

26-27 Parent/Student Handbook Changes

Page 11

Leveling for Language/Literature (7th-8th Grade) and **Math (5th-8th Grade)**

(Previously Math was leveled in grades 6-8)

Make-Up Assignments

Students are responsible for all assignments missed due to absence from school. If a student is absent due to illness and requests assignments, **a parent must email the homeroom teacher before 9:00 a.m.** and arrange to pick up books and assignments for that day. Parents may pick up assignments between 2:45-3:30 p.m. in the office...

(9:00 is an earlier time than previous years due to teachers needing more time to gather assignments)

Page 13

110% Award – Given in Grades 2-8 to a student who gives 110% effort in academics and/or behavior each day.

Father Lu Award – Given in Grades 2-8 for exemplary conduct, effort, Christian service and leadership.

Students must have an E in conduct in 80% of their classes, including Special Classes and general conduct in homeroom.

(We have updated previous criteria)

Page 14

Academic Probation

A student may be placed on academic probation following quarterly report cards if he/she receives a **grade of C (between 70-76)**, or a **grade of F (below 70) in core subjects (Language, Literature/Reading, Math, Religion, Science and Social Studies)**.

(We have been using grades from the core subjects for several years, but the subjects were not specifically defined)

Report Cards / Progress Reports

(Progress Reports were previously known as Interim Reports)

Page 16-17

Promotion, Retention & Class Placement

Decisions regarding student promotion and retention are ultimately determined by the school administration. Similarly, classroom placement decisions are also made at the school level to best meet the needs of our students and to support their academic progress. Several factors for classroom placement are taken into consideration, however the final decision rests with the school administration.

Each child should be considered individually. Any decision concerning promotion vs. non-promotion must be made after considering all facts related to the child's development (emotional, physical, social as well as intellectual and academic), collected from a wide range of sources throughout the year.

Promotion to the next grade will be conditioned upon the following:

a) A passing grade in major subjects (Math, English, Reading, Science, Social Studies, and Religion) as indicated on the final report card.

b) Failure in one of the major subjects for the year will require summer school or tutoring in that subject as a condition of promotion.

c) Failure in two or more major subjects will be grounds for retention based on an evaluation by the principal and department/grade teacher, subject to the procedures below.

Written documentation of compliance with the following procedures is to be retained in the confidential file. If the following requirements are not met due to extenuating circumstances or because, at the discretion of the local team, non-promotion appears to be in the best interest of all involved, the local administration may appeal to the Catholic Schools Office for a waiver of this requirement.

- a) There is consultation between the academic support team and principal or designated academic administrator as early as possible in the first semester.
- b) A conference is held with the parents during the 3rd quarter to advise them of the possibility of retention and to discuss possible remedial actions.
- c) Follow-up conferences with the parents are held to evaluate the child's academic progress.
- d) Evaluations and reports to parents must indicate failure to achieve minimum objectives required at the particular grade level.
- e) A final decision will be made only when all academic work for the year is considered. Exceptions to this time frame may be made by the pastor and principal or chief administrator, in consultation with the superintendent.
- f) A student shall be retained no more than one year at any given grade or level. Ordinarily, a student should not be retained more than once while in elementary school.
- g) Documentation of satisfactory completion of summer school or a tutoring report is required before the student will be admitted in the fall.
- h) Parents will provide the school with evidence of successful completion of summer school or tutoring. All summer tutorials must be approved by the administration.
- i) Attendance of at least 90% of days that school is in session (per Attendance Policy).

Close communication with parents will be maintained to provide the proper support and reinforcement needed by the child.

(This policy has been revised and updated)

Page 17

Self Help Day

Self Help Day is the day before exams begin for middle school students in December, and for 6th and 7th grade students in May. This day is organized for students to meet with teachers to ask those last minute questions prior to the exams. Self Help Day is a required day of school with an early dismissal per the school calendar.

(We have added self help days to the end of each semester for middle school students)

Termination of Enrollment

A student's enrollment may be terminated in accordance with the policies set forth in this Handbook. If a school decides to terminate enrollment in light of parent behavior, a discipline situation, or as a way to help a student avoid embarrassment or unnecessary hardship, the school has an obligation to inform other diocesan schools about the termination action.

The principal, in consultation with the pastor, will determine what information is pertinent to a situation and ensure that information is shared with any receiving diocesan schools. Parents should be made aware that termination as a result of financial issues, legal issues, moral turpitude, or other serious reasons can and will be shared with other diocesan schools and may also be shared with non-diocesan schools if permitted by law.

Termination for Academic Reasons

Academic Exit Policy

Termination for academic reasons should generally occur only after the following procedure has been implemented. Appropriate documentation of the process should be maintained in the student's confidential file. When the principal, in his or her discretion, determines that the following process is not appropriate for a particular situation, he or she should still document the alternative process and the justification for following that process. Written documentation of compliance with the following procedures is to be retained in the confidential file.

- a) There is consultation between the academic support team and principal as early as possible in the first semester.
- b) Conferences are held with the parents to advise them concerning the possibility of withdrawal for academic reasons and to discuss possible remedial actions and educational alternatives.
- c) Follow-up conferences are held with the parents to evaluate progress of the student
- d) The final decision is made by the pastor and principal.

Termination/Expulsion for Disciplinary Reasons

Orderly school administration is essential to fulfilling the core mission of Catholic schools. Even a single failure by a member of the school community to uphold the standards of behavior to which all community members agree when a student is enrolled can cause irreparable harm. Thus, while in many cases expulsion is reserved for very serious or persistent misconduct, a school may properly determine that a single instance of on- or off-campus misconduct requires separation of a student from the school community. Misconduct committed by a member of the school community other than a student **(including parents or other family members)** can also significantly hinder a school's ability to perform its essential task of educating students. As a result, misconduct committed by a person connected to the school through a student (including parents or other family members) may result in the expulsion of the student from the school when, in his or her sole discretion, the principal determines that such action is appropriate. Provided that any applicable school and diocesan policies have been substantially followed, the decision to expel a student rests in the sole discretion of the pastor and principal of a school.

1. Procedures for Expulsion

- a) Except when the pastor and principal determine that immediate separation from the school is necessary, the steps listed below should be followed and, when practical, the school should document each step below in written communication to the student's parents to minimize the opportunity for misunderstanding.
- b) The Superintendent of Catholic schools of the Diocese of Nashville should be apprised of the circumstances of any impending decision to expel a student as soon as practical, but before the decision to expel is implemented if reasonably possible.
- c) When practical, before the decision to expel is implemented, the student's parents should be given written notice of the offense and invited to a conference with the student, pastor, and principal.
- d) When a student is expelled, the principal should document the grounds for expulsion, a summary of the facts leading to the expulsion, any conferences with the student and/or his/her parents, and the means by which final notice of expulsion was provided to the student and his/her parents.
- e) The Superintendent of Catholic schools of the Diocese of Nashville should be notified of any expulsion and be provided with the documentation described in subsection (d) above before the student and his/her parents are notified of the decision and before the decision is implemented, if reasonably possible. Any additional documentation of the case on file in the school must also be made available to the superintendent upon request.

2. Guidelines

- a) The final decision to expel a student rests with the principal. The superintendent may also be consulted to suggest a resolution of the matter. The Superintendent should be informed of any decision to expel before that decision is communicated to a student or his/her parents.
- b) Unless the principal determines otherwise, an expelled student should be given credit for all work completed prior to expulsion. By way of example and without limitation, awarding full credit may, in the chief administrator's sole discretion, not be appropriate for a student who is expelled for academic dishonesty.
- c) Tuition is not reimbursed if a student is expelled.

3. General Grounds for Expulsion

Except when circumstances dictate otherwise, the grounds for expulsion listed below need not be applied mechanically and without consideration of individual mitigating factors. However, certain actions are so severe that disciplinary sanctions less than expulsion are unlikely to be effective to deter future misconduct and maintain orderly school administration.

Examples of such severe misconduct include but are not limited to:

- a) Actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of other students;
- b) Incurable or disruptive behavior which impedes the progress of the rest of the class;
- c) Assault, battery, or any threat of force or violence—whether intended in jest or not—directed toward any school personnel, students, member of the school community, or other person on school property or during school-related activities;
- d) Habitual or persistent violation of school regulations;
- e) Use, sale, distribution or possession of narcotics, controlled substances, alcoholic beverages;
- f) The on-campus use, sale, distribution, or possession of a substance intended or commonly used to mimic a narcotic, controlled substance, or alcoholic beverage;
- g) Use or possession of firearms or other potentially harmful objects or weapons;
- h) Gang-related conduct or activity including but not limited to, symbols, graffiti, apparel, colors, hazing/initiations, and hand signals commonly associated with gangs;
- i) Theft, extortion, arson;
- j) Habitual truancy;
- k) Malicious damage or destruction of real or personal property at school;
- l) Hazing;
- m) Serious bullying and/or harassment;
- n) Conduct which may damage the reputation of the school or parishes;
- o) Transmission of nude or otherwise inappropriate images of any student or person who appears to be a minor child; and
- p) Use of social media in such a manner as constitutes bullying or online harassment or which causes another student or member of the school community to fear for the safety of any member of the school community.

Generally, off-campus misconduct should result in expulsion only when such misconduct is related in some way to the school community, either because it is directed towards the school community, directly or indirectly involves multiple members of the school community, or may negatively impact the school's reputation in the community.

4. Exit Policy on the Grounds of Parental Behavior

All members of the school community, including parents and family members, are expected to comply with all school rules and policies while on campus and in communications with the school, be respectful, cooperate with the school with respect to all decisions affecting the student, and avoid behavior which disrupts the orderly administration of the school. A community member's failure to meet these expectations jeopardizes school administration, requires the school to expend limited resources to address inappropriate and unnecessary behavior, and detracts from the school's core mission and, as a

result, may jeopardize a student's continued participation in the school community. At the school's sole discretion, the failure of a student's parents or other family members to comply with these expectations, separate and apart from the student's conduct, may result in suspension or expulsion of the student.
(This is a new expanded policy)

Page 21

Early Dismissal

Students who dismiss early are marked as early dismissal (ED) if they miss 20 minutes or less of the last period. Students who miss more than 20 minutes of the last period of the day will be marked absent for that period and for any other periods they miss. Students must be dismissed through the office.

The cut off for early dismissal is 2:45 p.m. If a student is leaving early between 2:45-3:00, they will be called to the office at 2:45 p.m. We will not call any student to the office after 2:45 p.m. The 2:45 cut off is to ensure the front office runs smoothly, with less disruptions, at the end of the school day.

When a student reaches 5 tardies/early dismissals, the student will be assigned one absence. Tardies and early dismissals also count towards a student's total time out of school.

(This is a revision to the previous guidelines)

Excessive Absences - Attendance Make-up Time

If a student misses more than 10% of any class, he/she will be required to participate in attendance make-up time. Attendance make-up time begins when a student exceeds 10% of the year's school days (18 days). If a child exceeds 18 absences for the academic year, each additional absence will require one 3 hour session of attendance make-up time. Parents will be notified with updates before a student reaches attendance make-up time.

Attendance make-up time will be completed at an area learning center at parent's expense. Some examples of area learning centers are below:

- Huntington Learning Center - Brentwood
- Brain Balance - Brentwood
- Lindamood Bell - Brentwood Learning Center
- Learning Lab - Brentwood
- The Tutoring Center - Franklin
- Mary Lee Bunch - Brentwood
- Kumon Math and Reading Center - Franklin
- Achieve Learning - Franklin
- Mathnasium - Franklin

Parents will be required to submit proof of attendance at the learning center. Any student that fails to complete attendance make-up time will not begin the next school year at SMS until the make-up time has been completed. 8th grade students will not be able to participate in the 8th grade trip or other graduation events activities until the attendance make-up time is completed.

The State of TN defines chronic absenteeism as missing more than 10% of the school year. The 26-27 school year has 175 days and we have defined 10% as 18 days. If you believe there is a discrepancy in your child's attendance, please contact the front office.

(Previously known as Academic Make-up time, this is a revised policy)

Special Absence Form

The Special Absence Approval Form is a form available on FACTS (On the Resource Tab) for students who will be out of school for personal family reasons. Parents should complete the form at least **5 school days prior** to the first planned day absent. The principal will approve/disapprove each request. An email will be sent notifying each parent of the approval decision. **Students who are absent for a family trip, without prior approval, will be able to complete assignments missed, but the highest grade allowed on assignments, quizzes and tests will be a 70.**

(This policy has been updated)

Playground / Recess Rules

- Parents using the playground after school hours (3:00-3:30 p.m.) must accompany their children at all times. Students may not enter the playground area without a parent present.
- Aftercare uses the playground after school each day beginning at 3:30 p.m. Once Aftercare students arrive at the playground, all other students must exit.

(Previously the playground was closed for Aftercare at 3:45)

Recess Time

All classes, PreK-8th grade, have recess everyday. Grades 4th-8th have a minimum of 17+ minutes of recess each day. PreK-3rd grades have a minimum of 30+ minutes of recess each day. Specific recess time will be explained at Parents' Night. SMS adheres to the following guidelines for recess:

- Two teachers/assistants monitor each recess
- Parents should send a coat with their child during the cold weather months
- Students will have inside recess if it is raining or if the temperature outside is below 32 degrees at the time of recess.
- Recess will not be taken away from a student unless there is a physical issue between students in the classroom, playground or the lunchroom

(Recess time has not previously been spelled out in the handbook)

Prayer Buddies

Grade levels will be paired with other grade levels to participate in prayer buddies throughout the year. Prayer buddies offer our older students an opportunity to interact and build relationships with the younger students. More importantly, prayer buddies give our students the opportunity to be Christ-centered role models.

Prayer buddies may exchange gifts with each other during certain times of the year, such as Christmas, end of the year, or a prayer buddy's birthday. These gifts can be handmade cards, candy, or other gifts, but the cost should be limited to \$5.

(Revised the guidelines around giftgiving)

- AI/Chat GPT usage
 - Assignment must be resubmitted with a grade no higher than a 70.
 - Administration reserves the right to add additional consequences.
- Selling items on campus
- Skipping class - out of class without permission

(These behaviors have been added to the discipline policy)

Dismissal

The objective of dismissal guidelines are to ensure that children leave school property safely and expediently. Therefore, parents are expected to observe the following rules related to dismissal:

- Parents may not park in the front of the school (faculty lot) or parish offices unless given permission by the SMS Administration or having won a special parking pass during the previous year's Mane Event. Parents arriving late for dismissal should join the Late Line which forms in front of the church and is set with cones. **Security will monitor the parking lot before dismissal for parents parking in the faculty lot and in parish office spaces. Parents found in the faculty lot or in front of the parish offices will be asked to move to the late line.**
- Parents not following Dismissal Procedures will incur the following consequences:
 - o 1st offense - warning email sent by the Assistant Principal (AP)
 - o 2nd offense - email by AP and a \$25 fine through FACTS account
 - o 3rd offense - email by AP, \$50 fine and meeting with Dr. Simpson
 - o If parents refuse to meet or violations continue, student/family will be asked to withdraw or be expelled

(This is a revised policy due to parents parking in the faculty lot during dismissal)

School Nurse

The school nurse will be responsible for keeping medical records, administering medication/medicine throughout the school day, and communicating with parents regarding injury or illness.

If a student is ill and in the nurses office for more than 45 minutes (a class period), the parent will be contacted to come pick up the student.

(This is a revision to the policy)

Lunch Prices:

Pre-ordered entree, side, fruit/vegetable, and a drink, **\$6.00**

Entrees ordered the day-of with side, fruit/vegetable and drink, **\$7.00**

(Lunch prices have increased this year)

Shirts must be tucked in throughout the school day. Demerits will be issued in grades 4-8 for violations of this rule.

Team or class fundraisers may not include use of another organization's site to collect funds. All proposed team or class fundraisers must be approved in advance by the Principal or Advancement Director.

(These are updates to the Uniform Policies)