

THE SCHOOL OF SACRED HEART ST. FRANCIS de SALES

The School of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales (formerly known as Sacred Heart School) was established as an educational institution on September 1, 1891. It is a part of the educational mission of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales Parish and the Catholic Community of Bennington, Vermont.

Our school works to develop and nourish the ideas, curiosity, creativity, attitudes, and behaviors, which are necessary for good Christian living. Our school teaches each child to recognize that he/she is special and is God's child, to think intelligently, to make sound decisions, and to act in the light of the morals developed by Catholic teaching. Care is given to the total development of each student and open communication with parents is maintained throughout the school year.

The school exists today as a Catholic community dedicated to the education of young people providing excellence in academics, a deepening faith in God, and Gospel values in an environment that is caring, challenging, respectful, striving to develop in every student the habits of thinking critically and acting responsibly in daily life.

**WE WELCOME YOU
TO
OUR
COMMUNITY OF FAITH!**

SCHOOL POLICIES

ACCIDENTS

Any injury received anywhere on school property must be reported at once to the Principal, teacher or person in charge, or the school nurse.

ACTIVITIES

Teachers or coaches must supervise students who participate in extracurricular activities. No student is to enter the school building or classroom unless a teacher or supervisor is present and aware of the student's presence.

CARS

School Street is the designated drop-off area for students who are transported to school by cars. No cars, other than those of the staff, are allowed in the parking area during the hours of 8:00 AM and 2:00 PM. At dismissal, students are dismissed to parents via a car line. Cars may begin lining up at 2:00 PM. Once the bell rings at 2:40 PM, cars will be given a signal to start the car line. The use of this procedure ensures that all children are safely placed in the vehicles that will be transporting them home.

Any change in student transportation plans should be made known in writing at the beginning of the school day.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Jesus came that we might have life and have it to the full (John 10:10). Discipline in our school is about students learning to choose life to the full and becoming disciples of Jesus.

The formation of a child into discipleship is primarily the responsibility of parents. The school staff works in partnership with all parents. Together, we foster the child's self-discipline and self-esteem. We also help develop his/her conscience, and for positive behaviors and growth, we provide the following principles:

Excellence

A commitment to be the best that we can be
Responsibility in all areas of school life

Respect

Respect for self and others
Respect for materials and property
Respect for our own learning and that of others

Honesty

Honesty in all areas of school life

Dignity

Honoring the inherent dignity of each person

Compassion

Sensitivity to the feelings of others

A willingness to help and support others

As children and teachers work together to develop classroom/school rules that model these principles. The following expectations will serve as their guide.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

RESPECT FOR YOURSELF

WORK HARD AND TAKE PRIDE IN THE PRESENTATION OF YOUR WORK.

ALWAYS DO YOUR BEST

BE SELF-DISCIPLINED BY GETTING TO SCHOOL ON TIME.

BE WELL BEHAVED

WEAR YOUR UNIFORM WITH PRIDE AND ALWAYS LOOK YOUR BEST. RESPECT YOUR HEALTH.

RESPECT FOR OTHERS

TRY TO GET ALONG WITH EVERYONE.

TREAT OTHERS AS YOU WISH TO BE TREATED.

TREAT OTHERS AS EQUALS

RESPECT AND APPRECIATE OTHER PEOPLE'S WORK, VIEWS, PROPERTY, AND TALENTS.

MAKE EVERYONE FEEL WELCOME IN OUR SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM

REMEMBER YOU ARE PART OF A WIDER COMMUNITY WHEN YOU LEAVE THE SCHOOL.

YOU ARE ALL UNIQUE!

RESPECT FOR YOUR ENVIRONMENT

ENJOY AND TAKE CARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS.

KEEP ALL ROOMS CLEAN, ATTRACTIVE, AND PLEASANT.

HELP TO CREATE A CALM AND QUIET ATMOSPHERE, SO AS TO FOSTER A POSITIVE LEARNING CLIMATE.

Our approach to discipline respects each child's uniqueness and the common good of the school. Regardless of the misbehavior, our goal is to reconnect our children with the school community after a problem. We regard each child as a person with free will. We assist them in developing virtue and character. We will help them learn to make life-giving choices valuing persons, community, responsibility and learning.

An infraction of the basic community rules of Sacred Heart St. Francis may be dealt with in several ways. A teacher may talk with a student and assign an appropriate consequence. The consequence that will be assigned to help the student grow will be related (the consequence fits the situation), respectful (the consequence leaves the dignity of the student intact), and reasonable (the consequence will be short term – get it over and get back to the job of growing).

At times, it may be necessary to involve the Principal in the process. The administration and/or teacher may also see the need to confer with a child's parents. These adults may meet in a conference that might include the child. Families might be asked to seek outside help or referral. Disciplinary action could include a limit on participation in the activities and privileges of the school, probation, suspension or expulsion.

Verbal or physical abuse or harassment, physical violence, theft, dishonesty, disrespect for property or illegal acts are the behaviors that most undermine our sense of safety and community. The school reserves the right to search anything brought on school grounds. The possession or use of weapons is never acceptable.

Sacred Heart St. Francis also reserves the right to dismiss a child at any time it becomes evident to the Principal that their behavior or attitude both inside and outside of school, or that of his or her family, are inconsistent with the community principles and are detrimental to the reputation of The School of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales.

HARASSMENT

Harassment of students by other students is prohibited. Harassment is defined to include illegal harassment as well as any conduct or verbal abuse that does or would substantially interfere with a student's educational performance, or create an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment. Illegal harassment means verbal or physical conduct based on a student's race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or disability.

Sexual harassment is also a form of unlawful harassment. Sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Harassment includes conduct specifically directed at students on the basis of personal status or characteristics. Harassment may also include slurs or taunts, offensive graffiti, or other demeaning messages, disparaging references, threats or acts of physical harm, stalking, or intimidation.

Harassment, whatever its basis, is grounds for discipline up to and including expulsion. Acts of retaliation for reporting harassment or for cooperating with an investigation of harassment may be unlawful and are always considered to be serious violation of school policy.

Any person with a harassment complaint is encouraged to report the complaint in writing to the Principal as soon after the incident as possible.

DRESS CODE

Unless otherwise indicated in writing from the school office, it is expected that students wear their complete uniforms on a daily basis.

The girls' uniform in Grades PK-5 consists of a plaid school jumper, a white dress blouse, and knee socks, ankle socks, or tights (white, hunter green, cardinal red, or navy blue). The girls' uniform in Grades 6-8 consists of a plaid school skirt (2 different styles), a white dress blouse, a uniform navy blue vest, and ankle socks, knee socks or tights (white, hunter green, cardinal red, or navy blue). A white turtleneck and khaki dress pants may be worn from **NOVEMBER 1st** through **MARCH 31st**.

The boys' uniform in all grades consists of a plaid school necktie, light blue or white dress shirt, and navy blue or khaki dress trousers. Denim jeans of any kind or sweat pants are not acceptable.

Threaded and beaded braids, unnatural dyed hair, tails, shaved heads w/messages, body painting, and body piercing undermine our school's commitment to simplicity and lack of competition in the area of dress. They are not consistent with the school dress code, and therefore, are not acceptable.

Jewelry should be simple and of a conservative nature. Pierced earrings are to be limited to no more than one pair per ear.

In addition, students are not allowed to wear choker necklaces of any kind.

No student will have a tattoo, permanent or temporary, that is exposed while wearing school uniforms (including athletic uniforms).

Hats are not to be worn in the school building at any time.

If the children wear sweaters during the school day, they must be uniform sweaters purchased from the uniform company. Sleeveless fleece vests/jackets with the school's emblem embroidered may be worn on cooler days. Sweatshirts of any kind are not allowed during the school day. All school uniforms, ties, and sweaters can be ordered through the Flynn and O'Hara Uniform Company at any time during the school year at 1-800-441-4122.

A warm weather option consisting of a dark green polo shirt with the embroidered school name and khaki walking shorts (or skorts for girls) is available through the last Friday of September and for the months of May and June. The dark

green polo shirts may also be worn with uniform pants and skirts/jumpers during this time of year. This option is only obtainable from a uniform supplier determined by the school administration.. There are no substitutions.

Sneakers and dress shoes are both acceptable for the classroom but on gym day students must wear sneakers. Shoes must have backs. High heels, flip-flops, sandals, or other backless shoes are not allowed for daily wear or for dress down days.

Shoes that have built in wheels also pose a safety hazard. The wheels on these shoes should never be used in school.

Socks are required for all students as a part of their uniform.

NO-UNIFORM DAYS

The Principal will have the discretion to determine if a student's attire is appropriate on no-uniform days and will also have the authority to set the mode of attire for these special occasion days. On no-uniform days students should choose attire appropriate for the school environment. **Inappropriate attire includes:** tank tops, shorts that are more than two inches above the knees, tights worn without a skirt or pants, beach or hiking attire, bare midriff tops, t-straps, halter tops, T-shirts with inappropriate slogans, logos or designs, mini-skirts, etc. Shoes must be appropriate for steep stairs, recess, physical education, etc. (for example: no shoes without ankle support, no flip-flops, sandals, slippers, crocs, etc.). If your child wears clothing that does not meet the no-uniform code, parents will be contacted and asked to bring a change of clothing for them.

OUT OF UNIFORM NOTICE

An out of uniform notice will be sent home when a student is not following the dress code. This notice will bring the non-compliance to your attention and ask for an immediate correction. The notice should be signed by a parent and returned to school the next school day.

ATHLETICS

Competitive soccer, basketball, and softball programs are available at Sacred Heart St. Francis. Before the start of each season, students and parents must sign a medical release form and a code of conduct agreement. Student athletes must represent both our school and our community in the best possible manner. Coaches will determine consequences for any player that acts inappropriately at practices and games. If it should become necessary, a coach will submit to the Principal a written disciplinary referral. This may be result in suspension or removal from the team. In addition, if a student is suspended from school for behavioral reasons he/she will not be allowed to practice or play in any game for a period of five days. Further

infractions may result in removal from the team for the remainder of the playing season.

Players must also retain a passing grade point average.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Ingestion of harmful substances such as drugs or alcohol hinders the growth and development of the individual and is contrary to the philosophy of Sacred Heart St. Francis. The presence of devices of any kind associated with drug or alcohol usage is prohibited from school premises at all times.

The home has primary responsibility for treating health problems; however, Sacred Heart St. Francis shares these responsibilities in the areas of education and referral. The school also shares the responsibility of supporting any student who is attempting to change a pattern of use.

School administration and support services will work with the family in providing prevention and treatment opportunities.

A violation is any drug or alcohol related incident which occurs on school premises or at school sponsored functions and includes the purchase, use, possession, being under the influence of alcohol and any other drugs, dealing in alcohol or other drugs and the possession of devices associated with alcohol or drug use.

All school personnel are expected to immediately confront students verbally to discuss any suspected or actual drug/alcohol incident that occurs on the school premises and/or at school sponsored functions and to report instances of actual drug or alcohol policy violations immediately to the school Principal.

In all reported instances of actual drug or alcohol policy violation, the Principal will notify the parent or legal guardian immediately. The Principal will also investigate and evaluate to determine appropriate action.

If in the opinion of the Principal, an emergency situation exists, an area Rescue Squad and/or Bennington Police Department will be called upon for their service. The school nurse and any other personnel will serve in a support capacity in such instances. The parent or legal guardian will be notified prior to such action when possible and in other instances as soon as possible thereafter.

Consequences: Disciplinary action for the first reported violation of this policy shall involve suspension from school to begin immediately and last for a maximum of ten school days.

Students found to be selling drugs and/or alcohol will be recommended to the school board for immediate expulsion.

When the administration has sufficient information as the result of observation or referral to suspect that a probable violation of this policy has occurred, the students(s) will be expected to cooperate fully. This may include emptying pockets, pocketbooks and/or backpacks, etc. In such situations, the administration also reserves the right to inspect all other student belongings.

The student(s) will meet with the school Principal before re-entering school

following suspension. In some instances, sustained professional treatment may be a condition of continued enrollment in school.

A second violation of this policy within a given school year shall result in an automatic ten-day suspension to begin immediately. A recommendation shall also be made to the parents for them to refer their child to an alcohol and drug treatment program.

In the event that a third violation of this policy occurs within a given school year, a recommendation will be made to the school board for expulsion.

MANDATED REPORTING

All staff members are bound by state law to report any suspected cases of child abuse to Department of Children and Families. (formerly known as SRS)

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

At the beginning of each school year, every student will receive an "emergency information" form to be filled out completely by the custodial parent and returned to school immediately. Such information is crucial when an emergency occurs or if a child becomes ill during the school day. This information needs to be kept current; any changes in this information should be reported immediately to the school office.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS

If it is necessary for your child to go to the doctor or dentist during the regular school hours, a written note from a parent must be presented to the school office before 9:00 a.m. This note must contain the time and nature of the child's appointment, who is to pick up the child and if he/she will return to school after the appointment.

In cases where parents are separated or divorced, the Principal should be informed in writing as to which parent has custody of the child. This is necessary for the safety and protection of your child. Such information is considered confidential and will be held in strict confidence.

PARENT/TEACHER GROUP

Sacred Heart St. Francis has an active parent outreach association and each family is encouraged to support this organization. In addition, this group provides the school with fund-raising support. Notice is sent home before all meetings, and parents are strongly encouraged to attend them. This organization provides information, communication, and entertainment for the school and parish community.

RELIGION CLASS AND RELIGIOUS FUNCTIONS

Sacred Heart St. Francis is a Catholic school. Therefore, any student enrolled in the school must be a part of the religion classes taught in the school. At regular

times during the school year, the faith community of the school will celebrate liturgies together; and all students attend these celebrations. Non-Catholic students join their schoolmates at the celebrations, but do not participate in the sacramental aspects of these events. Full student participation at such religious functions is necessary to build the type of community we desire at this school. We are a Catholic school, and we celebrate our beliefs as a vital part of our lives.

SMOKING

For health and fire safety reasons, smoking is not allowed anywhere on school grounds before, during and after school hours. The Principal will contact the parents of any student violating this rule and appropriate school consequences and those in compliance with Vermont State Law will be imposed.

VISITORS

For safety reasons, all entrances to our school are locked during the school day. There is a video monitoring system located at the front door, where, after identifying yourself, you will be let in. Please use this door, and then report to the school office, for all school business. Do not allow other people to follow you in the school who have not announced themselves to the office. ***All visitors, including parents, are to report to the school office to sign in upon entering the school building.*** At no time is any visitor, parent, etc. to go to any classroom to speak with a teacher unless a specific appointment has been arranged with that teacher through the school office. ***Visitors must also sign out when they leave the building.***

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is essential for a student to succeed in school. Therefore, we ask your cooperation with regard to the following:

Absence - If your child is ill and will not attend school, please call the school office by 9:00 a.m. If you would like homework for your child, it should be requested when you call. When your child returns to school after an illness, a note written by a parent must be brought to the school office explaining the absence.

Early Dismissal - A student will not be released from school except by the written request of a parent. As far as is possible, all dental and medical appointments should be made after school hours.

Unexcused Absence - A school calendar is included with this handbook. This calendar indicates all of the in-service days, holidays, and school vacations that we are aware of at this time. Unless otherwise indicated in a note from the Principal, we will follow this school calendar.

Tardiness – The school day begins at 8:15 AM for PK-8. Students who are not in their seats by the time Morning Prayer is completed, they are considered tardy. Being late for school is disruptive to the start of the school day.

FUND RAISING

Since the cost of educating a child continually increases from year to year it is necessary to engage in fund raising activities. Sacred Heart St. Francis is a religious school and by virtue of that it cannot be subsidized by local tax money. Therefore, fund-raising plays a key roll in helping educating your child. It is also important to note that tuition does not fully cover the cost to educate each child this year at our school; so all families are expected to help raise funds.

The school sponsors these drives and they are announced at the beginning of the school year. Everyone is asked to participate and support these efforts in some way. Active participation will enhance the education of all your children.

Any fund raising activities using the school's name must be presented first to, and approved by, the Sacred Heart St. Francis School Board.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If any information such as an address, telephone number, emergency number, etc. changes during the school year, please inform the school office so that this new information can be recorded for your child. It is important that we be able to reach you quickly should an emergency occur during school hours.

CHANGE OF PARENTAL CUSTODY

In cases where parents are separated or divorced, it is necessary that the Principal be informed in writing as to who is the custodial parent. Any changes in custody must also be made known in writing to the Principal.

COMMUNICATIONS

All school communications come to the parents through notes given to each child on each Wednesday in a large white envelope or folder. Please check with your child or check your child's backpack weekly for any notes regarding school activities and then return the empty envelope to school.

Anyone requesting an appointment with the Principal or teacher should send a note or call the school office to request an appointment. The Principal or teacher will then contact the parent to arrange a convenient meeting time.

Parents are always acknowledged as the primary educators of their children. Therefore, every effort will be made to keep parents informed of the intellectual progress and general behavior of their children. Parents are asked to inquire of their children, the outcome of any tests or assignments received from a teacher or any other concerns they may have during the year.

Parents of students in Kindergarten through Grade 4 are expected to have a conference with their child's teacher at least twice a year. A schedule will be sent home well in advance for your convenience.

Any student-to-student communications, such as **birthday or holiday party invitations** should be sent through the mail, made over the telephone, or given outside of the school hours and grounds unless the entire class has been invited.

COMPUTER USE

Our computer network is established for the educational use of our students. The goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. It is an exceptional educational opportunity and privilege.

Using the network responsibly is the best way to avoid inappropriate information. Even though filters have been installed, there may be the rare occasion when a student comes across something unacceptable on the Internet. It is his or her responsibility to stop the connection and tell the teacher about it immediately.

Students are also entitled to a reasonable expectation of privacy for their files by other students. Taking advantage of someone who inadvertently leaves a computer without logging off is no different than entering an unlocked room and stealing, reading a personal letter, or destroying someone's personal property. Students are permitted to use only those programs that they have been instructed to use

E-mail, the use of chat rooms, and instant messenger, by students at school, is strictly prohibited, as is plagiarism of material placed on the Internet. Students should treat information found electronically the same way that they treat information found in printed sources.

Students found violating these guidelines will have their network privileges revoked and may face further disciplinary action.

DANGEROUS MATERIALS

The possession, use or distribution of dangerous materials such as knives, fireworks, or weapons of any kind, will not be allowed at school, on school grounds, or at any school-sponsored activity. Anyone violating this policy will face severe consequences including expulsion from school.

FIELD TRIPS

Occasional field trips by teachers and students to places of cultural and educational value are approved under the following conditions:

- the trip have some clear educational value.
- the trip is planned to coordinate with class work, the trip has specific goals, parents have been informed and their permission obtained, the cooperating organization has been informed.
- adequate adult supervision must be assured, teachers will accompany their students on all trips.
- the trip does not involve great expense.
- there is some form of follow-up evaluation done.

All field trips are considered privileges. Students will be denied participation if they fail to meet academic and behavioral requirements.

In addition, any trip requiring fund raising beyond the immediate school students, faculty and staff must be approved by the School Board. Before a trip will be approved, a complete description of the trip and a plan for fund raising must be submitted.

Transportation for class field trips will be provided by a School Board approved bus service when field trips are not within walking distance or within a thirty-mile radius of the school. When transported by private vehicles, seat belts will be worn. Students under the age of 8 must ride in an approved child restraint (booster seat). Those students 8 years of age and older who are a minimum of 4'9" must wear seat belts (lap and shoulder belt). No student will be allowed to ride in the front seat of any private vehicle used for field trip transportation. All drivers must have a copy of a valid driver's license and proof of insurance on file in the school office. When using a bus service, children may be transported by other means only if the driver is the child's parent.

A permission slip request from parents asking the school to take a student on a field trip must be signed by the parent for each field trip. Requests by telephone are not acceptable and may not take the place of the written request. Parents are also encouraged to suggest specific areas for field trips.

FIRE AND FIRE DRILLS

The Principal will ensure that all teachers, staff members, substitutes, volunteers, and students are certain of the procedures to be followed in a fire emergency or fire drill. Unannounced fire drills are routinely practiced throughout the year.

Everyone must leave the building immediately in a quiet and orderly manner at the sound of the fire alarm.

FOOD

School lunches are offered through a food service corporation used by the public school system.

If you choose to pack a lunch or snack for your child, it is strongly encouraged that it be nutritious in nature.

Nutritious food may be eaten at the classroom teacher's discretion and at lunch time while in the school building. Milk may be purchased through the school.

Snack sales, usually used as fund-raisers, may take place during the school day when permission is granted beforehand by the Principal or designee.

Please be sure that each child's lunch bag or box is labeled with the child's name.

CHEWING GUM is not permitted in the building or on the school grounds at any time.

GRADES

To evaluate student progress, a variety of means is employed including teacher-made tests, quizzes and assignments, tests provided by textbook publishers, direct observation, oral presentations, all forms of written materials, etc.

Grading is the most widely used method of reporting student progress. If a parent has a specific concern about his/her child's grades, please contact the teacher.

Special subject areas such as Art, Foreign Language, Music, and Physical Education will be graded according to a child's interest, behavior, and participation. A special report will be used for grading in these areas in Kindergarten through Grade Five.

In addition, the report card evaluates a student's work and study habits as well as social development.

HEALTH SERVICES

A nurse is on duty at the school at least once a week through the school year. The school nurse takes care of all medical histories, immunization records, etc. Please contact the school office for inquiries about this type of information.

The nurse's office is located in the main office and it is used in handling medical situations as they occur. Emergency medical supplies and first aid equipment are kept here as well.

It is not the school's responsibility to diagnose or treat illness or injury. School personnel are responsible for giving immediate aid and notifying parents. If the parent cannot be reached, the Principal or nurse will call one of the emergency numbers designated on the child's emergency card. This person will care for the child and notify the parent.

A child will be sent home for the following: abdominal pain; emergency bee sting when allergic reaction occurs; elevated temperature; head injury; continuing nose bleed; any communicable disease; weeping poison ivy or poison oak or poison sumac; serious skin condition such as an unknown rash; ringworm; sprain, fracture or dislocations; severe toothache or broken tooth; vomiting; convulsions; animal bites; earache; eye injury; fainting; head lice. Parents will be notified of anything of a serious nature.

A student returning to school after an illness should be well enough to participate in all of the school activities, including recess and physical education class. Exceptions to this policy will be made upon receipt of a note from the student's physician. If at all possible, medication should be given at home.

Parents should check their child before sending him/her to school to be sure the child is free of any sign of disease or illness such as: headache, upset stomach, sore throat, runny nose, rashes, flushed face, red and watery eyes and the like. If your child is exhibiting any of these symptoms before the start of a given school day, please keep them home. It is in everyone's best interest to do so.

A child should also be "fever free" for 24 hours before he/she returns to school.

The school nurse will send a complete Health Guide home at the beginning of each school year.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

No medication will be given without written instructions and a parent's signature.

An authorized adult will bring all prescription and non-prescription medication to school in the original container with the child's name printed clearly.

All medication will be kept in a locked area and distributed by a designated staff member only. No child will administer his/her own medication. No medication will be kept on his/her person. All medication will be given to the secretary or nurse upon arrival to school in the morning.

HOMEWORK

Homework should serve a positive purpose and be closely integrated with class work. It is not a substitute for what should be taught in the classroom; rather homework serves as a review or enrichment of materials learned within the classroom environment. Parents are encouraged to provide a suitable time and place for their children to do their homework.

The following time frame should be used as a daily guide for Grades 1-8.

Grade 1 - 10 minutes

Grade 2 - 20 minutes

Grade 3 - 30 minutes

Grade 4 - 40 minutes

Grade 5 - 50 minutes

Grade 6 - 60 minutes

Grade 7 - 1 hour and 10 minutes

Grade 8 - 1 hour and 20 minutes

The school policy is that no homework assignments are given over weekends unless the student is to do work that he/she has missed because of absenteeism or failure to complete homework or classroom assignments on time. Long-term assignments such as reports or projects do not apply to this rule because of the nature of time allowed.

If a student has not been completing assignments within a specific time frame, a note will be sent to the parent indicating the incomplete assignments.

Students who are absent are expected to make up work that was missed. The student or parent should contact the teacher regarding the work to be done. Siblings may relay the message for assignments to the teacher and then return to pick up work at the end of the school day.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Sacred Heart St. Francis will usually follow the "School Delays and the No School" announcements of the Southwestern Vermont Supervisory Union during

inclement weather and school closing. School delays or school closings are announced on radio stations WBTV (1370 AM) television stations WCAX (Channel 3) and WNYT (Channel 13) from 6:00 a.m. on. All parents should be notified through the School Reach broadcasting system either by telephone or through e-mail. This same policy will be followed should it ever be necessary to close school early due to bad weather. Should this happen, your child should know where he/she is to go if the parent is not at home. The school will always attempt to contact parents should it ever be necessary to dismiss the students early, but this is not always possible. Therefore, it is vital that your child knows what to do in such an emergency.

LIBRARY

The School of Sacred Heart St. Francis' library is located in our media center. Each class visits the library once a week. Students are permitted to take out books after their visits and to work on research projects when the library is not in use by a specific class. Parents are encouraged to participate in library activities. If you are able to do this, please notify your child's teacher at the beginning of the school year.

The Bennington Free Library is also used by the school as a resource for our teachers and students.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost items should be reported to the classroom teacher. The teacher will report the missing items to the Principal. Found articles, including clothing should be turned into the main office. ***All personal property and articles of clothing should be labeled with the child's name.***

PEANUT ALLERGIES

As with the general population, The School of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales is seeing an increased number of children with severe nut allergies, including potentially life-threatening anaphylactic reactions. Complete avoidance of peanut butter and nut products is the only way to prevent these children from having an allergic reaction. This reality has necessitated the elimination of peanut butter and nut products from all areas at The School of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales.

To our families, we ask that no type of food containing peanut butter and/or nut products be sent to school. This applies to all food coming into the school building, including lunches, snacks, and special-occasion foods. We will continue to allow home-baked goods into The School of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales; however, we ask that these home-baked goods also be completely free of peanut butter and nut products. We realize that this may cause some inconveniences, but we feel that the health of our children with these intense reactions must be a priority.

As we strive to provide a nut safe environment, please recognize that our facilities are used for many purposes and we cannot guarantee our facilities are

completely nut free. We do appreciate all efforts to make our facilities as safe as possible for all who use them.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education class is a requirement for all students unless there is a medical reason for non-participation. If a student is to be excused from class, a written note from a parent is to be presented to the office and also to the physical education class teacher.

Sneakers are required for participation in all Physical Education classes. For safety reasons jewelry that may be considered potentially dangerous during physical activity, is not allowed.

RECESS

Weather permitting, students in Grades Pre-K-5 are given a recess each day. The decision to have outside recess during cold and rainy days depends on the temperature and the wind chill factor. Students should always dress for outside recess on cold days. All students must be on the playground during the outside recess. Only students with medical excuses will be allowed to remain in the building during outside breaks and under the supervision of a faculty member or staff member. Students are not allowed to remain inside the classrooms alone.

Students will have supervised free time in the classroom on the days when bad weather prevents outside recess. Quiet games, talking with friends, working on puzzles, etc. are usually allowed by the teacher in charge.

REPORT CARDS

The report card is one of the school's most important forms of evaluation. It indicates a student's academic progress and evaluates general, personal and social traits and work study habits. Report cards are distributed at the end of each marking period (three times per year), usually during the months of November, March, and June.

HONOR ROLL

HONOR ROLL – In order for student to attain PRINCIPAL'S HONORS, an "A-(90)" or above must be attained in the seven major subjects (Religion, Literature, English, Spelling, Social Studies, Math and Science) with no special subject *grade* less than a "B+(87)".

In order for a student to attain HIGH HONORS, an average of "A-(90)" or above must be attained in the seven major subject areas (with no special subject grade lower than a "B(83)" in any subject).

In order for a student to attain HONORS, a grade of "B-(80)" or above must be attained in each of the seven major subject areas with at least a "C+(77)" in all other subjects.

(This criterion will also be used to determine awards for Grades 3-8 at the end of the school year.)

In Grades 6-8, an honor roll will be released for each of the marking periods.

RETENTION

Any student who fails two or more terms in any major subject may face retention at the end of the year. Such a decision is made after consultation with the parents and teachers of the child being considered for retention and with the full knowledge and thorough discussion with the Principal.

A student failing a major subject for the year will be required to attend summer sessions of private tutoring in order that he/she may advance to the next grade level.

Retention is always viewed as a growth process.

SCHOOL HOURS

School hours are Monday through Friday from 8:15 AM to 2:40 PM throughout the school year for Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 8.

A staff member will be on duty beginning at 8:00 AM for **PRIOR TO 8:00 AM AND AFTER 3:00 PM, THERE IS NO SUPERVISION** by any member of the Sacred Heart St. Francis staff. Parents must assume responsibility for their children outside of school hours.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Parents of students who destroy or lose textbooks, library books, etc., or who destroy or vandalize school property will be notified by the Principal and will pay to the school the replacement cost of the property that was destroyed or lost. If a debt is owed to the school, final report cards will be held until the debt is paid in full.

No students are to be on school property after school hours unless they are involved with after-school activities such as an athletic team, chorus, club, science fair, or other activities supervised by a staff member.

SCHOOL EVENTS

A list of school events is published in year in the Family Commitment Handbook. We encourage active participation by our school families; however, express written permission of the Principal is required to put photos of school functions on Facebook, Myspace, youtube, or any other social networks.

SCHOOL COLORS

The school colors for Sacred Heart St. Francis are green and gold. Students are encouraged to identify with these colors as a representation of our school pride and spirit. School Color Day may be held on occasion, and all students are asked to participate. We are the **SAINTS of The School of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales!**

When we speak of our school, we speak of it with pride and wear our school colors feeling that way too.

STUDENTS STARTING PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Students entering pre-kindergarten must be at least four years of age. There are no exceptions to this policy.

TEXTBOOKS

All hardbound textbooks are to be covered at all times and should be carried to and from school in book bags or backpacks. Proper care should be given to all books and materials provided by the school.

Consumable book fees are due at the beginning of the school year. The book fees are as follows: Pre-Kindergarten—\$25; ; Kindergarten—\$40; Grade 1—\$60; Grade 2—\$70; Grade 3—\$80; Grade 4—\$85; Grade 5—\$90; Grade 6—\$110; Grade 7—\$110; Grade 8—\$110. Students will not be given their consumable books until the fees have been paid in full.

TELEPHONE

Students are **not** permitted to use the telephone except in emergency situations. The Principal or office personnel will grant necessary permission to use the telephone in these situations.

TUITION

Timely payment of tuition is critical for the effective and efficient operation of Sacred Heart St. Francis School. The school tuition policy is as follows:

- The tuition for K-8 for the *2011-2012 school year is \$4150 (for 1st child)/\$3950 (for 2nd child) /\$3750 (for 3rd child).*
- The tuition for Pre-K for the *2011-2012 school year is \$4350 per student.*
- Families will be assessed the tuition cost to educate each child at Sacred Heart St. Francis and if there is a need for scholarship assistance, a financial aid package is available.
- Payment is either paid in full at the beginning of the school year or monthly payments can be electronically transferred from a checking or savings account through FACTS Management. A \$65 or \$100 **per family (if using FACTS)** non-refundable deposit is required to assure enrollment for the next school year. A \$100 deposit is required for the Pre-Kindergarten program.
- The process to determine a family's need for assistance will be through a third party evaluation done by the FACTS Grant and Scholarship Assistance Program. To keep confidence and honor a family's privacy, only the Principal will know what each family will be paying for tuition.
- Financial aid from our school is not available for any student attending our Pre-K program, but some families may be eligible for the Vermont ChildCare subsidy.

- Catholics who are registered in other parishes are also eligible to apply for scholarship assistance. These sending parishes provide assistance to Sacred Heart St. Francis for the children of families that they have registered in their respective parishes.
- All new non-Catholics and non-registered Catholics enrolling are assessed the full tuition cost.
- For families that make one payment at the beginning of the school year, these payments must be paid when due. If a family has not made their payment within the month, they are automatically referred to FACTS Management.
- Tuition payments are also non-refundable.
- Families who are delinquent in paying their tuition must appear before the school's finance committee to develop a plan for payment.*

HANDICAP ACCESSIBILITY

Our Media Center is fully accessible to any of our school programs for which federal funding assistance is received. Disabled persons seeking entrance to our building should let the Principal or office staff aware of this need.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

Different kinds of knowledge, skills, interests, and experiences are necessary to provide a well-rounded education. ***All Sacred Heart St. Francis parents are required to volunteer 5 hours of their time at school, at a school related activity, or helping on a school project at home and 3 hours at the school bazaar held in the fall.*** Parents will be able to participate in various instructional and enrichment experiences. At the beginning of the school year parents will be asked to make a commitment of time, energy, and talent. A parent volunteer coordinator will assist the teachers, staff, and school community in the placing of volunteers for various tasks.

All parents will be required to comply with the school's request for a Criminal Record Check. This is in accordance with Diocesan policies and is required for parents who volunteer to work with our students in any capacity. Fingerprinting is not necessary and there is no cost to parents.

Volunteers who work directly with children (including field trip chaperones) must also complete a 90 minute on-line certification entitled "Shield the Vulnerable" on a yearly basis. There is no cost for this program as well.

CRISIS PLAN

Procedures are in place in the event of an emergency situation.

OFF-SITE EVACUATIONS - Off-site evacuation is recommended only for serious reasons when it is concluded that the school building is not a safe place to be. Threats, fire, chemical incidents, neighborhood conditions, and the like constitute such conditions. In the event of an off-site evacuation, all students and staff will follow Gage Street will follow Gage Street south to North Street, cross North Street

and proceed to the Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales Parish Center on West Main Street. School officials will contact parents after the building has been evacuated. LOCK DOWN - In the event that an armed intruder has entered the school building, or for any other reason necessary, our school will move into what is called a “lock-down” mode. Rooms will be secured and students and staff will remain in their classrooms until the situation has been resolved.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The School of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales, located in the Diocese of Burlington, admits students of any religion, race, color, national and ethnic origin, handicap and age, to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students in the school. Catholic schools seek, however, primarily to serve any parents who want a Catholic education for any of their children.

PARENT/STUDENT/SCHOOL AGREEMENT

This Parent/Student Handbook contains policies and information. We feel these are necessary for you and your child(ren) to understand the basic procedures used to operate our school. It should be read carefully and then placed in a convenient location in your home for quick and easy reference.

The Parent/Student Handbook is an agreement between school, parent, and child, in which we endeavor to provide your child(ren) an outstanding academic and religious education, and to ensure they are provided every opportunity to achieve their maximum potential. You are requested to personally read this handbook and discuss it with your child(ren) each and every year with the intent of ensuring he/she/they, and you, understand the school’s policies and procedures in order to avoid problems or conflicts.

We consider School to be a partnership. If in the opinion of the Principal that the partnership is any way compromised or broken, parents may be required to withdraw their children from our school.

VERMONT LAW - APPROVED INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

"Approved Independent School" means an independent school which is approved under 16 V.S.A. § 166.

(a) An independent school may operate and provide elementary education or secondary education if it is either approved or recognized as set forth herein.

(b) Approved independent schools. On application, the state board shall approve an independent school which offers elementary or secondary education if it finds, after opportunity for hearing, that the school provides a minimum course of study and that it substantially complies with the board's rules for approved independent schools. Except as provided in subdivision (6) of this subsection, the board's rules must at minimum require that the school has the resources required to meet its

stated objectives, including financial capacity, faculty who are qualified by training and experience in the areas in which they are assigned, and physical facilities and special services that are in accordance with any state or federal law or regulation. Approval may be granted without state board evaluation in the case of any school accredited by a private, state, or regional agency recognized by the state board for accrediting purposes.

(1) On application, the state board shall approve an independent school which offers kindergarten but no other graded education if it finds, after opportunity for hearing, that the school substantially complies with the board's rules for approved independent kindergartens. The state board may delegate to another state agency the authority to evaluate the safety and adequacy of the buildings in which kindergartens are conducted, but shall consider all findings and recommendations of any such agency in making its approval decision.

(2) Approvals under this section shall be for a term established by rule of the board but not greater than five years.

(3) An approved independent school shall provide to the parent or guardian responsible for each of its pupils, prior to accepting any money for that pupil, an accurate statement in writing of its status under this section, and a copy of this section. Failure to comply with this provision may create a permissible inference of false advertising in violation of 13 V.S.A. § 2005.

(4) Each approved independent school shall provide to the commissioner on October 1 of each year the names, genders, dates of birth, and addresses of its enrolled pupils. Within seven days of the termination of a pupil's enrollment, the approved independent school shall notify the commissioner of the name and address of the pupil. The commissioner shall forthwith notify the appropriate school officials as provided in section 1126 of this title.

(5) The state board may revoke or suspend the approval of an approved independent school, after opportunity for hearing, for substantial failure to comply with the minimum course of study, for failure to comply with the board's rules for approved independent schools, or for failure to report under subdivision (b)(4) of this section. Upon revocation or suspension, students required to attend school who are enrolled in that school shall become truant unless they enroll in an approved public school, approved or recognized independent school or approved home instruction program.

(6) This subdivision applies to an independent school located in Vermont which offers a program of elementary or secondary education through correspondence, electronic mail, satellite communication, or other means and which, because of its structure, does not meet some or all the rules of the state board for approved independent schools. In order to be approved under this subdivision, a school shall meet the standards adopted by rule of the state board for approved independent

schools which can be applied to the applicant school and any other standards or rules adopted by the state board regarding these types of schools. A school approved under this subdivision shall not be eligible to receive tuition payments from public school districts under chapter 21 of this title. However, a school district may enter into a contract or contracts with a school approved under this subdivision for provisions of some education services for its students.

(7) Approval for independent residential schools under this subsection is also contingent upon proof of the school's satisfactory completion of an annual fire safety inspection by the department of public safety or its designee pursuant to subchapter 2 of chapter 173 of Title 20. A certificate executed by the inspecting entity, declaring satisfactory completion of the inspection and identifying the date by which a new inspection must occur, shall be posted at the school in a public location. The school shall provide a copy of the certificate to the commissioner of education after each annual inspection. The school shall pay the actual cost of the inspection unless waived or reduced by the inspecting entity.

(c) Recognized independent schools. Upon filing an enrollment notice a recognized independent school may provide elementary or secondary education in Vermont. The enrollment notice shall be on a form provided by the commissioner and shall be filed with the commissioner no earlier than three months before the beginning of the school year for the public schools in the town in which the applicant proposes to locate.

(1) The enrollment notice shall contain the following information and assurances:

(A) a statement that the school will be in session an amount of time substantially equivalent to that required for public schools;

(B) a detailed description or outline of the minimum course of study for each grade level the school offers, and how the annual assessment of each pupil will be performed; and

(C) assurances that:

(i) the school will prepare and maintain attendance records for each pupil enrolled or regularly attending classes;

(ii) at least once each year the school will assess each pupil's progress, and will maintain records of that assessment, and present the result of that assessment to each student's parent or guardian;

(iii) the school's educational program will include the minimum course of study set forth in section 906 of this title;

(iv) the school will have teachers and materials sufficient to carry out the school's educational program; and

(v) the school will meet such state and federal laws and regulations concerning its physical facilities and health and safety matters as are applicable to recognized independent schools.

(2) If the commissioner has information that creates significant doubt about whether the school would be able to meet the requirements set forth above, the commissioner may call a hearing. At the hearing, the school shall establish that it can meet the requirements for recognized independent schools. Failure to do so shall result in a finding by the commissioner that the school must take specified action to come into compliance within a specified time frame or the children enrolled must attend another recognized independent school, approved independent or public school, or home study program, or be declared truant unless absent with legal excuse.

(3) A recognized independent school shall provide to each student's parent or guardian a copy of its currently filed statement of objectives and a copy of this section. The copy shall be provided when the pupil enrolls or before September 1, whichever comes later. Failure to comply with this subsection may create a permissible inference of false advertising in violation of section 2005 of Title 13.

(4) A recognized independent school shall renew its enrollment notice annually. An independent school shall be recognized for a period not to exceed five years by the commissioner without need for filing an annual enrollment notice if:

(A) it is recognized by an organization approved by the state board for the purpose of recognizing such school; or

(B) it is accredited by a private, state or regional agency approved by the state board for accrediting purposes. Nothing contained herein shall be construed to prohibit the commissioner from initiating a hearing under this section.

(5) If the commissioner has information that creates significant doubt about whether the school, once in operation, is meeting the requirements for recognized independent schools, the commissioner may call a hearing. At the hearing, the school shall establish that it has met the requirements for recognized independent schools. Failure to do so shall result in a finding by the commissioner that:

(A) the school may not be in operation for the remainder of the school year and that the children are truant unless absent with legal excuse or enrolled in an approved public or independent school, another recognized independent school or a home study program; or

(B) the school must take specified action to come into compliance within a specified time frame or the school will not be permitted to operate for the remainder of the school year.

(6) Each recognized independent school shall provide to the commissioner on October 1 of each year the names, genders, dates of birth, and addresses of its enrolled pupils. Within seven days of the termination of a pupil's enrollment, the recognized independent school shall notify the commissioner of the name and address of the pupil. The commissioner shall forthwith notify the appropriate school officials designated in section 1126 of this title.

(7) After the filing of the enrollment notice or at a hearing, if the school is unable to comply with any specific requirements due to deep religious conviction shared by an organized group, the commissioner may waive such requirements if he or she determines that the educational purposes of this subsection are being or will be substantially met.

(d) Council of independent schools. A council of independent schools is created consisting of eleven members, no fewer than three of whom shall be representatives of recognized independent schools. The commissioner shall appoint nine members from within the independent schools' community. The commissioner shall appoint two members from the public-at-large. Each member shall serve for two years and may be reappointed for up to an additional two terms, except that five of the first eleven appointments shall be for an initial term of one year. The council shall hold its organizational meeting before March 1, 1990 at the call of the commissioner and shall adopt rules for its own operation. A chair shall be elected by and from among the members. The duties of the council shall include advising the commissioner on policies and procedures with respect to independent schools. No hearing shall be initiated before the state board or by the commissioner under this section until the recommendations of the council have been sought and received. The recommendations of the advisory council, including any minority reports, shall be admissible at the hearing.

(e) The board of trustees of an independent school operating in Vermont shall adopt harassment and hazing prevention policies, establish procedures for dealing with harassment and hazing of students and provide notice of these. The provisions of section 565 of this title for public schools shall apply to this subsection, except that the board shall follow its own procedures for adopting policy.

(f) An approved independent school which accepts students for whom the district of residence pays tuition under chapter 21 of this title shall bill the sending district monthly for a state-placed student and shall not bill the sending district for any month in which the state-placed student was not enrolled.

(g) An approved independent school which accepts students for whom the district of residence pays tuition under chapter 21 of this title shall use the assessment or assessments required under subdivision 164(9) of this title to measure attainment of standards for student performance of those pupils. In addition the school shall provide data related to the assessment or assessments as required by the commissioner. (Amended 1989, No. 44, § 1; 1993, No. 162 (Adj. Sess.), § 3; 1995, No. 157 (Adj. Sess.), § 2; 1997, No. 60, § 5, eff. June 26, 1997; 1997, No. 84 (Adj. Sess.), § 2; 1999, No. 120 (Adj. Sess.), § 5; 2007, No. 66, § 2; 2007, No. 138 (Adj. Sess.), § 1, eff. May 9, 2008.)

ACCREDITATION

The School of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales is fully accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and in accordance with the Vermont State Board of Education.

RIGHT TO AMEND

The School of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the Wednesday Folder.

After you have read this handbook we ask that you sign and return the acknowledgment **within one week.**

SCHOOL DIRECTORY OF FACULTY AND STAFF

2011-2012

Rev. William Kelley, CSC, Pastor

Rev. John Britto Antony, CSC

Mr. David Estes, Principal

Mrs. Linda Guetti, School Secretary

Mrs. Janice Disco, Pre-Kindergarten

Mrs. Christine Becker, Kindergarten

Miss Tiffany Hall, Grade 1

Mrs. Carol Roaf, Grade 2

Mrs. Rebecca Greenslet, Grade 3

Mrs. Maria Gorry, Grade 4

Mrs. Darcy Oakes, Grade 5 Homeroom

Mrs. Christina Bylina, Grade 6 Homeroom

Mrs. Patricia Dailey, Grade 7 Homeroom

Mr. David Estes, Grade 8 Homeroom

Mrs. Marcia Hendery, Media Specialist

Mrs. Kathy Murphy, Media Specialist

Ms. Taryn Reese, Music Education

Mr. Thomas St. Hilaire, Physical Education

Mrs. Maru Leon, Foreign Language

Mrs. Anne Anderson, School Nurse

Mrs. Jennie Hogan, Art Education

Mrs. Norina Gilarde, Receptionist

Mrs. Judy Pembroke, Bookkeeper

Mrs. Edith Katrick, School Aide

Mrs. Kathy Finney, After School Director

Mr. Leon O'Dell, Custodian

Mr. Adrian LaFlamme, Custodian

Mr. Henry Maynard, Custodian

Accidents.....	2
Activities.....	2
Accreditation	25
Administration of Medication.....	14
Athletics	6
Attendance	9
Behavior	2-4
Cars	2
Change of Address	10
Change of Parental Custody	10
Communications	10
Computer Use	11
Crisis Plan	19/20
Dangerous Materials	11
Directory.....	26
Dress Code	5/6
Emergency Information	8
Field Trips	11/12
Fire and Fire Drills	12
Food.....	12
Fund Raising.....	10
Grades	13
Handicap Accessibility	19
Harassment	4,5
Health Services	13/14
Homework	14/15
Honor Roll	16/17
Inclement Weather.....	14/15
Library.....	15
Lost and Found	15
Mandated Reporting.....	8
No-Uniform Days	6
Non-Discrimination Policy	20
Out-of-Uniform	6
Parent/Student/School Agreement.....	20
Parent/Teacher Group	8
Peanut Allergies.....	15/16
Physical Education	16
Preparedness	19
Recess.....	16
Release of Students.....	8
Religious Education	8/9

Report Cards	16
Retention	17
Right to Amend	25
School Colors	17/18
School Hours	17
School Events.....	17
School Property	17
Smoking.....	9
Students Starting Pre-Kindergarten.....	18
Substance Abuse	7/8
Telephone	18
Textbooks	18
Tuition.....	18/19
Visitors.....	9
Volunteer Program	18/19
Vermont Law-Independent Schools.....	20-25

****New changes are in italics.**