that the alleged abuse or harassment does not occur to other students. If a parent/guardian is uncomfortable going to the Principal, he or she may go directly to the Office of the Superintendent (718-965-7300).

## **XI. SIGNS OF SUICIDE (SOS) PREVENTION PROGRAM**

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

- Decrease suicide and suicide attempts by increasing student knowledge and adaptive attitudes about depression
- Encourage personal help-seeking and/or help-seeking on behalf of a friend
- Reduce the stigma of mental illness and acknowledge the importance of seeking help or treatment
- Engage parents and school staff as partners in prevention through “gatekeeper” education
- Encourage schools to develop community-based partnerships to support student mental health
- Raise of awareness of self-harm behaviors, such as cutting and burning

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

## **XII. TUITION AND FINANCES**

### **A. School Tuition Policies**

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

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

- Tuition contracts specifying a payment schedule will be published and shared with families. All families must sign an enrollment contract that guarantees the family will be responsible for the full payment of tuition for the academic year.
- Tuition payment schedule will follow the most appropriate schedule for the academy and parents: monthly, one payment, or multiple installments.
- A Tuition Assistance Committee will be in place at every Academy

### **B. Tuition and Other Fee Schedules**

The Academy will collect tuition and fees over an eleven month period. This eleven month period will typically extend from March to February. Tuition collection will begin prior to the start of the school year. Please use the payment stubs provided to you with all payments to ensure proper accounting.

#### **ST. BERNADETTE CATHOLIC ACADEMY TUITION SCHEDULE 2021-2022\***

<b>K through 8</b>	<b>Affiliated</b>	<b>Non-Affiliated</b>	<b>Re-Reg.</b>		<b>August 15th</b>	<b>November 1st</b>	<b>February 1st</b>
			<b>March 1st</b>	<b>June 1st</b>			
<b>1 child</b>	\$5,350	(\$5,950)	\$500	\$1275 (1400)	\$1025 (1250)	\$1275 (1400)	\$1275 (1400)
<b>2 children</b>	\$9,300	(\$10,100)	\$1,000	\$2150 (2325)	\$1850 (2125)	\$2150 (2325)	\$2150 (2325)
<b>3 children</b>	\$12,750	(\$13,800)	\$1,500	\$2900 (3150)	\$2550 (2850)	\$2900 (3150)	\$2900 (3150)
<b>4 children</b>	\$12,750	(\$14,800)	\$2,000	\$2750 (3300)	\$2500 (2900)	\$2750 (3300)	\$2750 (3300)
<b>Pre-K 4 5-day</b>	\$4,100		\$500	\$900	\$900	\$900	\$900
<b>Pre-K 3 3-day</b>	\$3,100		\$500	\$650	\$650	\$650	\$650
<b>K-8 Activity Fee (per child)</b>					\$375		
<b>Pre-K Activity Fee (per child)</b>					\$200		

TUITION PAYABLE BY CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ONLY (No Cash Please)  
MADE PAYABLE TO ST. BERNADETTE CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Re-Registration Fees will not be accepted if current tuition is in arrears.

RE-REGISTRATION FEE IS NON-REFUNDABLE

**TUITION PAYMENTS MADE TO THE ACADEMY WILL NOT BE REFUNDED AFTER JULY 15, 2021**

AUGUST 15th TUITION PAYMENT MUST BE MAILED TO: 1313 - 83RD ST., BKLYN., NY 11228

THERE IS A LATE AND RETURNED CHECK FEE OF \$25.00  
FOR ALL PAYMENTS OVER 10 DAYS LATE.

MONTHLY PAYMENTS ARE DUE ON THE NEXT BUSINESS DAY OF THE DUE DATE OR A  
\$10 LATE FEE WILL BE CHARGED.

\*See Full Tuition Schedule and Explanation posted on FACTS SIS

### **ACTIVITY FEES**

ACTIVITY FEE (Per Child) \$375.00 - (DUE WITH AUGUST PAYMENT)  
**K through Grade 8**

ACTIVITY FEE (Per Child) \$200.00 - (DUE WITH AUGUST PAYMENT)  
**Pre-K 3 & Pre-K 4**

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

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

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

### **C. Resources for Tuition Assistance**

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

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

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

#### **D. Tuition Assistance Committee**

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

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

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

#### **E. Tuition Delinquency**

Payers who fail to communicate with the academy and resolve the tuition delinquency through a payment schedule approved by the academy will result in suspension of services for the student.

Students will not be permitted to attend class at the start of the trimester should any balance be past due.

No student will be permitted to begin an academic year unless all registration and other required fees are current. Enrollment for students whose families are not current in the registration or other required fees by June 30 may be cancelled at the discretion of the academy. In no event will students be permitted to attend class at the commencement of the academic year unless the delinquency is paid in full.

In order to participate in graduation activities, all debts for eighth grade students must be cleared by the first Monday of May. Eighth grade transcripts will not be released to the high schools if the financial obligations have not been met.

For all grades, in order to participate in school activities and field trips, all financial accounts are to be current and up to date.

All fees must be paid in full before records or progress reports will be processed. It is the sole discretion of the academy to withhold trimester exams, report cards, transcripts, records, and diplomas until all financial obligations are satisfied in full.

### **XIII. TRANSPORTATION**

#### **A. Bus Procedure**

Currently, St. Bernadette Catholic Academy does not have bus service.

#### **B. Use of Other Vehicles**

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

The Academy does not assume liability for transportation not operated by it, such as Ubers, car service, private buses or van services.

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

### **XIV. RECORDS**

#### **A. Change of Information**

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

#### **B. Educational Records Request**

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

#### **C. Authorization to Release Records**

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

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

#### **D. Review of a Child's Official Records**

Parents/legal guardians have the right to inspect any and all material which is part of their child's permanent record. Academies require parents/legal guardians to provide a written request prior to when they wish to

examine their child's permanent record. At the time of inspection, the academy administrator, or qualified delegate, will be present.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK**

**FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

I acknowledge that I have received and read the Parent-Student Handbook and all subsequent forms (“Handbook”).

I have read and understood the contents of this Handbook, and will act in accord with these policies and procedures. I have explained the contents of this Handbook to my child. I agree that I am responsible for my child’s adherence to the policies in this Handbook.

I understand that this Handbook supersedes any other previously issued handbook and that all previous versions are hereby revoked.

I understand that the Academy reserves the right to add, amend, modify, or discontinue any of the policies and procedures as set forth in the Handbook at any time, with or without notice.

Policies relating to the COVID-19 virus, where applicable, will be provided as part of a supplement to this Handbook.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Child(ren) and Grades: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**FOR STUDENTS GRADES 6-8**

I have read the Parent-Student Handbook, have discussed its contents with my parent/guardian, and agree to abide by all its terms.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**ST. BERNADETTE CATHOLIC ACADEMY**

**ABSENT NOTE FORM**

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student's Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date(s) of Absence:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for Absence:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Doctor's Note Attached - Mandatory (circle one)?**                      Y                      N

**ST. BERNADETTE CATHOLIC ACADEMY**

**ABSENT NOTE FORM**

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student's Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date(s) of Absence:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for Absence:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Doctor's Note Attached - Mandatory (circle one)?**                      Y                      N

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR**  
**SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY**

**Parent/Guardian**

As the parent/guardian of a student at the Academy, I have read the Acceptable Use policy and agree to abide by its terms, and to ensure my child abides by its terms. I understand that computer and internet access at the Academy is designed for educational purposes. I am aware that it is impossible for the school to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold the Academy responsible for materials acquired in use. Further, I accept full responsibility for supervision if and when my child's use of school's technology resources is not in a school setting. I hereby give permission for my child to use the school's technology resources and certify that I have reviewed this information with my child.

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

**For Students Grades 6-8**

I have read the Acceptable Use Policy in this Handbook.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEDIA AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE**

I hereby consent to the taking of photographs, movies, videos, and images capable of reproduction in any medium of me or my children or children of whom I am the designated guardian by the Academy, Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn, and/or Department of Education and their parents, affiliates, trustees, directors, members, officers, employees, volunteers, agents and contractors (the "Parties").

I hereby grant the Parties the right to edit, reproduce, use and reuse images for any and all purposes including, but not limited to, advertising, promotion and display, and I hereby consent to the editing, reproduction, use and re-use of said images in any and all media in existence and all media yet in existence including, but not limited to, video, print, television, internet, and podcasts.

I forever grant, assign, and transfer to the Parties any right, title and interest that I and/or my child/children may have in any images, including negatives, taken of me and/or my children by the Parties. I hereby agree to release, indemnify and hold harmless the Parties from any and all claims, demands, actions or causes of actions, loss, liability, damage, or cost arising from this authorization.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Grade of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

**If you are choosing to opt out of this policy, the Academy MUST receive the signed acknowledgement below and return it to the Principal by the first day of school:**

I have read the Media Authorization and Release Policy and am choosing to opt out.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Grade of Child: \_\_\_\_\_