

## **True Cross Catholic School**

### **2017 – 2018 Family Handbook**

This Family Handbook is provided as a guide, for both students and parents, of the procedures and policies of the True Cross Catholic School. We ask parents to carefully read all sections of the handbook and review them with your child.

The enrollment of a child at True Cross Catholic School is considered to be an agreement on the part of the students and parents or guardians that they will comply with all school procedures, regulations, and policies including, but not limited to such procedures, regulations, and policies set forth in the handbook.

True Cross Catholic School and administration retain the right to amend the Family Handbook. By no means is this handbook considered all-inclusive. Administration and staff will exercise professional judgment and discretion to address situations fairly and consistently.

After reviewing this handbook with your child, sign the acknowledgment form included in the back of this handbook for each child enrolled in the school. The form must be returned to your child's homeroom teacher.

***We Transform the World!***

**CATHOLIC  
SCHOOLS**

THE ARCHDIOCESE OF GALVESTON-HOUSTON



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***"The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.  
And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; you shall teach them diligently to your children." Deuteronomy 4:8***

At the heart of a parochial school is the unwavering belief that the education of children is a primary responsibility of the family and of the Church. Pope John Paul II stated that, "Catholic schools have proven to be a priceless value to generations of children, teaching them to know, love, and serve God, and preparing them to take their place with responsibility in the community." True Cross Catholic School is such a community where we strive to support families in their efforts to raise their children in the faith.

On behalf of our Pastor, Father Larry Wilson, the Faculty and the School Board it is my pleasure to welcome you to a new school year. We share your concern for your child's health, happiness and safety. How well children are prepared for the future depends in part on what they learn in school today. Therefore, our emphasis is appropriately on academics, but also, importantly on moral and spiritual training. The development of Christian children with multiple skills and ideals to address the situations they will encounter through life is our major goal. We believe in a strong profile of educating children for a future in our faith by providing a spiritually, morally, and academically challenging curriculum.

We are a Catholic school. As such, we seek to share with you the richness and strengths of a Catholic education. It is our mission to educate children to become caring, faith-filled adults, involved with their family and their community. From the moment of baptism we become members of a new and larger family, the Christian community, joined with others in common faith, hope, and love. As a Catholic school, we nurture all children from diverse backgrounds as a microcosm of the world in which we live. Our students are bonded by a common faith life, stronger than ethnicity, nationality, or culture.

Blessings,

Yolanda H. Agrella  
Principal  
True Cross Catholic School

# **School Support Systems**

**2017 - 2018**

## **Shrine of the True Cross Catholic Parish**

**Pastor:** Rev. Larry Wilson

**Deacon:** Sam Ausmus III

### **True Cross Catholic School Board**

**Pastor**

**Principal**

**President**

**Member**

**Member**

**Member**

**Member**

**Member**

Father Larry Wilson

Principal Agrella

Ronald Smith

Mario Celis

Peggy Tasler

Richard Dryer

Monica Nordstrand

Steve Minasi

# True Cross Catholic School Staff

2017 - 2018

## School Administration

**Principal:** Yolanda Agrella  
**Office Staff:** Phyllis Mitchiner (Administration)  
Elise Donnow (Office Coordinator)  
Tracy Sheridan (Community Relations)

### Preschool/Kindergarten Teachers:

Katie Whatley PreK3  
Myrna Gallardo PreK4  
Alondra Coleman Kindergarten

### Auxiliary Teacher

Veronica Freed Music  
Marcella Flores PE  
Carla Parra Spanish  
Miguel Rangel Band  
Janet Whitehead Art

### Assistants:

Brenda Mitchiner

### Library:

Cheryl Liggio

### Nurse:

Vangie Nava

### Elementary Teachers:

Sandra Weber 1<sup>st</sup> Grade  
Ruby Urbina 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade  
Cherryl Hollins 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade  
Anna Ramirez 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

### Cafeteria:

Rosa Duran  
Ester Rodriguez

### Extended Day:

Silvia Bahena  
Andrea Solis

### Middle School Teachers:

Mercy Barrera English  
Jeff Eller Math/Computer  
Kathleen Khoury Religion  
Miguel Rangel History/ Music  
Denese Stewart Science  
Cora Wright Literature

### Maintenance:

Claudio Herrera

# MISSION STATEMENT AND PHILOSOPHY

## Catholic Philosophy of Education

Christ is the foundation of the whole educational enterprise in a Catholic school. His revelation gives new meaning to life and helps man to direct his thoughts, actions, and will according to the Gospel, making the Beatitudes his norm of life. The fact that in their own individual ways, all members of the school community share this Christian vision, which makes the school "Catholic". Principles of the Gospel in this manner become the educational norms since the school then have them as its internal motivation and final goal.

A Catholic school is committed to the development of the whole man, since in Christ, the perfect man, all human values find their fulfillment and unity. Herein lies the specifically Catholic character of the school. Its duty to cultivate human values in their own legitimate rights in accordance with its particular mission to serve all men has its origin in the figure of Christ. He is the one who ennoble man, gives meaning to human life, and is the model which the Catholic school offers to its pupils.

If, like every other school, the Catholic school has as its aim the critical communication of human culture and total formation of the individual, it works towards its goal guided by its Christian vision of reality "Through which our cultural heritage acquires its special place in the total vocational life of man." Mindful of the fact that man has been redeemed by Christ; the Catholic school aims at forming in the Christian those particular virtues which will enable him to live a new life in Christ and help to play faithfully his part in building up the kingdom of God.

These premises indicate the duties and the content of the Catholic school. Its task is fundamentally a synthesis of culture and faith, and a synthesis of faith and life; the first is reached by integrating all the different aspects of human knowledge through the subjects taught in the light of the Gospel; the second in the growth of the virtues characteristic of the Christian (Vatican document, 1977)

## Mission Statement

True Cross is a Christ centered Catholic school community, who, united with its parish, and in collaboration with its families, nurtures and forms the minds, hearts, and spirits of the children it serves.

## Philosophy

True Cross Catholic School is a community called by God to grow in wisdom and grace, just as Jesus did when he was a child. We grow spiritually, academically, and emotionally and we will learn to share our God-given gifts with others in this way the Kingdom of God will grow and prosper to his eternal glory.

## Vision

Our aim is to build a worthy upcoming generation that is cooperative, unselfish, and tolerant, believes in democracy, and has developed sound judgments; a generation whose lives will be lived in conformity with the teaching of Christ, ideals of family life and the needs of physical fitness, social virtue, cultural development, and spiritual perfection.

We want to develop in our students inquiring minds. Not only do we wish them to read well, but also to acquire the ability to speak and write effectively.

Our classrooms are to have freedom of expression. Where ideas and expressions are shared, both the teacher and students gain greater insight regarding one another. This brings about respect for honest differences of opinions.

Our classrooms are not merely places where information is acquired, but places where formation of character is attained. We aim to encourage in our students a sense of sacrifice so that they can share the gifts God has given them with others who are less fortunate. We also want them to realize their own unique nature and destiny and how worthy of love and respect is each member of their family, their classmates and associates.

The training of the intellect is not the sole objective of the True Cross Catholic School. The specific and essential function of our Catholic School is to bring about the intellectual, emotional, and vocational development of our students so as to make them contributing citizens of our free society.

With God's divine assistance and the cooperation of students, parents, and faculty, our students will go forth from True Cross Catholic School as Christian boys and girls. They will have a sense of the value of religious culture, rightly subject to the laws and duties of society; honest, courteous, open-minded and enterprising

# School Schedules and Calendar

## Regular School Schedule

<b>7:45 A.M.</b>	Students may enter buildings by the back entrance
<b>8:00 A.M.</b>	School Bell – Back entrance locked at this time. Students now enter by the front entrance for Tardy Slip Announcements and Prayer
<b>8:10 A.M.</b>	Classes Begin

### Lunch Schedules

PK3	11:00 - 11:30
PK4	11:05 - 11:35
K	11:10 - 11:40
1	11:15 - 11:45
2	11:20 - 11:50
3	11:25 - 11:55
4	11:35 - 12:05
5	11:45 - 12:15
6	12:30 - 1:00
7	12:30 - 1:00
8	12:30 - 1:00

<b>2:50 P.M.</b>	Dismissal for Pre K and Kindergarten
<b>3:00 P.M.</b>	Dismissal Bell for First Grade
<b>3:05 P.M.</b>	Dismissal Bell for Second and Third
<b>3:10 P.M.</b>	Dismissal Bell for Fourth and Fifth
<b>3:15 P.M.</b>	Dismissal Bell for Middle School

## Schedule For Early Dismissal Fridays (For Staff Development)

<b>2:00 P.M.</b>	Dismissal Bell for All Students
<b>2:15 P.M.</b>	Remaining students move to Extended Day

## Extended Day Schedule

<b>7:00 A.M.</b>	Morning Extended Day begins. Students are to be dropped at front entrance of the middle school.
<b>7:45 A.M.</b>	Morning Extended Day ends. Students are to enter the building.
<b>3:15 P.M.</b>	Afternoon Extended Day begins. Students may be picked up at front entrance of the middle school.
<b>6:00 P.M.</b>	Extended Day ends.

## School Office Hours

Office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The office will maintain regular business hours from August through May. The office will be open and maintain shorter hours of operation during June and July.



# True Cross Catholic School

2017—2018 School Calendar

400 FM 517 E. + Dickinson, Texas 77539  
(281) 337-5212 + FAX (832) 738-1682

Month	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>August</b>							
7-11							
10							
11							
14							
<b>September</b>							
1							
3							
4							
13							
14							
15							
18-22							
21							
<b>October</b>							
1							
5							
6							
9							
13							
15							
16							
19							
<b>November</b>							
2							
3							
5							
9							
10							
16							
17							
17							
20-24							
<b>December</b>							
1							
3							
12							
13							
21							
22-4							
<b>January</b>							
5							
8							
11							
15							
17							
25							
28							
29-2							
<b>February</b>							
2							
4							
8							
9							
13							
14							
17							
19							
<b>March</b>							
1							
2-6							
4							
9							
9							
12-16							
20-23							
22							
27							
30							
<b>April</b>							
2							
6							
9-20							
20							
21							
26							
<b>May</b>							
4							
6							
11							
18							
22							
25							
28							
30							
31							
1							
31							

H Holiday—No Classes

E—Early Dismissal

R—Report Cards

P—Progress Reports

C—Conference Day 6/23/17

# Admissions and Financial Policy

## Admissions

True Cross Catholic School offers grades PreK-8<sup>th</sup>. The school adheres to policies stipulated by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston for admissions and follows Texas State guidelines regarding age at admission. The school gives preference to siblings of currently enrolled students; secondly, to Catholic students living within the parish boundaries; thirdly, to Catholic students living outside the parish boundaries; fourthly, to non-Catholics.

True Cross Catholic School reserves the right to accept or deny the enrollment of a child, for any reason, according to the judgment of the school administration

## Admission of New Students

### Admission Requirements

- Students entering a PK3/PK4 pre-kindergarten class must be three and four years old respectively, on or before September 1. (All students must be completely toilet trained before being admitted to the school)
- Students entering a kindergarten class must be 5 years old on or before September 1.
- Students entering first grade must be 6 years old on or before September 1.
- Students seeking admission to Pre-school, Kindergarten, or Grade 1 who are under age because their birthday is after September 1, may be admitted to the respective grade if they come from a state where the minimum age is determined based on a date later than September 1<sup>st</sup> or if they have successfully completed the respective grade in an out-of-state Catholic accredited school.

Principal reviews current academic, social, medical, and psychological evaluations. The following documents must be provided:

1. Application
2. Release of Information Form
3. Certified birth certificate
4. Baptismal certificate, if applicable
5. Academic records (including standardized test scores)
6. Social Security card (copy)
7. Health Records
8. Special Needs Information Disclosure Form  
Parents must sign a Special Needs Information Disclosure form as well as an Authorization for Release of Confidential Information/Records form.  
Principal consults with appropriate personnel of present and/or former school as well as the Catholic School Office. The principal then determines if the applicant is qualified with or without his or her special needs. If so, the principal must then determine if minor adjustments can be made to the educational program, which will accommodate the student's needs.
9. Foreign students must present required Immigration forms.

Parent and student interviews are recommended. New students may be asked to take a placement test to be administered before acceptance.

Parents are expected to disclose with appropriate school personnel any significant confidential information which may affect their child's educational progress. Such sharing includes, but is not limited

to, any of the following: diagnostic evaluations, medications, custody arrangements, or any other specific family situations. Please provide the most recent documents to the school office. The school and teacher cannot effectively help students or be considered accountable without having been kept abreast of the students' current needs and circumstances. Failure to disclose pertinent information and updates could result in subsequent dismissal from the school.

All new students are on probation for the first 6-9 weeks of school. If the school cannot meet the needs of the student academically or behaviorally, the child will be withdrawn at the request of the school.

## **Registration**

Registrations are completed when all forms are returned and the registration fee is paid. The registration fee is non-refundable and covers the cost of textbooks, HSA dues, student insurance, art fee, testing fee, and the administrative costs of registration. New students need to present all previous school records prior to registration. A family will be able to register their child or children for school when all tuition has been paid for the previous school year. Students need to reconcile all obligations before the end of the year, i.e., financial, make-up work, return all school books and equipment. When all obligations to the school have been met, the official and final report card will be sent home

## **Tuition and Fees**

There are two options for tuition payments: Full tuition is due July 1, of current year and 10 month payments due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month beginning August 1, of current year. (See office personnel for information on direct-debit).

Tuition is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. Payments can be mailed, or brought to the office. If a parent or guardian becomes past due on their monthly tuition, the following steps will be implemented:

- A. If tuition has not been paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, a twenty-five dollar (\$25.00) late fee must accompany payment. No report card will be issued to the parent, nor will it be forwarded to another school, until all financial obligations are paid in full. Student records will also not be released before all money owed to the school is paid.
- B. Lunch accounts should always be maintained in the positive. If the accounts are negative and not paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month a \$25 late fee will be charged.
- C. If a financial emergency should arise, the school office should be notified so that the situation can be discussed.
- D. If the tuition has not been paid for two months, or special payment options have not been agreed upon, the parents or guardians will be requested to transfer their child or children from school.

## **Tuition Assistance**

Families interested in tuition assistance are required to complete a "Private School Aid Service" (PSAS) application and supply the necessary information by the January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline for Fall consideration. Forms are available with registration packets in February. Additional tuition assistance may be available to those in need. All financial information including family identity is held in strictest confidence. Every effort is made to keep family's name anonymous. Parents will be notified by the administration of possible awards during the first week of May.

## **EDP (Extended Day Program) Financial Policy**

No student will be accepted into the Extended Day Program without their registration being paid. EDP will be billed the 1<sup>st</sup> week of every month for the previous months attendance. If the EDP bill is not paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month a \$25 late fee will be incurred and the student will not be allowed to attend EDP.

# **General School Policies**

## **Policy for Catholic Schools**

True Cross Catholic School operates in accordance with the Archdiocesan Board of Education policy number 652.1 that reads: "The Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston admit all students to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to the student body. Catholic schools shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, or national origin in the administration of its admission, loan, athletic, or scholarship programs."

## **Accreditation**

True Cross Catholic School adheres to the guidelines established by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and maintains full accreditation status. We currently hold membership in the National Catholic Education Association.

## **Buckley Amendment**

True Cross Catholic School abides by Buckley Amendment provisions with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order and/or copy of the custody section of the divorce decree.

## **Christian Charity**

Christian charity and respect shall be observed during any verbal and nonverbal communication at all levels within the school community. The following actions will be termed in violation of Christian charity and may result in dismissal from the school:

- Public criticism of school personnel, policies, or procedures
- Threats of any nature toward personnel, students, or families
- Verbal/nonverbal acts of aggression including yelling, screaming, pushing, etc.
- Public discussion of student and/or family matters based upon confidential information obtained as a result of volunteer duties, etc.

## **Problem Resolution**

Every effort shall be made to resolve situations so that the education process can continue. Before differences become formalized grievances, both parties shall make every effort to resolve problems through open communication. If a parent seeks resolution of a situation relating to a student, the following steps should be taken:

- The matter should first be addressed with the child's teacher.
- If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved with the teacher, the parent may then discuss the issue with the principal.
- If the principal cannot settle the case after discussion with the parent and teacher, the matter may be presented to the pastor for guidance and resolution. If the matter cannot be solved by the pastor, the concerned party may then present the grievance in accordance with the Archdiocesan Appeals Process.

## **Appeals Process/ Grievance Policy**

Although the Archdiocese endeavors to establish a harmonious Christian atmosphere within its schools, it recognizes that misunderstandings or differences of opinion sometimes occur. Ideally, such matters can be resolved informally by a parent or guardian meeting with the immediate authoritative person to discuss the matter. If, however, the matter is not then settled to the parent or guardian's satisfaction, the parent or guardian may institute a formal grievance. A formal grievance must be in writing and must be received in five (5) working days following the occurrence of the event on which the grievance is based. Contact the principal for a copy of the Archdiocese current appeals process/grievance procedure for further details. Also, note that the current policy supersedes and replaces all previous policies and statements regarding institution and processing of formal grievances with the Archdiocesan schools.

## **Addressing The School Board**

Persons may wish to address the True Cross Catholic School Board at regularly held board meetings. Persons may address the Board on an issue or policy of the school (discussion of Personnel is not an issue that can be brought to a board). This is not to be confused with Due Process or a Grievance Hearing. Grievances are handled through the Archdiocesan Grievance Procedure discussed above.

Persons who desire to address the School Board should contact the president of the school board or the principal in writing at least 10 days prior to the next meeting. The board president and the principal shall decide if the issue is appropriate for consideration and at which meeting of the Board the issue will be presented. Persons, who attend a meeting of the School Board without first having been placed on the agenda, will be allowed to address the School Board only if the president determines there is time to hear the issue. During and following the presentation, questions of clarification can be asked. The Board will give no response during the board meeting. In executive session board members discuss the presentation and assist in formulating the response that the board president will send in writing to the person making the presentation.

## **Statement of Nondiscrimination**

No person shall be discriminated against, and no reprisals of any kind shall be taken against any person, solely because of participation in the conflict resolution process.

## **Faith Formation**

While students will attend regular religion classes, full preparation for first Holy Sacraments are not included in our school curriculum. In compliance with Archdiocese policy, candidates for sacraments will participate in the parish sacrament preparation program.

## **Crusader Parents (Formerly HSA)**

Crusader Parents, formerly known as the Home and School Association, organizes fundraisers and addresses the needs of the school. Parents are encouraged to participate in all events. All families are automatically members of Crusader Parents.

## **Parent Service Requirements**

All families are required to fulfill 10 hours of volunteer service hours. Service hours forms are on the website. Contact your teacher or the front office for service hours opportunities.

# Health and Safety Policies

## Volunteers/ Visitors / Service Hours

Schools depend on the consistent and loyal services of volunteers. Volunteers serve the school in many capacities such as in the clinic, office, cafeteria, or as room parents, drivers, etc. Volunteers represent the church and school. They should show support for the school and governing policies at all times. Archdiocesan Ethical and Moral Conduct policies hold all volunteers bound by confidentiality. Administration may terminate services of any volunteer who fails to uphold the policies and procedures of the school. All comments and concerns should be addressed with school administration.

Volunteers and visitors are required to sign in at the office and receive a visitor's badge before reporting to their work area. If you cannot be at school during scheduled times, please arrange a substitute. Upon completion of work, volunteers must sign out in the office. Please, refrain from visiting classrooms. Volunteers are encouraged to ask for assistance as needed. Please, make other arrangements for younger siblings as they may not be brought to school during volunteer hours. At home assignments are available upon request.

Each family is required to serve at least 10 service hours per semester. There are many ways to earn service hours, ask about options that work for you. Those who prefer may pay a fee of \$25 per hour not served

## Virtus

Volunteers who have regular access to children are required to obtain a criminal background clearance, participate in a VIRTUS Workshop and sign the Volunteer Code of Conduct.

The VIRTUS "Protecting God's Children" program for adults is a three to four hour awareness session that instructs adults of the Church that interact with children that to protect children you must have continuous vigilance. This awareness session helps trainees understand:

- the dangers and signs of child sexual abuse,
- the methods and means by which offenders commit abuse,
- the methods of properly reporting suspicions of abuse,
- and five empowerment steps one can use to prevent child sexual abuse.

## Child Abuse/ Neglect

School personnel of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston have a moral obligation as well as a legal obligation to report child abuse and neglect. If a school staff member has reasonable suspicion that abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur, he/she will report the incident to Children's Protective Services (CPS) within 48 hours. If a school staff member believes the child is in immediate danger of harm, 911 will be called. School personnel will be instructed on a regular basis concerning this topic.

### Criteria for Reporting Abuse

- A report of child abuse is not an accusation or a proven fact, and Texas does not require a reporter to know or be certain that a child has been abused or neglected.
- The degree of certainty that must be met is that the person reporting has "cause to believe" that abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur. This standard is based on the reasonable person convictions. Confidentiality of the person making the report will be upheld. If a person makes a report of suspected child abuse or child neglect without malice, then that person is immune from civil or criminal liability.

Failure to report suspected abuse or neglect is a crime punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both

### To Whom We Will Report

- The report is made to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services: Child Protective Services Division. They will investigate and will determine the nature and extent of the problem, evaluate the child's condition and safety, and if appropriate, initiate action to protect the child.
- In some cases, a law enforcement agency receives the report. The person reporting the abuse may call enforcement if they believe the child is in immediate danger of harm. School personnel are to call 911 if they believe the child is in immediate danger of harm

### Reporting Procedure

School personnel will follow these reporting procedures:

- Document all observations and conversations immediately.
- Report to the principal immediately.
- Report to Child Protective Services within 24 hours (by Texas law reporting is within 48 hours). The telephone for CPS is 1-800-252-5400.
- Submit a "Report of Child Abuse or Neglect" 6030.1 (HM 310.1) to the Catholic Schools Office within five days. Mail the form to the Superintendent, Catholic Schools Office, 2403 Holcombe Blvd., Houston, TX 77021.

The individual school's principal will determine follow up with the child and/or the parents.

## Immunization

Immunization requirements for school attendance are:

- A. Minimum of four DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus) is required. A TD booster is required the month of or month preceding fourth birthday, and every ten years after.
- B. Minimum of three polio doses are required, provided one dose has been received the month of or the month preceding the fourth birthday. Polio vaccine will not be required after the 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- C. All students must have received rubella vaccine on or after their first birthday.
- D. One dose of MMR vaccine received on or after their first birthday. Children born on or after September 2, 1991 must have two doses of measles vaccine (this dose may be received as part of a second MMR).
  1. Parental history of measles shall no longer be acceptable under any circumstance, including those previously accepted.
  2. Should a case of measles occur in a school it shall be required that measles vaccine records be reviewed within 24 hours. Susceptible children either must be vaccinated within three days or be excluded from school until two weeks after the last case of measles. Susceptible children include those who:
    - a. Do not have evidence of having been immunized, or
    - b. Do not have physician documented evidence of having had disease, or
    - c. Those who have medical contraindications to immunizations, or
    - d. Those who have religious exemptions from immunizations
- E. Two doses of measles vaccine are required for students who are twelve years of age.
- F. One dose of mumps vaccine received on or after their first birthday.
- G. Physician confirmation of prior measles or mumps illness will no longer be acceptable in lieu of vaccination. Only serologic confirmation of measles or mumps illness will be acceptable in lieu of vaccination.
- H. T.B. requirements of Catholic school children:

All new students are required to present written evidence of T.B. skin test received within 120 days of entering school and the results
- I. Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (HIB) – Children fifteen months of age, but not yet five years old: one dose on or after fifteen months of age is required unless a schedule for a primary series and booster was completed prior to or at fifteen months of age. A physician validated history of

invasive Haemophilus influenza type B disease, on or after the second birthday will substitute for the vaccine requirement for children two years of age through four years of age

- J All children 5 years old or older, born on or after September 2, 1992, are required to have received the 3 doses of the Hepatitis B vaccine by the time they turn 5 years of age Children born between September 2, 1988 and September 2, 2002 (inclusive) must show proof, within 30 days after their 12<sup>th</sup> birthday, of having received three doses of the Hepatitis B vaccine
- K One dose of varicella vaccine is required after 1<sup>st</sup> birthday for children born on or after September 2, 1994 or have written validated history of disease by parent or physician.
- L. One dose of varicella vaccine is required for children born between September 2, 1988 and September 1, 1994 by their 12<sup>th</sup> birthday or have written validated history of disease by parent or physician. If first dose is received after age 13, two doses are required.
- M . The day, month and year of vaccine administration or disease must be recorded on school records.
- N. Other immunizations may be added as required by the Texas Department of Health

## Screenings

Vision Screening is done by the school nurse and clinic volunteers every year. Any adjustments are reported to parents soon after the screening. This is done for PreK 4, K, 1, 3, 5 and all new students in Grades 2, 4, 6.

Height-Weight Screening is done by the school nurse and clinic volunteers every year for all students.

Scoliosis Screening is done each year by the school nurse and trained volunteers for 6<sup>th</sup> grade students.

Acanthosis Nigricans Screening is done each year by the school nurse and trained volunteers for students in Grades 3, 5, and 7.

Audiological Screening is done every year by the school nurse and trained volunteers from our school. This is done for PreK 4, K, 1, 3, 5, and all new students in Grades 2, 4, 6

## Medication

State law requires that NO MEDICATION, not even cough drops or throat lozenges, is to be in the possession of a student while in school.

Catholic Schools of the Galveston-Houston Archdiocese adhere to Texas Education Code 21.914 on the administering of medications by school employees.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule the administration of student medicine in such a manner that medication brought to school will be kept to a minimum. (For example, the physician may be able to prescribe the medication before/after school and at bedtime or twice a day).

Medication (prescription or non-prescription) may be administered to students only upon **WRITTEN REQUEST** signed by the parent/guardian and the physician. Parents, guardians or a designated adult must deliver and pick up all medicine to be administered. Forms are available in the school office.

All medication, prescription or non-prescription, must be in its original container and be properly labeled in English. A properly labeled prescription is one with a pharmacy label stating the student's name, the name of the medication, and date the prescription was filled. Non-prescription medication must be in the original container, indicating directions for use, and labeled with student's name. All cuts or abrasions may only be treated with soap and water during the school day, by clinic personnel

## Clinic

Parents will inform the principal if their child has a serious or possibly life-threatening chronic illness or condition before entry into the school. Prior to the first day of school, parents will meet with the principal or appropriate staff to develop an "Individualized Health Care Plan" that will include instructions for observation of the illness, care and treatment, medication orders, and special instructions such as calling EMS or parent notification.

If your child is sent to the clinic because of serious illness or injury, you or parent designee on the emergency card will be notified. It will be your responsibility to get medical attention unless the emergency is so great your child must be taken from school to be immediately treated. You will be notified as soon as possible. Emergency rooms will not render emergency care without the parent or guardian's permission. Therefore, the office must be kept informed of any telephone number change

### Illness/ Contagious Disease

For the protection of all the students, the following rules have been established and will be followed at all times. A child having one or more of the following symptoms will be sent home:

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Suspected contagious disease
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- General malaise (feels too badly to remain in school)

**A STUDENT MAY NOT RETURN TO SCHOOL UNTIL FREE FROM FEVER, VOMITING, OR DIARRHEA FOR 24 HOURS.**

If a child has any of the above symptoms in the morning before coming to school, please KEEP HIM/HER HOME. Keep your child home when he/she has a BAD COLD, SORE THROAT, UNUSUAL SKIN ERUPTION, EYE INFECTION, SWOLLEN GLANDS, NAUSEA) Any child exhibiting such symptoms will be sent home. We have very limited facilities for treating a child at school. Parents will be expected to make arrangements for him/her to go home.

Please report any infectious or communicable diseases (i.e. influenza, strep throat, eye infection, impetigo, chicken pox, etc.) to the school Clinic. A student who has an infectious or contagious disease is not permitted to attend classes until the danger of transmitting the infection or disease to other students is over. Requirements for determining when a student may return to school are those of the Texas Department of Health.

The principal will stay informed of all public directives about contagious flu diseases and implement health safety practices.

Please report any lice infestations. Any child with lice must be treated and then checked by the school nurse. The school requires a child to be nit free before returning to school.

## Child Release

No child will be released to a parent, guardian, or parent designee if the school personnel believes the person to be impaired (such as inebriated) and, therefore, unable to care for the child at that time. Another person from the student's emergency contact list will be called to pick up the child/ren

## **Athletic Requirements**

Injuries in sporting events can be decreased in various ways. Student athletes must have the health needed to meet the demands of the physical activity and be properly conditioned to prevent injury and achieve athlete's goals. In addition to physical requirements, student athletes must also be academically eligible to participate in sports (see Athletic Handbook). A student athlete must maintain a grade of at least "78" in all subjects to be eligible to play.

### ***Physicals***

All students trying out, practicing, and/or participating in a sport or cheerleading are to have an annual signed parent/guardian consent form, annual medical history, and annual physical evaluation. The parent/guardian consent, medical history, and physical evaluation are to be completed before any practice (both in-season and out-of-season) or games/matches. The required forms are Parent/Guardian Consent (HM 620.1a), Medical History (HM 620.1b, c), and Physical Evaluation.

Student athletes must be under the supervision of their coach for after school practices and games. Other students, attending games as spectators, must be seated on the bleachers and supervised by an adult. Students may not remain unsupervised on campus before, during, or after athletic events. Students returning to watch a game must be appropriately attired. Younger children may not be on the school's playground while their parents attend athletic events.

All True Cross student athletes are provided with additional accident insurance through the Maksin Management Corporation for any injuries sustained as a result of participating in school-sponsored athletic activities

## **Use of Controlled Substances**

The use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful. A student under the influence of, or in possession of these substances is subject to removal from class which may result in suspension, expulsion, or referral for prosecution. This policy is effect whether the student is on school property or attending a school sponsored or school related activity on or off school property. The use of a controlled substance includes but is not limited to:

- Chemical substance use, possession for consumption, sale or dispensing of illegal drugs and narcotics (hard or soft drugs, alcohol, inhalants, marijuana or controlled substance).
- Acting under the influence or an illegal drug – alcohol, narcotic, marijuana or a controlled substance.
- Medication misuse or overdose.
- In the event there is question of drug abuse the school nurse and the principal will work together with the student and family, towards bringing about a complete recovery and elimination of the drug abuse for the student involved.

Upon removal from class the principal will:

- Report the incident to the superintendent.
- Notify parent/guardian immediately and request a conference.

## **Asbestos**

This notice is in compliance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act. True Cross Catholic School was inspected on September, 2013 by McClelland Management Service. At that time the school was found to be a safe environment. Periodic re-inspections will be done by trained personnel.

1-3% chrysotile asbestos is in the ceiling tile in the classrooms, library, and hallway. The vinyl floor tile in the principal's closet has a trace of asbestos and all the other vinyl tile was not analyzed but is assumed to be positive. No other signs of asbestos are apparent in the school.

## **IRIS**

In the modern world, schools sometimes need to get information to parents as soon as possible. To facilitate this need, True Cross Catholic School and the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston has partnered with a rapid communication system called IRIS-Immediate Response Information System. This system will deliver emergency messages to parents individually by the communication method(s) of your personal choosing. Should the school need to close early due to weather, for example, this system would notify you by your choice of home phone, cell phone, or email. In addition, the school may use the IRIS system to keep you up to date on important school wide information or changes relating to groups in which your child participates.

Parents will be asked to complete or update the IRIS information form at the beginning of the school year or as changes occur. Then a test run will be completed to ensure everyone receives a notice.

## **Emergency Closing**

There may come a time when, because of a storm alert or other weather conditions, we need to close the school. We will generally follow Dickinson Independent School District directives. However, please note that True Cross Catholic School will use its own discretion to close based on the utmost concern for student safety. If the decision is made to close True Cross Catholic School the following radio and TV stations will be notified. An IRIS alert message will be used to confirm any closing and opening of school.

K I L T	Radio Station	610 AM
K P R C	Radio Station	950 AM
K T R H	Radio Station	740 AM
K P R C	TV Station	Channel 2
K H O U	TV Station	Channel 11
K T R K	TV Station	Channel 13

## **Evacuation**

Pine Drive Christian School, located about one block East on FM 517, serves as our safety evacuation point, in the event that we must clear the entire True Cross Parish complex. Students will walk in line to Pine Drive School where parents will be notified to pick up their children

## **Emergency Drills**

Fire and disaster drills are conducted regularly at varied times and unannounced times (both during regular school hours and after school Extended day). Students are made aware of safe and orderly procedures in case of fire or weather warnings. All persons must vacate the buildings in an orderly fashion during a fire or evacuation drill following routes mapped for each room. Weather watch drills will be conducted during the school year as well. Students also practice emergency "shut downs" where they must be safely secured within buildings and, additionally, are verbally prepared to evacuate the premises to either another parish building or Pine Drive Christian School.

## **Insurance**

A third party, as dictated by the archdiocese, provides primary or secondary insurance coverage for all students who may be injured on campus or engaged in school-sponsored activities. This insurance will serve as primary insurance for any student without other insurance coverage and will serve as secondary insurance to any existing insurance coverage for a student.

# Drop-off and Pick-up

## Dismissal

Requests for permission for a student to be dismissed early must be in a written note. No child is allowed to leave the school grounds once the school bell rings for the start of the day. A child who has left with permission and who returns the same day should report to the office on his/her return to obtain an admit slip. In the case of illness, the parent or a person designated by the parent will be notified. Please do not leave a sick child at school.

School is dismissed at 2:50 for PK,K, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3:00 for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, and 3:15 for middle school every day and at 2:00 on most first Friday of the month (for Staff Development).

Students must be picked up by their parent or designated driver. Students going home with another student must have a note from home or a call to the office giving them permission to leave with a different driver. For the safety of the student, the school may call back to verify this information.

Extended Day students should refer to the Extended Day Handbook for arrival and dismissal procedures

## Carpool Information and Procedures

The carpool system provides easy access for arrival and dismissal. *For safety purposes*, it is important that rules below and traffic flow patterns and assignments detailed in this handbook be followed.

The traffic flow pattern will be followed at all times. Traffic for drop-off and pick-up will enter by either Spruce Street or by the alley drive that runs adjacent to the middle school and pavilion. For safety purposes ***ALL TRAFFIC WILL EXIT VIA SPRUCE STREET. Drivers must follow the 5 per mile speed limit. The use of cell phones while driving on school property is prohibited. In addition, it is against the law in posted school zones. There is no greater importance than the safety of our children.***

## Morning Drop-off

All students are to be dropped off at the back of the school. Cars dropping off children must be in single file at all times. Pull completely forward to all drop-off points. Students should exit vehicles on the curbside. Parents must park for students who need help getting out of vehicles. (At 8:00 A.M, the back doors will be locked and students, with a parent/guardian, must enter through the front office for a tardy slip.)

## Afternoon Pick-up

**All cars must display a carpool card with large bold letters that can be read easily.** The office will provide these cards. Cars picking up students must be in ***single file*** at all times. Please, follow the instructions of the adult traffic director at all times. Enter the carpool line from the rear only.

### **Pick-up – 2:50-3:15 p.m. depending on the grade level.**

All grades will be picked up at the back of the school. For safety reasons, **REMAIN IN YOUR VEHICLE.** Students will be brought to your car and assisted by an adult. Please, ***do not park your car*** to walk over and pick up your child. If you must enter the school after dismissal, park at the front of the school and enter through the office. It is the driver's responsibility to assure that the child is safely secured (seat-belted) in the vehicle.

Students not picked up by 3:15 (2:15 on first Friday) will be taken to Extended Day and charged applicable fees, \$8.00.

# Curriculum and Instruction

## Curriculum

The curriculum of Archdiocesan Catholic Schools focuses on a total, Christ-centered environment. Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston plan according to the archdiocesan curriculum guides in the academic areas.

## Textbooks

Textbooks are selected from the State of Texas Adopted Textbook List or from other publishers with Archdiocesan approval. Supplementary material is used to enrich and expand the curriculum. Textbooks are provided on a rental basis and are distributed to students at the beginning of the school year. Students will be fined for damages beyond the normal wear or required to pay full replacement cost for lost books.

## Student Success

All available school resources shall be utilized to promote student success. Lines of communication will be kept open to inform parents of student progress in all areas. Concerns about a student will be addressed initially by the classroom teacher and parent. School success can only be attained through cooperation between parents and educators. Parents are expected to disclose any pertinent information from private resources (diagnoses and recommendations) which would be of specific educational value in programming adequately for their children. If it is determined that the school's resources cannot meet the needs of a student, or if parents/guardians fail to act on the school's recommendations for remediation, or diagnostic evaluation, the principal may request withdrawal of the student or deny admission for the following year.

## Homework

Homework is essential and is multi-purpose:

- A review of previously learned material
- Independent practice of learned material
- Supplementary reading
- Correlation of past and present material
- Adding further knowledge to material already covered.

We ask the parents to check to see that written assignments are legible and are neatly done. The child reaps no benefit from assignments which are done by the parents, therefore, we ask you to encourage the student to work to the best of his/her ability. It is important that you help your child keep some type of daily schedule or routine for homework, television watching and home responsibilities.

## Homework Time Guidelines

The following times reflect the average time frame for homework at each grade level.

Grades 1-2	30 minutes + 15 minutes of independent reading
Grades 3-4	45 minutes + 15 minutes of independent reading
Grades 5-6	60 minutes + 20 minutes of independent reading
Grades 7-8	90 minutes + 30 minutes of independent reading

NOTE: Times are based on average students – many students will finish faster and some students may require additional time to complete homework assignments. If your child consistently experiences difficulties completing assignments within reasonable time frames, *please* contact your child's teacher

## **Homework in EDP**

The Extended Day Program conducts a study hall period daily, which is to be used productively by the students enrolled in the program. This is an opportunity for the students to complete homework within a structured environment.

## **Make Up Work**

Make up work for all absences is due in the same number of days that the student is absent or deductions for late assignments will be taken. Grades on makeup work and tests from unexcused absences are reduced by 10 points of the total possible points. Vacations during the school calendar year are highly discouraged.

## **Late Assignments**

Grades are reduced by 10 points of the total possible points. A zero will be posted if the assignment is not turned by the third day.

# Assessment and Grading

## ITBS Testing

Tests are meant to give the teacher and administrator a certain amount of information regarding the native endowments as well as the educational growth of the students as they advance. Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston annually participate in achievement testing. All students in 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade will be tested using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Students in 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> grades may be given the Cogat Ability Test. Standardized testing presents one component in measuring a child's ability. Standardized testing assists the school in developing curriculum strategies and strengthening instruction. Test results of each student are recorded on the Permanent Record Card for grades 1-8. Parents will receive their child's individual profile at the end of the school year

## Grading Standard

The school year is divided into four nine-week quarters. In fairness, every grade given, both academic and conduct, will be the result of an honest, careful evaluation of all phases of the student's work and effort. Teachers may use observation and informal testing materials to assist in evaluating children.

Grades for late assignments (Grades 1-5) will be reduced by 10 points (from the maximum points possible) for each day that they are not received by the teacher. After the third day, the assignment will no longer be accepted and a grade of "0" will be entered in the grade book. Late assignments for Middle School students must be turned in the next day (with a 10 point penalty). After the third day, a grade of "0" will be entered in the grade book.

For all student grades 1-8, the following grading designations are used:

<u>Outstanding</u>	<u>Above Average</u>	<u>Average</u>
A+ 99-100	B+ 91-92	C+ 84-85
A 95-98	B 88-90	C 80-83
A- 93-94	B- 86-87	C- 78-79
<u>Below Average</u>	<u>Failure</u>	
D+ 76-77	F Below 70	
D 72-75		
D- 70-71		

For grades 1-5, a numerical grade is to be given for all Major Subjects. For grades 6-8, a numerical grade is given for all Subjects. Numerical value is posted on all Duplicate Report Card Sheets and Permanent Record Cards.

### Major Subjects:

Primary 1-3	Religion, Reading, English, Spelling, Mathematics
Grades 4-5	Religion, Reading, English, Spelling, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science
Grades 6-8	Religion, Literature, English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science,

All students take classes in Art, Music, Physical Education, and Foreign Language.

A designated evaluating code is to be used for all other subjects and for conduct. Numerical value is posted on the Duplicate Report Card Sheet and Permanent Record Card.

E-Excellent	90-100
S-Satisfactory	80-89
N-Needs Improvement	70-79
U-Unsatisfactory	Below 70

Conduct grades are based on students' behavior throughout the school day, particularly as related to behavioral choices within the classroom. Students will begin the school year with an S or *Satisfactory* conduct grade. The E conduct grade is to be earned for *Exceptional* behavior within the classroom as well as in all school settings. All N or U grades in conduct will have one or more traits listed

## **Progress Reports**

Formal progress reports will be sent home at the midpoint of the first quarter for elementary and middle school students and during subsequent quarters. Teachers will contact parents about specific concerns as necessary

## **Report Cards**

Students for Preschool and Kindergarten are not issued written summaries or report cards for the first quarter. Progress reports for the first quarter will be discussed verbally at the fall conference. Written summaries and/or report cards for these students are issued beginning with the second quarter.

Students in grades 1-8 receive report cards at the end of each quarter. Report Cards are withheld when financial responsibilities to the school have not been met.

Essentially, a child is in school to learn, not to get grades. However, parents and students like to see some tangible evidence of the amount of progress made in learning. Such is the reason for the report card. These points are offered for your consideration:

- A. Parents should recognize the capabilities of each of their children individually. Some parents expect and demand extremely high grades when the child is blessed with only an average mental ability. This is frustrating to the child and expecting the impossible of the teacher. On the other hand, there are parents whose child could be doing outstanding work, but who fails to do so because his/her parents are satisfied with mediocre effort and average grades.
- B. Please do not compare the achievements of one child with another in the same family, or with the neighbor's child. This is UNFAIR. No two children are alike in ability. Rather than demanding high grades, demand GREAT EFFORT. A child who learns more slowly, but who does his/her very best each day, may eventually prove to be more successful than the child who can get good grades without even studying.
- C. Each year becomes a little harder. Each teacher imposes different demands. Each year, your child is in a new situation. It is therefore to be expected that his/her grades may differ from year to year.

The report card is issued four times a year as noted on the school calendar. These cards are definitely designed to invite the interest and cooperation of the parents

## **Viewing Records**

Parents have access to the current year's transcript via Renweb. Otherwise, parents wishing to view student records must submit a written request twenty-four hours in advance.

## **Release of Student Information**

No information contained in student records will be released to anyone, except under the following circumstances:

1. Student information requested by the courts, governmental agencies, probation department or community agencies working with the school personnel will be furnished by the principal.
2. Student information related to matters of litigation may be obtained by issuance of a subpoena to the principal.
3. Individuals employed by Galveston County or Harris County Protection and Child Welfare Units, child protection workers, or in a related assignment may be permitted to review applicable student records if they have on their person an official picture identification badge. The parent or guardian does not need to be notified or grant permission for the above; however full disclosure should be made to the parent or guardian if there is an inquiry from the parent.
4. Information which the parent has authorized the school to share for the purposes of evaluating and helping a child in their academic and/or behavioral endeavors.

## **Awards**

True Cross Catholic School looks for reasons to celebrate all its students' gifts, talents, efforts, and personal choices. Awards recognition or certificates will be presented at the end of the year in assembly or with report cards.

Academic achievement of students is recognized quarterly by the Honor Roll as follows:

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>A Honor Roll:</b>       | A's in all Subjects and an E or S in conduct.   |
| <b>AB Honor Roll:</b>      | A's and no more than 2 B's in Major Subjects and an E or S in conduct.  |
| <b>Perfect attendance:</b> | No absences and no more than 3 tardy slips during the year of that report card.   |
| <b>Crusader Award:</b>     | Monthly award given to a student in each class who exhibits consistent behavior most exemplary of a True Cross Crusader |

# Communication and Conference

## Communication

Ideally, the home and school should work hand in hand twenty-four hours a day to insure the spiritual, intellectual and cultural growth of your child. We are eager to work *with you* in the education of your children. Many factors in the growth and development of your child can be shared fruitfully. Every effort will be made to keep lines of communication open. All of the teachers and school staff have email, Renweb notices, and IRIS Alerts. TCCS has a Facebook page and a website. You may contact our administration via phone at (281)337-5212 or email (staff member's first initial then last name @truecrosschurch.org) and request a meeting

## Thursday Folder

Various school documents, including administrative letters, schedules, newsletters, etc., communicate school business with families. Students bring home notices in the Thursday folders. Progress reports and Report Cards will be sent home in an envelope. They should be signed and returned with the envelope in the folders to the school on Friday

## Homework Folders/ Assignment Books

Homework folders or assignment notebooks will be used to help parents monitor student assignments and help students build responsibility. Folders of elementary students may also contain weekly reports on progress and behavior. Students may be required to obtain signatures if problems arise concerning organization or completion of homework assignments. We ask that you take time each evening to go over this with your child. Middle School students are expected to progress in time management skills, recognizing that projects and test preparation are their responsibility beyond ordinary homework demands.

## Conferences

### Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences

Report Card Conferences are held twice a year, following the first and third quarter progress reports, with the homeroom teacher, parent, and student. These conferences are meant to be positive in nature and include input from the trinity of parent, child, and educator. A student who does not attend the Conference Day will be counted absent.

Your child's progress is important to us. Teachers are available to discuss issues during the regular school day by appointment only. Contact the school office to request a conference, a phone call, or send a note with your child. Teachers will attempt to return calls within 48 hours of receipt of the message. *Please, respect the personal life of ALL staff members and do not call a staff member at home.*

### Intervention Conferences

Parents of students who are experiencing academic, social, and/or behavioral problems will be asked to conference with the team of teachers and administrators who work with the student daily. The student may be asked to attend the conference when appropriate. At this time a Plan will be developed to determine causes of the problems and to make recommendations to resolve the problem.

## Promotion/ Retention

A student will be promoted to the next grade upon satisfactory completion of the current grade. Promotion from Early Childhood and Primary grade levels shall be based upon accomplishing the required essential curriculum elements as well as progress made in social, emotional, and physical growth. If a child receives a grade below 70, the child fails the subject. If two (2) major subjects are failed, the child is recommended for retention. Parents will be informed of the likelihood of their child's academic failure and possible

retention before the end of the school year. If all avenues have been explored and the school cannot meet the needs of the student or the parents have not acted on the school's recommendations regarding diagnostic evaluation, the principal has the right to request withdrawal of the child. If the parents of a child, who is recommended for retention, do not agree with the recommendation of the teacher(s) and administrator(s), they have the option of withdrawing their child and placing them in another educational environment

## **SPECIAL NEEDS LEARNERS AND REFERRALS**

### *Introductory Statement*

Consistent with the contents of the Church document, *To Teach as Jesus Did*, and the Pastoral Statement of the U.S. Bishops, *Persons with Disabilities*, the Archdiocese seeks to include students with special needs in our schools to the extent that the need of such students can be met within the scope of the programs and resources offered. The Catholic Schools Office is aware that it is unrealistic to serve all categories of special need students. However, True Cross Catholic School and the other Catholic Schools are cognizant of the fact that admission of special needs students must be considered and reviewed on an individual basis.

### *Legal References to Special Services*

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that local school districts locate, identify, and evaluate all private school students suspected of having a disability (for True Cross Catholic School, the local district is Dickinson ISD). This "Child Find" process must be conducted in consultation with private schools representatives to ensure equitable access for private school students. In IDEA, these children are often referred to as "parentally placed private school children with disabilities," and the benefits available to them differ from the benefits for children with disabilities enrolled in public schools.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 educational section (frequently call "Section 504), provides that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from the participation in any program receiving federal assistance. Catholic educators strive to recognize and address the needs of all those who seek a Catholic education. Within our resources, True Cross and other Catholic schools will offer services to eligible students with special needs, when possible. However, private schools are not required to significantly alter their programs, lower or substantially modify their standards to accommodate a child with special needs. Private educational institutions are only required to make minor adjustment to accommodate eligible students.

### *Records for Special Needs Learners*

All psychological and educational evaluations/reports regarding special needs testing of students received from local public schools, persons, or agencies are forwarded to True Cross Catholic School, upon request. These records are kept on file at the school for a period of seven (7) years after the exit of the student. These records are kept in a secure file and area accessible only to the principal, the Intervention Specialist, the Counselor, and any other appropriate staff member working with the student. Parents may view their child's record at any time. These records may not be forwarded to any other individual or agency.

### *Criteria for Acceptance of Students with Special Needs*

In making a determination regarding the admittance of a particular student, the school will review the child's ability to meet the school's academic, behavioral, and physical qualifications. Each Catholic school determines its ability to meet the need of the student applicant. Consideration will be given to the following:

- Student's demonstrated ability to meet grade level requirements;
- Record of student's ability to follow school rules and regulations; and
- Students' ability to meet the physical requirements of attendance.

### *True Cross's Services for Special Needs Learners*

*New Students* – When the Admission Office or the principal is notified that an incoming student may have special learning needs, the principals and other appropriate school staff review current academic, social,

medical, and psychological evaluations to determine if the applicant is qualified to enroll, with or without his/her disability. If the applicant is qualified for enrollment, the principal and Intervention Specialist will then determine if reasonable adjustments can be made to the educational program which will accommodate the student's needs. If an admission is determined the school will begin the procedures with parents to discuss a *Catholic Accommodation Plan*.

*Currently Enrolled Students* – If a teacher (or parent) is concerned about a child's academic, behavioral, or emotional progress and feels that testing may be needed, he/she will discuss concerns with the parent/family and the Principal, and then meet the Intervention Specialist as soon as possible. We work as a team to do what is best for the child and will discuss:

- The student's current educational status, including attendance records, grades, assessment data, and classroom observations;
- Previous educational efforts and strategies provided for the students and the results;
- Documentation of recent vision and hearing screenings;
- Updated general health history inventory; and
- Other information provided by the parents or teachers.

Parents will be expected to disclose any pertinent information that may assist us in educating the student. The principal and staff are responsible for recommending educational alternatives and/or referral to the local school district and/or private agency of the parent's choice for further evaluation. In some cases, the campus may not have the resources necessary to help the child be successful. The principal or Intervention Specialist will then assist the family to locate an appropriate educational program for the child.

Documentation for all referrals must be kept on file. This documentation will be included in the student's records. If an evaluation determines the student requires minor accommodations the school will begin the procedures with parents to discuss a *Catholic Accommodation Plan*. Accommodations for a child will be noted on the report card and in the child's permanent folder.

#### *Student Success Expectations for Special Needs Learners*

All available school resources shall be utilized to promote student success. Lines of communication will be kept open to inform parents of student progress in all areas. Concerns about a student will be addressed initially by the classroom teacher and parent. School success can only be attained through cooperation between parents and educators. Parents are expected to disclose any pertinent information from private resources (diagnoses and recommendations) that would be of specific educational value in programming adequately for their children. If it is determined that the school's resources cannot meet the needs of a student, or if parent(s)/guardian(s) fail to act on the school's recommendations for remediation or diagnostic evaluation, the principal may request withdrawal of the student or deny admission for the following year.

#### *Accommodations for Special Needs Learners*

The purpose of an accommodation of any type is to provide the appropriate instruction according to the individual student's special needs. As a result of a diagnostic evaluation, a student meets certain criteria to qualify for accommodations to his/her schoolwork. In many instances, accommodations (changed in methods of instruction) can be made in the classroom for students with special needs or for struggling students. Students who are diagnosed with a learning difference or who are diagnosed with a special need through the public school system, private doctors, or through special agencies may be referred for special assistance with the Intervention Specialist after the administration has verification of the student's recommended accommodations. (Curricular modifications are not provided because modifications require alterations of curricular objectives.) The number of intervention sessions per week, length of sessions, and goals will be determined by the Intervention Specialist, tutor, principal, and classroom teacher after all available information has been reviewed.

#### *Standardized Assessment for Students with Special Needs*

Standardized assessments are one of several means of evaluating student performance. All students participate in the Archdiocese standardized assessment program. Students with disabilities identified

through IDEA may require assessment accommodations. These accommodations should be provided on a weekly basis through the classroom teacher. These testing arrangements must be planned for in advance through a meeting with the Intervention Specialist. Any adjustment made on the standardized assessment must be requested from the Catholic Schools Office via special request on the appropriate form.

# Student Life

## Formation

### Liturgy and Worship

All students Grades PK-8, attend the 8:30 a.m. Mass together each Wednesday and on Holy Days of obligation in the Church. Parents are invited to attend Mass but to sit in the back of the church and not with their children's classes. Official school uniforms will be worn for all masses and prayer services. (Please, see Dress Code, p. 31)

During the week, students will participate in classroom prayer services. In addition, students will be given opportunities during the year to participate in other types of worship in keeping with our Catholic faith and traditions. All parents and friends are invited to be a part of our faith community and to worship with us.

### Sacrament Preparation

The religious education is an integral part of the curriculum of True Cross Catholic School. However, formal preparations for the Sacraments are not included in the school curriculum. Per Archdiocesan policy, students and parents must participate in the sacrament preparation program offered by the parish Religious Education office. Information about Reconciliation and First Eucharist for students in the second grade will be sent home early in the school year. If your child has not received these sacraments and is older than second grade, you should contact the Religious Education office to register him/her in the sacramental program.

## Field Trips

Field trips are taken to enrich the instructional program by taking advantage of the educational resources of the community which supplement classroom work. No student has an absolute right to a field trip. Field trip are privileges and students can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements. Students will be counted absent if they do not attend the field trip unless arrangements are made for them to be at school during the field trip. All students will wear the school uniform for the trip.

All students are to follow the same school rules and guidelines on field trips as they would on campus. The use of cell phones or electronic devices on school sponsored field trips is prohibited. Cell phones or electronic devices brought on school field trips will be held by the front office for parent pick-up at the end of the school year.

Teachers make arrangements for field trips. A list of student names, designated by the teacher, will be given to each of the drivers. The number of drivers will be limited by the size of each class. Students are not allowed to visit any gift shops or souvenir stores during a field trip unless accompanied by the teacher or parent. Parent drivers should not stop during the trip to purchase food or beverages for themselves or the children they are driving. No videos are to be shown in the vehicle and music in the vehicle may not be morally offensive.

Parent drivers are expected to correct any students in their group for inappropriate behavior. No siblings are allowed to accompany the class on field trips so that the parent drivers may give full attention to their assigned group. Parents who drive students on field trips and to sporting events must meet the following guidelines:

- Must possess up to date insurance with the minimum coverage of \$20,000/person and \$40,000/incident.
- Must be 21 years of age or older.
- Must have a valid Texas driver's license.
- Ensure that an adequate number of seat belts are available for each passenger (shoulder restraints preferred).
- Vehicles with air bags require students to sit in the back seat(s).
- Agree to provide transportation directly to and from the event, for the entire group.

- Copy of Driver's License and proof of insurance on file in the school office.
- Parents must have VIRTUS training before serving as a chaperone or driver for field trips.

Buses will be used for all field trips as often as possible).

According to state law, children are not allowed to attend a field trip without the completed field trip permission form from the parents or guardian. **NO EXCEPTION WILL BE MADE.** Permission cannot be given over the telephone. Middle school students may be given an opportunity to participate in extended and/or overnight field trips. Student attire will be specified for each trip.

**Washington D.C. Field Trip** – If any financial obligation beyond one month is owed to the school, the student may still participate, however, parents may not be allowed to attend

## Library

Our school is fortunate to have a beautiful and adequate library facility. Our volume of books is steadily growing. Each class has a library period each week. Parents are urged to encourage reading as well as the proper care of library books. Books are checked out for one week. Two books may be checked out each time if desired. To renew a book, the book must be brought on your library day to the librarian to be stamped; otherwise it is considered an overdue book. A book overdue for two weeks (except absences due to illness) will be considered lost and will be billed to you at replacement cost. It must be paid for before you can check out books again. Report cards may be held for overdue materials or fines owed to the library. You are responsible for the books as long as they are checked out in your name.

## P.E. Program

True Cross Catholic School maintains a balanced program of physical activity designed to develop and strengthen vital motor skills in growing children. All students are expected to participate in these activities. Middle school students must be in proper physical education dress code. If a student is physically unable to take P.E., he/she must obtain an excuse from the doctor. In cases of an emergency a student may bring a note from the parent/guardian, and the teacher will excuse him/her temporarily

## Lunches

Lunch menus from the catering company are sent home each month. Selections are due no later than 8:30 a.m. on the previous Thursday for the coming week. School lunches are all pre-ordered and must be pre-paid. No late orders will be accepted. Funds must be deposited in order to be served lunch. Parents will be called for those who did not bring a lunch from home and who fail to sign up for lunch.

No carbonated drinks are allowed before, during, or after school. This includes special after school classes such as choir, band, or gymnastics as well as Extended Day. No food may be brought from home that needs to be heated here at school. Red drinks are discouraged, they stain the floor.

Parents, who come to eat lunch with their children, will sit at the parent table. They may not invite other children to sit with them.

## School Parties

If a parent would like to celebrate their child's birthday, **only** cupcakes, cookies, or a pre-cut birthday cake may be served to a class at lunchtime. Parents must furnish plates, napkins, and silverware when needed. If they choose to bring their child lunch, parents are asked to please bring a lunch for their child only. Students and/or teachers wishing to hand out invitations at school must have one for each student in the class and hand them out at the end of the day

## National Junior Honor Society

Seventh and eighth grade students who are on the school's honor rolls and portray leadership, scholarship, citizenship, character, may be invited for membership in the True Cross Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society. Induction ceremonies are held during Catholic Schools Week each January.

## Personal Property

Students are encouraged to leave valuable possessions at home. Toys, electronic games, cameras, portable music players, live animals-pets, valuable collections, trading cards, jewelry, etc. should not be brought to school. The school is not responsible for theft, damage, breakage, loss, or liability for injury. The use of portable electronic devices (i.e. personal cd player, MP3s, iPods, pagers, or cell phones) is not permitted. The use of cell phones or text messaging during the school day is strictly prohibited. Students who violate this policy shall be subject to established disciplinary measures. Any cell phone, text messaging device, or portable electronic device of any kind used or found during the school day will be confiscated and will be held by the front office for parent pick-up at the end of the school year. A fine of \$50.00 will be imposed if a student is found with a cell phone, iPod, camera, game machine, or other electronic device on campus that is being used without permission, inappropriately, or is in violation of our technology policy

## Extended Day Program

The Extended Day Program is designed to meet the needs of parents who must find additional hours of supervised care for their children beyond the regular school day. The program consists of many and varied types of activities for physical and emotional development (such as: storytelling, singing, tutorial help, and games). A nutritious snack is provided every day for all evening children in the Extended Day Program. All students enrolled in this program must check in with the supervising adult before and after school.

Non-refundable registration fee: \$70.00 per family for the year.

<u>Session</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Rates</u>
I	7:00 a.m. – 7:45 a.m.	\$55.00 per month
II	3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	\$7.00 per day

Children not picked up 15 minutes after school has been dismissed will be placed in Extended Day. Children picked up after 6:00 p.m. will be charged \$5.00 for every 5 minutes (or portion of) per child, payable directly to the Extended Day personnel. Emergencies do occur that prevent pick-up by 6:00. Please, call and advise the staff.

Additional information concerning Extended Day is available in the school office

## **Athletics**

The philosophy of the True Cross Catholic School athletic program is in accordance with the school's overall philosophy statement. True Cross Catholic School recognizes that physical development is an important component of a student's well being and therefore seeks to aid in the total development of the individual student through organized, cooperative competition. In addition, it is important for students to develop socially as they learn to work in a team situation and to practice good sportsmanship. The goal of the athletic program is to produce young men and women of strong character, who can be successful in the competitive society in which we live. Additional goals of the athletic program include the development and cultivation of self-esteem, respect, and school spirit.

True Cross Catholic School offers a variety of sports for both boys and girls in middle school, including: volleyball, basketball, and baseball. The athletic program also includes cheerleading for all sports. Additional sports are periodically considered if there is sufficient interest on the part of students and parents. The athletic program falls under the jurisdiction of the School, and is administered by the Principal, full-and-part-time coaches, and parent volunteers. The True Cross Booster Club serves as an advisory board to the Principal, and assists with the administration of the program.

Participation in athletics/cheerleading is a privilege, requiring a commitment from both student participant and his/her parents. Students earn the privilege of participating through maintaining a commitment to academics, effort, dedication, desire, and self-discipline.

For more information regarding eligibility and registration for True Cross Athletic Program, please refer to the "True Cross Athletic Handbook

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Students in the upper grades may choose to participate in our athletic programs, If students choose to participate, parent permission and a health exam are required. Transportation to competitive events is not provided by TCCS. Students will participate in after-school practices approximately two or three times a week. All discipline policies apply during Extra-Curricular activities.

## **Animal (Pet) Policy**

Animals are not allowed outside a car at school. This includes student arrival and dismissal time from school or extra-curricular activities. The only exception to this rule will be for the blessing of the pets on the "Feast of St. Francis." Parents will remove pets from the school grounds after the ceremony

# Dress Code

## Philosophy

Our school uniform identifies our students as members of True Cross Catholic School. Adherence to the dress code goes beyond the actual items of apparel to the proper wearing and respect for the school uniform. The proper school uniform is to be worn at all times in the specified manner to and from school. Shirts and blouses must be tucked in the pants/skirts/shorts so that the belt is visible. The principal or his designee will be the final interpreter of the dress code.

All students are expected to be in uniform during the school day and in the P.E. uniform during physical education classes. Only students in grades 6-8 change clothes for P.E. classes. ***The full dress uniform is to be worn for all field trips, unless specifically stated otherwise, competitions, performances, all school liturgies, and any other time as indicated by the school.***

## Dress and Daily Uniforms

### Girls PK 3 – 5<sup>th</sup>:

*Full Dress Uniform:* A plaid jumper; blouse-white short or long sleeve oxford shirt with or without red trim. Jumpers should fit properly and be no shorter than 1" above the knees. Navy knit privacy shorts are to be worn under the jumper. **Crew socks or knee socks are to be clearly visible above the shoe.** Students will be permitted to wear tights on cold weather days. Leather or suede dress shoes are required when in full dress uniform. Full dress uniform is required on every Wednesday and any other day as indicated by the school.

*Optional Daily Uniform:* Navy culottes, navy or plaid shorts, or pleated slacks with a short or long sleeved red knit shirt. A belt must be worn with all pants. Socks are to be white or navy crew or knee socks. Students will be permitted to wear tights on cold weather days.

### Girls 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>:

*Full Dress Uniform:* A plaid pleated skirt with a 3/4 sleeve white oxford blouse. Skirts should fit properly and should be no shorter than 1" above the knee. Navy knit privacy shorts are to be worn under the skirt. **Socks are to be crew or knee high.** Students will be permitted to wear tights on cold weather days. Leather or suede dress shoes are required when in full dress uniform. Full dress uniform is required on every Wednesday and any other day as indicated by the school.

*Optional Daily Uniform:* Khaki pleated skirt, shorts or slacks with a short or long sleeved navy knit shirt. A belt must be worn with all pants. Socks are to be white, khaki or navy crew or knee high socks.

### Boys PK 3 – 5<sup>th</sup>:

*Full Dress Uniform:* Navy pleated pants, white short or long sleeved oxford shirt, navy vest, a solid belt and striped school tie, with navy/black or white crew socks. Shirts are to be tucked in at all times and ties are to be worn properly. Leather or suede dress shoes are required when in full dress uniform. Full dress uniform is required on every Wednesday and any other day as indicated by the school.

*Optional Daily Uniform:* Navy shorts or pleated pants, short or long sleeved red knit shirt. A belt must be worn with all pants. Socks are to be white or navy/black crew socks.

PK3, PK4 and Kindergarten are not required to wear a belt if the pants/shorts have an elastic waistband with no belt loops

## **Boys 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>:**

*Full Dress Uniform:* Khaki pleated pants, white short or long sleeved oxford shirt, solid belt and plaid school tie, with **white crew socks**. Shirts are to be tucked in at all times and ties are to be worn properly. Leather or suede dress shoes are required when in full dress uniform. Full dress uniform is required on every Wednesday and any other day as indicated by the school.

*Daily Uniform:* Khaki shorts or pleated pants, short or long sleeved navy knit shirt. A belt must be worn with all pants. Socks are to be white or navy/black and clearly visible above the shoe.

## **Shoes**

Daily shoes must be white, black, brown, or navy. They may have a secondary color (must be one of the previous 4 colors). On Mass days, students must wear dress shoes that are navy, black, or brown (girls may wear white). **No tennis shoes are allowed on Mass Days.** To ensure safety, students should bring athletic shoes to wear on the playground on days when dress shoes are worn. Shoelaces should be white or match the primary shoe color. No boots, open toe, open back, high heel, platform shoes, slippers, or shoes with wheels are allowed

## **Belts**

In grades 1 – 8 students must wear a solid black, brown, or navy belt

## **Sweaters and Jackets**

Uniform sweaters (navy cardigan) may be purchased at Parker Uniform. School sweatshirts and jackets may be purchased in the school office. No jackets may be worn inside the buildings during school hours. School sweaters and sweatshirts may be worn during school hours as weather dictates. All outerwear must be removed during school masses

## **Purchase of Uniforms**

The Parker Uniform Company supplies all pieces of the True Cross Uniform, with the exception of the school sweatshirt and jacket. Parker is located at *209 West Main Street in League City*. The telephone number is 281-338-9653. If you would like to purchase the uniform online, their website is [www.parkersu.com](http://www.parkersu.com). Our school code is LC341131. The H.S.A. also hosts Used Uniform Swap where you can purchase gently worn pieces at a lesser price.

## **Free Dress Day**

On some occasions, students will have the opportunity to wear “free dress”. For free dress days, all clothing must be modest and appropriate for wear in the Catholic school setting. Tank tops, halter tops, midriff shirts, short shorts, jeans falling below the natural waist, or any garments exposing an inappropriate amount of a student’s body are not permitted at any school event. Skin tight jeans or leggings are not allowed. Shirts must cover the midriff, even when the student bends over. No advertisements, offensive or inappropriate language, graphics, or symbols may be worn. Hats/caps are not indoor wear and are not allowed in the classroom. Appropriate shoes must be worn. These days will be at the discretion of the Principal and will be announced accordingly. For students who wear inappropriate dress, parents will be called to bring approved apparel to the school.

## After School Events

For these events, all clothing must be modest and appropriate for wear in the Catholic School setting. Tank tops, halter tops, midriff shirts, short shorts, jeans falling below the natural waist, or any garments exposing an inappropriate amount of a student's body are not permitted at any school event including the Fall Festival. All shorts and skirts must be knee length. Shirts must cover the midriff, even when the student bends over. No advertisements, offensive or inappropriate language, graphics, or symbols may be worn. Hats/caps are not indoor wear and are not allowed. For more formal events, such as graduations, awards ceremonies, banquets, concerts, etc., boys should be dressed in slacks and a long or short sleeved dress shirt and dress shoes. Girls should be in modest, knee length dresses or dressy and appropriate fitting slacks. No see through material is allowed. Skirts and dresses must be knee length. No tank tops, spaghetti straps, or strapless dresses or tops are allowed. Only flat dress shoes are permitted. Heels or platform shoes are not allowed. Failure to adhere to this dress code will result in the student not being allowed to participate in the event. Please remember that we are a Catholic school and the students' attire during special events should reflect that.

## Personal Grooming

Only natural hair color is acceptable for all students. Extremes in hair style (i.e. dying, bleaching or spiking) and hair length (hair should be above the collar, cut above the ears and brow for boys), are not permitted. Hair should not hang in the eyes. Headbands should be plain and hair bows must not be larger than 1" wide or distracting. Only one pin may be worn and must be religious or patriotic. Flowers and other objects are not allowed.

Jewelry should be limited to one watch, one ring per hand, one bracelet, and one set of earrings. Earrings are to be no larger than a dime. Girls are not permitted to wear long, dangling earrings or multiple earrings. No earrings are to be worn for boys.

Necklaces with a religious symbol ONLY may be worn.

No makeup or tattoos are to be worn by students. Only clear nail polish is permissible

## P.E. Dress

Students in grades 6-8 wear a P.E. uniform. The students must wear the required P.E. uniform. Students will be permitted to wear black or navy sweatpants on cold weather days. Tennis shoes worn for P.E. must be lace-up. Slip-on shoes are *NOT* allowed.

## Lost and Found

Please, label ALL articles of clothing, lunch boxes, and backpacks with the first and last name of the student at the beginning of the school year. All "lost and found" items will be kept in a central location. Items not claimed at year's end will be donated to a local charity.

# Code of Conduct

## Crusader's Code

The school's ultimate goal regarding discipline is to help our students become self-disciplined. The idea is to enable students to move from externally imposed discipline to self-discipline. Self-discipline can be observed in students whose behavior is consistent with good moral principles and Christian values. As a disciplined school, we strive for a positive, non-disruptive environment in which all persons, their rights and their belongings are respected. A True Cross Crusader **and their family members**, demonstrates the following behaviors:

### Cooperates With Others

The True Cross Crusader works and plays well with others. He/she follows rules of fair play, wins with humility, and loses with grace. The student is gracious in sharing with others, takes turns, and respects the opinions of others. Pushing, shoving, or fighting with others is not acceptable

### Respects the Rights and Property of Others

The True Cross Crusader is a good steward of God's gifts. The student is considerate and appreciates the worth and value of others and their belongings. We show respect for the rights and property of others by keeping our hands to ourselves and by using our own materials. We do not use or take the things that belong to another person without first receiving permission. Respect of school property should be practiced at all times. All property of the school – whether it is books, furniture, the school itself, or school grounds – should be used properly and carefully by students. Misuse and abuse of school property (i.e., defacing walls, desks, etc.) are serious offenses and parents will be responsible for payment of such damages.

### Upholds Christian Values and Behavior

*True Cross Catholic School is a community called by God to grow in wisdom and grace just as Jesus did when He was a child. As we grow spiritually, academically, and emotionally, we will learn to share our God-given gifts with others. In this way the Kingdom of God will grow and prosper to His eternal glory."*

*(True Cross Catholic School Philosophy statement)*

The True Cross Crusader is kind, caring, and concerned with the welfare of all. He/she is polite and exhibits Christian behavior. In all the work that they do, their actions glorify God. Our students participate in opportunities that bless and serve the school, the community, the country, and our world. They search for ways to care for those less fortunate, and for those with added challenges. They act on behalf of the poor and the oppressed. The Crusader is modest and neat in dress and follows school rules and dress codes. There is respect for those in authority.

### Speaks with Appropriate and Respectful Language

Our words should glorify God in their kindness, love, and support of others. Respect and courtesy should be shown at all times to adults as well as to other students. A Crusader **and their parents**, speaks politely and respectfully to all adults and classmates. Name-calling, teasing, belittling, bullying, or laughing at the mistakes or struggles of others is inappropriate. The use of obscene or offensive language is not permitted. (No gum is allowed on school property).

## Is **A**ttentive in Class

The True Cross Crusader recognizes and uses the opportunities to learn and grow to the fullest. Students learn through full and active participation in classroom and school activities. The student listens and follows directions, stays focused and on a task. It is important that the atmosphere in the school remain one in which learning can take place effectively by all. Students are expected to behave in a manner that insures that this atmosphere will be maintained. Off-task behavior and continual disruption of classes to the point that the teacher cannot teach or that the students cannot learn will not be permitted

## Is **D**iligent in Attendance

Daily school attendance is the only effective way to assure continued academic progress. Excessive absences may jeopardize the student's school success, continued enrollment or re-enrollment for the following year, and can contribute to a recommendation for student retention. Homeroom and announcements begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. when the tardy bell rings. A student will be marked tardy if not present in the classroom by 8:00 a.m. Parents must park and come into the school office to sign in tardy students before students will be allowed into the classrooms. Habitual tardiness seriously affects school performance. Lateness to class for all students is considered a conduct infraction. Middle School students are expected to be punctual to each class. Parents/guardians are expected to honor the calendar established by the school. Parents are required to telephone the school if a child is going to be absent.

In compliance with the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and the State of Texas Family Code, schools of the Archdiocese of Galveston- Houston follow compulsory attendance laws. All absences are considered absences – they are neither excused nor unexcused. True Cross Catholic School recognizes the following as valid reasons for an absence:

- A. Family emergency, such as a death in the immediate family and serious or prolonged illness, is always handled on an individual basis.
- B. Absence due to illness – if a student is unable to come to school due to illness, the parent/guardian is expected to notify the school office, and to **send a written note upon return to school.** Homework will be sent home in a timely manner by the teacher, when a student's absence is due to illness. Students will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up assigned work and tests. A gauge would be an allowance of one school day for each day the student is absent. If a student has been absent for **three days** or more or is under a doctor's care, the school needs a "Return to School" form from the doctor.
- C. Absences for other reasons – when a student is absent from school for any reasons other than illness or family emergency, the parents are to make an appointment with the principal. In order for True Cross Catholic School to be an accredited institution, the compulsory attendance law from the State of Texas must be followed. School Calendar days are indicated, established and published at the beginning of each school year.
- D. Tardiness – A student, who arrives at school after the 8:00 a.m. bell has rung, is required to report to the school office with a parent/guardian before being admitted to class. Tardiness, like absence, interferes with a child's progress in school and leads to the formation of undesirable character traits. All students are expected to be on time for school.

No student may be dropped off before school, in the front, until after 8:00 a.m

## Exhibits **B**est Effort in Class and School Activities

The school years are the time to learn to do a job and to do it to the very best of our ability. True Cross Catholic School expects the best effort that each student can give. We do not demand perfection, but rather GREAT EFFORT. A child who learns more slowly, but who does his/her very best each day may eventually prove to be far more successful than the child who can get good grades without even studying. All work should be neat and thorough and turned in on time.

## Is Responsible for Schoolwork and Supplies

Students should come to school prepared with the required school supplies (i.e. crayolas, paper, pencils, scissors, glue, etc.). Students grow in responsibility by the practice of remembering to bring library books, lunch money, signed papers/tests, weekly folders, progress reports, and assignment books to school each day. An important part of developing responsibility in children is by allowing them to experience logical and natural consequences. Therefore, students may not use the phone to call someone to have them bring missing/forgotten items to school, including lunch. If a student forgets a lunch, the cafeteria will supply a sandwich and drink and the parent will be billed. Please, keep books covered at all times. All students must have a book bag to carry books. Students in 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grades only, may use rolling backpacks at the teacher's discretion.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches:

Respect for the reputation of persons forbids every attitude and word likely to cause them unjust injury. He becomes guilty:  
-of rash judgment who, even tacitly, assumes as true, without sufficient foundation, the moral fault of a neighbor;  
-of detraction who, without objectively valid reason, disclosed another's faults and failings to persons who did not know them;  
-of calumny who, by remarks contrary to the truth, harms the reputation of others and gives occasion for false judgments concerning them.

## Discipline Code

### POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

Each teacher displays a discipline plan with the classroom. It is based on rules, positive recognition for appropriate behavior, and consequences for children who choose inappropriate behavior. Positive reinforcements play a key role in maintaining discipline each day and can take many forms from verbal praise to more tangible rewards. The entire school faculty and staff will notice and praise children readily.

We believe that students start each day with a new beginning. Teachers strive to implement consequences that are logical and natural for the action as well as appropriate for the age of the student

## Disciplinary Notice

Specific breaches of discipline in the classroom are under the authority of the supervising teacher. However, all teachers have jurisdiction over all students, regardless of age or grade. Students who misbehave and/or infringe on the academic process will be disciplined. Parents will be notified whenever a child has seriously misbehaved within the classroom or during extracurricular activities

## Action Plan

When behavioral and/or social problems persist, parents and students will be required to meet with the teachers who work with the student, and the principal to formulate a School Action Plan. Causes of problems will be reviewed and recommendations for solution will be set. The principal reserves the right to put the student on probation, home study or to suspend or expel as deemed appropriate to the circumstances. The pastor will be consulted in cases of expulsion. The pastor's decision in these cases will be final.

## Academic Probation

All newly enrolled students are automatically accepted with a status of academic and behavioral probation for the first nine-week quarter. This procedure is followed for students enrolling mid-year.

## **Disciplinary Probation**

A student's continuous misbehavior may result in the student being placed on disciplinary probation by the principal. The principal determines the length of probationary time, and will conference with student and parents regarding the reasons for the probation. During the probation and at the end of probation, the parents will be informed of the child's progress.

After consultation with the student's teachers, the principal will determine if sufficient improvement has occurred. If insufficient progress is noted, the principal may consider other disciplinary actions.

## **Suspension**

True Cross Catholic School shall maintain a community free from all forms of harassment and shall insist that all persons are treated with dignity and respect. Harassment is unacceptable conduct that is severe, perverse, and deliberate and proven allegations can result in suspension and dismissal. This school will treat allegations of harassment seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

Suspension is a serious punishment which shall be used when a student is in serious violation of the Disciplinary Code, or commits a major offense. Should it be necessary to suspend, both oral and written notice will be given to the student and parents. The suspension may be either "in-school" or "out-of-school" suspension. This is at the discretion of the Principal.

In-school suspension means that the student will not be allowed to attend classes with fellow students and is required to complete all regular class work in another setting. A substitute teacher will be hired at the parents' expense. An in-school suspension may last up to five days.

Out-of-school suspension requires that the student remain away from school under the parents' supervision. Schoolwork will be assigned and completion is required.

### **Major Offenses**

1. Destruction of property, vandalism of any kind
2. Smoking or use of tobacco, alcohol or other harmful substance, or possession thereof (See Diocesan Policy below)
3. Theft/Cheating/Plagiarism
4. Fighting/assaulting another student or any school personnel resulting in injury
5. Harassment (including sexual harassment)
6. Intimidation
7. Leaving school grounds without authorization
8. Repeated acts of incorrigible behavior
9. Other acts of behavior unbecoming a True Cross student.

All student lockers and cubbies are the property of the school. Students will abide by the school's rules regarding the usage and care. Students are advised that lockers can be searched for just cause and without prior notice

## **Expulsion/Dismissal**

Expulsion is an extremely serious matter and generally every other possible solution will have been explored with the student and his/her parents prior to taking this action.

A student's continued enrollment at the school will be subject to his meeting the scholastic and behavioral

standards set by the school's administration. If any student fails to meet these standards, and if the principal believes that continued enrollment of the student is not in the best interest of the student or the school, the principal shall so advise the pastor. A written notification of the expulsion, stating the circumstances and dates of the matter shall be sent to the Archdiocesan Superintendent of School. Parents may appeal the expulsion to the Catholic Schools Office. Immediate expulsion can take place when a student:

- Sells, possesses, uses or distributes any harmful substances,
- Participate in disruptive activities by a group such as gangs,
- Sells, possesses, uses, or delivers narcotics, dangerous drugs, any harmful/ illegal or prohibited substance, or alcohol on the school campus
- Smokes or uses any tobacco product on school property or at any school related activity
- Possesses, uses, or conceals a weapon (a weapon is any instrument which may produce bodily harm or death) on school property or at a school-related activity,
- Vandalizes school property or the property of others
- Possesses an electronic device or any other type of communication system disruptive to instruction,
- Engages in assault that results in serious physical injury to another student or any school personnel,
- Commits persistent acts of incorrigible behavior.

The disruptive, threatening, or illegal behavior of a parent/guardian may result in the expulsion of the student.

#### Guns and Weapons

We are a weapons-free campus. Guns and other weapons are clearly a hazard to a safe learning environment. They will not be permitted nor tolerated on our campus. Possession of such weapons or devices will result in immediate notification to the appropriate authorities.

### **Home Study**

A student who is accused of serious wrongdoing may be placed in a home-study program (under the direction of the parent/guardian), pending adjudication or an investigation into the matter. The length of time of the home-study program may vary for each child/offense, depending upon the amount of time remaining in the school year, the type of infraction, and other factors.

### **Administrative Judgment**

This disciplinary program supersedes all previous plans. By no means is it all-inclusive. Administration and staff will exercise professional judgment and discretion so as to address each situation fairly and consistently

# Computers and Technology

## Letter to Parents

Your child has the opportunity to receive an Internet account and needs your permission to do so. Your child will be able to communicate with other schools, colleges, organizations and students around the world. An Internet account allows your child the opportunity to reach out to many other people to share information, learn concepts, and research subjects.

With this educational opportunity also comes responsibility. It is important that you and your child read the enclosed Access Release form and the Acceptable Use Policy and discuss it together.

When your child is given an account and password to use on the computer, it is extremely important that the rules be followed. Failure to follow the rules will result in the loss of the privilege to use this educational tool.

Remember that you are legally responsible for your child's actions. Please stress to your child the importance of using only his or her own account and password, and the importance of keeping it a secret from other students. Under NO circumstances should your child let anyone else use his or her account and password!

Although we have established acceptable use policies, please be aware that there may be unacceptable material or communication on the Internet that your child can access. We cannot control material available on other computer systems.

After you have read and discussed this with your child and if you agree to allow your child to have an Internet account, please sign the Authorization Form and return it to your school.

## **Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP) Agreement for Parents and Students**

True Cross Catholic School is pleased to offer students access to technology resources for educational purposes, which may include computer hardware and software licensed to the school. To gain access to the technology resources, all students must obtain parental permission as verified by the signatures on this agreement. Should a parent prefer that a student not have e-mail and Internet access, use of the computer is still possible for more traditional purposes such as word processing.

### **Internet and E-mail**

Access to Internet and e-mail will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, museums, and other repositories of information and to exchange personal communication with other Internet users around the world. **FAMILIES SHOULD BE AWARE THAT SOME MATERIAL ACCESSIBLE VIA THE INTERNET MAY CONTAIN ITEMS THAT ARE ILLEGAL, DEFAMATORY, INACCURATE, OR POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE.** While the purpose of the school is to use Internet resources for constructive educational goals, students may find ways to access other materials. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet outweigh the disadvantages. Ultimately, however, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. Therefore, we support and respect each family's right to decide whether or not to allow for access.

### **What is Expected?**

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network just as they are in a classroom or on a school playground. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will comply with Archdiocesan standards and the specific rules set forth below. The use of technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the school's technology resources. The students are expected never to access, keep, or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see.

### **What are the Rules of Appropriate Use?**

**Personal Safety and Personal Privacy** - Students will not post personal contact information about themselves. Personal contact information includes their address, telephone, school address, etc. This information may not be provided to an individual, organization, or company, including web sites that solicit personal information

## **Principal's Right to Amend Handbook**

The principal retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause. Parents will be given notification if changes are made.

## **Handbook Review and Amendments**

Every 2 years the entire school board will review all previous school policies for the purpose of revision and updating of the policies.