

Holy Cross Catholic School

Parent-Student
Handbook 2023 - 2024



**2001 Katy Avenue
77414**

**Main: 979-245-5632
Fax: 979-245-6120
www.bholycrossschool.org**

“Education at the Foot of the Cross”

Holy Cross Catholic School

Handbook for Students and Parents

Forward to Parents

Welcome to Holy Cross Catholic School. Together we share the responsibility and the privilege of passing on the rich tradition of faith and providing the educational excellence each child deserves. By choosing to send your child/children to Holy Cross Catholic School, you have demonstrated your trust in us. For this, and the many ways you show your support and spirit of cooperation, we are grateful.

This handbook has been prepared to provide you with a copy of school rules and policies and other general information. A common understanding of rules and policies by all concerned—parents/guardians, school staff, and students—is essential.

Herein is provided basic information about Holy Cross Catholic School (hereinafter called Holy Cross School or HCCS) that we believe will benefit all. We call on all parents/guardians and students to become familiar with the mission statement, philosophy, vision, goals, objectives, guidelines, and policies as they are outlined in the following pages.

*We recommend that you study this handbook carefully and discuss it with your child. **The receipt/acknowledgement page (at the end of the handbook) must be signed and returned.***

We realize that there is no way that we can foresee every event or circumstance that may occur. Therefore, the administration of Holy Cross Catholic School reserves the right and obligation to make decisions in the best interest of all.

Accreditation:

Holy Cross Catholic School is fully accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops-Education Department (TCCB-ED). The Texas Education Agency recognizes the authority of the Texas Catholic Conference to accredit Catholic schools in the state of Texas. Our accreditation manuals have a letter of understanding written by the Commissioner of Education verifying “the continuing recognition of the Texas Private School Accreditation Commission (TEPSAC) and its affiliate associations for the purpose of determining the accreditation of non-public schools (Guide to Quality and Effectiveness: An Accreditation Manual for Catholic Schools of Texas, III-6).”

Title IX Compliance:

Holy Cross Catholic School adheres to the procedures and policies related to Title IX compliance [Section 901(a) of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972]. No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

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Section I: School and Administration

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.

Guidelines For Success:

- **Be Respectful**
- **Be Responsible**
- **Be Safe**
- **WWJD!**

Philosophy

Holy Cross Catholic School was founded to assist parents in the education and spiritual formation of children in the spirit of Christian love, respect, and responsibility. Building our Christian family, while striving for academic excellence, is the primary purpose of Christian education at Holy Cross Catholic School.

Catholic education encompasses the message of Christ in His church, fosters a sense of community among its believers, leads students to the fullness of Christian growth, and supports academic excellence, while rooted in a strong Catholic foundation.

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.

Vision

Holy Cross Catholic School Believes:

... that every facet of life is important – spiritual, physical, intellectual, social, and emotional.

... that every child is unique and valuable because their life comes from God.

... that one of the purposes of life is to improve the quality of life for ALL people everywhere.

... that if we have helped a child to become more respectful, responsible, safe, and Christ-like, while pursuing high academic standards – then we have prepared the child for life.

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.

History of Holy Cross Catholic School

Holy Cross Catholic School opened its doors to students in the **fall of 1940** under the direction of the *Reverend George Elmendorf and two Benedictine Oblate Sisters from England*. The Benedictines were *succeeded in the fall of 1941, by the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament from Victoria*.

The school was moved to its current location in 1950, where, under the direction of Monsignor Martin, a new church, rectory, convent, and school were built. The school originally included grades first through eighth, until the *junior high school classes were discontinued in 1966*.

The school was fully accredited by the Texas Education Agency in 1968. In 1971, a half-day kindergarten was begun. Additionally, during the tenure of Monsignor Martin, a fully-equipped library and refectory/all purpose room were added to the school. In 1986, the Catholic schools in the state of Texas were accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference Accreditation Commission. Holy Cross has remained fully accredited.

During the pastorate of Father Sonnier, a full-size gym was built in 1987, and two additional classrooms housing the upper grades were also added to the school a few years later. In 2009, **the last of the Sisters of Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament left the school**, and Mrs. Stephanie Kucera became the first lay principal. She remained at the school for five years. Mrs. Inez Kucera succeeded her and remained the principal of the school for five years. Beginning 2019-2020 school year, Mrs. Angela Kupcho became principal with the spiritual direction of Father Greg Korenek, Pastor of Holy Cross Catholic School and Parish. After several years of service to Holy Cross Catholic School and Parish, Father Greg Korenek was assigned to another parish, and Father Stephen Vacek was named pastor in July 2020. Mrs. Kupcho resigned her position after two years of service in the summer of 2021. After an exhaustive search for a new principal, Dr. John Quarry (Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Victoria) offered to serve as Interim Principal as of August 1, 2021. Ms. Linda Bradford became principal in January 2022.

While Holy Cross' buildings represent the old and new, the philosophy and curriculum of the school are different from most schools in the area because of the school's goals to return to the basic values that, in the past, have made students great leaders in the Church and in the world communities. The school continues to promote the tried and true fundamental elements of manners, respect, responsibility, friendliness, and Christ-like

behavior while having high academic expectations rooted in a strong Catholic Christian foundation.

Holy Cross Catholic School is blessed to have the generous backing of not only the students, parents, teachers, and pastor, but also of the local parishioners, businesses, Foundation, volunteers, alumni, and the community at large, who generously support the school and its programs.

Governance

Bishop

Through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to them, bishops are the successors of the apostles by divine institutions; they are constituted pastors within the Church, so that they are teachers of doctrine, priests of sacred worship, and ministers of governance (The Code of Canon Law, c. 375). As chief representative of the Church's teaching authority, the Diocesan Bishop is juridical head of the school system. His is the ultimate responsibility for articulating the faith and educational policies. He delegates ordinary oversight of the Catholic School System to the Superintendent of Schools (*Handbook of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools, Policy 2100*).

The Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent of Schools is the chief administrative officer of the Catholic Schools in the Diocese. The Superintendent of Schools is responsible to the Diocesan Bishop. It is the duty of the Superintendent of Schools to coordinate all school programs and to represent the diocesan school system in dealing with state and regional educational offices. The Superintendent of Schools acts as the executive officer of the Diocesan School Advisory Council (*Handbook of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools, Policy 2100*).

The Pastor

The Pastor of Holy Cross Catholic Church is the proper shepherd of the parish entrusted to him, exercising pastoral care in the community entrusted him under the authority of the diocesan bishop in whose ministry of Christ he has been called to share; in accord with the norm of the law he carries out for his community the duties of teaching, sanctifying and governing, with the cooperation of other presbyters or deacons and assistance of the lay members of the Christian faithful (*The Code of Canon Law, c. 519*). The Pastor is ex-officio the chief administrative officer of the parish school. The Pastor serves as spiritual leader of the school community. The Pastor, in consultation with the Local School Advisory Council, has final approval over actions taken by the Local School

Advisory Council (*Handbook of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools, Policy 2100*).

School Advisory Council

The Holy Cross Catholic School Advisory Council provides advice and direction to the pastor and principal in aspects of the local school including planning, policy formation, finances, and public relations. All policies and significant actions of the local school council shall need approval of the pastor and must be in accord with diocesan policy (*Handbook of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools, Policy 1120*).

Principal

The principal, as administrator of the school, is responsible for the implementation of council policy, diocesan policy, and government requirements. As the educational leader of the school community, the Principal has full administrative responsibility for carrying out the instructional program. The Principal also acts as the executive officer of the Local School Advisory Council (*Handbook of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools, Policy 2100*).

The Principal is the educational, spiritual, and managerial leader in accordance with the policies of the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops- 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 (*Handbook of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools, Policy 2120*).

Teacher

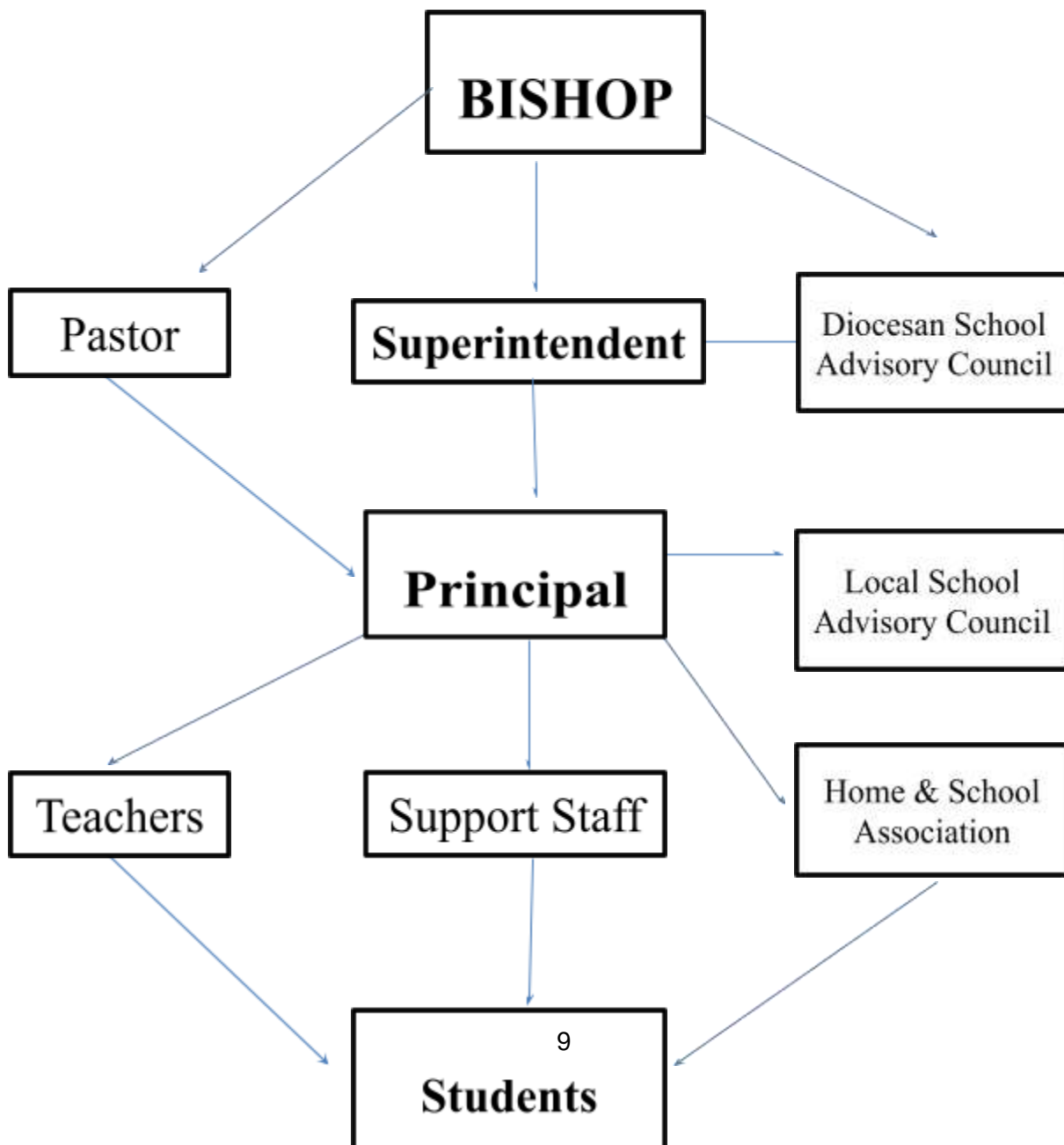
The teacher is accountable to the principal and the parents for providing suitable learning experiences that are in accord with the philosophy of Holy Cross Catholic School. The main responsibilities of the teacher include the religious and academic instruction of the student, the evaluation and grading of scholastic achievement, the maintenance and promotion of discipline, and the implementation of the requirements of the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops-Education Department (TCCB-ED), the Diocesan School Office, and Holy Cross Catholic School.

Home & School Association (HSA)

The main purpose of the Holy Cross Catholic School Home and School Association (HSA) is to foster unity and understanding between the home and school. Dates of meetings are listed in the school calendar. Special meetings are publicized in the school newsletter.



Organizational Chart of Holy Cross Catholic School



Section II: PARENT'S ROLE IN EDUCATION

PARENT SUPPORT OF ADMINISTRATION, POLICIES, AND REGULATIONS

The parents or guardians of students 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 School.

Holy Cross Catholic School considers it a privilege to work with parents in the education of their children, as "parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children (No. 2223 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church). As partners in the educational process at Holy Cross Catholic School, it is the parent's role to do the following:

- Ensure your child is at school ready to start the day on time (7:50 a.m.) and is picked up on time (3:20 p.m.). Children may be dropped off beginning at 7:30 a.m. If your child arrives after 7:50 a.m., **you must escort your child to the front office and sign the child in to receive a tardy slip, before he/she will be allowed to report to class.**
- Ensure your child is dressed according to the school dress code daily and on Mass days.
- **Call the school by 9:00 a.m.**, if your child will be late to school or absent for the day. If you plan to pick up classwork/homework, please let the front office know. Work may be picked up from the front office from 3:30-4:00 p.m.
- Notify the school with a written note when your child has been absent and include the date(s) of absence, reason, and sign. If your child was under the care of a physician, a note signed by the doctor stating the dates of care and release to school will suffice.
- Notify the school in advance if your child will be picked up early, i.e., doctor's appointment. **No child may be picked up after 3:00 p.m. until dismissal at 3:20 p.m.** Instruction is scheduled through the end of the school day and end-of-day procedures. Please make every effort to schedule doctor's appointments after 3:30 pm. on days when school is not in session.
- Actively participate in the Home & School Association (HSA) by attending parent meetings, volunteering your time and talent to our fundraising events and volunteer at the church festival. **Be on time to work your event, sign in and out, and find**

someone to take your place, if you will be unable to fulfill your obligation. Tuition rates are lower because our Parish and HSA make financial contributions to the school's budget.

- Attend parent-teacher conferences.
- Please discuss all classroom concerns with the teacher. A meeting with the principal may be scheduled, if resolution cannot be achieved and/or further concerns arise.
- Notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers.
- **Meet ALL financial obligations to the school (tuition, cafeteria, before/after school care, etc.)**
- Inform the school of any special situation regarding your child's well-being, safety, and health.
- Complete and return to the school any requested information promptly.
- Take time to review the various items and announcements on the school's website: (www.bcholycrossschool.org).
- Please also review the Parent Alert text messages from the school.
- Check in the front office, sign in, and receive a visitor's badge before going to any location on campus. To visit classrooms, you must be Safe Environment trained.
- Have at least one family member Safe Environment trained.
- Support the religious and educational goals of the school.
- Support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school.

Sacramental Programs

The sacramental life of the Catholic faith at Holy Cross Catholic School is central to our religious instruction. Preparations for two sacraments, Reconciliation and Holy Communion, form the core of our efforts for second grade students. In accordance with the Diocesan guidelines, candidates for First Communion will receive the sacrament of Reconciliation prior to First Communion/First Eucharist. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered during Advent and Lent for all Catholic students second grade and above.

Parents are required to be active partners in the preparation of their children for the sacraments of the Catholic Church. The sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion/First Eucharist are only conferred to students baptized in the Roman Catholic tradition. For those interested in the Baptism of their child in the Catholic faith a special class after school is available upon request.

Volunteer Hours

Parents are committed to volunteer a minimum of **30 service** hours (generally parents are asked to earn 10 hours in the 1st Semester and 20 hours in the 2nd Semester) during

the school year. There are many opportunities throughout the year for service hours: HSA meetings and functions, classroom parent, parties, school events, etc. Other people may work the volunteer hours provided that they sign in the volunteer log prior to working the hours. You can only work (sign-in) for one family at a time. Some events/activities require Safe Environment training.

Ten (10) hours are to be completed between August 1, 2023- December 17, 2023; (1st semester) and twenty (20) hours completed between January 4, 2024 –May 20, 2024 (2nd semester).

There is a BUYOUT option for service hours only, NOT fundraisers. Full Buyout is \$225 per semester payable by December 1 for the first semester and May 1 for the second semester. Hours will be recorded for each event. You MUST sign the volunteer log. For each hour that is not worked you will be billed \$15 per hour and it will be deducted from your FACTS account

Section III: ADMISSIONS/TRANSFER/WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

Nondiscrimination 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, tuition assistance, or other school-administered programs.

Admission

All new students are provisionally admitted until all admission and registration requirements have been met. Failure to complete the registration process could result in a student not being admitted. Admission and registration documents may be found on-line or in the school's office.

A child must be:

- Three (3) years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year to be admitted into the Pre-K3 program
- Four (4) years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year to be admitted into the Pre-K4 program
- Five (5) years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year to be admitted into the Kindergarten program; or
- Six (6) years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year to be admitted into First Grade

All children must be potty-trained. While we understand that accidents may happen, if a child has three accidents in a two week span, you may be asked to withdraw your child until potty-trained.

Parents of prospective students may be interviewed by the principal before enrollment decisions are made. Students who have been removed from another school for disciplinary reasons (including poor attendance) will not be admitted to Holy Cross Catholic School.

Transfer Students

The admission of a student who wishes to transfer from another school is determined after the needs of the student are discussed and the reasons are verified by the school from which the student wishes to transfer. Any student's academic position will be objectively established through the school transcript and/or by standardized tests.

Students who wish to transfer to Holy Cross Catholic School may be admitted on a probationary basis for nine (9) weeks. If the student does not show a willingness to accept the conduct and academic requirements of the school, he/she will be asked to leave. In addition, the student's attendance during the probation period is also considered.

Provisional Enrollment

All immunizations **should be completed by the first date of attendance**. A student may be enrolled provisionally if the student has an immunization record that indicates the student has received at least one dose of each specified age-appropriate vaccine required by this rule. To remain enrolled, the student must complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule and as rapidly as is medically feasible and provide acceptable evidence of vaccination to the school.

A school nurse representative or school administrator shall review the immunization status of a provisionally enrolled student **every 30 days** to ensure continued compliance in completing the required doses of vaccination. If, at the end of the 30-day period, a student has not received a subsequent dose of vaccine, the student is not in compliance, and **the school shall exclude the student from school attendance until the required dose is administered**.

Admission of Students with Disabilities

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 guarantees educational rights to students with disabilities ages 3 through 21. The policy of the 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.

Registration

Registration of current students and admission for new students takes place in the spring. New students applying for admission to Holy Cross Catholic School are required to bring the following:

- 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 medical affidavit that, **for medical reasons ONLY**, 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.)
- In the case of students whose parents are separated or divorced, a copy of the official custody agreement must be furnished to the school Principal. (*Handbook of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools, Policy 5110*)
- Completed application and registration packet with fees.

The following documentation is also required and must be provided for older students who were previously enrolled in a school:

- Official transcript from the previous school
- Standardized test scores
- Special Education/504 documentation including any IEP or Behavior Plan

Failure to provide these documents in a timely manner may be grounds for removal from the school.

Tuition

The School Advisory Council sets tuition, registration, and additional fees. This information is posted on-line at the school's website and made available to current families and those wishing to apply for admission to Holy Cross Catholic School during the spring registration and admission period. 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. Any unworked service hours or fundraising balances will be debited from the FACTS 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 of using FACTS include, but are not limited to:

- 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

Tuition Assistance

Tuition assistance is available on a limited basis for demonstrated financial need. Tuition assistance is applied for through the FACTS link. Additional information may be obtained from the Principal.

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. Only the Principal may grant access to student records.

Withdrawing a Student

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. A *Notice of Withdrawal Form* must be completed. All textbooks, library books and materials must be turned in or paid for, all fines must be paid, and all appropriate Tuition and Incidental accounts **must be paid in full. *The student's cumulative records will be forwarded to the receiving school upon formal request from that school when the funds are completely paid.*** Copies of cumulative records are hand-carried in a secured envelope **only when leaving the country.** Registration fees are non-refundable.

Section IV: ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Holy Cross Catholic School is the parish school of Holy Cross Catholic Church and such is a Catholic institution of the Diocese of Victoria. Thus, the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, and physical elements of the education that it offers are taught within the context of the Catholic Faith. HCCS maintains a balanced curriculum which meets or exceeds the accreditation standards of the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops-Education Department. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are used to plan the timeline for curriculum. HCCS offers its students opportunities in the following subjects: Religion, English Language Arts and Reading, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts, Spanish, Health, Physical Education, and Computer Technology.

Grades/Report Cards

Report cards are distributed quarterly (every nine weeks) using the format specified by the Office of Catholic Schools. The school will retain a duplicate report card, if the report card is lost or misplaced during the school term. These duplicate report cards will be kept in the principal's office. All required information on the report card must be supplied each marking period. Grades in the subject areas will be based on academic achievement and not on the student's behavior or other factors. Holy Cross Catholic School calculates grades based on the system requirements by the Diocese of Victoria.

PK and Kindergarten

100-70	S – Satisfactory Progress
69 or below	N – Needs more time to develop skill

Grades 1 – 5

Numerical Range	Interpretation	Letter Grade
100-94	Outstanding	A
93-85	Above Average	B
84-75	Average	C

74-70	Below Average (Passing)	D
69 or below	Failing	F

Core subjects include: Religion, English-Language Arts, Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies.

Conduct Grades

- E: Excellent (100 – 94)
- S: Satisfactory (93-86)
- N: Needs Improvement (85-70)
- U: Unsatisfactory (69 - and below)

For Conduct & Work Study Skills

Enter E, S, N, or U for each sub topic.

Behavioral Traits:

- Attentive in class
- Observes school rules
- Respects needs and property of others
- Cooperates with others
- Is well mannered
- Positive attitude
- Shows self-discipline

Grades/Progress Reports

Progress reports are sent out midway between report cards to make parents and students aware of the student's progress at that time.

The following grading policy will apply to core subjects of Grades 1 to 5. We feel that it is important to have consistency from grade to grade.

Grades will be assigned to one of two categories:

- 1) Daily Work/Homework
- 2) Quizzes/Tests/Projects.

- On Daily Work/Homework, if a student does not make a 70% or better, the content will be retaught and the child may correct the paper for a grade up to 70. This is part of the learning process.
Ex: The child does not pass the first time and on the redo they DO make above a 70. The child will receive a grade of 70. If on the corrections, the student still does not make a 70, the higher of the two grades will stand.
- Daily Work/ Homework papers that are not passing will require a parent signature. The student has two (2) days from the time the paper is returned by the teacher to have corrections made, paper signed, and then returned to the teacher.
- On Quizzes/Tests/Projects, the grades earned will be the grade given. Corrections will need to be made on failing papers, but grades may remain the same. Parent signature is required. A minimum of four (4) grades per nine weeks will be given in this category.
- Nine week averages are weighted *60% Daily Work/ Homework* and *40% Quizzes/Tests/ Projects*.

Academic Honesty

Students at Holy Cross Catholic School need to understand the importance of the virtue of integrity. They should strive to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and be willing to provide appropriate help to their peers. It is the student's duty to abide by the teacher's instructions both inside and outside the classroom, and to avoid any unauthorized use of sources that could constitute cheating or plagiarism. Cheating on tests, copying homework, and all forms of plagiarism constitute serious offenses. A student who is caught cheating will be assigned an academic penalty by the teacher and will be referred to the principal.

Academic Honor Roll***

High Honors is awarded to students in grades **2-5** who have all grades on their report cards within the range of 94-100.

Honors is awarded to students in grades **2-5** who have all grades on their report card within the range of 85-100.

******A student with two or more "N's" (Needs Improvement) in conduct/work study skills or one or more "U's" in conduct/work study skills will not be allowed on the Academic Honor Roll.***

Academic/Religion Awards

After the first semester and at the end of the year, students will be recognized for various accomplishments that may include: Honors, High Honors, Accelerated Reader, Academic Contests, Pep Squad, Religion Awards, Service Awards, Perfect Attendance, Promotion Exercises (PK4/K/5), Physical Fitness, and Fine Arts.

Accelerated Reader (AR)

This program is used at HCCS to increase students' interest in reading more, to expose students to a variety of genres, and to help students grow in reading comprehension. Each student is provided a 9-week goal. As students read and complete comprehensive computer-based tests on the books read (AR tests), they will earn points toward their goal. Students will have an opportunity to spend their hard earned points at the AR store at the end of the school year.

Homework

Homework is an essential part of the learning process. It gives the student practice so that the knowledge and skill is mastered. Whether students are present or absent, they are responsible for daily homework assignments and for handing them in on time.

Academic penalties may be implemented by the teachers to encourage students to turn in homework/projects on time. This teaches responsibility. Teachers will provide students and parents with a printed homework policy statement. **Reading, which is essential for all subjects, is to be done daily at home.** Parents are to help provide a good study atmosphere for their child.

Promotion and Retention

The promotion or retention of a learner should be based primarily on the degree of achievement of the specific objectives of the grade. A learner who has not achieved satisfactorily in a grade should repeat the grade. To permit a learner to go to the next grade for which he or she does not have the proper preparation is an injustice to him or her, to the other learners, and to the teacher. There may be cases in which ability, effort, interest, and other factors must be weighed. In such cases, the Principal's decision shall be final.

Parents shall be informed of possible non-promotion at the beginning of the second semester or as soon as this becomes evident. If the learner is promoted conditionally, the parents shall make provisions for the learner to remove the condition through summer work. The Principal shall approve these provisions.

Special circumstances: Effective June 1, 2019, Social promotion and skipping grade levels(aka "double promotion") are prohibited in the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Victoria (approved by diocesan bishop on May 31, 2019).

Regulations for Promotion

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 2-5 shall earn a final average of at least "70" in each major subject in order to be promoted to the next grade. The major subjects in grades 2-5 are religion, reading, English, mathematics, social studies, and science.

2. The principal and teacher will consult with parents in making decisions about placement to the next grade level, if there are extenuating circumstances.
3. Students who fail two major subjects, *provided that both subjects are not in the area of reading/language skills or math skills*, shall be promoted on the condition that they receive remedial instruction, during the summer and receive a passing grade.
4. The principal must approve all remedial instruction.

Field Trips

Field trips are to be related to the curriculum, have an educational purpose, and serve to enhance learning. Classroom teachers, with the approval of the principal, plan these trips. A field trip is a privilege. The school reserves the right to permit or deny a student the privilege of participation in a field trip. Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of such outings. Only students having signed permission forms will be allowed to participate. The school may accept a signed permission slip that has been FAXED from the parent/guardian, but 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. Volunteer drivers, arranged by the teacher and room parents, must provide adequate transportation. Generally, educational trips taken by students in the primary grades should be within a close distance.

Since the school is responsible for the students while on a school-sponsored trip, the following is required:

- Orderly behavior at all times;
- Proper attire;
- Proper respect and cooperation with the driver, teacher, guide, or other adult in charge;
- All misconduct on the trip is to be reported to the teacher and principal by the chaperone so proper action may be taken;
- Drivers are to have completed the Safe Environment training required by the Diocese of Victoria and follow the guidelines of the Diocese of Victoria Transportation Policy, which include completing the Volunteer/Driver Information Checklist and Volunteer Driver Information forms
- Every private vehicle used must have a minimum insurance coverage of \$100,000 per person/\$300,000/\$50,000 property per occurrence

There are 2 types of field trips:	
OPEN FIELD TRIPS	CLOSED FIELD TRIPS
Public Locations Examples: Museums, Zoos, Aquariums, County Fair Grounds (during fair week: NASA)	Private / Semi-Private Locations Examples: Maine Center, Ag in the Classroom, Convents, Churches, Retreat Centers, Theatre/Plays (especially put on for students)
Parents are invited to accompany their children on public field trips (especially grades PreK4 – 3 rd grade) if they are Safe Environment trained. No siblings (or children under 18 years of age) are allowed on field trips. Siblings over 18 years of age must be Safe Environment trained.	Students, teachers & chaperones only are invited to attend these field trips unless there is a special family oriented learning outcome.

Chaperone Requirements:

- **Safe Environment trained**
- **Selected chaperones for each field trip approved by office**
- **Are required to stay the entire length of the trip**
 - **No leaving the field trip early**
 - **Once students are on the bus or cars for return trip, nonteacher chaperones may be excused if there are the proper number of chaperones per the transportation policy**

Duties of a Non-Teacher Chaperone

- **Keep group assigned to him/her together and safe**
- **May stop unsafe or unacceptable behavior**
- **May Not determine discipline for a student (eg. Have him/her sit out, give a verbal reprimand to individual or group of students – except to stop unsafe situation). If discipline needs to be addressed, a school faculty member should address the situation.**
- **May enforce the discipline/rules and consequences that are put in**

place for students by a faculty members. Thus they should have copies of all contact numbers. If a non-chaperone parent needs to reach a faculty member they may go to the chaperone and ask them to contact the required person. They should not give out faculty members personal cell numbers to other parents.

Physical Education

Participation in P.E. is mandatory for all students in accordance with the Texas Educational Agency (TEA) and Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops-Education Department (TCCB-ED) requirements. Initially, a signed note from a parent is needed for a student to be excused from participation. If requests from parents are too frequent, a doctor's signed note/request will be mandatory for a student to be excused. Students who are excused will/may have to be assigned other tasks during the P.E. period(s).

Standardized Testing

The Iowa Assessments (formerly Iowa Test of Basic Skills--ITBS-- is generally given in the fall to grades 1-5. A spring testing session may be given, if determined by the principal. The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) is generally given in the fall to grade 2. Other grades may be given the CogAt, if determined by the principal. The Assessment of Catholic Religious Education (ACRE) is administered to students in grade 5 during the second semester. The Renaissance STAR Reading and STAR Math are administered to grades 1-5, to assess growth and progress; generally once every nine weeks, or as needed. STAR Early Literacy is administered to PreK-4 and Kindergarten twice a year.

Section V: ATTENDANCE***

A student's absence from school interferes with his/her academic progress. In compliance with Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops-Education Department (TCCB-ED) and the State of Texas Family Code, Holy Cross Catholic School enforces the compulsory attendance laws. The school year consists of 180 instructional days. The school day BEGINS at 7:50 a.m. until 3:20 p.m. Students can be dropped off for school starting at 7:30 a.m. 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 at least 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 7:50 a.m. will be recorded as tardy. Research has shown repeated tardiness can result in poor academic consequences.

Tardy Policy

The school day begins in the classroom for prayer, pledge to the flags, and announcements at 7:50 a.m. A student is tardy when he/she arrives in the cafeteria/classroom after 7:50 a.m. A student who is late is required to report to the school office 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 seven (7) will require a parent conference.** Parents will be contacted when this situation arises. When children are tardy, it can be very disruptive to the classroom learning environment. This affects not only the tardy child but all classmates.

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 in the school year.**

Absence is one of the main reasons for poor schoolwork and possible retention. Student illness, medical, dental, and counseling appointments, attendance at special church services (by arrangement), 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, according to the Texas Education code 21.035, include:

- Illness/Doctor's Appointment
- 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.
- Quarantine or other COVID-related issue
- Weather or road conditions which make traveling dangerous.

Prior Principal Approval Procedure

1. Notify the principal 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 student's 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 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. Teachers need a

reasonable amount of time to prepare assignments and gather books, while still teaching. ***A student who is absent for only one day can get make-up work when he/she returns.***

Unexcused absences include:

- 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 the school within three days of returning to school after being absent.

Unexcused Absence Make-Up Work Procedure

A student taken out of school for any of the above-unexcused absences will be expected to make up schoolwork on his/her time. **Teachers are not responsible for re-teaching any new skills missed during the student's absence.** Parents must prepare the student to take any test missed during the absence.

Students who have been given an 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. **ALL projects that had extended time to create or work on are still due on the due date.** The Principal has the right to modify this policy with a parent conference.

Return to School After an Absence

When a child is absent, the parent/guardian is to notify the school office **by 9:00 a.m.** on the day of the absence. Students will need to bring a written note or doctor's slip. The note should contain the date of absence and reason for the absence. Failure to notify the school for reason of absence will result in the absence being recorded as 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 after the child is signed out from the office. **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 within a two and a half hour time window in order to be

eligible for perfect attendance. If a student is off campus for more than 2 ½ hours, he/she is considered absent 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.

Emergency Closure

In the event of an emergency closure, parents will be informed through the RenWeb Parent Alert system. 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 approves a waiver and in the case of an emergency situation during the school day, the school will follow the School Crisis Management Plan.

Release of Students

Students will be released only to parents, guardian(s), or someone explicitly authorized by them. School personnel will take care to comply with court orders regarding child custody and parent access. A third party who is authorized by parents must be personally identified by them or be known to the principal or staff member. Students will be released from school during the day only with written notice by a parent or guardian.

Section VI: ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

Parking Areas/Crosswalk

For the safety of all students and families, please use the crosswalks. We are the children's role models.

Arrival Procedures

Students should be dropped off at school between 7:30-7:50 AM. All students must arrive and enter the cafeteria / classroom and report to their assigned places. Students will be supervised by teachers on duty while in the cafeteria / classroom. The students will be released to their teacher (if they are in the cafeteria) to walk to their classroom (unless their class is already in the classroom) as a group after morning announcements. (See Before/After School Care information below.)

Morning drop-off procedures are either park or drive-thru. Drive-thru drop-off is only allowed at the covered sidewalk area. **ALL** children using the drive-thru drop-off must **exit** the vehicle on the **passenger side**. The left side of the parking aisle closest to school has parking facing the school only. (See diagram in Appendix)

Dismissal Procedures

No child will be picked up after 3:00 p.m. until dismissal at 3:20 p.m.

Instruction is scheduled through the end of the school day and end-of-day procedures. The school day ends at 3:20 PM. After-school dismissal is **drive-thru pick-up only**. The parking lot will be blocked off. Please have your placard hanging on your rearview mirror. Cars without the placard will hold up traffic. Please enter the school parking lot at the entrance next to the church. There will be adults loading cars (3 stations) next to the covered sidewalk. Children may **ONLY** be loaded into the cars on the passenger side. (See diagram in Appendix) Students not picked up by 3:30 PM will be sent to the Eagles' Nest. (See Before/After School Care information below.)

Before/After School Care (Eagle's Nest)

The Before/After School Care program is available from 7:00-7:30 AM and again from 3:30-6:00 PM. All students who attend Before/After School Care will be billed through FACTS. Cash will not be accepted. The cost is \$3.00 per hour/per student billed in 15-minute increments.

Early Dismissal

Early dismissal days and times are designated in the school calendar. There is no Before/After School Care on days when lunch is not served. This happens when dismissal is before 12:00 p.m.

Section VII: EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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

Pep Squad/Mascot

Pep Squad offers third, fourth and fifth grade students the opportunity to promote school spirit and participate in dance routines. The pep squad/mascot perform at school events and other school functions. Information about participation is available from the school office.

Honor Choir

Students in the third through fifth 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. Misbehavior during practice and in the classroom may result in removal from HCCS Honor Choir.

Flag and Safety Patrol

Students in Grades 4 and 5 serve on the Flag and Safety Patrol Force. This program is in operation to help students leave the school safely and learn/follow flag protocol. Patrols are on duty from 3:20-3:30 pm. Flags are hung prior to the beginning of the school day and removed at the end of the school day. Students are on a rotation schedule with a 4th grader paired with a 5th grade student.

Section VIII: DISCIPLINE (EXPECTED BEHAVIOR) POLICY

General Guidelines

Disciplinary procedures shall be based on Catholic values and uphold the dignity of the human person. The HCCS mission/guidelines should be upheld: *to be friendly, respectful, responsible, and Christ-like*. By working together, the school and family can achieve the vision of helping each student live the Gospel of Jesus Christ and meet his/her full potential as a person created in the image of God.

The primary purpose of discipline is to create a positive environment conducive to learning for all students. Students are to act in such a manner as to make Holy Cross Catholic School a center of Christian social living and to enable themselves to acquire the fullest education possible. ***No student has the right to interfere with the teacher's ability to teach or with the students' ability to learn.*** Behavior that is harmful to the good order of the school, to themselves or to their peers is to be avoided. Unacceptable behavior at school or any school-related activity constitutes the following:

- 1. Disturbing Class:** Any disturbance that interferes with another student's opportunity to learn, including, but not limited to: talking, making noises, out of seat, slamming books, playing with toys, throwing objects, biting, kicking, screaming, etc.
- 2. Insubordination:** Argumentative, uncooperative, refusal to follow directions, ignores or defies authority figures
- 3. General/Blatant Disrespect:** In words or actions to any teacher, aide, other student(s), religious traditions, or any other legitimate authority
- 4. Uniform Violation:** Improperly dressed or not following the uniform dress code policy
- 5. Chewing Gum:** Students may not chew gum at school

Expected Classroom Behavior

- Raise hand and wait to be called upon
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to self
- Have all necessary materials—textbooks, assignments, supplies, etc
- Stay in seat at appropriate times
- Follow directions
- Respect teacher and classmates
- Keep books and other supplies off the floor (safety hazard)
- Leave unnecessary materials at home, such as toys, video games, etc.
- Cell phones are not to be used in the classroom. Remain OFF and in a backpack.
- Keep all textbooks covered.
- Pay for any damage to school property for which they are responsible.

General Classroom Discipline

Each teacher handles classroom discipline. We have adopted a positive redirect form of discipline called Nurtured Hearts. You will be hearing more about this tried and true program throughout the year: The Nurtured Heart Approach® by Howard Glasser—www.ChildrensSuccessFoundation.com. The belief of Howard Glasser is, “Children do not awaken by the fear of punishment. They awaken to their greatness.”

The principal will address consequences for continuous disruptive behavior or severe disruptions which result in an office referral. Consequences include, but are not limited to, principal-student conference, detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension and/or expulsion. Corporal punishment shall not be permitted in the schools of the Diocese of Victoria (*Handbook of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools, Policy 5121*).

Harassment or Bullying

Harassment is contrary to the Catholic faith and detrimental to the education process. 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 (*Handbook of Policies & Procedures for Catholic Schools, Policy 5120 & 5211*).

Threats

Any threat of bodily harm or threat of possession of a weapon shall be taken seriously. Students, parents, and staff shall be responsible to report to the administration any knowledge of verbal or written threats. Any such threats and any false reports of such threats may result in immediate suspension or expulsion.

Consequences

The principal will deal with severe disruptions and/or behavior in a manner appropriate to the age of the student and the severity of his/her behavior. Methods used by the principal may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- Student/principal conference
- Student/parent/principal conference
- Detention after school
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Expulsion (dismissal from school)

Suspension and Expulsion

A student may be suspended and/or expelled for reasons including, but not limited to, the following:

- Habitual misconduct that is disruptive to 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; and Conduct, whether inside or outside the school, is a reflection on the school.

Therefore, keep in mind that the students of our Catholic schools are Catholic school students at all times. A student who engages in conduct, whether inside or outside the school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school, may be disciplined by school officials.

Only the principal or his/her authorized representative may suspend a student.

The principal must notify the student and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) of the reason for the suspension, the duration of the suspension, and requirements for reinstatement.

Only the principal is authorized to expel a student. The principal will follow the following procedures PRIOR to an expulsion:

- Confer with the student, the teacher(s), the parent(s) or guardian(s), and the pastor regarding the problem with a view to resolution and reconciliation;
- Advise parents, in writing, of the decision, the effective date of expulsion and their rights under these policies;
- Parents must be notified of their right to appeal the action according to procedures specified by Policy 5500:Complaint Procedure for Students and Parents; and
- Inform the Superintendent of Schools and submit to the Superintendent of Schools a copy of the official letter of expulsion to parents (*Handbook of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools, Policy 5114*).

Expected Playground Behavior

- Play in designated areas only
- Follow directions of the on-duty adult
- Keep playground free of all litter
- Use playground equipment properly
- Always be respectful toward other students and the on-duty adult

Cafeteria Procedures

- All students will walk through the cafeteria line. Those not purchasing anything will just go through and then go to their assigned table.
- Students who brought their lunch will get their lunches unpacked and ready to eat while waiting for classmates.
- When the last member of their class family is seated, the class will say the Blessing or they may say it before entering the cafeteria.
- Monitors are in the cafeteria to ensure that students focus on eating, rather than socializing.
- Students who would like seconds or the extras that the cafeteria sells can do so, once they have completed their initial lunch serving. They should ask a monitor for permission to do so.
- Students should not eat off of another student's plate or from another student's lunch from home.
- Food from the cafeteria should not be taken out of the cafeteria.
- Students are to clean the area where they sit. No trash should be on or under the table upon leaving.

Section IX: DRESS CODE: UNIFORM POLICY (PK3-5)

Personal Appearance

- Cleanliness and neatness are absolute requirements
- Any style of dress, article of clothing or hairstyle which interferes with, or disrupts the learning process is unacceptable (Examples: feathers, mohawks, dyed hair).
- Males must have hair out of their eyes.
- Shirts must be tucked in at all times
- No visible tattoos (even play tattoos)

Uniforms

Uniforms express pride and spirit in your school. See section below for uniform guidelines.

Girls	Boys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White/Hunter Green/Navy knit shirt • Khaki/Plaid/Navy walking shorts, skort, capris • Navy, black, or brown belt (For early childhood students, elastic waistband pants may be worn, and belts are not usually required.) • Solid blue or black sweater for classrooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White/Hunter Green/Navy knit shirt • Khaki or Navy walking shorts • Navy, black, or brown belt (For early childhood students, elastic waistband pants may be worn, and belts are not usually required.) • Solid blue or black sweater for classrooms
Girls Church (NO Khaki)	Boys Church (NO Khaki)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navy conbow tie • Plaid or solid navy jumper • White button-up rounded collar shirt • Navy or white socks • May wear dress flats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navy tie • Navy slacks • White oxford shirt • Navy or white socks

Shoes

- Athletic shoes must be compliment the school uniform (No lights, no bling, no wheels or high tops)
- No boots may be worn (unless stated as a special event)
- Students must wear socks with their school uniform, and they may be white, gray, black, or navy colored socks.
- **Tennis shoes or other footwear must be predominantly SOLID-COLORED navy blue, black, brown, white, or gray.**
- **Yellow, red, pink, or any other BRIGHT colors that are a distraction are not permitted, only as an accent color.**

- Black, white, or navy leggings or tights (if they meet the sock tops) are allowed.

Hair

- Boys' hair length must be above the collar; must not cover the ears and may be just above the ears. Hair in the front must not touch the eyebrows. Hair is not to be in ponytails, braids or **with shaved sides** of Mohawk type styles.
- All students the bangs must be above the eyes. For girls, hair must be kept out of the face with barrettes, clips, or headbands.
- Severe haircuts and styles that are disruptive to the learning environment are not allowed.
- Girls' and boys' hair color must be of a natural color, not dyed, bleached or highlighted.
- The teacher and / or principal will contact parents regarding their child's hairstyle when it is approved or is inappropriate. Students may be sent home to remedy the situation.

Jewelry

- Jewelry can be one necklace with a small religious pendant, one small ring, a watch and for girls one pair of stud earrings.
- Earrings may only be worn in the ear lobe. One earring per lobe is allowed.
- Boys are not allowed to wear earrings of any kind.
- A student may wear one colored wrist band for an appropriate cause.
- Students may be asked to remove any jewelry that might be disruptive to the learning environment.

MAKE-UP, NAIL POLISH, TEMPORARY TATTOOS AND FALSE NAILS ARE NOT PERMITTED

Spirit Day - Friday

- Holy Cross Catholic School spirit shirts must be worn
- Other approved school event shirts may be worn
- Blue jeans or shorts may be worn with a spirit shirt
- Belts must be worn if pants have belt loops except for PreK and Kinder

Clothing Do's and Don'ts

- When wearing the uniforms, the shirts are to be tucked in at all times.
- Shorts or skorts are to be no shorter than 4 inches above the knee. Jumpers, skirts, or dresses should be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee, and girls should wear shorts underneath a jumper or skirt.
- Ankle leggings are not allowed. Tights (full footed) are allowed in the winter.
- No cargo pants (side of leg pockets), jeggings, or leggings allowed.
- Blue jeans (on Fridays with a spirit shirt) are to be solid and not tight, frayed, holes, cut-offs or low-waisted are not allowed..

Section X: SCHOOL SAFETY

Catholic schools of the Diocese of Victoria provide a safe environment for all individuals. Routine drills are conducted for protection against fire, inclement weather, other disasters, and intruders. When the alarm is sounded for a drill, students must quickly and silently go to their assigned places without running. They are to remain there until the signal to return is given. Escape routes are posted throughout the school buildings and in all classrooms. Fire extinguishers are inspected regularly to insure proper working condition. Routine maintenance is provided by qualified and trained personnel in accordance with the manufacturer specifications and state statutes. The school will comply with the local fire codes.

Disaster Procedures:

Accidents

Accidents in the school building or on the school grounds during any school-related activity should be reported to the person in charge and the school office personnel. Proper medical action will be taken.

Fire

Each school will maintain close contact with the local fire Department and work out details for fire drills and for prevention (*Handbook of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools, Policy 1390*).

Every occupant of the school building should be familiar with the method of sounding the fire alarm. The fire alarm system should be checked regularly, and some alternate system of alerting the occupants should be established in case of alarm failure.

The principal will determine the fastest possible means of reporting a fire and designate a responsible person to do this.

Schools must conduct a fire drill at least once a month. The first of these must be conducted within the first two days of the school term (unless otherwise noted). Accurate records must be kept regarding the dates drills were conducted and the time required to completely vacate the building. All occupants shall use a regular exit route, but an

alternate route must also be specified for use in the event the regular route is blocked by debris, smoke, or fire.

Drills should be conducted when students are in various area of the school, such as gymnasium, cafeteria, etc. Occasionally a regular exit should be blocked during a drill so that students will have practice in using the alternate route. Drills should always be conducted without advance notice to students or staff.

During the fire drills, students should follow these regulations:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds.
2. Close windows and doors.
3. Walk to the assigned area briskly, in single file at all times, and in silence.
4. Return to the building, when the signal is given.
5. Teachers carry attendance roster in order to account for all students in the class.

3 Bells Leave the building immediately, close doors

2 Bells Return to building

1 Bell Halt and wait for instructions

The principal is responsible for carrying out the requirements of the Fire Department relative to fire prevention measures and equipment.

Tornado

Schools should conduct periodic tornado drills. The procedures are:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds.
2. Walk briskly to the assigned place.
3. Kneel, face wall, and put hands over head.

5 Short Bells Go into assigned hallway area and into position

1 Bell Sit quietly

2 Bells Return to classroom

Crisis Management

Each school will develop and implement a crisis management plan (including, but not limited to, the following areas: power failure, hostages, shootings, intruders, suicide, and discipline.) All faculty and staff must be informed and oriented to the plan. The plan must include instructions to teachers on classroom procedures to include such things as lock doors, pull shades, and seat students on the floor or below window height until an all-clear notification is received.

Student Illness

In case of student illness or similar emergency, the school office will notify the parent or guardian to make arrangements for the child to be picked up immediately. When a parent cannot be contacted, persons who are listed for emergency contact will be notified.

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 school-sponsored and supervised school activities.

Section XI: HEALTH AND WELLNESS

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*. Form is available in the school office. 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.

Head Lice

While we follow state guidelines for pediculosis (head lice), Holy Cross Catholic School has chosen to formally adopt and enforce our accreditation agency, TCCB-ED's, strongly recommended "Nit-Free" policy. "Nit-free" means the child is to be **free of nits and lice** on their head. With the evolution of the super lice and their resistance to normal chemical treatments, *HCCS will require students be nit-free at all times.*

Students found to have head lice will be sent home for treatment immediately. Parent/guardian is required to bring the student to the office to be checked by school personnel **before** being dropped off and returning to class. School office personnel will check to ensure that the child is free of lice **and** nits. Students may return to class if cleared by office. Students not cleared will have to return home until nit-free. 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 as follows (new table):

Condition/Symptom	What You Can Do	May Return to School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral temperature of 100 degrees or more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of liquids • Get rest • Seek a doctor's advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be fever-free for 24 hours without fever-suppressing medication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vomiting, nausea, or severe abdominal pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to get your child to drink in very small amounts. Even if vomiting continues, they're still absorbing some of what you give them. Try ice chips, sips of water, sports drinks, or oral rehydration solutions like CeraLyte, Enfalyte, or Pedialyte. • Seek a doctor's advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symptom-free for 24 hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sore throat, acute cold, or persistent cough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek a doctor's advice. • Medication can't cure colds or flu, but honey, hard candies or cough drops can help relieve a sore throat caused by coughing. Because of choking hazards, they should only be given to children over age 4. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symptom-free
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redness, inflammation, or discharge from the eyes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek a doctor's advice. • The eye infection conjunctivitis — often called pinkeye — is common in young kids. It's usually contagious, and breakouts can sweep through preschools and playgrounds. But even teens and adults can get pinkeye. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written physician release
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute skin rashes or eruptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to figure out whether the rash is due to coming into contact with a common irritant such as poison ivy, chemicals, soaps, nickel jewelry, or a pet. • Exclude until drainage is contained and completely covered with a clean, dry bandage. • Clean the skin. • Treat the symptoms. • Seek a doctor's advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written physician release

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Swollen glands around the jaws, ears, or neck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● List any symptoms your child has been experiencing, and for how long. ● Make a list of all recent exposures to possible sources of infection. ● Seek a doctor's advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Written physician release
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Suspected scabies or impetigo or weeping skin lesions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seek a doctor's advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Written physician release
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ear ache 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Place a cold pack or warm compress over your child's ear. ● Keep child hydrated. ● Seek a doctor's advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Symptom free OR ● Written physician release
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pediculosis (head lice) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply a lot of conditioner to your child's wet hair. Rub it into the scalp and along the hair shafts. ● Leave the conditioner on for at least 15 minutes. ● Use the lice comb to remove the conditioner from your child's hair. ● Comb your child's entire head thoroughly at least twice. ● Seek a doctor's advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lice and nit free OR ● Written physician release
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diarrhea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Helpful link: https://www.webmd.com/children/guide/diarrhea-treatment ● Seek a doctor's advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diarrhea-free for 24 hours without the use of medication. OR ● Written physician release.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Any suspected contagious disease 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seek a doctor's advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Written physician release
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Other symptoms of serious illness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seek a doctor's advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Written physician release

Basic First Aid

Washing with soap and water, use of ice packs and/or bandages are the treatments used for minor injuries. Parents are called in the event of a head injury or any injury judged to be of a more serious nature.

The school is responsible for first aid only, i.e., that immediate care be given to a student whose sickness or injury occurs on the school premises during school hours.

Parent/guardian is contacted, and if unable to come for a student, persons named on the

emergency sheet will be contacted. If the student is in need of medical care and the parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the principal will follow procedures on the emergency sheet.

TCCB-ED requires two full-time employees of the school be certified in first aid and two who are certified in CPR. Holy Cross complies with this policy. First Aid is rendered according to the Red Cross Aid book. All staff members adhere to the procedures outlined in the Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan.

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.

AIDS Policy

Based on the current opinion of the scientific and medical community, AIDS is caused by a virus known as HTLV-III/LAV which attacks the body's immune system, thereby leaving the individual vulnerable to opportunistic infections. A person afflicted with AIDS suffers a variety of virus and /or fungus-caused illnesses that debilitates the body resulting in a substantially high mortality rate often within three years after diagnosis. The spread of the virus has occurred through the exchange of bodily fluids (blood, blood by-products, or semen) between individuals, and no evidence exists to indicate the spread of the virus through casual contact.

Recognition of a student or employee with AIDS is not reason alone enough for exclusion from school. Each person will be evaluated as an individual case, and exclusion from the school and exclusion from the school environment will be based upon the person's physical limitations, psychological activity patterns, and the opinion of a panel of responsible persons designated by the Superintendent of Schools. In the case of a student, the panel shall be composed of the student's parent, the school's physician, the school's nurse, the student's physician, and the principal of the school where the child attends or will attend. The Superintendent may appoint additional persons if he/she deems it appropriate and necessary. In the case of an employee, the panel shall be composed of the school's physician, the school's nurse, the employee's physician, the principal of the school, and a representative of the Superintendent's Office.

If a student has been diagnosed as having AIDS and has any of the following conditions, he/s he shall be excluded from attending school:

1. Vomiting
2. Lack of toilet training
3. Tendency to bite
4. Open sores
5. Other medical conditions conducive to spreading the virus

Cafeteria

Holy Cross Catholic School offers nutritious lunches for PreK-3 through 5th grade. 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.

Lunch prices are as follows:

PreK-3, PreK-4, and Kindergarten	\$4.00 per tray.
1st Grade through 5th Grade and adult trays	\$4.00 per tray.
Extra milk and sides	\$0.50 each.
Juice	\$0.25 each
Extra main entrée	\$1.00 each.

Students may bring lunch or purchase a tray from the cafeteria. **Please refrain from bringing outside restaurant food for individual students. Students may not bring soft drinks.** Visitor/Guest lunches will be handled through the front office.

Child Abuse Laws

Holy Cross Catholic School abides by the Child Abuse Prevention, Adoption, and Family Services Act of the state of Texas. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services. **All personnel and volunteers who work with or have contact with the students are required to attend the Safe Environment training and undergo a criminal background check as mandated by the Diocese of Victoria.** In addition, HCCS follows the guidelines promulgated by the Office of Child and Youth Protection to govern the Safe Environment Program/Transportation Policy for the Diocese of Victoria.

Federal, State, and Local Regulations

Holy Cross Catholic School follows 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.

Section XII: GENERAL INFORMATION

Curriculum and Instruction

Holy Cross Catholic School holds students responsible for mastering the knowledge and skills in the curriculum of the Diocese of Victoria and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills Curriculum of the State of Texas with which it is aligned.

Visitors to the School

For reasons of safety, **ALL** visitors to the school are required to sign-in upon arrival at the school office, receive a “visitor badge” and sign-out upon departure from the school campus leaving their “visitor badge” with the front desk person. The current visitor information system that Holy Cross Catholic School uses is the Raptor Visitor Information System. Visitors are asked to provide a government-issued identification card (generally a Texas Driver License), which is scanned, and a clearance visitor badge is printed. If a visitor is going into the classrooms or anywhere children are located other than the cafeteria, they must have a Raptor badge and also be Safe Environment (SE) trained/compliant. Holy Cross Catholic School offers numerous SE trainings. Please ask the office for more 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 Thursday and Friday 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.

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.

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 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. Each teacher has an email address which can be found on the HCCS website: www.bcholycrossschool.org. The principal is usually 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 website. **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. In addition to the progress reports and report cards that are sent home, parents can check student grades via Parent Web. For more information, please contact the school office.

Eagle News

The school sends a weekly newsletter home each Friday in paper form and/or via Parent Alert. It is also posted on the HCCS website.

Parent Alerts

Holy Cross Catholic School utilizes a parent communication system that sends messages via text to parent/guardians' phones.

Lockers

Each student is assigned a "locker" for the storage of materials. (NOTE: During COVID, this practice was modified.) 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 may 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 there is an absolute emergency or specific instruction from the teacher. Students will assume responsibility and applicable discipline for forgotten homework, etc. A student, under no circumstances, may call home to be picked up for illness or other reasons. 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 upholding 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(s) should contact the teacher or advisor in charge to resolve dispute or concern.

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

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

Holy Cross Guidelines for Success



- **Be Responsible**
- **Be Respectful**
- **Be Safe**

WWJD

**Holy Cross Catholic School Parent-Student Handbook
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
2023 - 2024****

Child(ren) _____ Grade _____
_____ Grade _____
_____ Grade _____

My child(ren) and I have received and read the 2023-2024 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)

Signature _____

Date _____

Please return to Front Office by September 1, 2023.

Thank you for your support,

*Linda Bradford
Principal*

