

SAINT MARK CATHOLIC ACADEMY STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK 2020-2021



A Guiding Light in Sheepshead Bay

2602 East 19th Street • Brooklyn, New York 11235
(718) 332-9304
www.smcaonthebay.org

Section 1- Letter from the Principal

Dear Families:

Whether you are a returning family or new to Saint Mark Catholic Academy, we are happy to welcome you to the 2020-2021 school year!

As we begin a new year together, I ask both parents and students to read this handbook closely and carefully. More than just a set of rules, it is a guide to a successful and beneficial academic year for all of our students.

Moreover, your familiarity with this handbook works to further enhance the communication between the academy and your family. Meaningful and productive communication is our goal because it maximizes the educational benefits for its students. When the school and the family work together as partners, children are empowered to reach their highest potential and take responsibility for their learning and behavior.

This year will be a school year unlike any other. Our children have been out of the building for nearly six months, and they are being greeted with new routines and changes to their school environment. Despite all of these modifications, what has not changed is our commitment and dedication to your children. Once they step foot in our school, they become part of our family, and we will make every effort to ensure that they have the best educational experience in the safest environment possible!

Sincerely and with thanks,

Mr. Mark Wilson
Principal

Section 2- Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to outline policies and procedures for Saint Mark Catholic Academy. No handbook can cover all circumstances and all situations. For any issue that occurs and is not covered by this handbook, we will consult with our Board of Directors, Office of the Superintendent of Schools of the Diocese of Brooklyn, and the Pastor of St. Mark Parish to make fair and reasonable decisions.

Based on the recommendation of the principal in consultation with the Board of Directors, the Pastor of St. Mark Parish, and the Office of the Superintendent of Schools of the Diocese of Brooklyn, the principal of Saint Mark Catholic Academy retains the right to amend the student-family handbook for just cause.

Section 3- School Overview

3.1 Brief History of the School

Saint Mark School was founded as a parish school by Monsignor Daniel J. McCarthy on September 24, 1924. The school began under the leadership of the Sisters of Saint Dominic of Columbus, Ohio. Their mission was precise: Christian values taught in the Catholic tradition, that is, to teach as Jesus taught. Located in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, Saint Mark School has provided a quality faith-based Catholic education to the parish of primarily Irish and Italian children at no cost to them. The first graduating class of 1928 had thirteen graduates.

After World War II, and continuing through the 1970's, enrollment steadfastly grew to a highpoint of 135 graduates in 1975. Throughout all those years the school was predominantly a Catholic school, serving the children of the parishioners.

The Sisters of Saint Dominic were the first teaching community in the school. They remained a presence in the school for nearly sixty years. During the early 1950's the Dominican Sisters of Amityville, New York became a large part of the teaching community.

In the 1980's through the 1990's, Saint Mark School underwent a change in population. The racial, ethnic, and religious makeup slowly began to change the composition of the school community. Many of the students attending the school came from outside the parish of Brighton Beach and Coney Island. This was when the ethnic (Hispanic), racial (Asian, Black) and religious (Non-Catholic) populations made a significant change to the makeup of the school community. Also during this time, the teaching staff shifted from a religious order of nuns to a predominantly lay faculty.

From the 1920's to the mid 1960's, Saint Mark School was a tuition-free school. The parish met the full cost of operating the school. Thereafter, families were charged tuition for their child's attending. Since that time, the school has not relied upon the parish for financial support. Yet there was a particularly challenging time in the years prior to 2000. In 2000, Father Joseph Grimaldi became pastor of Saint Mark Parish. At that time, he was faced with a school that was on the verge of needing a Diocesan subsidy. With his vision he was able to avoid that step and he committed his energies in leading the effort to generate support for Saint Mark School from alumni, parishioners, and friends of the school. Under his guidance and with the work of the Finance Committee, the school was able to grow and become financially sound.

3.2 Mission statement

Saint Mark Catholic Academy, a faith community of students, parents and teachers, is dedicated to personal excellence in the traditions of the school's Catholic education heritage.

The academy values the uniqueness and dignity of all individuals, and respects the diversity of nationalities, races and religions true to our Sheepshead Bay location. We stand committed to training analytical learners, critical thinkers, and responsible decision makers for further study in the 21st century's global and technological society.

3.3 Vision Statement

Saint Mark Catholic Academy Vision Statement is to provide a faith-filled nurturing environment committed to our students achieving excellence. We envision our students to become inspired learners, resourceful thinkers and productive responsible citizens. We strive to create a school environment in which all children and adults feel welcomed, respected, and trusted and remain true to the Gospel values of our faith.

3.4 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.

Section 4- 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 multi-cultural, 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

Section 5- Student Behavior

5.1 Conduct

The conduct of each child in Saint Mark Catholic Academy should be an outward reflection of Christ’s Law of Love: “Love God with your whole heart, your whole strength and your whole mind. Love your neighbors as yourself.” This love can only be shown by the things we do for each other. In a school, we show our love and consideration of others by focusing on the Six Pillars of Character Education: respect, citizenship, caring, responsibility, fairness, and trustworthiness.

Students are held responsible for their words and actions. No student’s actions should prevent a teacher from teaching or other students from learning. Disrespect in any form, either directed toward a faculty member or another student, will not be tolerated. Disrespectful behavior may result in detention, suspension, or expulsion depending on the severity of the offense. The degree of severity will be determined by the principal in consultation with the Board of Directors. Students who are suspended—whether suspended from the classroom or suspended at home—will not be permitted to participate in any club or extra-curricular activity including class trips for either the remainder of the trimester or the remainder of the school year. This will be determined by the principal in conjunction with the teacher. Any student who is suspended whether from class or suspended at home may permanently lose their eligibility for any special classes. This will be determined by the principal in conjunction with the Board of Directors. Students are to show respect toward academy property and to the property of others.

Students who have not demonstrated the ability to act in an appropriate manner may be required, along with their parents, to sign a behavioral contract. Each contract will be written by the Principal for that particular student.

There are specific rules for each class regarding behavior, homework, etc. Each teacher makes the rules for his/her class within the boundaries of the general school philosophy.

5.2 School rules

The actions described below are all serious issues. Students must learn to respect each other, accept differences and realize verbal abuse of others, excessive teasing, and unacceptable comments, are all forms of harassment. Parents must teach this respect at home and make the child aware of the severity of such abuse.

1. **Stealing:** If a student is caught stealing, a parent may be called, proper authorities may become involved and retribution must be made. Depending on the outcome and severity of the above involvement, one or both of the following actions may be taken:
 - a) Immediate Suspension
 - b) Expulsion
2. **Fighting:** Physical violence is not tolerated. This may result in an immediate in-house suspension for 3 days. If this behavior continues and results in a five day out of school suspension, the student and parent will be notified in writing of a mandatory expulsion for the third offense.
3. **Weapons:** A student found to be in possession of a weapon or threatening another student or students with a weapon will be reported to the Principal immediately. The proper authorities may be notified as well as the parents and the Pastor. Depending on the outcome of the above involvements, one or both of the following actions may be taken:
 - a) Immediate suspension
 - b) Expulsion
4. **Threats: All threats will be taken seriously.** If a student seriously threatens another student or teacher, the Principal will be notified immediately. The proper authorities may be notified as well as the parents and the Pastor. The following actions may be considered upon the outcome of the investigation:
 - a) Immediate suspension
 - b) Expulsion

If suspension is the decision, the child may only return to school after professional documentation is provided assuring that the child is not a danger to self or others. Counseling may be required.

5. **Alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs** are never permitted on school grounds. Any student found to be in possession/using these substances can be suspended immediately. Any student dressed in uniform, even off school premises, can be suspended if found to be using these substances. If guidance is sought to rid the student of the need for drugs or alcohol, the student may be given a "second chance." A second offense in this area may mean immediate expulsion with no chance of readmission.
6. **Cameras (of any type) and or Recording Devices are not permitted at any time without the explicit consent of the Principal.** These items will be confiscated immediately and a parent will be required to retrieve them from the Principal's Office. No pictures, videos or recordings of any kind will be taken by students on the school premises. Posting any pictures or commentaries on You-tube or any other Internet site that could be considered damaging to another student, staff or faculty member or Saint Mark Catholic Academy may result in an automatic 5 day out of building suspension.
7. **Defacing School Property:** Students who are in possession of sharp instruments, magic markers or who are chewing gum on school grounds will be penalized. Any student who is found guilty of defacing or damaging school property must pay for the repair or damage. Parents and **police will be notified. Graffiti is a crime!**

CONSEQUENCES FOR BREAKING SCHOOL RULES

Students have the right to **due process** which provides them with the following procedures before any action is taken:

- A written or oral notice of the charge(s)
- An explanation of the facts which led to the charge(s)
- An opportunity to present their side of the story

Circumstances will determine the particular order and selection of procedures as noted below.

1. Teacher - The teacher will employ classroom behavior management techniques with appropriate consequences and rewards.

- a. Correction of pupil by teacher
- b. Informal teacher-pupil conference: confer privately with student at the earliest opportunity
- c. Detention (prior notification to parent)
- d. Telephone call to the parent/guardian with notification to the principal
- e. Approved letter home
- f. Informal teacher-parent conference
- g. Referral to principal: written and concise

2. Principal

- a. Conference with both pupil and teacher
- b. Warning to pupil of possible subsequent actions
- c. Telephone call to the parent/guardian
- d. Letter home
- e. Loss of privileges such as field trips, play time, recreational assembly, holiday festivities, etc.
- f. Principal-parent conference
- g. Restitution of damaged or stolen items
- h. Other appropriate referrals such as medical, court, outside agencies
- i. In-school or out-of-school suspension
- j. Recommendation for expulsion after discussion with appropriate personnel

5.3 Diocesan 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.

5.4 Diocesan Cyber Bullying Policy

In accordance with New York State Law on Cyber-Bullying, inappropriate, defamatory, or content found to be injurious to an academy or parish school community member may result in disciplinary action, even if done outside of academy/parish school premises or using devices not owned or controlled by the academy/ parish school. 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 or parish school 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

5.5 Diocesan 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 Saint Mark Catholic 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 Parish School and 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 Parish School or 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.

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.

Section 6- General Procedural Information

6.1 Dress Code

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn 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 or hair style which is considered by the Administrations to be contrary to good hygiene or which is distracting 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.

We strongly urge parental support every day for the correct wearing of full uniforms. Uniforms are worn from the first day of school to the last day. Students are expected to comply with the school uniform dress code in both action and intent. Students will wear all clothing in the proper manner and remain in their uniform while on school grounds. Students are expected to avoid deliberate attempts to achieve appearances which are conspicuous or attention getting.

On days when physical education classes are scheduled, students are to wear the alternate school gym uniform. All articles of clothing should have the student's name on them.

For emergencies or serious reasons, a parent may request a temporary exemption from dress code.

The uniform requirements are as follows:

NURSERY

Girls: maroon printed tee shirt, maroon gym shorts (warmer weather), maroon printed sweatshirt and maroon printed sweatpants (cooler weather), sneakers and socks. **Absolutely no sandals.**

Boys: navy blue printed tee shirt, navy blue gym shorts (warmer weather) navy blue sweatshirt and navy blue sweatpants (cooler weather), sneakers and socks. **Absolutely no sandals.**

GRADES K-5

Girls: (daily) red plaid jumper, white Peter Pan collared blouse, white anklets (no colors, no designs, no pompoms, no sport socks), red cardigan school sweater or fleece, black opaque tights (no patterns)

(gym day) sneakers, maroon printed tee shirt, maroon sweatshirt, maroon sweatpants, sneakers, gym shorts (for warmer weather).

Boys: (daily) white shirt, striped school tie, navy blue school trousers (no cargo pants), black belt, navy blue school socks, navy blue pullover school sweater or fleece.

(gym day) navy blue printed tee shirt, navy blue sweatshirt, navy blue sweatpants, sneakers, gym shorts (for warmer weather).

GRADES 6-8

Girls: (daily) red plaid skirt, white oxford shirt, red bolero vest, white anklets (no colors, no designs, no pompoms, no sport socks), black opaque leotards.

(gym day) maroon printed tee shirt, maroon sweatshirt, maroon sweatpants, sneakers, gym shorts (for warmer weather March 15 – November 15).

Boys: (daily) white shirt, striped school tie, navy blue school trousers (no cargo pants), black belt, navy blue school socks

(gym day) navy blue printed tee shirt, navy blue sweatshirt, navy blue sweatpants, sneakers, gym shorts (for warmer weather March 15 – November 15).

NOTE:

- School sweaters are optional.
- From the first day of school until October 31st and from April 15th to end of school year (warmer weather) is the only times gym shorts will be permitted.
- Ties will not be provided by the school office.
- Boots or other garments worn during inclement weather must be removed upon arrival in the classroom and may not be worn during school hours. Please make sure your child has the appropriate articles of uniform clothing and uniform shoes to change into.

Uniform Company Information

Ideal Department Store, 1816 Flatbush Avenue (Near Avenue K), Brooklyn, NY 11210 (718) 252-5090 – www.idealuniform.com

School uniform shoes must only be purchased at Moneysavers shoe store.

6.1a 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

6.1b Grooming Code

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

- 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 jewelry is allowed. Two bracelets may be worn at a time. One pair of small earrings may be worn by girls only. Necklaces must be tucked into the shirt. Tattoos and body piercings are not allowed.

6.2 Attendance Policy

Saint Mark Catholic Academy has developed our attendance policy in accordance with New York State Education Law Section 3205 to be implemented on July 1, 2020. This comprehensive attendance policy will help to uphold the philosophy and mission statement of our school/academy, as stated in our handbook.

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.

6.2a Lateness

A student who arrives after 8am will be marked late.

6.3 School Calendar

New York State Law currently requires a school calendar to provide 176 days of instruction with 4 professional days and cites the following holidays when schools may not be in session:

New Year's Day	First Day in January
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Third Monday in January
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
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

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

6.3a) School Hours

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Arrival Time</u>	<u>Full-Day Dismissal Time</u>	<u>Half-Day Dismissal Time</u>
Nursery: Full Day	7:50am	2:45pm	12:15pm
Pre-K for All	7:50am	2:30pm	N/A
Kindergarten - Eighth Grade	7:50am	3:00pm	12:30pm

These times may be adjusted because of the staggered arrival and dismissal times necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

6.3b) Before Care & After Care

The Saint Mark After-School Program welcomes students whose parents seek a safe, supervised venue where students have the opportunity to complete homework.

Please note that the Saint Mark After-School Program is committed to your child’s academic success and well being. In order for the students to benefit from all that is available to them we must have the cooperation of the students and the support of their families. We are available to discuss with you any questions or concerns.

HOURS AND RATES:

The hours are from dismissal until 6pm.

- Full School Days:
- 3pm to 3:30pm: \$10
- 3pm to 4:30pm: \$18

3pm to 6:15pm: \$23

(Snack is provided at 4pm at no additional cost.)

12:30pm Dismissal Days:

12:30pm to 1pm: \$10

12:30pm to 2pm: \$18

12:30pm to 6pm: \$27

(Student should bring lunch on half days)

Half price will be charged for a second child from the same family.

Each week, in the Wednesday folder, an account statement indicating fees for the week prior is sent home. Payment is due that same week to the Business Office.

PICK-UP:

At the end of the session, a child is released only to a parent or adult on record.

All students must be signed out at the time of pick-up. This will help us to insure that you are billed correctly. If you fail to sign your child out you will be billed for the entire day.

Children must be picked up by 6pm. If you will be late in picking up your child (after 6:15 p.m.) you must contact Michael Davis at (347) 574-1828. After 6:15pm, an additional fee per 15 minutes will be billed to your account.

PLEASE NOTE

Do not send in your child with toys or electronic games. We are not responsible for misplaced or damaged items. Cell phones are not permitted to be used during After-School hours. If your child is found using a cell phone it will be confiscated and you must pick it up in the Principal's Office.

Early Drop Off

The school building opens at 7:30am. Any student who arrives at this time will be supervised by a faculty or staff member until students report to their homeroom teachers.

6.3c) School Office Hours

Unless otherwise noted, the school office opens at 7:15am each morning and will close at 3:30pm each afternoon.

6.4 Releasing of Students

Students are expected to be in attendance for the complete session each school day. If for any reason a student must leave the academy or parish school before the regular dismissal hour, a parent/legal guardian or a person authorized by the parent/legal guardian must come to the academy or parish school office to 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.

6.4a Custody, Guardianship Orders

Parents must provide accurate custodial information to be kept on file at the academy or parish school. 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 Diocese of Brooklyn 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, a school or parish 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.*

6.5 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 section 9.4 for further information about this process.

6.6 Birthday Policy

Invitations for birthday or other parties should be sent to the homes of students via the U.S. mail unless an invitation is being sent to every student in the class, all the girls or all the boys in the class.

Due to COVID-19, students may not bring food into the classroom to be shared with other students. To promote health and safety, students should consume only the foods that they have brought to school or have been provided by the school.

6.7 Lost and Found

Every year we accumulate many lost sweaters, sweatshirts, jackets, lunch boxes, etc. Please label all clothing so that we may return the items instead of disposing of them after a month's time. Lost items will be brought to the main office where they will be held for one month. If no one claims the items, they will be discarded.

6.8 Responsibility for Valuables

The academies and parish schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn are 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.

Section 7- Transportation

7.1 Bus procedures

While students are being transported to and from their academy/ parish school, it is expected that they will uphold the behavior expectations of the academy/ parish school as well as rules set forth by the bus driver or bus company. Students who continuously disregard bus procedures and rules are at risk of losing their access to bus transportation.

Each bus company must hold an evacuation drill at least once a year. Students are expected to follow all instructions as given by the bus driver or other adult facilitating the drill.

Consolidated Bus Company provides services for Saint Mark Catholic

7.2 Use of Other Vehicles

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

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.

Section 8- Student Records

8.1 Change of Address/Phone Number

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

8.2 Educational Records Requests

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.

8.3 Authorization to Release Records

Academies and parish schools 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.

8.4 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 and parish schools 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 or parish school administrator, or qualified delegate, will be present.

Section 9- Health and Nutrition

9.1 Medical Requirements

The New York City Department of Health requires that all new students entering nursery 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 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 or parish school. Any exemptions to the immunization requirements must be approved by the Academy or parish school 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, 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.

9.2 Administering Medications at School

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.

9.2a 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 or parish school 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 or parish school 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.

9.2b 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.

9.3 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

9.4 Breakfast/Lunch Program

Saint Mark Catholic Academy utilizes the New York City Department of Education Student Meals program. Lunches are provided at no cost, regardless of family income.

Students are also permitted to bring lunch from home.

- Soda is not to be brought into the school building at all during lunch and afterschool.
- Please do not bring any food items that contain peanuts or other tree nuts. We do our best to keep Saint Mark Catholic Academy a “peanut safe” school.

At this time, breakfast through the New York City Department of Education Student Meals program is available to students in Pre-K for All only.

Section 9-Parental Obligations

9.1 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. 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 and parish school'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 or parish school community. Failure of parents to act in a manner compatible with the values of the academy or parish school may result in student dismissal.

9.2 Fundraising Commitment

Option 1: \$300 per family per year; payable in July 2020 (except Pre-K for All)

Option 2: \$30 per family per month for 10 months (except Pre-K for All)

A portion of the Fundraising Commitment includes the cost of:

- **Candy Sale in September.** Each family will receive one box of candy in the Fall. This box has been paid for by your Fundraising Fee. If families sell that box of candy, that money is theirs.
- **Raffle Books in January.** Each family will receive raffle books in the winter. If you sell these raffles, that money is yours. You may also choose to keep the raffles and enter the drawing yourselves for a chance to win \$1,000. (Drawing held at the Card Party in early spring.)
- Bowl-A-Thon in February. The children may ask for sponsorship from friends and family.

Expected revenue from these fundraisers is included in determining tuition fees for the school year. Families who do not participate in the Mandatory Fundraising Obligations, will incur an additional fee on their tuition.

9.3 Parent Teacher Association (PTA) - Home Academy Association (HAA)

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

An added responsibility of the Home School Association will be to assist in the fundraising efforts of the academy or parish school. 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 or parish school. All financial transactions must be approved by the pastor/academy board of directors.

9.4 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 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

Section 10-Safety

10.1 Emergency Drills

Per New York State laws, academies and parish schools 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.

10.2 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 and parish schools 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.

10.3 Procedures for Visitors

All visitors must be admitted to the building by 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 or parish school only when necessary as well as to keep any visits as brief as possible.

10.4 Video Surveillance Cameras

Academies and parish schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn are authorized to use video camera surveillance on academy/ parish school 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.

Section 11-Instruction

11.1 Grading Policy

Grades 1 - 4

- assessments: 70%
- homework: 15%
- classwork: 15%

Grades 5 - 8

- assessments: 65%
- homework: 10%
- classwork: 10%
- trimester exams: 15%

Extra credit for individual students is not available. At times, a teacher may give an optional assignment that is available for additional earned credit to the entire class. Students who complete the assignment will earn the additional credit. The students who choose not to complete the additional assignment will not be penalized.

11.2 Homework Policy

Homework is important. It is an extension of the learning that takes place in school. Homework can provide practice and drill that reinforces classroom learning and can provide opportunities for independent study, research and creative thinking. Parents can help their children by arranging a quiet, comfortable place for the students to work and by seeing that assignments are completed. It does not help a child when parents do the homework for them. It is actually detrimental in many ways. Homework is often posted on our website at: www.smcaonthebay.org. It is recommended that students spend the following minimum amounts of time doing homework:

Kindergarten and Grade One: Twenty (20) to Thirty (30) minutes

Grades Two and Three: Thirty (30) to Sixty (60) minutes

Grades Four and Five: Sixty (60) to Ninety (90) minutes

Grades Six, Seven, and Eight: One to Two Hours

11.3 Protecting Instructional Time

Maintaining school schedule and structure is of the utmost importance during the school year. As academies and parish schools 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.

11.4 Reporting Student Progress

11.4a 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.

11.4b 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.

11.4c 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 supports 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.

11.4d 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.

Section 12-Internet Use

12.1 Option C

The Option C Parent Portal allows parents to be involved in their child's academic life on their schedule and more efficiently. Rather than writing a note to a teacher to see how their child is doing on assignments, they can access the portal and see it in real time. They can communicate with teachers directly through Option C removing the issues of lost or blocked email messages. It allows teachers to contact parents directly and keeps a record of the interaction should it be necessary. As grades are recorded for student work, they can be shared with parents, giving any time up-to-date progress reports.

Option C's Parent Alert System is a flexible notification system that lets its audiences - parents, principals, and school staff - communicate quickly and reliably. Academies and parish schools may also create alerts to send to parents regarding fund raisers, events, drills, community affairs, school closings and any information they would like to communicate quickly. Users can decide how they want to be reached, either by voice, text or email, or any combination. Parents should check their settings on Option C to ensure that all contact information is up to date and all options are set correctly.

12.2 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 Option C, 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.

It is strongly advised that parents and teachers do not use personal social media accounts or personal cell phones (texting) as a means of communication in regards to school related concerns.

Section 13-Finances

13.1 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.
- Academies will arrange for all tuition and fees to be collected through FACTS Tuition Management.
- Tuition payment schedule will follow the most appropriate schedule for the academy and parents: monthly, one payment, or three installments.
- A Tuition Assistance Committee will be in place at every school/academy

13.2 Tuition and other fee schedules

The academy or parish school will collect tuition and fees over a ten month period. This ten month period will typically extend from June to March. Tuition collection will begin prior to the start of the school year.

Tuition Rates for the 2020-2021 School Year Catholic Tuition Rate

Nursery & Kindergarten through Grade 8

1 child:

\$492 per month for 10 months

2 or more children:

\$770 per month for 10 months

Non-Catholic Tuition Rate

Nursery & Kindergarten through Grade 8

1 child:

\$559 per month for 10 months

2 or more children:

\$910 per month for 10 months

A discount of 5% will be given if tuition is paid in full before the first day of school.

School Fees

Registration Fee: \$150 per family (except Pre-K for All)

Books and Testing Fee: \$175 per student (except Pre-K for All and Nursery)

Technology Fee: \$235 per student (except Pre-K for All)

Academies and parish schools 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 withdraw 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.

13.3 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 . 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.

13.4 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 parish school, the letter should be addressed to the pastor of the parish. 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.

13.5 SMART

SMART is a tuition management company designed to make tuition collection simpler for families as well as academies and parish schools. There will be one SMART record per family, and each student must be listed separately. This provides valuable detail about the charges and discounts each student is receiving. In turn, this provides the academy better reporting. A major benefit of SMART is the ability to process automatic drafts of the payer's bank account or credit card. There is a convenience fee on credit card transactions. Families are encouraged to pay via automatic draft. FACTS also allows for flexible payment options. Common options are monthly payments, three trimester payments, and a payment in full.

13.6 Tuition Delinquency

- By standard practice, SMART will send payment reminders prior to any due date, returned payment notices in the case of a failed payment, and will make automated phone calls to delinquent payers. Payers who fail to communicate with the academy and resolve the delinquency through a payment schedule approved by the academy may result in suspension of services for the student.
- Students may 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. Registration and other required fees are paid through SMART Tuition Management at enrollment. 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.
- 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.

Section 14-Safe Environment

14.1 Child Lures Prevention Program

The Child Lures/Teen Lures Prevention programs are presented to the children and youth who attend each academy or parish school. 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.

14.2 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.

14.3 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

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.

Section 15- COVID-19

**All health related policies and procedures have been adopted from the regulations published by the NYC Department of Education in partnership with the NYC Board of Health.*

15.1 Hygiene and Health Requirements

15.1a Face Coverings

Students are required to wear face coverings when in the school building and maintain appropriate social/physical distancing. Students should bring an appropriate face covering from home. The school will have surgical masks available for students as needed. Students' cloth face coverings should be clearly identified with their names or initials, to avoid confusion or swapping. Students' face coverings may also be labeled to indicate top/bottom and front/back. Non-disposable mask should be washed daily.

All visitors to the school for any reason will always be required to wear a face covering while on school grounds or in the school building. Faculty and Staff are also required to wear masks

All masks for faculty, staff, and students are subject to approval by the principal and Office of the Superintendent of Schools. Masks should be plain and free of any objectionable statements or support for any group, product, political view, and so on, other than the name of their Parish School or Catholic Academy.

Students will be provided opportunities for short breaks to remove masks throughout the day, while social distancing, in addition to removing them during outdoor times and while eating.

15.1b Social Distancing

Classrooms and other school areas will be set up to ensure social distancing between students. Students will also be required to maintain social distance when they are not at their desk. This is particularly important when students are not wearing face coverings such as while eating or during mask breaks.

15.2 Health Policies

If a student or staff members displays symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day, the following procedures will be followed:

- Each building will have a designated Isolation Room for students or staff who display symptoms
- A student showing symptoms of COVID-19 will be escorted to the Isolation Room by a staff member wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- The area where the student was showing symptoms will be immediately cleaned and disinfected.
- The student will be evaluated by the nurse/health professional in the Isolation Room.
- A family member or guardian will be contacted by a staff member and asked to pick up the student.
- Upon pick up, the nurse/health professional and school staff will strongly advise the family to visit a doctor and get the student tested for COVID-19
- Any student placed in the Isolation Room will be adequately supervised by a staff member during this time until the ill student can be picked up.

15.2a Health Screenings

Parents/ legal guardians will be asked to check student temperatures and screen students for symptoms prior to their arrival to school grounds. In the event that parents/ legal guardians are unable to do so, school staff members will be designated to complete health screenings. It is asked that all parents/ legal guardians are vigilant in temperature and symptom screenings for their children for the safety of other students as well as staff members. School staff will also perform random temperature screenings for both students and staff members using no-touch thermometers.

Symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- Fever of 100.0°F or higher or chills
- Cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing,
- Fatigue,
- Muscle or body aches,
- Headache,
- Loss of taste or smell,
- Sore throat, congestion or runny nose,
- Nausea or vomiting,
- Diarrhea.

15.3b Students Excluded from In-Person Learning

School-based staff and students cannot report to school if they have:

- Been knowingly in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19.
- Tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
- Experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, in the past 14 days.
- Traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days.

15.4 Returning to School after Showing Symptoms

Any individual (student or staff member) showing signs of COVID-19 can only return to school when the following conditions are met:

- Received a positive COVID-19 test AND
- Isolated for 10 days AND
- Presents clearance from a healthcare provider AND
- The individual has been symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

OR

- Received a negative COVID-19 test AND
- Presents clearance from a healthcare provider AND
- The individual has been symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

OR

- Never got a COVID-19 test AND
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms started AND
- Presents clearance from a healthcare provider AND
- The individual has been symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

If DOHMH or NYC Test & Trace Corps determine the individual is considered a close contact of a positive case, the individual can only return to school when all the following are met:

- The individual has completed a 14-day quarantine regardless of symptoms or COVID-19 test results since their last exposure to that case AND
- Presents clearance from a health care provider evaluation AND
- The student has been symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.
- Students in quarantine should participate in remote learning if feeling well enough.

15.3 School Closures

Academies and parish schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn will continue to work to provide in-person learning as long as it is safe to do so. Academies and parish schools will follow guidance from local Board of Health officials as well as directives from the City of New York to ensure student safety.

Per the New York City Department of Education “In order for schools to reopen and stay open, the percentage of positive tests in New York City must be less than 3% using a 7-day rolling average. Schools will need to close if the percentages of positive tests in New York City are equal to or more than 3% using a 7-day rolling average. It is important to note that the above threshold is just one trigger for closing schools but may not be the only trigger. For example, a decision to close schools would be made where there were recurrent, uncontrolled outbreaks of COVID-19 in schools, even if the overall case rates across New York City were to remain low.”

In the event of positive cases reported within the school community, the following procedures will be followed per NYC Test & Trace Corps and DOHMH Investigations:

Number of Cases	During Investigation (at least 24 hrs)	After Investigation
One confirmed case in a classroom	Close classroom with positive case, transition to remote learning	Classroom remains closed for 14 days; Students and staff in close contact with positive case quarantine for 14 days
At least two cases linked together in school, same classroom	Close classroom with positive cases, transition to remote learning	Classroom remains closed for 14 days; Students and staff in close contact with positive cases quarantine for 14 days
At least two cases linked together in school, different classrooms	Close school building, transition to remote learning	Classroom or each case remains closed for 14 days; Students and staff in close contact with positive cases quarantine for 14 days. Additional school members are quarantined based on where the exposure was in the school (e.g., the locker room)
At least two cases linked together by circumstances outside of school (e.g., acquired infection by different setting and source)	Close school building, transition to remote learning	School opens after investigation; Classrooms remain closed for 14 days
At least two cases, not linked but exposure confirmed for each outside of school setting	Close school building, transition to remote learning	School opens after investigation; Classrooms remain closed for 14 days
Link unable to be determined	Close school building, transition to remote learning	Close school for 14 days

15.4 Distance Learning

Distance learning that is facilitated by a Catholic Academy or Parish School within the Diocese of Brooklyn is bound by all parts of the Acceptable Use Policy. As distance learning requires the use of other mediums such as teleconferencing platforms, virtual classrooms, digital file transfer and online work, there are other factors that need to be addressed.

- **Device Usage** – The use of school/academy or personal devices for distance learning is allowed. It is recommended that all school/academy issued accounts only be used for schoolwork purposes and that those accounts are signed out of after work is completed. All usage is governed by this policy.
- **Video/Audio Conferencing** – Video or audio-conferencing platforms may be used to facilitate class meetings and communication between teachers and students for teaching and group work. When using these platforms, participants must remember to conduct themselves in a professional manner commensurate with behavior expected in a physical classroom. Entering meetings other than those you are explicitly invited to by the coordinator (teacher, principal, etc.) is strictly prohibited. Trying to circumvent the security of a meeting, “hijacking” a presentation or displaying any objectionable content during a meeting is a direct violation of this policy and subject to the disciplinary actions contained within. Recording of video/audio conferences is also prohibited.
- **File Transfer/Submission** – The transmittal of files may be required at times for teachers to provide and students to submit work. The willful transfer of objectionable material, malicious content or any other such transmissions is a violation of this policy.
- **Learning Platforms** – The use of learning platforms such as ThinkCentral, Learn360, Mathletics, Microsoft 365, Google Classroom and others is for the sole purpose of supporting and furthering the education of students. Any use of these platforms for any other reason may be considered a violation of this policy.

- Any use or misuse of the technology provided for distance learning that interferes with the education of students or the operations of the school/academy is a violation of this policy.