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Holy Cross Catholic School

2001 Katy Avenue

Bay City, TX 77414

Phone: 979-245-5632 Fax: 979-245-6120

www.bholycrossschool.org

Forward

Holy Cross Catholic School is a private elementary school sponsored by Holy Cross Catholic Church in the Diocese of Victoria. The school offers a four-year-old pre-kindergarten program and a Kindergarten through sixth grade program.

Holy Cross Catholic School endorses the call of the Catholic Bishops of the United States to express educational ministry through the three objectives of personal spirituality, social justice, and a strong academic program in accord with Christian values.

The content of Holy Cross Catholic School Parent-Student Handbook is consistent with the Catholic Schools/Diocese of Victoria in Texas: Handbook of Policies and Regulations. A copy of the diocesan handbook is available for viewing in the administration office of Holy Cross Catholic School. This handbook is not all-inclusive and is subject to amendment by the principal in consultation with the School Advisory Board Council and with the approval of the Pastor. Changes to the handbook will be provided to students and parents in writing.

Mission Statement

The mission of Holy Cross Catholic School is to make a difference in the world by loving God, others, and ourselves through learning as we build our Christian Family.

Statement of Philosophy

Holy Cross Catholic School was founded to assist parents in the education and spiritual formation of their children in a genuine spirit of Christian love and responsible freedom. Forming a Christian Community is the primary purpose of Christian Education at Holy Cross Catholic School.

Catholic education, as a mission of the Church, has three interlocking dimensions: it transmits and explains the message of Christ in His Church; it fosters a sense of Community among its believers; and it carries the sense of community to the fullness of Christian growth.

Therefore, the philosophy by which Holy Cross operates is that an educated Christian is the product of active cooperation among the home, the church and the school.

School Motto

Soaring to God on Eagle's Wings

Goals and Objectives

The faculty, working with the family and the Church, endeavor to apply our philosophy by doing the following:

Religion

Develop Spiritual, Ethical and Moral Values

- By developing an understanding and appreciation of Christian Doctrine and practices.
- By participating in the Liturgy.
- By encouraging vocal and shared prayer.
- By creating an environment conducive to the teaching and learning of Roman Catholic Doctrine.

Responsibility

Encourage the students to be Self-Reliant, Responsible and Self-Disciplined young people

- By the faculty serving as role models.
- By encouraging students to respect adults, self, and others...as well as their rights.
- By parents demonstrating a willingness to become the primary educators of their children.
- By encouraging students to be the best that they can be.

Academics

Help each child prepare academically for a successful future

- By helping the child create a desire to excel mentally, morally, and physically according to his/her potential.
- By guiding the child in developing a proper respect for his/her body through Health Instruction and a Physical Education program.
- By making advantageous use of such cultural resources and agencies as are available.
- By establishing an atmosphere for good study habits and a desire for knowledge, for self-improving ideas, and for academic excellence.
- By providing opportunities to acquire skills in the use of logical process of searching, critical thinking, analyzing, evaluating and problem-solving.
- By developing an understanding and appreciation of the democracy in which he/she lives and the American heritage which produced it.
- By developing intellectual curiosity, and an open mind concerning the world around him/her.

Students' Prayer

Father in Heaven, thank you for giving me a mind that can know and a heart that can love. Help me keep learning every day of my life – no matter what the subject may be. Let me be convinced that all knowledge leads to you and let me know how to find you and love you in all things you have made. Help me to put knowledge to use in building the Kingdom of God on earth so that I may enter the Kingdom of God in Heaven.

Pledge of Allegiance

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.

Texas Pledge

Honor the Texas flag; I pledge allegiance to thee, Texas, one state under God, one and indivisible.

Honor Pledge

As a student of Holy Cross Catholic School, I pledge myself to uphold the high purposes of my school and will be true to the Christian principles for which it stands.

I will be loyal, will obey all rules and regulations established for my school, and will strive to the best of my ability to maintain and to encourage high standards of scholarship, character, leadership, citizenship and service.

Accreditation

Holy Cross Catholic School is accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and recognized by the Texas Education Agency of the State of Texas.

GOVERNANCE

The Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED) coordinates and supervises the accreditation of all Catholic schools in the State of Texas through the Texas Catholic Conference Accreditation Commission. The accreditation is reported to the Texas Private School Accreditation Commission (TEPSAC), the joint association established to review and approve the principles, standards, and processes of various accrediting associations. Nonpublic schools accredited by a TEPSAC approved association are recognized by the Commissioner of Education as accredited schools and are listed in the official Texas School Directory published annually by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). This acknowledgement ensures student credits earned in these accredited, nonpublic schools are recognized by the state of Texas and other educational institutions and that teacher service in these schools is recognized for salary increment purposes in Texas public schools. Accreditation of nonpublic schools under this arrangement became effective February 12, 1986. Accreditation of nonpublic schools directly by TEA ceased after May 31, 1989.

Role of the Principal

The principal is the educational, spiritual, and managerial leader of the school in accordance with the policies of the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and the Superintendent of Schools. The Principal is directly responsible to the Pastor and will work collaboratively with the Pastor and the Local School Advisory Council for the fulfillment of the mission of the school.

In accordance with the school's philosophy and values, in situations where policies and procedures have not been established, the principal has the authority to take the actions necessary to provide a safe and orderly learning environment. The Principal, as administrator of the school, is responsible for the implementation of council policy, diocesan policy, and governmental requirements. As the educational leader of the school, the Principal has full administrative responsibility for carrying out the instructional program. A complete description of the roles and responsibilities of the principal is contained in the Diocese of Victoria Handbook of Policies and Regulations for Catholic Schools.

The Principal also acts as the executive officer of the Local School Advisory Council. The principal, in consultation with the School Advisory Council and with the approval of the Pastor, may make amends to this handbook. Changes will be provided to students and parents in writing.

School Advisory Council

School Advisory Council consists of elected/appointed members, the pastor of Holy Cross Catholic Church Parish, the principal and other non-voting members.

School Advisory Council Duties: The council is advisory to the Pastor and Superintendent of Schools. The council prepares and sets policies for the school with the approval of the Pastor. The principal implements policies, employs, and supervises the faculty and staff. Council meetings are held monthly on the last Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m. (unless otherwise scheduled and council members notified) in the library of Holy Cross Catholic School. Meetings are open and parents and stakeholders may address the council by notifying the Principal or the Advisory Council Chairperson in writing and requesting the placement of an item on the agenda 5 working days prior to the scheduled meeting. The policies and regulations governing open meetings presentations are in the Diocese of Victoria Handbook of Policies and Regulations for Catholic Schools. A copy of this document is available in the school office.

Superintendent

The Superintendent of Catholic Schools is responsible for the implementation of the policies in the Diocese of Victoria. The superintendent has immediate charge and control of the general administration and supervision of the Catholic schools in the diocese.

TITLE VI, TITLE VII, AND TITLE IX: NON-DISCRIMINATION

Holy Cross Catholic School admits student of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, tuition assistance, or other school-administered programs.

FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL CIVIC REGULATIONS

All schools of the Diocese of Victoria will be in compliance with all federal, state and local civic regulations including, but not limited to, the areas of asbestos, immunizations, health screening, communicable diseases, hazardous materials, and transportation. All schools of the Diocese are considered smoke-free. According to federal guidelines, no smoking is allowed within ten feet of the school buildings.

ADMISSIONS

Application forms are available from the school office. To be considered for enrollment, applications must be complete and submitted with all other required documents plus a non-refundable registration fee. Age requirements for admission to Holy Cross Catholic School will follow the guidelines contained in Diocese of Victoria Handbook of Policies and Regulations for Catholic Schools. Applicants seeking entrance to Holy Cross Catholic School will be accepted based on a determination of the ability of the school to provide the student with the necessary educational program to meet his/her academic needs. Students who have been removed from another school for disciplinary reasons will not be admitted to Holy Cross Catholic School. Parents of prospective students may be interviewed by the principal before enrollment decisions are made. Upon acceptance, a FACTS account will need to be created before a child is officially registered. All new students are admitted to Holy Cross Catholic School on a probationary status for two months. During this time, the school's administration reserves the right to revoke the student's admission status.

Age Requirements

- **4K Program:** A child must be four years of age on or before September 1 to be admitted to the 4K program.
- **Kindergarten:** A child must be five years of age on or before September 1 to be admitted to Kindergarten.
- **1st Grade:** A child must be six years of age on or before September 1 to be admitted into the first grade. Exception may be made in the case of a child who has completed kindergarten in a different state where the entering age is lower, provided there is also a written statement from the kindergarten teacher that the child is ready for first grade.

Required Documents for Admission:

- Official Birth Certificate
- Baptismal Certificate (Catholics only)
- Social Security Card
- Immunization data, illness record (The Diocese of Victoria requires that students must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a notarized affidavit that, for medical reasons, the student will not be immunized. Proof of immunization may be personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic. Health records transferred from another school may be accepted if properly authorized.)
- Official transcript of previous grades
- In case of students whose parents are separated/divorced, a copy of the official custody agreement must be furnished to the school.

Acceptance Priorities for Kindergarten Registration (Holy Cross Advisory Council 1993)

The following priorities are used to admit students:

- Parishioner children with siblings that have been enrolled in Holy Cross Catholic School for a minimum of one full school year.
- Parishioner children with no siblings that have been enrolled in Holy Cross Catholic Church.

OR

Parishioner children with siblings that have been enrolled in Holy Cross Catholic School for less than one full school year.

- Non-Parishioner children with siblings that have been enrolled in Holy Cross Catholic School for a minimum of one full school year.
- Non-parishioner children with no siblings enrolled in Holy Cross Catholic School.

OR

Non-parishioner children with siblings that have been enrolled in Holy Cross Catholic School for less than one full school year.

Holy Cross Catholic School accepts the number of students in each grade level that allows for excellence in teaching and learning. Each year, the enrollment in each class is rolled forward. If there are openings in a class, then new students are admitted based on criteria that gives preference to those with students currently enrolled, children of alumni, and parishioners.

Admission of Students with Disabilities

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 guarantees educational rights to students with disabilities, ages 3 through 21. The policy of Diocese of Victoria is that the school will enroll students with disabilities if

the school can provide the necessary facilities and programs to meet the student's needs. Students will be referred to other schools and programs, which have the ability to effectively educate the disabled person if the school cannot provide, needed services.

Parishioner/Non-Parishioner

Holy Cross Catholic School is subsidized by Holy Cross Catholic Church; therefore, active parishioners are given the first opportunity to enroll their children. Non-parishioners will be accepted to fill classes in the order that they pre-register. Registration of new students and pre-registration of those students presently enrolled will take place in March. The non-refundable registration fee will be paid at this time. Registrations will be confirmed early in August.

The Parish rate for registered/active members of Holy Cross Catholic Church requires a church contribution of \$700 during the previous year (July 1 to June 30).

Transfer Students

The scholastic and health records of a student who transfers from another school, are requested by Holy Cross Catholic School. Temporary placement of the student is based on those records. Final placement is made after a trial period and teacher observation. If transfer records are not sufficient, the student is tested to determine grade level. Transfer students are on a two month probationary status.

Faith Formation

A Catholic Education is a life-long gift to your child. For the child to receive spiritual growth that is life long, it is important for the parents and those who take their place to actively live out and participate in our Catholic faith. The school and parents have integral parts and are obliged to educate students so that they may live a full Christian life. Catholic Schools have the mission of assisting parents in fulfilling their religious educational obligation. It is our goal at HCCS for our faith to become living, conscious and active through instruction.

As Catholic Schools strive to teach and encourage participation in our faith, it is imperative that parents continue the same participation in their daily life. At HCCS, we teach students respect for the Eucharist during Tuesday Mass and during their religion classes, but this in no way covers the responsibility of the parents/family of their obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of obligations.

Tuition Assistance

Tuition assistance is available on a limited basis for demonstrated financial need. Additional information may be obtained from the principal. Tuition Assistance must be reapplied for *each* school year and does not cover the registration fee. ***Beginning Spring 2015, Holy Cross Catholic School will begin utilizing the FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment program to compile and perform the analysis of need which will be used to determine assistance for the 2015-2016 school year.

Parent Support of Administration and/or Policies and Regulations

The parents or guardians of children enrolled at Holy Cross Catholic School must demonstrate a willingness to comply with school policy, particularly as it is described in this handbook and implemented by the school's administration. A deliberate or persistent disregard, whether stated or

demonstrated, for school policy could be grounds for a family being required to withdraw their child from Holy Cross Catholic School.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Holy Cross Catholic School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship program, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

Permanent Records

A cumulative record will be maintained for each student from his/her entrance into school until he/she withdraws or graduates. Records are kept in accordance with the Diocese of Victoria requirements.

Registration

Registration is held in March of each year for the following year. The registration fee for each child is set by the Holy Cross Advisory Council and non-refundable. For current students, all tuition and fees must be current in order to re-register. Your FACTS account will need to be set up for the following school year. FACTS is an on-line management system that handles Holy Cross Catholic School's tuition and incidental charges account. Incidentals are lunch and extended day care.

FACTS (Tuition)

Holy Cross Catholic School utilizes the FACTS Management Company for our tuition payment plan. Payments for lunches and extended day will also be made through FACTS.

A FACTS account will need to be set-up on-line at <https://online.factsmtg.com/signin/45726>. Tuition can be drafted from a checking or savings account as full payment or set up as monthly payments. Lunches and extended day will be debited from the associated account. Prior to the debit, FACTS will notify you of the dollar amount. FACTS is used by many schools locally and over 6,600 schools nationally.

The benefits by using FACTS are:

- Safety of our children and staff
- Convenience & Security of payment
- Choice of two payment dates
- Consumer Account: Families can check their personal account from home or office anytime

Withdrawal from School

When a student intends to withdraw from school, the parent/guardian should notify the office as soon as possible. The school will then initiate the withdrawal process. All textbooks, library books and materials must be turned in or paid for, all fines must be paid and all appropriate tuition accounts must be paid in full. Registration fees are non-refundable. The student's cumulative records will be forwarded to the receiving school upon formal request from that school when the funds are completely paid. A copy of the student's permanent record card and the original health records will be released without an onsite parent's signature, since it is assumed that the receiving

school has that signature on file. All special education or psychological test results, which are to be released to a receiving school, must include a parent's signature release of that information.

ATTENDANCE

A student's absence from school interferes with his/her academic progress. In compliance with Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED) and the State of Texas Family Code, Holy Cross Catholic School enforces the compulsory attendance laws. The school year consists of 180 instructional days.

Attendance Policy

The school day is from 8:05 AM until 3:20 PM. Parents/guardians are expected to honor the calendar established and published by the school at the beginning of each school year.

Students must remain in school for a total of FIVE HOURS to be counted present for the day and to be eligible for the Perfect Attendance Award. (See also policy on absences from school). Students who arrive after 8:10 AM will be counted present for the day and be recorded as tardy. Attendance will be taken by 9:30 AM daily for attendance accounting purposes. Research has shown repeated tardiness results in academic consequences (See also policy on absences and tardiness). Perfect Attendance Awards are given at the end of the school year at the Awards Ceremony on the last day of school. This award is given to those students who have not missed school according to the official attendance records.

Tardy Policy

A student is tardy who arrives in the classroom after 8:10 AM. A student who is late is required to report to the school office and to obtain an admission slip before going to class. Habitual tardiness seriously affects school performance. Any student who accumulates five (5) or more unexcused tardies will not be eligible for Perfect Attendance. A tardy may be excused if the student checks in to the office with a doctor's note showing they just came from a medical or dental appointment. Unexcused tardies in excess of 11 will require a parent conference. Parents will be contacted when this situation arises.

Absences

Absence is defined as not being present at school during the required hours of the school day. School absences are defined as excused absences and unexcused absences. In accordance with the guidelines set down by the compulsory attendance law, a student may be retained in the current grade level if the student accumulates more than nine unexcused absences in a semester or eighteen unexcused absences or more for the school year. Any student who accumulates more than 9 unexcused absences in a semester or 18 for the year will be required to appear before an Attendance Review Committee to determine being promoting to the next grade level.

Absence is one of the main reasons for poor schoolwork and possible retention. Student illness, medical, dental, and counseling appointments, travel with parents (by prior arrangement with principal), and death in the immediate family are excused absences. The school does not recognize the following absences as excused: Absences due to such things as car trouble, late ride, oversleeping, staying home to complete homework and similar circumstances, leaving school early for vacation (without prior principal approval), and failure of a parent to call, email or send a note within 3 days after the student's absence. A medical excuse may be required upon the student's return to school. A doctor's slip will be needed after 3 or more days of continuous absences.

Excused Absences

- Family Emergency – A death in the immediate family and/or a serious, prolonged illness of a family member. Special arrangements can be made for make-up work.
- Illness/Doctor's Appointment – A student is unable to come to school due to illness or misses due to medical visits. Please don't forget a doctor's note from the visit.
- Other Reasons - Participation in events that are not sponsored by the school and other circumstances that require the students to miss school. All of these absences must have prior approval of the principal and may require verification by the event sponsor.

Students who participate in approved extra-curricular activities recognized by the school as educational experiences are not counted absent for participation in such events. If a vacation is taken during the school year, it must be approved directly by the Principal in regards to identifying the absence as excused or unexcused.

Prior Approval by Principal Procedure

1. Notify the Principal, in writing, prior to the absence and report the dates the student(s) will be out of school and the reason for the absence.
2. Contact the classroom teacher(s) to discuss work that will be missed and pick up the materials necessary for the successful completion of the missed assignment before extended leave of absence.
3. Make sure the work is complete upon the students return to class.
4. The teacher will give a reasonable deadline for work to be completed. If the work is not completed by the date, the highest possible grade will be a 70 on the assignments.
5. If this procedure is not followed, the absence will be considered unexcused.
6. The principal has the right to determine if the absence will be considered excused or unexcused based on factors such as student academic performance, excessive tardies or excessive absences. These things are considered for the benefit of the student.

Excused Absence Make Up Work Procedure

When a student has an excused absence, he/she may make up any of the work without penalty as long as the assignments are completed in a timely manner as determined by the teacher and communicated to the parent. If you would like to pick up your child's homework during a period of absence, please email your child's teacher early in the day or even the day before and plan to pick up the work after school. Please do not interrupt the teacher to get make-up work. It is unreasonable to ask a teacher to prepare assignments and gather books on a 10 minutes' notice. A student who is absent only one day can get make-up work when he/she returns.

Unexcused Absences

- Any absence from school, which does not meet the guidelines, stated above.
- Any absence from school in which the student does not bring an excuse signed by the parent or the parent has not called or emailed the school secretary within three days of returning to school after being absent.

Unexcused Absences Make Up Work Procedure

In the event of an unexcused absence, work will be allowed to be made up, but the highest grade that can be achieved will be a 70 on a 100 point grading scale. The work is required to be completed and turned in the NEXT DAY.

Students who have been given a project, assignment, or a quiz/test date prior to their absence will be expected to be ready with the assignment or to take the test upon their return to school. Teachers may make an exception to this rule for extenuating circumstances. The Principal has the right to modify this policy with parent conference.

Return to School After an Absence

On the first day (and each subsequent day) of a student's absence, the parent or guardian should call the school office to report the absence by 9:00 AM. Students who have been absent must, upon return to school, bring a written note or excuse. The note should contain the date of absence and reason for the absence. A re-admit slip from the school office will be given to each student upon their return. Re-admit slips must be presented to the teacher upon returning to school. The teacher will turn the re-admit slip into the office at the end of the day. The re-admit slip will state if the absence is excused or unexcused.

Sign-Out Policy

The parent/guardian may request that the student be released from class by coming in person to the school office. The office will call the student from the classroom to the office and departure will be from the office area. No one may pick up a student directly from the classroom or the campus during the school day. **All** departures must occur through the office. Dental and medical appointments are discouraged during the school day. If such an appointment must be made during school hours, the student must return to school and be checked back in to school within a two hour and fifteen minute time window in order to be eligible for perfect attendance. *If a student is off campus for more than 2 hours, he/she is considered absent for the entire school day.* The parent must sign the student back in to school at the office. The sign-in/out sheet is an official school document. It will be used to determine perfect attendance along with the doctor's notes and tardies.

Emergency Closure

Conditions such as hurricanes, snow, or icy roads may necessitate the closing of school. In the event of an emergency closure, the announcement will be made on 1270 AM or KMKS, 102.5. Our policy is to coordinate with the other schools in this district. School days missed due to emergency closure must be made up on the days designated as bad weather days in the school calendar or at the end of the school term unless the Diocese of Victoria waives a make-up. In the case of an emergency situation during the school day, the school will follow the School Crisis Management Plan. Parents will be informed through the School Reach broadcast system, the local radio station and other community emergency agencies. Students will be allowed to use their cell phones to contact parents.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Holy Cross Catholic School maintains an open door policy and encourages parents and visitors from the community to visit the campus. Liturgical celebrations, assemblies, and other special events are open to parents and friends. The office should be staffed during school hours to give access to parents and visitors. All other areas of the school and campus are off limits to anyone who is not a member of the staff unless that person has a visitor/volunteer's pass obtained from the school office. The school administration will call law enforcement officials for the removal of anyone who loiters or attempts to contact students while they are on the school grounds. Fire, Intruder, and Bad Weather drills are practiced throughout the school year. Students are educated on the appropriate action in case of an emergency.

Safety Drills.

Safety drills are important. Please take them seriously.

1. Fire Drill

- a. The standard signal for leaving the building is 3 bells.
- b. Walk out of the building in an orderly manner, without talking, rushing or crowding.
- c. One (1) bell is the signal to halt.
- d. Two (2) bells is the signal to return to your class.

2. Tornado Drill

- a. Tornado drills are held periodically throughout the year.
- b. A siren is sounded as a signal to begin the drill.
- c. Students and teachers will go to the designated area in silence and immediately get into tornado drill position.
- d. A siren will be sounded for return to the classroom.
- e. Classroom and building captains will perform the same job as they do on fire drills.

If a fire or tornado signal sounds when the students are in the cafeteria or on the playground, or anywhere other than the classroom; they should go to the nearest safety zone.

3. RED APPLE ALERT - Students evacuate classrooms for the cafeteria and remain quiet for further instructions.

4. SUNSHINE ALERT - <lockdown> Students remain in the classroom until the emergency has been solved.

Cell Phones

Parents may provide their children with cell phones; however, the school is not responsible for loss or damage. The following rules must be followed:

1. Phones must be kept in an OFF position during school hours.
2. Phones will be kept in the backpack in the student's lockers.
3. No cell phone may be used for picture taking.
4. No harassment or threatening of persons via cell phone is permitted.

5. Cell phones may not be used for game playing, internet or e-mail access, gambling or making purchases of any kind.
6. Those who violate any of the rules regarding cell phones may forfeit their privileges of bringing cell phones to school.
7. Cell phones may not be used in the Extended Day Care program.

Diocese of Victoria Safe Environment Requirements

The Diocese of Victoria requires that all staff members, volunteers, room mothers, and field trip attendees over the age of 18 years who serve children in any capacity at school or a school sponsored event meet the safe environment requirements. The Diocese of Victoria Safe Environment Process includes a Keeping Kids Safe training and registration on line on the Diocese of Victoria website which initiates a criminal history check. All of these requirements must be completed and cleared by the site administrator for Holy Cross Parish before anyone can participate in school functions.

Holy Cross Catholic School abides by the Child Abuse Prevention, Adoption, and Family Services Act. This law mandates that all cases of suspected child abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services.

Harassment or Bullying

See Discipline

Search and Seizure

The Principal or her designees considers searches of lockers, desks, backpacks, and personal items permissible upon reasonable cause.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment includes but is not limited to the following behaviors that are adult to child, child to child, or adult to adult: Verbal comments, jokes, assaults, touching inappropriately, etc. Holy Cross Catholic School will take immediate action in the case of sexual harassment in accordance with the policy of the Diocese of Victoria and the laws of the State of Texas.

TRANSPORTATION: FIELD TRIPS

School Safety/Field Trips and Other School-Sponsored Off-Campus Activities

All field trips sponsored by Catholic schools in the diocese must have an educational purpose and serve to enhance learning. The school reserves the right to permit or deny a student the privilege of participation in a field trip. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified, in advance, of such outings.

The following regulations apply to all field trips, as well as any and all other trips for various school sponsored activities:

Permission Forms

Only students having signed permission forms will be allowed to participate. The permission form shall state the curriculum objective of the outing. The school may accept a signed permission slip that has been FAXED from the parent/guardian. The school may not accept a permission slip that has been transmitted via electronic mail. Signed permission slips must accompany supervising

personnel on field trips to provide information, in case of an emergency. A copy of the signed permission slip will be retained at the school.

Chaperones and Drivers

All drivers must be at least 25 years of age and have a valid Texas driver's license. All volunteers, including volunteer drivers, who accompany students on a field trip must comply with the Diocese of Victoria's safe environment regulations; specifically, individuals must have completed the eApps online application, the criminal background check, be approved by the Diocese of Victoria, and have completed the Orientation to the Diocese of Victoria's Code of Pastoral Conduct as well as be within the timeline for completing the required Creating A Safe Environment Workshop.

Use of Private Vehicles

When private vehicles must be used, the Volunteer/Driver Information Checklist and Volunteer Driver Information forms must be completed. Every private vehicle used must have a minimum insurance coverage of \$100,000 per person/\$300,000/\$50,000 property per occurrence. Also, when private vehicles are used, parents will be given a list of drivers for the event and be asked to choose the individual with whom they wish their child to ride.

Safe Environment Compliancy

For any vehicle used to transport students there must be at least two (2) safe environment compliant adults in the vehicle.

CAFETERIA / FOOD SERVICE

The Holy Cross Catholic School cafeteria offers hot nutritious lunches. The charge to students is kept as low as possible to encourage students to participate in the program. All student lunches will be billed through FACTS. Cash will not be accepted for student lunches. Visitor/Guest lunches will be handled through Mrs. Larson. Students may bring a lunch from home. Soft drinks are not allowed. All students eat in the school cafeteria.

Holy Cross follows the Diocesan WELLNESS PROGRAM.

Celebrations or Treats (Birthday)

Birthday cake and other treats may be brought to the school and served during the lunch period. Enough of the items must be provided to serve the whole class. Invitations to private parties may not be passed out in the classroom or on the school campus unless every student in the class is invited.

Lunch Visitation Procedure

Parents and family members are welcome to join students for a hot lunch in the cafeteria. To ensure enough lunches are cooked, the following steps are requested:

- Call the school office or send a written notice by 9:00 AM, no later than the day of the visit so that lunch count can be increased; We want all students to have a lunch available.
- Sign in at the school office and get Visitor's Pass.
- Pay for a lunch with Mrs. Larson.
- Sit in the designated area with the student or at the class table.
- Visitors are welcome to bring a sack lunch. Please refrain from bringing soft drinks. Students are not allowed soft drinks for lunch.

MORNING ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Morning Arrival Procedures

Students should be dropped off at school between 7:45-8:00 AM. Students arriving before 8:00 AM will meet in the cafeteria and sit at their designated table. Students will be supervised by teachers on duty while in the cafeteria. The students will be released to their teacher to walk to their classroom as a group after morning announcements. (See Extended Day Care information below)

Dismissal Procedures

The school day ends at 3:20 PM. Each grade level will be dismissed as a group and taken outside. The younger students will exit first. When the weather warrants due to rain or cold, the classes will remain in the building and students called out when their ride arrives. Students not picked up by 3:30 PM will be sent to Extended Day Care (See Extended Day Care information below)

Extended Day Care

The Extended Day Care program is available from 7:00-7:45 AM and again from 3:20-6:00 PM. All student extended day care will be billed through FACTS. Cash will not be accepted. The cost is \$3.00 per hour/per student. Extended Day Care is held in the cafeteria. Students receive a snack in the afternoon and then go to the computer lab, playground, or library. Parents are to pick up afternoon Extended Day Care students in the back parking lot.

Parking Areas/Crosswalk

Cars may only enter the school parking lot by the entrance nearest the church. Drivers are asked to remain in the parking space until the children come to the car. At no time should anyone stop in the lanes or park his/her car along the curb or under the canopy in front of the school. These areas are designated fire lanes and can only be used for moving vehicles picking up and unloading children on rainy days.

For the safety of all students and families, please use the crosswalks.

Early Dismissal

Early dismissal days and times are designated in the school calendar. There is no Extended Day Care on early dismissal days.

DISCIPLINE

Holy Cross Catholic School has rules and procedures that provide students with a safe and positive Christian learning environment. Rules that are not followed have disciplinary consequences. All rules at Holy Cross Catholic School are based from our Core Rules which are posted in every classroom.

Core Rules

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Safe

WWJD

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment (including, but not limited to: spanking, shaking, slapping, pinching, hair pulling) shall not be permitted in the Diocese of Victoria school systems.

Discipline Management Techniques

The consequences listed below are in random order. This list is not all inclusive. The principal and the staff have discretion in applying consequences.

- Verbal correction
- Time-Out in classroom or lunch Time-Out
- Seating or class assignment change
- Behavioral contract
- Grade reduction for cheating or late work
- Temporary or Permanent confiscation of disruptive items
- Parent/Teacher/Principal conference
- E-mail to parent
- Telephone call by student to parent
- After School Detention
- In-School Suspension (Principal Assigned Only – Parent will be contacted by phone & in writing)
- Out-of-School Suspension (Principal Assigned Only – Parent will be contacted by phone & In writing)

Expulsion from Holy Cross School may occur under the requirements of the Diocese of Victoria (see Victoria Diocese Handbook of Policies and Regulations for Catholic Schools). A student may be suspended and/or expelled for reasons including, but not limited to, the following:

- Habitual misconduct that is disruptive of the teaching/learning process
- Refusal to obey reasonable directives, orders, rules or regulations of the school, or any teacher/administrative officer of the school, which are promulgated for the well-being of the student body, the staff, or the institution
- Violation of any penal law or ordinance applicable to the respective jurisdictions of all parties concerned
- Engaging in any activity or conduct which is a serious violation of the Roman Catholic ethic or which attempts to promote teachings contrary to those of the Roman Catholic Church.

Holy Cross Catholic School reserves the right to remove any student who endangers the mission of the school to provide a safe and positive Christian, Catholic learning environment or whose attitude and/or conduct, on or off campus, reflects adversely on the school community.

Harassment or Bullying

Holy Cross Catholic School provides a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individuals are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (seriously, in jest, or online) face disciplinary actions leading up to and including detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Harassment of any type is not tolerated. The Principal investigates all complaints of harassment. Students involved in harassing behavior face disciplinary actions leading up to and including detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Engagement in online blogs, such as but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, etc., may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student's or parent's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students, or the parish.

The following policy is implemented for all Catholic Schools within the Diocese of Victoria and has been approved by Bishop David Fellhauer:

Any behavior (on-campus or off-campus) which is illicit, immoral, or illegal and/or which reflects adversely on the school, subjects the student to disciplinary action, which could result in immediate suspension and/or expulsion. This behavior includes, but is not limited to sexting, harassment of any kind, or intimidation.

Student Expectations

- Students will be expected to participate in all religious ceremonies and activities in a prayerful and respectful manner.
- Students will be expected to follow the school rules at school and all school related functions.
- Students will be expected to demonstrate courtesy and respect to others.
- Students will be expected to comply with all class and school procedures and follow accepted routines.
- Students will be expected to attend school regularly and arrive on time.
- Students will be expected to come to class prepared for learning and with the necessary supplies and materials.
- Students will be expected to have all assignments prepared as directed and ready at the time indicated by the teacher.
- Students will be expected to follow the dress code and be well groomed.

Violation Procedures

Teachers are expected to provide a classroom environment and classroom control to assure a positive learning environment. If the teacher or staff member has used all appropriate behavioral management techniques to redirect student inappropriate behavior, the student will be referred to the principal. The principal will meet with the student, obtain all necessary information, and determine the consequence for the student. Parents will be notified by phone and/or in writing of the behavior and the consequence.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Holy Cross Catholic School holds students responsible for mastering the knowledge and skills standards given in the Curriculum Monitoring Documents provided by the Diocese of Victoria. The Diocesan standards are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills of the State of Texas. Pre-K curriculum is taught in the morning and reinforced in the afternoon.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Parent /Teacher Communications

Any concerns regarding your student should first be attempted to be resolved at the classroom level. Only after such attempts have failed, should administration be contacted. A conference with the teacher can be arranged during the teacher/s conference period/s by calling the school office. Teachers may also be reached by phone during the school day at their conference period or by leaving a message for the teacher to return a call during his/her conference period. The principal is available for phone calls or a conference during the school day. Calls may be made to the school office, if the principal is not available at that time, your call will be returned at the earliest opportunity. The email address of the principal is on the school's homepage. Please respect staff's personal and family time and do not call staff members at home.

Progress Reports and Report Cards

The Diocese of Victoria requires schools to be on a nine-week reporting system. To assure that parents are informed in a timely manner, progress reports are sent home by the beginning of the fifth week of each reporting period. Report cards will be issued every nine weeks (see school calendar for dates). Parents should contact the school immediately if report cards are not received on the date/s indicated. Parents of Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students will receive feedback from teachers weekly, if not more often.

Website

Holy Cross Catholic School maintains a website to keep parents informed about all aspects of school life. The web address is www.bcholycrossschool.org. Please visit the website often for current information.

RenWeb

RenWeb is a computer-based system that will enable school personnel to notify all households and parents by phone (text) and/or email within minutes of an emergency or unplanned event that causes early dismissal, school cancellation or late start. This system will be used as an overlay to the public announcements. The service will also be used to communicate general announcements or reminders. When used, the service will simultaneously contact all listed phone numbers in our parent contact list.

NOTE:

- 1) This requires NO registration by the parent on the School RenWeb website.
- 2) All information and contact numbers are strictly secure and confidential and are only used for the purposes described herein.
- 3) PLEASE BE SURE TO KEEP YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBERS CURRENT WITH THE SCHOOL OFFICE!

ACADEMIC POLICY

Academic Eligibility for Extra Curricular Activity Participation

Students who participate in any extra-curricular activity (Cheerleading, Safety Patrol, or Choir) must maintain passing grades in all subjects.

Extra-curricular activities are considered privileges in which to participate. Students must maintain proper conduct and attitude in order to be part of the team and to represent the school. The sponsor and/or principal may remove a student from such activities.

Grading System

Holy Cross Catholic School calculates grades based on the system required by the Diocese of Victoria.

Kindergarten

100-70	Satisfactory
69 or below	Needs Improvement

First Grade

100-94	Excellent Progress
93-85	Good Progress
84-75	Satisfactory Progress
74-70	Needs Improvement
69 or below	Unsatisfactory

Second thru Sixth Grade

Numerical Range	Letter Grade	Interpretation
100 – 94	A	Excellent Achievement
93 – 85	B	High Achievement
84 – 75	C	Average Achievement
74 – 70	D	Low Achievement (Passing)
69 or below	F	Unsatisfactory

Music / P.E. / Technology

100-85	Satisfactory
84-70	Needs Improvement
69 or below	Unsatisfactory

Conduct

S	Satisfactory
N	Needs Improvement
U	Unsatisfactory

Homework

Homework is an essential part of the learning process. It gives the student practice so that the knowledge and skill is mastered. Homework is to be completed on time. Students who do not have completed homework may be asked to complete it during lunch recess or at another designated time. Incomplete homework may be the cause for a lowered class grade or the loss of possible bonus points.

Promotion/Retention Requirements

Holy Cross Catholic School follows Diocesan Regulations for promotion and retention. The principal and the teachers will consult with parents in making decisions about placement to the next grade level due to extenuating circumstances. A plan for remediation will be implemented if such a decision is made for the student.

1. A student who has made satisfactory progress at one grade level will be promoted to the next higher grade.
 - Students in first grade must have completed the primer level in reading and have at least a final average of **“N”** in religion, mathematics, and reading in order to be promoted to second grade.
 - Students in grades 2-3 shall earn a final average of **“70”** in each major subject in order to be promoted to the next grade. The major subjects for these grades are religion, reading, English and mathematics.
 - Students in grades 4-8 shall earn a final average of **“70”** in each major subject in order to be promoted to the next grade. The major subjects in grades 4-8 are religion, reading, English, mathematics, social studies, and science.
 - Because language skills (English and reading in grades 2-8, reading in first grade) and number skills (mathematics in grades 1-8) are the basis for all other learning, a student who fails two of these subjects shall not be promoted to the next grade.
2. Students who fail two major subjects, provided that both subjects are not in the area of language skills or number skills as indicated above, shall be promoted on the condition that they receive remedial instruction, during the summer and receive a passing grade.
3. The principal must approve all remedial instruction and/or attendance at summer school programs.

Retention

In the event there is no summer school available for students in Grades 1-8, the principal may allow the student to be tutored. The tutor may be a classroom teacher, professional tutor, or college student. The decision will be made by the principal.

Guidelines for Summer Retention Tutoring:

1. The instructor should identify areas of weakness.
2. The time frame should be determined by the principal and instructor.
3. Parents are responsible for any fees associated with the summer retention tutor and/or supplies. The principal and instructor will set fees.
4. Students will be assessed during the course of the summer retention tutoring. A cumulative test will occur at the end of the summer session to verify mastery of grade-level skills and knowledge.
5. Additional requirements may be made at the discretion of the principal.
6. The student participating in the Summer Retention Tutoring Program may not be instructed by their previous classroom teacher.

TESTING AND ASSESSMENT

The Diocesan Testing Program consists of the following:

1. All student in grades 1-6 take the total battery of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), according to the schedule set up each year by the Diocesan Schools Office.
2. Students in grades 2 and 6 also take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT).

STUDENT HEALTH

The school maintains the nurse's station through the school office.

Immunizations

Every student enrolled in a Catholic school in the state of Texas shall be immunized against vaccine preventable diseases caused by infectious agents in accordance with the immunization schedule adopted by the Texas Department of State Health Services. A student who fails to present the required evidence shall not be accepted for enrollment. The only exemption to the foregoing requirement is a medical exemption signed by a licensed physician (M.D. or D.O.) authorized to practice in the state of Texas. Current information on required immunizations is available in the school office.

During the school year height and weight are recorded. Vision and hearing screening is done on the required grade levels and results are reported to parents if there is a need for further screening or assessment. Scoliosis screening is done in the fifth grade. This examination requires specific parent permission.

Routine head lice checks are conducted as necessary.

Accidents and Illness

Students who are ill will be sent home. The conditions for removal from school for illness are:

- Oral temperature of 100 degrees or more
- Vomiting, nausea, or severe abdominal pain
- Sore throat, acute cold, or persistent cough
- Redness, inflammation, or discharge from the eyes
- Acute skin rashes or eruptions
- Swollen glands around the jaws, ears, or neck
- Suspected scabies or impetigo or weeping skin lesions
- Ear ache
- Pediculosis (head lice). Holy Cross Catholic School maintains a "nit-free" environment.
- Any suspected contagious disease
- Other symptoms of serious illness

Emergency Care Due to Accident or Illness

If school personnel believe that the child needs emergency care, EMS will be called. Parents will be notified immediately using the information for parent contact provided to the school. If necessary, the child will be transported to the nearest hospital. In the event of a non-critical accident, a parent will be contacted by phone and/or an accident report notification form.

Medication Policy for Prescription and Non-Prescription Medications

Authorized school personnel will administer only medications prescribed by a licensed physician or dentist and dispensed by a registered pharmacist. Medications must be properly labeled and accompanied by a signed parent/guardian permission form (located on website) or administration to the student. Medications must be in the original bottle or container from the pharmacy and have dosage information for that specific student on the bottle or container.

Non-prescription medications (over the counter) must be in the original container with directions for administration and display the student's name. Parental permission is required for administration of these drugs and must be consistent with the directions from the manufacturer. Cough drops are considered over the counter drugs and must be administered under these guidelines. School personnel are not permitted to administer any medications (prescription or over the counter) that do not follow these guidelines for their use. School personnel are not permitted to perform any medical treatment other than First Aid.

Student Insurance

A student accident insurance program shall be available for all students. This program assists in medical expenses incurred due to bodily injury sustained by children while attending school, while traveling to or from school, or while participating in sponsored and supervised school activities

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students are provided opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities throughout the school year. Students must have passing grades in all subjects and satisfactory behavior in all courses.

Cheerleading

Cheerleading offers sixth grade students the opportunity to promote school spirit and participate in dance routines. The cheerleaders perform at school events and other school functions. Information about participation is available from the school office.

Honor Choir

Students in the third through the sixth grades are encouraged to become members of the Holy Cross Honor Choir. Members practice once a week after school. They provide music for special occasions and participate at special Liturgies. Choir members must participate in the after-school practice sessions.

Safety Patrol

Students in Grade 5 and 6 may serve on the Safety Patrol Force. This program is in operation to help students leave the school safely. Patrols are on duty from 3:20-3:30 pm.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Religious Activities

All students who attend Holy Cross Catholic School are required to participate in designated religious activities. Tenants of the Catholic faith are infused into every subject and every aspect of school life. Students who are not Catholic will be expected to participate in all ways that are appropriate according to Church law and practice. Parents are encouraged to attend Mass and all other religious observances with their students. Students attend Mass every Tuesday of the school year (check school calendar for specific dates or changes due to Holy Days). Students may also participate in recitation of the rosary or recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet. Students also participate in All Saints Activities, Thanksgiving Food Drive, Advent Services, Lenten Activities and the Stations of the Cross, May Crowning and other specific recognitions of special religious events and persons.

Physical Education

Each student is required to participate in the physical education classes. Only with written permission from the parent and/or doctor will a child be excused from PE. For long-term non-participation, a doctor's note describing the limitations that exclude ALL participation will be needed. **Tennis shoes MUST be worn during PE.** This is for the children's safety.

Duty Teachers/Volunteers

There are a number of teachers and volunteers on duty each school day. These teachers and/or volunteers have supervision over the building, playground, cafeteria, etc. Each teacher and/or volunteer has the authority and responsibility to correct any pupil if the school rules are not being followed.

Lockers

Each student is assigned a "locker" for the storage of materials. It is the student's responsibility to see that the locker is kept neat and clean inside and out at all times. Lockers are school property and not personal property. A student should only use his/her assigned locker.

Lost and Found

Please label your child's clothes and equipment. Any items found on the school grounds will be turned in to the office. If not claimed in a week, they will be disposed of at the discretion of the Principal.

Student Phone Use during the School Day

Calling home during the school day will be discouraged unless of an absolute emergency or specific instruction from the teacher. Students will assume responsibility and applicable discipline for forgotten homework, gym shoes, etc. A student, under no circumstances, may call home to be picked up for illness or other reason. This call will be made by the school health attendant if a student is deemed too ill to remain in school.

Textbooks

Textbooks are purchased by the school for the use of the students. Books are to be kept covered at all times. Students are responsible for keeping books in good condition. Students are responsible

for any damage to books beyond reasonable wear and for the cost of replacement for lost books. Lost books and any fines due must be paid before final report cards can be received.

Volunteer/Parent Computer Use Notice

Any volunteer or parent utilizing a personal or school owned computer while on campus is responsible for imparting the standards of ethical and legal conduct of usage as established by the Diocese of Victoria. All use of the Internet must be in support of education and research and consistent with the mission of a Catholic school.

Grievance Procedure

Parents who have a complaint or grievance in regards to current policy or academics, or any school related activity should follow the levels outlined below:

Level I – Parent should contact the teacher or advisor in charge to resolve dispute or concern.

Level II – Parent should contact the Principal to resolve the dispute or concern.

If no resolution can be formalized follow procedures outlined in Complaint Procedures for Students and Parents outlined in Policy 5500 of the Handbook of Policies and Regulations for Catholic Schools in the Victoria Diocese.

DRESS CODE

Shoe Requirements

1. Sandals may not be worn in school.
2. No Flip Flops.
3. All high-tops must be laced & tied.
4. No lights.
5. **PE requires tennis shoes.** This is for the children's safety.
6. The Principal will have final decision as to the appropriateness of the shoes.



Holy Cross Catholic School

Required Uniform

Kindergarten - 6th Grade



The school uniform is a symbol of a student's pride in himself/herself and the school. Students must wear approved articles of clothing from the uniform list and the required Mass uniform on Mass days. The required school uniform may be purchased from Parker Uniform, Land's End, Academy or JC Penney.

Boys Church Uniform

Navy slacks
White oxford shirt
(short or long sleeve)
Navy or white socks
Khaki slacks (Grade 6)
Navy, black or brown belt
Navy or Black (Standard or Clip) Tie

Girls Church Uniform

Plaid or solid navy Jumper
White blouse rounded collar
(short or long sleeve)
Navy or white socks
Navy conbow tie
Khaki conbow tie (Grade 6)
Khaki box pleat skirt (Grade 6)



Boys School Uniform

White/Hunter Green knit shirt
Navy walking shorts
Navy sweater
Navy vest
Khaki shorts (Grade 6)
Navy, black or brown belt

Girls School Uniform

White/Hunter Green knit shirt
Plaid/Navy walking shorts, skort, capris
Navy sweater
Navy vest
Khaki walking shorts, skort, capris (Grade 6)
Navy, black or brown belt

**Holy Cross Catholic School Parent-Student Handbook
2014-2015**

Child(ren) _____	_____
Print Name(s)	Grade
_____	_____
_____	_____

My child(ren) and I have received and read the 2014-2015 Holy Cross Catholic School Parent–Student Handbook. We have discussed the school’s policies and expectations and agree to support these policies.

Student(s) Signature(s) _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

(Please print)

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____