Bridgeport Catholic Academy School
Parent/Student Handbook
2026-2027

Bridgeport Catholic Academy is recognized by the Archdiocese of Chicago and the Illinois State Board of Education. Bridgeport Catholic Academy, as a member of the Archdiocese of Chicago, adheres to all the policies and guidelines established by the Office of Catholic Schools. The regulations and procedures to be found in this book are an expansion on the local level of those policies and guidelines. Statements in this handbook are subject to amendment with or without notice. The school Principal will attempt to keep the school families informed of all changes as soon as possible. Some changes might have to be made immediately due to unforeseen circumstances.

Bridgeport Catholic Academy

3700 South Lowe Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60609

Mrs. Gina Geisert, Principal

Mrs. Samantha Cesar, Assistant Principal

Mrs. Amanda Canino, Office Manager

Main Telephone Number – 773-376-6223

Welcome

Dear Bridgeport Catholic Academy Families:

We are happy to welcome you to Bridgeport Catholic Academy. As your child begins a new year, we begin a cooperative alliance. Our school philosophy is built on the premise that parents and guardians are the primary educators of our children. You have entrusted us to share in this important responsibility. Only by parents and teachers working together, with mutual respect, can we hope to achieve what is best for each child at Bridgeport Catholic Academy. Please take advantage of every opportunity to work with the school so that together we may foster a loving, spiritual, and academically challenging environment for all children.

This handbook has been compiled to acquaint you with the policies and procedures of Bridgeport Catholic Academy for students in grades Preschool through 8th grade. All sections apply to all students. Please read the handbook carefully with your child (if age appropriate) and rely on its contents for future reference during the school year.

Psalm 121:3

Dear Lord, we trust in You to keep our children safe throughout this school year. We pray that they will enjoy and excel in their education. We declare Your divine covering over every child, from the crown of their heads to the soles of their feet. In this school year, we release them to You and ask that You watch over them in Jesus Name, Amen.

Yours in Christ,
Mrs. Gina Geisert
Faculty and Staff Members of PK3-8th grade

This handbook is subject to change per the discretion of the Principal and Bridgeport Catholic Academy.

Bridgeport Catholic Academy Staff
2025-2026

Administration
Pastor-Fr. James Hurlbert
Principal- Mrs. Gina Geisert
Assistant Principal- Mrs. Samantha Tracy Cesar

Teachers
Pre-K 3 Lead Teacher- Mrs. Alicia Meehan
Pre K 4 Lead Teacher- Mrs. Tressa Fasula
Kindergarten-Mrs. Jackie Lagoni
1st Grade-Ms. Mary LiFonti
2nd Grade-Mrs. Lisa Grabowski
3rd Grade-Mrs. Karen Mizera
4th/5th Grade Language Arts/Literature-Mrs. Bridget McCarthy
4th/5th Grade Math/Science- Mrs. Samantha Cesar
6th Grade Homeroom,6-8 ELA - Ms. Megan Young
7th Grade Homeroom, 6-8 Math-Mrs. Katie Steinkraus
8th Grade Homeroom,6-8 Science -Mrs. Gina Geisert
6th-8th Grade Social Studies - Mr. Patrick McGonagle
Gym-Mr. Kal Moy
Humanities-Mrs. Mary Bell
Title I- Ms. Morgan Zifchak

Support Staff
Office Manager-Mrs. Amanda Canino
Secretary- Mrs. Rebecca Marinopolous

Teacher Aides
Mrs. Sue Sheppard
Mrs. Patty Zeimys
Mrs. Joette Miller
Maintenance
Mr. Tim Smith

This Handbook is designed to provide a clear, uniform set of expectations for our school community.

About Bridgeport Catholic Academy

Bridgeport Catholic Academy was established in 1985 by several parishes in the Bridgeport community of Chicago. Through a consolidation of educational resources, the participating parishes were able to offer a significantly improved primary education program. All Saints/St Anthony, St Bridget, St David, St George, Immaculate Conception, St John Nepomecene, St. Mary of Perpetual Help, and Nativity of our Lord parishes all figure prominently in BCA's ancestry. Bridgeport Catholic Academy is committed to preparing children for life in a respectful and supportive environment by living out our mission of providing a rigorous education centered in Christ. We are a vibrant and growing Catholic school with a dedicated faculty and staff.

When your child becomes part of the Bridgeport Catholic Academy community, they will learn to be:

Independent Thinkers with the academic fundamentals, critical thinking skills, personal values, and confidence necessary to solve problems independently, both in and out of the classroom.

Young Leaders with the specific life skills and characteristics – such as integrity, self-confidence, accountability, time-management, teamwork, and self-direction – that will position them for success in high school and beyond.

Confident Communicators who read and write at a level beyond that of the typical student at competing schools, empowering them to be confident and agile communicators who can shape and marshal words into meaningful and impactful ideas.

Open-Minded Individuals who work alongside a diverse student body, inspiring them from an early age to see past skin color, religious affiliation and economic status as precursors to the value of another human being.

Faithful Followers who learn the teachings of the Catholic Church and allow their faith to be alive and vibrant and permeate all they are and do, in the classroom and out.

BRIDGEPORT CATHOLIC ACADEMY MISSION

Mission Statement

At Bridgeport Catholic Academy, we offer an exceptional education from Pre-School through 8th Grade, seamlessly integrating academic excellence with strong faith-based principles. Our mission is to foster a nurturing and inclusive learning environment grounded in Catholic values, ensuring each child receives an education that promotes intellectual growth, moral integrity, and spiritual development.

We are committed to educating the whole person by:

- Promoting Academic Excellence: Providing a rigorous curriculum that challenges and inspires students to achieve their highest potential.
- Cultivating Moral Integrity: Instilling strong ethical values and a sense of responsibility in every student.
- Encouraging Spiritual Growth: Nurturing each child's spiritual journey through faith, prayer, and community service.

Through a balanced focus on faith, academics, and service, we prepare our students to become compassionate, responsible leaders who embody the teachings of Christ in their everyday lives.

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD & ST. GABRIEL PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Nativity of Our Lord & St. Gabriel Parish Council is to serve our Lord Jesus Christ, for whom our Parish is named, by functioning as a liaison between the pastor/deacon and the parishioners to assess the present and future needs of the parish community.

GOVERNANCE

Bridgeport Catholic Academy operates under the Archdiocese of Chicago. Therefore, Bridgeport Catholic Academy adopts in whole all policies set forth in the Educational Policy Manual for School Administrators published by the Office of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Chicago. The school administrator, faculty and governance board are required to follow all policies of the Archdiocese. Additional local policies may be developed to govern the operation of the school but may not be contrary to those set policies and procedures established by the Chicago Archdiocese.

ILLINOIS STATE RECOGNITION / ADOPTION OF STATE REQUIREMENTS

All Archdiocese Schools must be registered with the State of Illinois and be recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). School communities and their principals must comply with State requirements annually in order to maintain ISBE registration. These requirements include meeting administrative deadlines as determined by ISBE to ensure compliance and recognition.

STUDENT AND PARENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Rights:

- To be safe at school
- To be treated fairly, courteously, and respectfully
- To bring complaints or concerns to the school principal or staff for resolution
- To tell his/her side of the story before receiving a consequence
- To be told the reason(s) for any disciplinary actions

Student Responsibilities:

- To read and become familiar with this policy
- To attend school daily, prepare for class, and complete class and homework assignments to the best of his/her ability
- To know and follow school rules and instructions given by the school principal, teachers, and other staff
- To inform school staff about any dangerous behavior or bullying that occurs at school, on the way to and from school, or in the school community
- To bring to school only those materials that are allowed
- To treat everyone in the school community with respect
- To respect school property, community property, and the property of others

Parent/Guardian Rights:

- To be actively involved in their child's education
- To be treated fairly and respectfully by the school principal, teachers, and other staff
- To have access to information about school policies and procedures
- To be notified if their child is disciplined for inappropriate/disruptive behavior and informed of the consequences assigned
- To receive information about their child's academic and behavioral progress

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

- To read and become familiar with the policies.
- To make sure their child attends school regularly, on time, and to notify the school before the school day begins, when possible, if their child is absent.
- To give the school accurate and current contact information.
- To tell school officials about concerns or complaints respectfully and in a timely manner.
- To work with the school principal, teachers, and other staff to address any academic or behavioral concerns regarding their child.
- To talk with their child about the behavior expected at school.
- To support their child's learning and school activities at home.
- To be respectful and courteous to staff, other parents, guardians, and students.
- To respect other students' privacy rights.

ADMISSION POLICY

Policy ES 130.1 Archdiocesan schools admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students in these schools. Archdiocesan schools do not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, or national and ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, loan programs, athletic or other school-administered programs.

Policy ES 130.2 Schools may admit students who are not Catholic provided that these students will not displace Catholic students and that both students and parents clearly understand that participation in Catholic religious instruction and school activities related to the Catholic identity of the school are required.

Policy ES 132.1 The Archdiocese of Chicago shall follow the State of Illinois school age requirements for admission.

Enrollment of Non-Citizens - Catholic schools shall admit students regardless of their citizenship status, provided that the student(s) meet all other admissions requirements in accordance with applicable state and federal laws to the extent that such anti-discrimination statutes do not conflict with the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church.

Transfer Students

Certified copies of transfer students' records are requested within 14 days of enrollment. Bridgeport Catholic Academy sends unofficial records of students transferring out to other schools within 10 days of the request. Official records are sent once all financial obligations have been met.

All new and transfer students are welcome and will be accepted on a probationary period of 90 school days at Bridgeport Catholic Academy. During this probationary period, students are expected to maintain passing grades, have no major disciplinary issues, or require accommodations that the school physically or financially is incapable of supporting. Students with special learning needs may be accepted if the school has the staff and ability to make the necessary accommodations for the child's academic growth and success. During the 90 day probationary period, if the school determines the student is unable to perform with adequate growth in this environment, any prepaid tuition will be prorated and refunded.

Admission of any child is dependent on the assumption that parents or legal guardians and the child agree to abide by the policies, rules, and regulations of the Archdiocese of Chicago and Bridgeport Catholic Academy.

Bridgeport Catholic Academy will do its best using all available resources to provide programs for students with special needs. If a student's needs exceed our capabilities, Bridgeport Catholic Academy will make every effort to assist parents in finding an appropriate school to meet those special needs.

Pre-Kindergarten 3 and 4 year old Admission: Children must be three (3) or four (4) years of age by September 1 of the school year in which they are enrolling to enter Pre-Kindergarten. They must be fully toilet trained. Specifically, they must be able to use the toilet completely independent of adult help. The use of Pull-Ups is not accepted.

Kindergarten Admission: In accordance with the School Code of Illinois, a child must be five (5) years old on or before September 1 of the school year in which they are enrolling.

Returning Students: Every student must be registered each year he or she attends Bridgeport Catholic Academy. The school office will provide a registration form. This form, along with a signed tuition contract, must be completed before a child is officially registered. The registration fee must also accompany the registration form.

All students enrolling in Bridgeport Catholic Academy will need the following:

1. An official copy of the child's birth certificate.
2. Baptismal record if baptized.
3. A record of compliance with city and state health requirements.
4. Bridgeport Catholic Academy will request all records from the former school, including health and discipline records, to be transferred as stated above.

Health Records

In accordance with regulations set by the State of Illinois Department of Human Services and the State of Illinois Department of Public Health, the following health records are required for all students:

Examinations

The State of Illinois requires every child entering school for the first time in kindergarten or first grade, as well as all students entering sixth grade, to have a complete physical and dental examination. These examinations must be completed within one year prior to the first day of school.

Immunizations

Illinois law requires parents/guardians to provide proof of immunization against communicable diseases. This documentation must be on file for every student.

Proof of Immunity

The Illinois Department of Public Health requires proof of immunity for the following: Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, Mumps, and Rubella.

School Exclusion

According to Illinois law, any student whose parent/guardian has not submitted proof of required health examinations and immunizations will be excluded from school. All required documentation must be submitted by October 15. After this date, students without proper records will not be permitted to attend school. Multiple notices will be sent to families as reminders.

In compliance with the State of Illinois Department of Human Services and the State of Illinois Department of Public Health, the following medical and dental requirements must be met:

1. The State of Illinois requires every student to have a complete physical examination upon entering preschool, kindergarten, sixth grade, and when transferring from another school, regardless of grade level.
2. Immunization records for all students must be current prior to the first day of school. Students whose records are not up to date will be excluded from school until proper documentation is submitted.
3. Diabetes screening is required as part of all school physicals (Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1st, 5th, and 9th grades).
4. An eye examination is required for all children entering kindergarten or first grade for the first time.
5. Dental examinations are required for students in kindergarten, second grade, and sixth grade. These exams must be completed within 18 months prior to May 15 of the current school year.

TUITION

Financial Overview

The actual cost to educate a child at Bridgeport Catholic Academy School is over $10,000 per year! It is important that parents and guardians realize the tremendous amount of work that is done on the part of the school administration to subsidize this actual cost to make tuition affordable through financial aid to the parents.

Such efforts must be matched with parental cooperation in the following areas:

1. Keeping financial obligations current
2. Volunteering in various ways throughout the year
3. Cooperating with administration and staff
4. Participating actively in all fundraising events

Lack of cooperation in these areas may result in the dismissal of the child from Bridgeport Catholic Academy.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition, fees and directives are listed on the parent/guardian contract and information forms available in the school office and/or on our school website. Parents must pay the registration fee when registration takes place.

Families are expected to pay by the last day of each month through our online tuition payment portal, FACTS. Payments are also accepted in a variety of forms—cash, money order, check payments by mail or in the office. Payments made that are sent or given to the office will be added directly to their FACTS account. Payments will be applied to the oldest outstanding bill. For example, the registration, books, materials, and other fees must be paid before the first tuition payment. Parents are expected to have payments up-to-date within 5 days of payment due date or your child can be excluded from school until the monthly payment is made. Failure to pay on time will result in a $35 late fee. Checks returned unpaid for non-sufficient funds will be assessed an additional $50 (per check returned). Payment of the returned check and fees must be made by cash or money order. In instances where we receive more than one NSF check, the school requires that all future payments be made by cash or money order. Every family must have a FACTS Tuition Management account in place, which expands the payment opportunities for families and simplifies payment tracking and management for both the school and families.

Delinquent Accounts

1. Any family that is delinquent in their account must **contact Mrs. Canino** immediately and make necessary arrangements to make the account current.

2. School families who have missed two monthly payments and have not made suitable arrangements with Mrs.Canino within fourteen (14) days of the second missed payment will be informed that their child(ren) may not attend school until the outstanding balance is paid in full.

3. Non-admission of students due to tuition delinquency: School families failing to pay tuition according to the agreement which they made with the school, or who have been unwilling to make suitable alternative arrangements with the school, will be informed that their child(ren) will not be readmitted to our school.

4. Any tuition accounts that are outstanding in June will necessitate withholding report cards, diplomas, or transfer papers. Accounts include but are not limited to extended day care costs, lunch, and tuition

commitments.

TRANSFERRING RECORDS/WITHDRAWAL

When a student transfers to another school, the school office should be notified at least two weeks in advance. It is necessary to know the name and address of the receiving school, as well as the new address of the family. All permanent records will be forwarded directly to the receiving school within ten days of the request. All financial accounts must be completed before records will be forwarded.

Bridgeport Catholic Academy School will release student records to another school, when an official request is made for the records. This is usually provided to the parent for signature, at the time of enrolling a student. This administrative procedure will also be applied to graduating students' records.

CORE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The principal, as the instructional leader of the school, is responsible for the achievement of the purpose of Catholic education, i.e., to educate young people in a Catholic community where human culture and knowledge are enlightened and enlivened by Catholic faith and shared in a spirit of freedom and love.

All locally written curriculum, developed cooperatively by the Principal and faculty, is infused with Gospel values, and is consistent with the curriculum design and framework of the Office of Catholic Schools.

Bridgeport Catholic Academy instructional program includes: Religion, English/Language Arts, Reading/Literature, Vocabulary, Physical Education, Health, Mathematics, Biological, Physical and Social Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts, and Health. Catholic Social Teachings as well as areas that address societal ills, i.e., substance abuse, communicable diseases, violence, etc., are integrated into the curriculum. Core Instruction is provided in the English Language.

Instruction includes the content, skills, values and processes necessary for students to master curriculum goals and objectives and the support for each student to be successful. The instructional program at Bridgeport Catholic Academy is continually evaluated and revised, as needed, to maximize learning opportunities.

Comprehensive Health Curriculum: As mandated by the State of Illinois, Bridgeport Catholic Academy provides health education in grades K-8 at age appropriate levels. The program addresses many aspects of wellness, human ecology, body systems, human sexuality, growth and development, personal hygiene habits, mental health and available help resources, information on communicable diseases, safety and substance abuse and information on HIV/AIDS. Topics are introduced at age-appropriate levels and may be integrated into the Science, Physical Education and/or other appropriate curriculum areas. Parents/Guardians may choose to have their child/ren excluded from some topics on Human Sexuality.

Additional Programs

- Foreign Language – Twice a week, children in pre-K -8th grade will receive instruction in Spanish language.
- Humanities Program – Weekly classes providing an integration of art, music and history.
- Physical Education – Gym classes are conducted twice a week (Tuesdays/Thursday) for students in grades K-8 grade. Instruction includes exercises for a healthy body and games that allow for continued motor and skill development.
- Technology - Grades K-8 will have access to Chromebooks and ipads in their classrooms. Students will work with their classroom teacher to incorporate technology into their daily lessons/projects.
- Title I Math and Reading Program – This federally funded program provides small group

instruction and individual tutoring for students in grades K-8 who need additional instruction and reinforcement of math and reading skills.

- Academic Counseling – The school has the services of counselors funded through the federal government. Students are referred by Title I Teacher.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

***Our Mass schedule has been set for the year. We ask our families to schedule and attend mass weekly on their own, as well.**

The Bridgeport Catholic Academy religious education program emphasizes the building of community of faith by teaching students to understand and to live in accordance with the doctrine and practices of the Catholic Church, to participate actively in Catholic liturgical life, and to dedicate themselves to serving others, not only at home, school, and in their parishes, but ultimately within society at large.

All students are required to participate in all aspects of the religious education program including all prayer and worship services.

The Bridgeport Catholic Academy religious curriculum presents children with accurate and comprehensive religious instruction based on the following:

Catechesis in Human Sexuality and Sexual Morality: In accordance with Archdiocesan policy, BCA incorporates the authentic Catholic teachings regarding family living, human sexuality, and sexual morality into both its religion and science curricula in a manner appropriate to the age and maturity of the students.

Prayer: Prayer is an essential and daily part of each day at BCA. The day begins and ends with prayer and students pray frequently throughout the school day. Prayer services are scattered throughout the year as marked on the yearly mass calendar. Students in 3rd-8th grade have opportunities to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Students also participate in Eucharistic adoration on a regular basis. Mass is celebrated once a week for students in PreK-8th grade as marked on the calendar. Parents, family, and friends are most welcome and encouraged to be part of this important time.

Sacramental Instruction: Students in second grade are prepared for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. Eighth grade students prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation. Parents are required to attend informational meetings during the year in which their child is being prepared to receive a sacrament. Participation in these meetings will strengthen the efforts of all. Failure to attend these meetings may disqualify the child from receiving the sacrament.

Service: Students assist in liturgical celebrations through lectoring, altar serving, and gift presentation. During the year, different classes participate in various projects. The purpose of these projects is to encourage students to be aware of those in need to practice responding to those needs in compassion.

This curriculum offers daily religious instruction including Catholic doctrine, scripture, morality, lives of the saints, social justice, as well as preparation for Liturgy. Each year, the students at Bridgeport Catholic Academy have a particular focus of study in terms of Catholic Doctrine and Tradition.

Parents' Role in Faith Formation: Religious formation goes far beyond the formal instruction of Catholic doctrine and traditions. It involves leading our young people to a life centered on Christ. This is where our partnership is essential. Parents are the first and foremost educators of their children. They are the first to communicate the faith to their children through example and instruction.

Non-Catholic students are welcomed at Bridgeport Catholic Academy School. The non-Catholic student is expected to understand and agree that Bridgeport Catholic Academy exists to educate in the framework of

Catholic values.

Non-Catholic students must participate in the Religion classes and liturgical services scheduled for students during the school year.

HOMEWORK

Students in grades 2-8 will receive an assignment notebook. Each day students are to write down all of their homework in this notebook. This is one way for teachers to communicate with parents. Homework for middle school students can also be found on Google Classroom. Parents are asked to review the assignments and completed work.

The following chart indicates a maximum total amount of homework (historically) to be given daily in each grade:

1st Grade – 10-15 minutes	5th Grade - 50 minutes
2nd Grade – 20-25 minutes	6th Grade – 60 minutes
3rd Grade – 30 minutes	7th Grade – 70 minutes
4th Grade - 40 minutes	8th Grade – 80 minutes

The above homework time does not include independent reading time.

If a student is receiving considerably less or more than the suggested times above, it is strongly encouraged to discuss the matter with the child's teacher.

PLEASE do not accept sloppy or incomplete work from your child. We are striving for excellence – it is up to all of us to encourage our children to stick with it until they get it right!

GRADING SCALE

The following codes are to be used on progress reports and report cards:

Achievement mark:

A+ = Superior	A +	99-100
A = Superior	A	95-98
A - = Superior	A-	93-94
B+ = Above Average	B+	91-92
B = Above Average	B	87-90
B- = Above Average	B-	85-86
C+ = Average	C+	83-84
C = Average	C	79-82
C- = Average	C-	77-78
D+ = Below Average	D+	75-76
D = Below Average	D	71-74
D- = Below Average	D-	69-70
F = Unsatisfactory	F	68 and below

Achievement marks for Gym, Humanities, SEL and Spanish

Specials Grading Policy

- Grades 4 and above: Students receive letter grades in Specials (Art, Music, PE, Spanish, etc.) which contribute to their overall GPA.
- Each Specials teacher will provide a syllabus during Curriculum Night outlining grading expectations.
- Grades 3 and below: Students will receive Pass/Fail marks in Specials.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

Progress reports will be sent home in the middle of each trimester. Progress reports will be sent home in the Friday Folder. They must be returned the next day with a parent signature.

Grades are accessible at any time for parents with students in grades 1-8 via PowerSchool**. A username and password are sent home at the beginning of the year.**

Report cards are issued three times a year. Third Trimester report cards are sent home on the last day of school.

HONOR ROLL POLICY

Students in grades eligible for honor roll will be recognized as follows:

- High Honors OR Honors
    - Any student with more than one detention in a trimester will not be eligible for the honor roll, regardless of GPA.

To qualify, students must meet academic requirements and maintain positive behavior.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Satisfactory progress in all major content areas is a requirement for every student to pass to the next grade level. If a student does not make satisfactory progress, summer school is required before a student is allowed to pass to the next grade. The following conditions warrant required summer school:

1. A second grade student is reading at a K reading level or below at the end of the school year
2. A student receives an overall grade of an F either in reading and/or math
3. A student receives an F in one trimester in any subject area

Teachers can also recommend summer school for students who are teetering and may need the extra help over the summer.

If summer school is recommended or required, you must register your child for summer school at Bridgeport Catholic Academy. Your child is to attend all classes for the full session. Submission of official transcripts or documentation verifying passing grades in summer school, are required by the school. If the principal deems it necessary (due to low multiple D and/or F averages), you may be advised that your child will require being retested in August at Bridgeport Catholic Academy before being advanced to the next grade.

Tutoring by a current Bridgeport Catholic Academy faculty member to replace summer school attendance is possible ONLY in the event the school does not hold summer classes, or by special exemption by the principal. Students may be re-tested by their tutor or the school, as deemed appropriate by the principal.

RETENTION OF A STUDENT

Assessment of a child's ability to learn concepts and educational material needed to have success at the next grade level is a serious responsibility of the professional staff. Staff members base their decisions about student advancement and ability to learn, in the students' best interest.

Teachers of Kindergarten through 8th grade will meet with parents of students within the first six to nine weeks of the school term to assess student progress and advise and recommend to parents the student's progress, ability and probability for success. Early intervention to assist students' learning is our goal. Parents are encouraged to consult with their child/children's teachers often in regard to a student's progress. Any student that is experiencing a serious lack of ability to learn or master educational concepts will be referred for evaluation to determine needs for special or prolonged assistance. Retention after grade one is not encouraged, but the use of "special services" to help students be successful will be encouraged.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Policy ES 140.1./HS 317.1 Students shall be issued a diploma upon completion of the school's academic requirements.

Procedures As a requirement for graduation, each student shall receive a passing grade on an examination covering the Constitution of the United States and the State of Illinois. The fulfillment of the requirements shall be documented on the student's permanent record. Additional graduation requirements include satisfactorily completing academic requirements, adhering to the school's code of conduct, returning all school materials, and meeting all financial obligations of fees and tuition.

A diploma is issued to an eighth grade student who achieves a passing grade point average for the entire school year in each subject area. A 'Certificate of Attendance' will be issued in lieu of a diploma for any student who does not meet the requirements. All assignments, both academic and disciplinary, must be completed before a student participates in the graduation ceremony. All tuition and fees must be paid by the last day of class.

All 8th grade students, regardless of religious affiliation, must complete the required service hours in order to successfully graduate from Bridgeport Catholic Academy and participate in the graduation ceremony. Currently the requirement is 25 hours split between home, school, and community. More information is given on this at the Parent Confirmation Meeting.

All students must pass the U.S. and State Constitution test with a minimum 70% prior to the end of their eighth grade year. If a student does not pass on the first try, they will be given a second opportunity two weeks later. If this attempt is again not successful, the family must seek private tutoring over the summer.

Student Behavior

As a Catholic educational community, we firmly believe in discipline based on self-respect, concern for others, and Christian ideals. Students learn through proper guidance, self-motivation and self-discipline. A mutual respect is expected among the students, faculty, staff and parents of Bridgeport Catholic Academy. In order to hold our students to these high expectations, several conversations were held between the teachers and administration. As a result of these conversations, students will begin receiving weekly behavior sheets that are explained and shown on page two of this letter under "consequences."

In order to promote an atmosphere conducive to learning and to maintain a safe learning environment, BCA students are expected to comply with our behavior guidelines and will be held accountable for any behavior that is non-compatible with the mission and philosophy of Bridgeport Catholic Academy.

The goal of the Bridgeport Catholic Academy's School's faculty and staff is to provide a safe and positive learning environment which supports Christian moral excellence. Our teachers and staff are ready to meet those expectations by helping to develop respectful, responsible, and cooperative students. Every child at BCA deserves the opportunity to achieve high academic standards. The best way for us to ensure this goal is to create and maintain an environment in which learning is the priority and behavioral disruptions are minimal.

Learning is directly related to a predictable, structured environment. By providing a cohesive code of conduct for all students, the goal of academic and Christian and moral excellence becomes attainable because

behavioral expectations are clearly defined.

Consequences

Students will receive a new behavior sheet at the beginning of every week from their homeroom teacher. Behavior sheets must be kept in their expandable file. Failure to meet the behavioral expectations, will result in a consequence that is described below.

Class I Infractions: Class one infractions are listed in the chart below.

A. If a student receives three class one infractions in one day, or five times in one week, he/she will receive a lunch detention.

B. If a student receives a second detention within the same trimester, he/she will be assigned an after school detention, to be served on the next Thursday from 2:45-3:45 **or** the date listed on the detention slip from 2:45-3:45.

C. If a student receives a third detention within the same trimester, parents will be contacted for a conference to discuss the negative behavior. Additionally, two after school detentions will be scheduled.

D. Subsequent detentions assigned within the same trimester will result in a suspension.

Class II Infractions: Class II Infractions are listed in the chart below.

Class II infractions are more serious and therefore require immediate disciplinary action.
Class II infractions will result in an immediate after school detention. More than one class II infraction, within the same trimester, will result in a suspension.

While Class III infractions are not addressed on our new behavior chart, we feel that it is important for our BCA students and families to be mindful of them. These infractions are listed below.

Class III Infractions:

- Reckless behavior.
- Fighting/aggressive physical contact.
- Bullying (See bullying policy).
- Repeated Class 2 infractions.
- Bringing or supplying another student with alcohol, drugs, or poisonous chemicals, weapons or explosive devices to school.
- Falsely alerting authorities (i.e., pulling fire alarms, calling 9-1-1, etc.).
- Possession of or exploring sites containing or distribution of inappropriately mature material in any manner - electronic or otherwise.
- Writing, speaking, or portraying racially-or ethnically-charged language, pictures or images.
- Inappropriate sexual behavior; sexual harassment, misconduct, indecent exposure.
- Use of an electronic device to facilitate any of the above Class 3 infractions.
- See also Technology Acceptable Use Policy and Technology Use Contract.

Such behaviors will result in a meeting with the principal, assistant principal, teacher, parents, and the student(s) to discuss the length of immediate suspension or possible expulsion. An appropriate disciplinary response will be determined in each instance by the administration using the information at hand at the time of the incident. In considering an appropriate response and resulting consequences to each situation, the principal and faculty will weigh:

- Factors such as previous misbehavior, discipline and/or provocation of the student who committed the inappropriate behavior due to harassment, bullying related to race, ethnicity, disability, religion, etc.
- The nature, frequency and severity of the behavior, and the impact of the school environment and community as a whole.

We are confident that, with your support, this behavioral system will have a positive effect on the overall learning environment at BCA. We encourage you to speak with your child about this policy, and to check their chart frequently.

GRADES 3-8

Behavior charts must be kept on students at all times .

Class I Infraction *	HR	Math	LA	Lit.	SS	Science	Humanities	Spanish	PE
Disruptive classroom behavior									
Off-task behavior									
Hallway/bathroom behavior									
Lunch/recess behavior									
Unprepared for class									
Tardy to class									
Behavior in Church									
Failure to respect others' personal space									
Out of uniform									
Chewing gum									

*Every three class I infractions in one day or five class I infractions equal one detention.

Class II Infraction**	HR	Math	LA	Lit.	SS	Science	Humanities	Spanish	PE
Foul language or gesture									
Academic dishonesty									

Disrespect of peers									
Disrespect of school personnel									
Inappropriate use of Technology									
Use of electronic device									
Loss of behavior chart									

*Class II infractions will result in an automatic detention.

K-2 Behavior Tracking Chart

Class I Infraction*	**HR**	**SEL**
Disruptive classroom behavior		
Off-Task behavior		
Hallway/bathroom behavior		
Lunch/recess behavior		
Unprepared for class		
Behavior in Church		
Failure to respect others' personal space		
Out of uniform		

*Every three class I infractions in one day or five class I infractions equal one detention.

Class II Infraction**	**HR**	**SEL**
Foul language or gesture		
Academic dishonesty		
Disrespect of peers		
Disrespect of school personnel		
Inappropriate use of Technology		
Use of electronic device		
Loss of organizer/behavior chart		

*Class II infractions will result in an automatic detention.

The student handbook does not include everything that may possibly happen during the school year. If any situation not specifically covered should arise, the principal will make every effort to act fairly and quickly. The best interest of the student, school, and community will be greatly considered. Each situation is different and will be handled on an individual basis.

Information Reporting: As per Archdiocesan policy, the school is obligated, as part of its discipline process, to report to law enforcement ANY offense involving possession or use of ANY illegal substance or alcoholic beverage or the possession of a firearm by ANY student which occurs at ANY school function or ANYWHERE on school property.

Disciplinary Probation: A student who has been suspended is automatically placed on disciplinary probation for a period of nine weeks. Any misbehavior during the probationary period may be grounds for expulsion.

Expulsion: A student expulsion is a very serious matter and is only invoked as a last resort, when all other reasonable consequences have failed, or when the safety of a member or members of the Bridgeport Catholic Academy community has been unreasonably compromised, or when the student's continued presence would seriously compromise the ability of the school to fulfill its mission or obligations.

Expulsion of Students for Disciplinary Reasons

Any student may be expelled for serious or repeated violations of the Student Code of Conduct that include, but are not limited to: physical, verbal, or sexual threats; substance abuse; possession of weapons or illegal drugs; repeated or serious behavior that is inconsistent with Catholic teaching; serious and repeated lack of respect for school authorities; serious damage to school or student property; theft; or physical harm to student/staff.

Where the student misconduct warranting expulsion did not: (a) present a threat of harm or (b) result in any harm to the health and safety of school employees, students, volunteers etc., the principal may, in their discretion, offer parents/guardians the opportunity to voluntarily withdraw from the school before the student is expelled. If parents accept this opportunity, they should submit their intent to withdraw their child to the school in writing. The expulsion or withdrawal of a student does not necessarily impact the registration of any siblings in the school. Students may no longer participate in any school-sponsored extra or co-curricular activities once expelled. Parents/Guardians of Archdiocesan schools may submit a request for review of the expulsion, in writing, to the Superintendent

Withdrawal of Students Based Upon the Conduct of Parents/Guardians

As partners in the sacred mission of Catholic education, parents and guardians are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that consistently reflects the teachings, values, and moral standards of the Catholic Church. This obligation applies to all interactions with school personnel, students, and volunteers—whether on school property, at school-sponsored events, or in any context associated with the school community.

The conduct of parents and guardians must be guided by Christian charity, respect for the dignity of every person, and a spirit of cooperation and humility, in accordance with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the principles of Catholic social teaching.

Behavior that is contrary to the moral and spiritual mission of the school will not be tolerated. Such behavior includes but is not limited to: actions or speech that oppose Catholic values; any form of disrespect, harassment, verbal or physical abuse; threats, intimidation, or any conduct that disrupts the peace, order, and Christian witness of the school environment.

Should a parent or guardian engage in conduct that, in the judgment of the Principal and/or Pastor, seriously undermines the mission or well-being of the school community, the school reserves the right to take the following actions:

- Restrict or revoke the parent/guardian's right to be present on school property, either temporarily or permanently.
- Dismiss the student(s) of the parent/guardian from the school, either on a temporary or permanent basis.

Attacks on School Personnel

Upon receipt of a written complaint from any school personnel, the school is required to report all incidents of battery committed against any school employee (e.g. principals, teachers, aides,

secretaries, custodians) to the local law enforcement authorities immediately after the occurrence of the attack. Additionally, schools must report all of these incidents to the State Board of Education through existing school incident reporting systems as they occur during the year by no later than August 1 for the preceding school year.

Withdrawal of Students Based Upon Financial Delinquency

Students may be withdrawn if their parent/guardian fails to fulfill their financial/tuition obligations to the school. Before withdrawal occurs, the Principal (or designee) shall attempt to formulate a payment plan with the family. The Principal (or designee) will be sensitive to the unique circumstances of the family, while ensuring that the family is able to fulfill their financial obligations. The Principal may establish "Exclusion Days" in which families are told that they may not send their child to school unless a plan for tuition payment is formulated or followed. Such days will be announced ahead of time so that the family and teachers can make appropriate plans.

Disenrollment of Students with Medical or Developmental Needs Impacting Learning or the School Environment

The school may reach an evidence-based decision as to their ability to serve a student with special needs when it is learned that the child's needs are greater than initially understood or when the available resources dedicated to serve the child are not effective. In such circumstances, the school may disenroll the student because it does not have the resources to meet the child's needs. Disenrollment is not the same as expulsion, which is a removal from school for disciplinary reasons. Disenrollment is not the result of a disciplinary proceeding, but a school determination that the support required by a student exceeds what the school can provide.

Common indicators include:

- The student's behavior results in disruptions in the school environment and/or jeopardizes the health and safety of the student and/or others. The behavior has not been managed by the supports offered .
- The school cannot meet the student's safety needs.
- Benchmark assessments (e.g., iReady scores) show insufficient academic progress.
- Parent No Longer Collaborates Respectfully with School Staff or refuses to cooperate with school staff and such behavior impedes student progress.
- Academic assessments, new private psychological evaluations, or public school evaluations evidence new diagnoses.

Corporal Punishment: No student shall be disciplined corporally or corrected with abusive or demeaning language.

FIELD TRIP ELIGIBILITY

Participation in field trips is a privilege. Students may be excluded from field trips at the discretion of the administration if they meet any of the following criteria:

- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness
- Five (5) or more missing assignments across all classes

- A grade of D or below in any subject
- Behavior concerns, including more than one detention in the trimester

DRESS CODE/UNIFORM

Our regular school uniform is an outward sign of a student's duty to live in unity with his or her classmates. A uniform also removes the distractions and competitiveness that tends to accompany free dress, distinguishes Bridgeport Catholic Academy students, is an opportunity for them to convey pride in their school, and encourages them to focus more on personality and talents than on externals. Additionally, students who understand and who follow the uniform code demonstrate that they are ready to live up to the academic and behavioral standards at Bridgeport Catholic Academy.

Students are required to be in uniform nearly every day of the school year. The few exceptions are called **out of uniform days**. Although every faculty and staff member is charged with enforcing the uniform code, it is primarily and naturally the responsibility of the parents to make sure that their students are properly attired to attend school.

It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that their children are in proper uniform attire each school day. Dress-down or special dress days will be announced ahead of time.

Appearance:

Proper grooming is expected of each student. Uniforms must be clean, neat and without holes or ragged hems. All pants and shorts must fit around the waist.

- No facial piercings or visible tattoos are permitted.
- Make-up is not allowed to be worn at school and may not be brought to school. Colored nail polish is okay, *however* fake nails such as press on/ glue on/ acrylic nails are not permitted.
- Students are not to wear decorative jewelry with their uniform, including hoop or dangle earrings. The wearing of earrings by boys is not allowed. Simple chains or crosses may be worn to school. **Smart watches are not permitted.**

- All hair must be a natural hair color. For boys, hair must not grow below the collar of their shirt.

Preschool students are not required to wear the school uniform, but should be dressed in appropriate school attire.

Boys in grades K-8 are required to wear a **maroon** or **white polo shirt with the Bridgeport Catholic Academy logo**, along with **black or gray pants, or shorts**. **Cargo pants and gym shorts are not considered uniform attire.** **Shorts may be worn through October at the discretion of the parent. November-April, pants must be worn. Starting April 1st, pants/shorts are at the discretion of the parent.*

- All shorts must not be higher than 2 inches above the knee. Any undergarments should not be visible below the shorts. Shorts should not be rolled to make them shorter.
- Shoes can be a **soft-soled <u>solid</u> black, gray, or brown**; or dress or gym shoes (TOMS, Sperry, etc. **are** acceptable). All shoes must be a solid color. **Shoes that look like slippers and slides are not permitted*
- Socks must be worn with shoes that are a solid color of maroon, white, grey, or black. No-show socks are not permitted
- Solid white, gray, black, and navy socks are permitted

- *Only white T-shirts* are allowed to be worn under polo shirts
- Shirts must remain tucked in at all times
- Belts are to be worn with both pants and shorts
- Official ¼ zip crest logo sweaters/sweatshirts are acceptable
    - Hooded sweatshirts are not permitted even with a BCA logo in the classroom

Girls in grades K-8 uniforms are essentially the same as the boys, except girls may also choose to wear the BCA maroon plaid jumper (K-4) and skirt or skort (5-8) from Big Kahuna/School Belles. Girls may wear **a white or pink button-down blouse or the BCA crest polo.** **Shorts may be worn through October at the discretion of the parent. Starting April 1st, pants/shorts are at the discretion of the parent.*

- All shorts must not be higher than 2 inches above the knee. Any undergarments should not be visible below the shorts. Shorts and/ or skirts should not be rolled to make them shorter.
- **Maroon, black, or white knee high or crew socks** are to be worn
- Shoes can be a **soft-soled solid black, gray, or brown**; or dress or gym shoe (TOMS, Sperry, etc. **are** acceptable) All shoes must be a solid color. **Shoes that look like slippers and slides are not permitted*
- Only white T-shirts are allowed to be worn under polo shirts
- Shirts must remain tucked in at all times
- Belts are to be worn with both pants and shorts
- Official ¼ zip crest logo sweaters/sweatshirts are acceptable
    - Hooded sweatshirts are not permitted even with a BCA logo in the classroom

The gym uniform consists of:

- A Bridgeport Catholic Academy Physical Education logo maroon or gray T-shirt (**or BCA crest t-shirt**), with maroon or gray logo sweatshirt (**or BCA crest sweatshirt**).
    - Hooded sweatshirts are not permitted even with a BCA logo in the classroom
- Maroon or gray BCA sweatpants (or gray/maroon) gym shorts with the BCA logo on the leg.
- ***No form of Bridgeport Catholic Academy spirit or sports committee issued sportswear can be worn as part of the gym uniform.***
- See shorts guidelines above, in uniform policy.

Outerwear — While in the school buildings, students may only wear the maroon or gray sweatshirt with the Bridgeport Catholic Academy logo. The BCA cardigan or sweater vest is also acceptable.

- No form of spirit/sportswear may be worn as part of the school uniform or the gym uniform and may not be worn while in the school building.
- No coats, jackets, or hoodies of any kind may be worn *in the classroom*

Out of Uniform Days —Clothes for special occasions and out of uniform days should be modest and respectable. Any student may be asked to change inappropriate clothing when necessary. Sandals are not permitted. BCA Hoodies are only allowed in the classroom on out of uniform days- and only if they do not interfere with student learning. This is a privilege and may be taken away for wearing hoods up in the school or for disruption of learning.

Please refer to the following guidelines:

- No bare shoulders
- No crop tops
- No spaghetti straps

- No inappropriate or offensive graphic design/words
- No slippers
- No crocs
- No flip flops
- No leggings
- No yoga pants
- No ripped jeans
- No altered apparel ex. cutting shirts/sweatshirts
- Skirts and shorts -no more than 2 inch above the knee (May1st - November 1st)

Picture Day Dress Code

To ensure students look their best for school photos, please follow these guidelines:

Boys

- Must wear a collared shirt (polo or button-down).
  Shirts must be tucked in.
- No t-shirts, athletic wear, gym shorts, or hoodies.
- A belt must be worn with pants/shorts, and socks must be worn with shoes.

Girls

- Should dress neatly and appropriately.
- Dresses, skirts, or pants with tops are all acceptable.
  Outfits must follow all Out of Uniform Guidelines:
    - Skirts/dresses of modest length (no shorter than fingertip length).
    - Shoulders must be covered (no spaghetti straps or strapless tops).
      No leggings or sweatpants.
    - No crop tops, ripped jeans, or inappropriate graphics.

General Reminders

- While students are out of uniform for Picture Day, we still have a dress code, guidelines, and expectations that must be followed.
- All students should come looking neat and school-appropriate.
- This is a special day to celebrate—please dress to impress while keeping modesty in mind!

Spirit Wear Days- For spirit wear days, students are allowed to wear a BCA top and appropriate bottoms. Any student may be asked to change inappropriate clothing when necessary. Sandals are not permitted. Hoodies are only allowed in the classroom on dress down days- and only if they do not interfere with student learning. This is a privilege and may be taken away for wearing hoods up in the school or for disruption of learning.

Please refer to the following guidelines:

- No bare shoulders
- No crop tops
- No spaghetti straps

- No inappropriate or offensive graphic design/words
- No slippers
- No crocs
- No flip flops
- No leggings
- No yoga pants
- No ripped jeans
- No altered apparel ex. cutting shirts/sweatshirts
- Skirts and shorts -no more than 2 inch above the knee (May1st - November 1st)

Failure to comply with the uniform dress code and or the gym uniform dress code will result in the child being sent to the office to contact their parent/guardian, in order to request a proper change of clothes be brought to school.

Dress down days are planned in advance and will be on the website/calendar. Students will also receive this information from teachers.

Final decisions concerning the dress code are under the authority of the principal.

Non Discrimination Statements

As per Illinois PA 102-0360, Bridgeport Catholic Academy does not prohibit hairstyles that are historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture, including, but not limited to, protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists.

Bridgeport Catholic Academy allows a student athlete to modify his or her athletic or team uniform for the purpose of modesty in clothing or attire that is in accordance with the requirements of his or her religion or his or her cultural values or modesty preferences provided such uniform modifications do not contradict or create confusion with Catholic social teaching. The modification of athletic or team uniforms may include, but is not limited to, the wearing of a hijab, an undershirt, or leggings. If a student chooses to modify his or her athletic or team uniform, the student is responsible for all costs associated with the modification of the uniform and the student shall not be required to receive prior approval from the school for such modification.

Official Uniform Provider

For the sake of uniformity, all school uniform items are to be purchased at Big Kahuna. Socks and shoes of the appropriate styles may be purchased at any location. A flier listing the required and optional items available from Big Kahuna is provided to parents and is available, upon request, from the office.

POLICY ON BULLYING

As Catholics, we believe in the dignity and respect of each individual created in the image of God. Bullying is contrary to Gospel values and has no place in the Catholic school community. At Bridgeport Catholic Academy, we want to ensure students can learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

Bullying is:

- Any intentional, repeated, hurtful act or conduct (physical, verbal, emotional, or sexual)

including communications made in writing or electronically,
- Occurring on campus or off campus during non-school time,
- Directed toward another student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to
    - Place the student or students in an unreasonable fear of harm to the student or student's person or property;
    - Cause a substantially detrimental effect on the student or student's physical or mental health;
    - Interfere substantially with the student's academic performance;
    - Interfere substantially with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

Bullying can take many forms, including violence, harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, cyber stalking, theft, public humiliation and retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.

Cyber bullying can include all the above as well as the use of electronic tools, devices, social media sites, blogs and websites to harm a student or students with electronic text, photos, or videos.

Bullying acts or conduct described above can include the following:

- **Physical** which includes, but is not limited to, punching, poking, stalking, destruction of property, strangling, hair pulling, beating, biting, spitting, stealing, pinching, and excessive tickling;
- **Verbal** which includes, but is not limited to, name-calling, teasing, taunting, gossip, and threats whether in person or via any form of electronic communication and the Internet;
- **Emotional** which includes, but is not limited to, intimidation, rejecting, terrorizing, extorting, defaming, humiliating, blackmailing, rating/ranking of personal characteristics such as race, disability, ethnicity, perceived sexual orientation, manipulation of friendships, isolating, ostracizing and peer pressure.
- **Sexual** which includes, but is not limited to many of the emotional acts or conduct described above as well as exhibitionism, voyeurism, sexual positioning, sexual harassment and abuse involving actual physical contact or sexual assault.

No student shall be subjected to bullying:

- During any school sponsored education program or activity, while in school, on school property, on school buses or school vehicles, or at school sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities
- Through the transmission of information from a school or home computer network, or other similar electronic school or home equipment.

All members of the Catholic school community, parents/guardians, teachers, staff, administrators and others, are expected to work together in preventing bullying and promoting Gospel values in a Christ centered environment.

All allegations and threats of bullying/harassment are taken seriously, promptly investigated and dealt with appropriately. In cases of reported bullying, the principal or designee shall interview all students involved (i.e., the aggressor(s) and the victim(s)) and investigate, as appropriate. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents and school staff; review of school records; and identification of parent and family issues. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting bullying may be subject to appropriate consequences. Appropriate disciplinary consequences will be enforced:

1. **If it is determined that a child is bullying, he/she will be placed on an In-School suspension**

immediately and will be required to complete the day's assignments. In addition, any student participating on an athletic team who is bullying may be suspended from the team.

2. Per Archdiocesan policy, documentation of what happened and the consequence given must be placed in the student's file. The principal will also notify the Regional Director from The Office of Catholic Schools of the bullying complaint and the action taken.
3. Continued incidences of bullying can result in mandated counseling (both for the student and/or the family) or expulsion.

Illinois Public Act 92-96, S.B. 1026 provides that whoever by threat, menace, or intimidation prevents a child entitled to attend a public or non-public school from attending that school or interferes with the child's attendance at that school is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

Parent/School Partnership

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We firmly believe that the process of education here at Bridgeport Catholic Academy is a mission shared with parents. We assume that each child's parents or guardians are supportive of the values of learning as expressed in the pillars of excellence and lived out in all aspects of the life of Bridgeport Catholic Academy. This partnership includes supporting the school's policies, procedures, traditions and decisions and/or being willing to communicate directly with appropriate school personnel whenever concerns or questions arise. To accomplish this, the school urges students and parents to follow these steps when addressing concerns:

- Speak first to the teacher with whom one is having a concern.
- If that communication is not successful, speak to the Principal.

Our pillars of education call each of us – administrators, faculty, staff, students, and parents – to a deep and abiding respect for the dignity and worth of each person. It is imperative, therefore, that members of the community treat each other with thoughtfulness and charity. In situations of frustration or disappointment, one must guard against disregarding the value inherent in the pillars of excellence. If a parent develops a pattern of approaching administrators, faculty, staff, or other community members in a manner contradictory to the values reflected in our mission and pillars of excellence, the administration will invite the parent to meet and evaluate whether the values and mission of the school are consistent with those of the family. Should the pattern continue, the family may be asked by the principal to leave the school.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Scheduled parent teacher conference days during the school year promote a greater understanding of the needs and growth patterns of the student, as well as strengthen home-school communications. Scheduled parent conferences are held at the end of the first and second academic trimester. If additional conferences are needed, an appointment may be made with the teacher which will occur before or after school.

Teachers will not be interrupted during class for conferences or phone calls (this includes the beginning of the day or homeroom time). You may leave a message in the school office or send a request via email. Please allow a minimum of 48 hours for a response.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

***It is imperative that we have this information in the office on day one, in case of an emergency, illness or otherwise.**

Each family must have an emergency form on file in the school office. The form includes the following information:

1. Parent(s)' or guardian(s)' name(s).
2. Up-to-date address.
3. Home, cell phone and work numbers.
4. Emergency contacts and phone numbers.
5. Physician's name and phone number.

Emergency Contact forms must be completed and returned to the school on the first day of classes. It is essential that all family contact information remains current to ensure the safety and well-being of your child. Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying the school immediately if any contact information changes or becomes outdated.

Please ensure that any individual listed as an emergency contact has the authority to make decisions regarding medical care for your child.

Parents/guardians should notify the school promptly in writing of any change of home address, or home, emergency or work and or cell phone numbers.

If your child states they are feeling ill, nauseous, dizzy and/or has experienced a head injury and we cannot get in touch with the parents/guardians or any of the emergency contacts, the school will call 911 and transport your child via ambulance to the hospital for medical care.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between home and school is one of our priorities. The school pursues different avenues of communication to ensure that parents are informed of what is happening at school. ***The first line of accurate school-wide information is always the Principal's Newsletter and BCA Updates.*** Teachers will best be able to assist with classroom-specific questions and needs.

ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE: Parent Orientation is held during the month of September for the purpose of providing parents with the opportunity to receive important information, learn tips on how to make this a successful year, and meet the school faculty.

PARENT COMMUNICATION FOLDERS: Our communication folders are white folders that may be sent home with important communications from the office or your child's teacher. One of the most important ways to make this a successful year is by being informed.

WEBSITE: Our school website is a fabulous resource which houses valuable information, forms and materials relevant to our school life and community. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with what's there!

EMAIL: Each teacher has an email available through the website. Teachers have 48 hours to respond.

PHONE CALLS: Phone calls are a quick and efficient way to communicate a student's struggles or challenges, as well as their accomplishments. Teachers and staff members cannot accept phone calls during the school day due to the fact that they are busy with the school children. Please allow 48 hours

for all calls and e-mails to be returned.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION: Teachers and parents will most effectively communicate through a consistent mode of technology, namely Seesaw for grades PreK-3rd grade and Google Classroom for grades 4-8. All teachers and staff members have assigned Bridgeport Catholic Academy email accounts. Although teachers are often able to respond quicker, please allow 48 hours for a response.

MASS ATTENDANCE

***Students in grades 1, 3, 5 and 7 will attend Mass on Wednesdays, grades 2, 4, 6 and 8 will attend on Mondays. We ask our families to schedule and attend mass weekly on their own, as well.**

At Bridgeport Catholic Academy, Christ is the heart of all that matters; Christ is at the heart of all that we do. And, it is at the Celebration of the Eucharist, at Mass, where our hearts touch His in a visible way and where, through Him, our hearts can touch one another's hearts in a visible way. At Mass we are energized by the faith of one another and enabled to keep our focus on Christ and His being at the heart of all that we do.

For non-Catholics, this Covenant is an agreement to attend weekly church services in your denomination.

FAMILY SERVICE AGREEMENT

***We are fortunate to be able to have our volunteers helping out once again this year. Please see the Archdiocese guidelines for Volunteer compliance, on our website. There are multiple forms to complete before volunteering is permitted. Virtus accounts, for those who requested re-activation, should be reactivated by September 3. Those who are able to volunteer for school duties will be asked to commit a week at a time, for the safety of our students and staff. The following is our standardized policy for our families service agreement.**

Purpose of the Family Service Agreement

The Family Service Agreement provides the school with a source of steady volunteer hours and/or additional income to reduce costs.

The BCA parents/guardians are required to:

- Donate 10 service hours **or**
- Pay a $300 family service fee **or**
- A combination of both

Family Service Hours (volunteer service) are vital to Bridgeport Catholic Academy. Service Hours help to develop camaraderie between parents, faculty, staff, and the greater school family, help to contain costs, and enhance programs. Most important is the fact that children of parents who are involved in their school are far more likely to succeed in the classroom and in life.

Fulfilling Program Requirements

- Each family is required to serve ten (10) hours per year. It is recommended that parents endeavor to spread service hours throughout the year.

● For purposes of this program, the school places a value of $30.00 per hour served, on time that is donated.

● In recognition that some families may not be able to donate their time, families may choose to pay a Family Service Fee of $30.00 per un-served hour. Parents may choose the best option according to their circumstances when fulfilling the Family Service Agreement. Each hour not served will be billed in May of each year at the rate of $30.00 per hour with a payment due date of May 1st This fee will need to be paid before the student's final grades will be released.

● Parents are responsible to complete the volunteer service forms in the school office no later than one week after completing each qualifying service. Hours are tracked on Family Service Time Sheets in the BCA School Office.

● If a family fails to complete the required service hours, and fails to pay the fee associated with not completing the hours, final grades will not be released.

● If a family commits to a certain service hour opportunity and fails to be present to complete that commitment without sufficient notice to appropriate board members, not only will that family not receive credit for the service hours but will also have appropriate hours added to their total requirement. This is due to the fact that a substitute will be needed to fulfill the service hour opportunity.

Family Service Hours Opportunities

- It is the parent's responsibility to take the initiative and seek opportunities to fulfill their Service Hours.
- The school will endeavor to provide regular email and parent newsletter communication about service opportunities.

The following can be counted for service hours:

- Lunch Duty; Time frame is approximately 11:00 am to 1 pm.
- Recess supervision.
- Attendance at meetings and service work done for fundraisers such as the Walkathon, Candy Sales, and the Super Raffle. Fundraising obligations and donations for these events will not be counted.
- Alumni Association Committee work.
- Home and School volunteer at events such as Labor Day picnic, Halloween, dinner with Santa, breakfast with Santa, breakfast with the Easter Bunny.
- Volunteer in the classroom as requested by teachers.
- Various Bake Sale Monitor/Volunteer.
- Scholastic Book Fair staffing.
- Chaperone a School Dance.
- Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week preparation/staffing.
- Tour prospective families through school at Open House (January & February).
- Help with Catholic Schools Week Activities.
- Field trips: Earn a maximum of 5 hours per year per family.
- Other volunteer tasks not on the list need approval from Ms. Brown prior to participation.
- Sports hours cannot be used for school volunteer hours.

In order for volunteers to work directly with children and attend field trips at Bridgeport Catholic Academy School, each volunteer **must** be compliant with the Archdiocesan guidelines. VIRTUS COMPLIANCE GUIDELINES

ATTENDANCE

CALENDAR REQUIREMENTS

Illinois State Code requires that the school be open for 176 full instructional days. Archdiocese regulations require a minimum of 4 days be set-aside for teacher in-service days. Our school calendar meets these requirements.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Daily school attendance is compulsory in the State of Illinois for children 6 through 16 years of age. Therefore, students enrolled in grades K-8 at Bridgeport Catholic Academy are **required** to attend school **daily**. The responsibility for compliance with the law and the school's policy belongs to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child. The school is responsible for keeping an accurate record of each student's daily attendance. The attendance record is placed in the student's permanent file each school year.

HOURS

Office Hours 7:30 AM – 3:00 PM
Before Care Hours 7:05 AM – 7:40 AM
Drop-off Begins 7:40 AM
Tardy 7:55 AM

School Dismissal

- 2:40 PM PK & Kindergarten
- 2:45 PM 1st-8th

After-Care Hours (fee charged hourly) latest pickup, 5:30

Lunch Hours:

PK3, PK4, Kdg	11:00- in the classroom
Grades 1-3	11-11:40
Grades 4-5	11:45-12:25
Grades 6-8	12:30-1:10

Attendance Policy

Doors open at 7:40 am for grades 1-8. Doors open for PreK and Kindergarten at 7:40. Dismissal is at 2:40 for PreK/Kdg and 2:45 PM for 1st-8th grade. PreK and Kdg enter and dismiss from their own respective doors. 1st-8th graders are dismissed through the chapel doors into the parking lot.

Dismissal occurs at 2:40 PM for students in PK-K. An authorized adult must sign out students in PK Kindergarten from their classroom. All students in grades 1-4 will not be dismissed unless the teacher

sees an authorized adult to pick up the student or the child has a walker permission slip on file.

Children are permitted to be dropped off to their **line up spots on school grounds** at 7:40 AM. Students may only have entry to the building prior to 7:40 AM if they have a scheduled appointment with a teacher.

One of the major goals of Bridgeport Catholic Academy is to provide an academically excellent environment for our school. In order to accomplish this goal, the teachers need every minute of the day for instructional time.

Consistent attendance and punctuality is key to academic success. The basic responsibility for regular attendance and punctuality of the student lies with the student and parents/guardians. The following procedures and expectations are to be followed for the protection of your child.

Please call in student absences by 8:15 AM to 773-376-6223. When you call, please be prepared to give the following information:

1. Student's name
2. Name of the person calling and the relationship to the student
3. Reason for the absence
4. Whether someone will pick up the homework at 2:30 PM

If a parent does not notify the school office, school staff will call the home or work numbers to verify the absence. When a student is absent from school, he/she is not to participate in any after-school activities that day or evening.

1. A note, signed by the parent or guardian is required upon returning to school. This note should include the cause of absence from school.
2. If absence is due to a communicable disease, or if a student has been absent for three consecutive days, a *signed* doctor's release is necessary.
3. Cases of excessive absences and/or patterns of unverifiable absences/tardies will be handled by school officials on an individual basis. In extreme cases, where a substantial percentage of school instruction has been missed as a result of absences or tardies, it may be necessary to recommend a remediation plan for the student which could include the repetition of a grade.
4. Truancy is absence from school without permission. Such absence is serious and will be treated as such.
5. If it is necessary for your child to be excused from school for medical/dental appointments or other emergencies a note must be sent to the teacher for approval prior to the time of appointment.
6. In the event of an emergency, the child must be picked up at the school office by the parent or legal guardian. A parent or legal guardian must also sign the student early dismissal log documenting the time and reason the child is dismissed from school.

School Work Missed During an Absence

In all cases, students who are absent from school are responsible for all school work missed. A student will not be penalized for an absence, whether excused or unexcused, and will be allowed *one day per day of school missed to make up for missing school work (to a maximum of five school days).*

Absenteeism/Excessive Absenteeism

Definition

- Excessive Absenteeism is defined as missing 10% or more of the school year, which equates to:
    - 5 or more days per trimester, or 15 or more days per school year (total)

Communication and Intervention

- If a student is approaching the excessive absenteeism threshold (5 absences in a trimester), the school will:
    - Send a warning letter to parents
    - Request a parent meeting if absences continue
- If a student reaches the excessive absenteeism threshold:
    - The student will be restricted from participating in:
        - Sports
          Field trips
        - Other extracurricular events
    - A formal Attendance Improvement Plan may be developed with the school administration.

Parent Responsibility

- Parents must notify the office by 8:15 AM on the day of the absence.
- If your child is absent for 3 consecutive days, a signed doctor's note is required to return to school.
- Absences will only be considered excused with a signed doctor's note or official documentation (e.g., family emergency, funeral, etc.) submitted to the school office.

TARDINESS

Being on time is essential for student success and minimizes disruptions to the learning environment. Excessive tardiness affects not only the student but also interrupts classroom routines and administrative operations. We certainly understand that circumstances beyond our control can contribute to a student being late, even with the best intentions; however, habitual tardiness impedes a student's learning due to a loss of educational time.

Definition

- Doors open at 7:40 AM and close at 7:50 AM. Students must arrive during this window.
- Students not present by 7:55 am will be marked tardy
- A student is tardy if they are not in their classroom and ready to begin by 8:00 AM.
- We understand that emergencies and appointments occur. In such cases, a signed doctor's note or office note should be provided to avoid a penalty.

CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL

Cancellation of school takes place only during extraordinary circumstances such as extreme weather, equipment failure, or public crisis. School will not be canceled unless a safety risk has been created by unusual circumstances. Please use your best judgment in determining whether or not it is safe to transport your child(ren) to school.

Should conditions necessitate school closing, several systems are in place to communicate this to faculty, staff, parents, and students:

1. Teachers are notified first via a Phone Tree System.
2. Parents and students are notified next through email.
3. A complete list of closings is also available at www.emergencyclosingcenter.com. At the emergency closing website you may also request an email be sent to you when school is closed. 4. You can also access this information on the radio (WGN Radio 720 AM, WBBM Radio 780 AM) or television (CBS Channel 2, NBC Channel 5, ABC Channel 7, WGN-TV, FOX Channel 12, or CLTV).

Information stating that school will be closed will be sent via email and posted on the television, radio, and internet by 7:00 AM. If nothing is posted, school is open.

VACATIONS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

Because of the serious disruption to a child's learning process, vacations during the school year are strongly discouraged. "Making up the work" never substitutes for the actual classroom experience and the expert instruction of a teacher. Likewise, grades invariably slip as a result of such vacations.

If parents do arrange such a vacation, however, advance written notice should be given to the main office, stating the exact days the child will be absent. The school takes no responsibility for the learning missed during the absence, nor are teachers required to prepare work to be done during the trip. When the child returns, he/she is to ask each teacher what work/test has to be made up. It is the responsibility of the parents to see that the child learns the material, makes up the work, and prepares for the tests.

SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMS

BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL CARE

Bridgeport Catholic Academy School offers both before and after-school care to our school families on days when school is in session. An online registration form was sent to all parents, with a maximum number of registrations for student/staff safety. The before care program is offered from 7:05 AM until 7:40 AM. The after-care program begins at dismissal and ends at 5:30 PM for students in grades PreK through 8. To contact a member of our after-care staff by phone, please call the main school number—773-376-6223. Online sign up forms will serve as registration. Space is limited.

CLUBS AND EXTRACURRICULAR

Bridgeport Catholic Academy is proud to host a variety of extracurricular and enrichment programs for our students after school hours. Depending on the nature of the activity, there may be an additional fee required. These programs include student leadership, altar servers, and various creative and academic clubs. Programs for which additional staff compensation or the purchase of materials are necessary, there will be an additional cost. These programs include our sports teams, cheerleading, and after school classes/programming. Please contact the school office, visit our website, or check your parent communication folder, Principal's emails, or the website for more information on current costs and schedules.

All physical forms/sports release forms must be completed and filed in the office before any student will be allowed to practice.

Interscholastic Athletics

The State of Illinois requires any student playing interscholastic sports to have a sports pre-participation physical exam by a licensed health care provider and a concussion information sheet signed by both student and parent.

If a student plans on participating in any interscholastic sport (including tryouts), they must submit these forms prior to their participation. To that end, parents/guardians and students are strongly encouraged to complete and submit the sports-physical examination and concussion information forms prior to the start of the school year. Students who have not completed the forms will not be allowed to participate.

Note: 6th graders who have submitted the required Physical Exam are exempt from the sports exam requirement providing that the physician has indicated on the form that the student is physically able to participate in athletics.

Sports Eligibility Policy

At BCA, participation in sports is a privilege that is tied to academic and behavioral expectations. Academic probation is a temporary suspension from sports participation until eligibility is restored. To support students in balancing academics and extracurriculars, the following guidelines apply:

Academic Requirements

- Students must maintain a C or higher in all core subjects to remain eligible for sports.
- If a student has a D or below, they will be placed on academic probation, resulting in temporary suspension from practices and games until the grade improves.
- Parents and students are expected to regularly check PowerSchool to stay informed on academic standing.

Trimester Grace Period

- At the start of a new trimester, there is a one-week grace period for students to adjust.
- After this grace period, if a student has a D or below in any core class, they will be placed on academic probation and may not participate in games or practices.
- If a student ends the previous trimester with a D or below, they will begin the next trimester on academic probation.
    - They may not participate in sports during the one-week grace period and must demonstrate that their grades have improved above a D before returning to play during the 1 week grace period.

Behavioral Requirements

- Students are expected to demonstrate respectful and responsible behavior in all school settings.
- If a student receives more than one detention in a trimester, they will be ineligible to participate in sports for the remainder of that trimester.
- Any Class II or III behavioral infractions (e.g., physical aggression, serious disrespect, or disruption) may result in immediate suspension from athletic activities, pending administrative review. Coaches will be informed of behavioral concerns by administration, and eligibility decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis in collaboration with school leadership.

Monitoring and Communication

- Parents and students are responsible for regularly checking PowerSchool to stay informed of current grades.
- Notification of academic probation will be sent via email from **athletics@bcachicago.org** and shared with coaches.
- Students must be *present in school by first period - 8:00 AM* - to participate in any game or practice that day, unless a valid reason is communicated (e.g., a doctor's note).
- Daily attendance reports will be sent to coaches each morning.

LUNCH

Email updates from the office will contain information on how to place online lunch orders from The Sit Down Cafe, should you choose to do so. If you choose to order from The Sit Down Cafe, you will pay them directly and can order daily or weekly. For more information, check out the BCA tab on their website: https://order.toasttab.com/online/the-sit-down-cafe-sushi-bar. Cafe lunches will be distributed in the Refectory each day. Please pay attention to deadlines for ordering to be sure the lunch will be delivered on time.

Families may send lunch from home, as well. **ALL STUDENT LUNCHES MUST BE NUT-FREE, as we are a Peanut-Free School.**

Lunches should be sent to school with your child daily, or ordered from The Sit Down Cafe. Door Dash and other delivery orders are no longer permitted at Bridgeport Catholic Academy.

NON-ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

BIRTHDAYS/CELEBRATIONS

When students do bring their own snacks and lunches, please ensure all items are peanut free.

Birthdays are an exciting and happy time for us all, but particularly for our children! We like to make each child feel special and recognized on his/her birthday. Birthdays are a nice time for parents to plan a project to do with the child's class or to read a story. ***Traditional birthday treats (sweets including cupcakes, cake, ice cream, etc.) are NOT permitted.*** Please see the approved snack list for possible birthday treats.

Unless all the children or all the boys or all the girls are invited, party invitations are not to be passed out at school. Students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students. Balloon and floral arrangements delivered to school will be held in the school office for the student or parent/guardian to pick up at the end of the school day.

CARE FOR PROPERTY

As part of our mission to exercise responsible stewardship, members of the BCA community remind themselves that the school building and grounds belong to the Catholic Church, are blessed and dedicated to God, and have been built and maintained by the generous contributions of numerous people. As such, students are asked to demonstrate appreciation by helping to keep the school building, campus, furniture, equipment, educational materials, and other school property clean and free from damage of any kind. Because of the serious nature, students are required to report any violations of this policy to a member of the faculty or staff or directly to the Principal.

Parents/guardians of students will be held responsible for the replacement of property damaged, and materials damaged or lost through the negligence of their children.

- **Textbooks:** Students are expected to take proper care of their textbooks, which remain the property of the school. All hardcover textbooks should be covered with a book cover at all times. No writing is allowed in any hardcover books. Lost or damaged books are to be replaced by the student's family. Fines will be imposed for books damaged beyond what is expected in normal use for a year.
- **Chewing Gum:** Due to the unsanitary conditions and the damage caused by its improper disposition, chewing gum is not permitted on school premises.
- **Classroom tables/desks:** We ask that care and respect is shown when in the classrooms.

Anyone vandalizing, drawing on, or otherwise disfiguring school property will face disciplinary actions.

- **Personal Belongings:** An unseemly number of personal items are lost every year because they have no identification. Parents are strongly encouraged to ensure that their student's personal items, such as jackets, sweaters, lunch boxes, and the like, are clearly marked with his or her name.

CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

We understand that parents sometimes decide to allow their children to have a cell phone; however, it is not necessary for students to bring cellphones to school. Students are always allowed to make a phone call to a parent from the school office, even after "normal" school hours. The administration, faculty and staff highly discourage parents from allowing students to bring a cell phone to school. We understand certain circumstances will make this a necessity. All phones will be turned in to the teacher at the beginning of the school day, and will be returned at the end. Cases in the past have included students taking cell phones to the bathroom to text or make phone calls. Other issues arise when the cell phone goes missing. **The school takes no responsibility for lost or damaged cell phones.**

If a student is caught on school grounds, either during school hours or after school hours, with a cell phone or other unapproved electronic device, it will be confiscated immediately and a $25 fee must be paid before it will be returned to the parent. If a second occurrence happens, $50 will be charged and the student will serve an in-school suspension.

This policy also refers to the use of smart watches. Students are not permitted to wear smart watches at school.

Please weigh carefully the need for your child to have a cell phone. It is important that parents/guardians monitor the content of the communication that is occurring on these phones. If your child does not collect the phone at dismissal, there is no guarantee they will be able to get it until the next morning, when the teacher or office staff arrives.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please notify the school office immediately if there is a change in your address, telephone number, or other personal information so we can maintain accurate school records. Should an emergency arise, it is extremely important that we are able to contact parents/guardians in the quickest manner possible.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips have educational objectives and are, therefore, an important part of education. Field trip participation, however, is considered a student privilege. Students who fail to meet academic or behavior requirements can be denied participation.

Bridgeport Catholic Academy requires written consent of the parents before a child is permitted to attend a field trip. A form requesting permission will be sent home well in advance of the trip and should be returned promptly to the child's teacher.

Parents that would like to serve as chaperones must complete all necessary Archdiocesan volunteer requirements in order to be allowed to assist in the supervision of children on field trips. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Field Trip Eligibility

Participation in field trips is a privilege. Students may be excluded from field trips at the discretion of the administration if they meet any of the following criteria:

- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness
- Five (5) or more missing assignments across all classes
- A grade of D or below in any subject
- Behavior concerns, including more than one detention in the trimester

LOST AND FOUND

The main office has a "Lost and Found" box. Students should check the lost and found box for misplaced items. To avoid missing items, all student clothing and personal items should be labeled with the child's name and current grade level. Items are given to charity if they are not claimed—the lost and found box is cleaned three times a year—once at Christmas, once before Spring Break, and finally when the year ends.

LOST/LATE LIBRARY BOOKS

***Students will not have designated Library time. A selection of books will be chosen by the teacher.**

Checking out books from our school library is a privilege offered to students of BCA. It is important that all books are cared for and treated properly. If a book is lost or so severely damaged it needs to be replaced, the child and his/her family is responsible for paying for the cost of the book

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

All property of the school, including student desks and lockers, as well as contents, may be opened, searched or inspected at any time without notice. School personnel have an unrestricted right to search this property as well as any containers, book bags, purses, or articles of clothing that are left unattended on the school campus.

VISITOR POLICY

For security and the safety of all our children, all school visitors must sign-in in the office. A visitor's badge must be worn while in the building. Office staff will direct visitors to their destination and will notify the teacher of the visitor's arrival. Teachers have been instructed to ask visitors without a name tag to return to the office.

Parents are not to enter a classroom to talk to a teacher during classroom instruction time. Parents must schedule an appointment to formally speak to a teacher.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

*Students will be admitted to the building without lining up and waiting in their cohort. Doors will open at 7:40. **Please ensure students are dressed appropriately** and have proper protection if they need to wait during check-ins. Students must be wearing masks and need to be an arms length away from anyone in line.

WINTER WEATHER

When the outside temperature and/or wind chill factor is 20 degrees or below, all children remain indoors. When the temperature is above 20 degrees and the air is generally dry, all children will potentially go outdoors. Please always dress appropriately.

Archdiocese of Chicago Policies

AMENDMENTS TO THE HANDBOOK

Statements in this handbook are subject to amendment with or without notice. The school will attempt to keep you informed of all changes as soon as practical. Some changes may be made immediately.

ALLERGY AND EPI-PEN GUIDELINES

\The hallmark of our Catholic schools is to welcome and to accommodate all students within the limits of the school's educational programs and staff. Students with severe allergies present challenges for which each local school must determine its individual capacity: 1) to ensure the safety of the child and 2) to ensure its ability to make the reasonable accommodations required for the student with serious medical and/or life-threatening conditions; and 3) to ensure that the entire school community is trained and aware of the local school's Food Allergy Procedures.

Due to the increasing number of children with life-threatening allergies, it is necessary that the school understands the risks of admitting students with severe allergies and other life threatening medical conditions. The school administration must create a culture of understanding and acceptance of allergy precautions among school personnel, students, and their families. The school may invite parents and guardians whose children have known severe allergies to work with the principal and staff in reviewing the Food Allergy Procedures of the local school. It should be a goal of school administration to establish an environment of caring and accepting individuals ready to welcome all parents/guardians interested in Catholic education for their children.

The following guidelines are designed to assist school administration and personnel in developing local procedures for the management of students with severe allergies.

NOTE: THE FOOD ALLERGY EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN AND TREATMENT AUTHORIZATION, INCLUDING THE STUDENT'S PHOTO, MUST BE PRESENTED AND APPROVED BY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION BEFORE THE CHILD IS REGISTERED IN THE SCHOOL.

LINK TO PRINT EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN:

http://www.isbe.state.il.us/nutrition/pdf/food_allergy_emer_action_plan.pdf

School administrators should note that any reasonable accommodation by the school is initiated by a parent/guardian request which must include a physician's report outlining the severity of the allergy and the recommended actions by the physician that are medically necessary to avoid reaction.

Guarantees of a "peanut free" or "lactose free" school are not credible accommodations for any school, but we try our very best to avoid any/all exposure. Effective practices to reduce the chance of exposure to allergens in each local school's **School Food Allergy Procedures** may include, but is not limited to:

- designating a separate table in the lunch room for students with the allergy;
- allowing the allergic student to eat at his/her own desk, keeping the same desk year round to reduce possible contamination if there is no common lunchroom in the school;
- limit/prohibit food in classrooms;
- remove food as a reward in classrooms or for celebrations;
- limit use of classrooms for after-school activities involving food;
- limit times teachers can bring food into classrooms (Note: A small amount of milk in coffee

creamer might cause a reaction for a student with milk allergies.);

- the regular cleaning of tables, desks, chalkboards, computer keyboards, musical instruments, and gym equipment in the classrooms and lunchroom;
- the washing of hands before and after meals using soap and water or commercial hand wipes. Note: **According to The Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (JACI), antibacterial hand sanitizer does not effectively remove allergens**.

Surfaces (tables, desks, counters. floors)

Trace amounts of allergens left on tables, desks, and counters could trigger a reaction. Proper cleaning of desks/tables/counters/ and other "high touch" areas such as railings, door handles, light switches, food preparation areas and all areas of the bathroom. is of paramount importance. Approved soap and water or all-purpose cleaning products should be used with an abrasive cloth before and after meals or snacks. Cleaning with water alone is not effective in removing allergens. To prevent cross-contact, the surface is cleaned first and then rinsed with a clean cloth. The cleaning cloths should be washed before re-use to prevent cross-contact before re-use. If washable cloths are not available, disposable cloths or paper towel could be used and discarded after use. Rinse with a new cloth or paper towel.

Removing Peanut Allergens from Hands

According to **JACI**, bar soap and liquid soap cleaned and removed allergens from hands. The use of water only or antibacterial hand sanitizer to wash hands is not effective in removing peanut allergens. **Wet wipes manufactured for use on skin should be the only wipes used on a student's hands.**
http://www.foodallergy.org/tools-and-resources/resources-for/child-care-facilities/cleaning-methods

Educate and train all school personnel on the management of students with allergies, including training for the use of Illinois law allows schools to voluntarily maintain a supply of emergency epinephrine auto-injectors **epinephrine auto-injectors (Epi-Pens).** (**EpiPens**) for students who have forgotten their EpiPen at home or who do not have a current known allergy. **Schools are not required to maintain extra EpiPens; however, without an emergency supply, dialing 911 is the only option school personnel have if a student forgets his/her EpiPen and has an anaphylactic or a first time reaction**. Any delay in administering epinephrine can be fatal. If a school keeps EpiPens available for use in case of emergency, the school must first have trained personnel available to administer the Epi-Pens**.**

"Trained personnel" is defined in the law as either a school nurse or one or more employees who have received training in:

- **recognition of anaphylaxis symptoms;**
- **standards and procedures for the storage and emergency use of Epi-Pens;**
- **instruction and certification in CPR; and**
- **emergency follow-up procedures.**

The supply of emergency epinephrine allowed under this Act is not intended to replace epinephrine prescribed to students with known allergies. In August of 2012, the Physician's Toolkit was developed by the Office of the Attorney General and the Director of the Department of Public Health in Illinois which assists physicians with an explanation of the Emergency Epinephrine Act, a standardized standing order and prescription form with additional resources that may be provided to school nurses and trained personnel. Once the nonpublic school has a prescription, it may take the prescription to be filled at any pharmacy.

Schools must maintain the supply of emergency epinephrine auto-injectors in a secured, locked location. The Emergency Supply of epinephrine may be used under three circumstances:

1. **Administration of an epinephrine auto-injector to a student, with an unknown allergy, having a first-time anaphylactic reaction.**
2. **Self-administration of an epinephrine auto-injector by a student with a known allergy who has**

forgotten his or her auto-injector or it is otherwise unavailable.

3. **Administration of an epinephrine auto-injector to a student with a known allergy having an anaphylactic reaction that meets the student's prescription on file.**

Only the school nurse or trained school personnel can administer the Epi-Pen in the event of an emergency.

Each local school must publish its **School Food Allergy Procedures** which

- designate the person(s) who will provide training for the trained school personnel; - designate the medical director of the local health department from whom the school obtains the Epi-Pen prescription and/or the licensed physician in the state of Illinois who prescribed epinephrine auto-injectors in the name of the nonpublic school to be maintained for use when necessary; - identifies the school employee who will obtain the prescription;
- states the location in the school where the Epi-Pens are stored; and
- states the school must have an emergency action plan and treatment authorization which includes a physician's report and recommended actions medically necessary for students with severe allergies.

If accepting a student with a life-threatening allergy, the principal should take proper steps to inform all personnel of the allergy, how to identify and avoid allergic reactions, and what to do in the case of a reaction. For management of severe allergies, it is important to take special care in the lunchroom/cafeteria during bake sales, parties/holiday celebrations, field trips and other events that may involve the presence of food. In the event of an allergic reaction, these general steps should be taken **immediately**:

- The injection of epinephrine if the child is unable to administer it him/herself OR the administration of other medication as directed by a physician on the Medication Authorization Form (i.e., inhalers).
- **Contact emergency medical services immediately regardless of the continuance of symptoms.**
- Contact the parent/guardian to inform them of the student's reaction.
- Complete the OCS Accident/Incident Report and follow up with the OCS Regional Director within 24 hours.

All students with severe allergies that have been prescribed epinephrine auto injectors (EpiPens) and other emergency medication should carry them in metal-lined pouches or 'fanny packs' while in school and there should be an understanding between the parents/guardians with the school administration on who has consent to use the EpiPen if the child is incapable. It is strongly recommended to have a general authorization so any trained school personnel could act in an emergency. **It is considered a reasonable accommodation to have trained staff willing to use an EpiPen in an emergency, as long as a physician's report states that it is a medical necessity and cannot be self-administered.** All faculty and staff should be trained on the warning signs for an allergic reaction as well as the locations of the school nurse (if applicable) and the trained school personnel.

EXEMPTION FROM LIABILITY

Under Public Act 97-0361, a school district or non-public school and its employees and agents are to incur ***no liability*** for the administration of an EpiPen, provided the school nurse or trained personnel acted in good faith when administering the EpiPen to a student whom he or she believed to be having an anaphylactic reaction. Only in cases of willful and wanton conduct will liability be incurred.

If a student is injured or harmed due to the administration of epinephrine that a school obtained under the provisions of the Act, the school, its employees, and its agents will not be held responsible for the injury unless the epinephrine was administered with a conscious disregard for safety.

ASTHMA GUIDELINES

Asthma is the most common chronic condition of childhood. Comprehensive, individualized asthma education focuses on improving medical management which means recognizing and responding to attacks and medication.

A Doctor's signature is no longer required for a student to carry and self-administer an asthma inhaler in school. Only parent permission and prescription label are necessary.

Section 5. (105 ILCS 5/22-30) The School Code is amended by changing Section 22-30 as follows:
Section 22-30. **Self-administration of medication.**

- In this section: "Asthma inhaler" means a quick reliever asthma inhaler.
- **"Epinephrine auto-injector"** means a medicine, prescribed by 1) a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches, 2) a physician assistant who has been delegated the authority to prescribe asthma medications by his or her supervising physician, or 3) an advanced practice registered nurse who has a written collaborative agreement with a collaborating physician that delegates the authority to prescribe asthma medications, for a pupil that pertains to the pupil's asthma and that has an individual prescription label.
- **"Self-administration"** means a pupil's discretionary use of and ability to carry his or her prescribed asthma medication.

A school, whether public or nonpublic, must permit the self-administration of medication by a pupil with asthma or the use of an epinephrine auto-injector by a pupil, provided that:

- **the parents or guardians of the pupil provide to the school written authorization from the parents or guardians for the self-administration of medication or**
- **for use of an epinephrine auto-injector, written authorization from the pupil's physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse; and**
- **the parents or guardians of the pupil provide to the school:**
- **the prescription label, which must contain the name of the medication, the prescribed dosage, and**
- **the time at which or circumstances under which the medication is administered, o**r - **for use of an epinephrine auto-injector, a written statement from the pupil's physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse containing the following information: 1. the name and purpose of the epinephrine auto-injector**
    1. **the prescribed dosage; and**
    2. **the time or times at which or the special circumstances under which the epinephrine auto-injector is to be administered.**

The information provided shall be kept on file in the office of the school nurse or, in the absence of a school nurse, the school's administrator.

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT ALLEGATIONS/SUSPICIONS

School personnel are mandated reporters to the State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) regarding allegations or suspicions of child abuse and neglect. Thus, school personnel are required by law to report even the suspicion of abuse or neglect. School personnel of Bridgeport Catholic Academy follow the law. If any parent has concerns about the safety of a child, the DCFS reporting hotline is: 1-800-ABUSE. It is the responsibility of DCFS personnel to investigate allegations of abuse or neglect, and school employees shall fully cooperate with such investigations.

CHILD CUSTODY

Policy

Regardless of custody, both parents have the right to inspect and receive a copy of school records and reports in the absence of a court order to the contrary.

Ordinarily, the school shall release a student to either parent unless the school has a copy of a court order giving one parent the exclusive custody.

Procedures

The school abides by the provisions of the FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT with regard to parents' right of access to their child's school records. The school also abides by the provisions of the Illinois law regarding the right of access of non-custodial parents to his or her child's school records.

Release of school records to the non-custodial parent cannot be conditioned upon the approval of the custodial parent without court order.

It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the administration with a certified copy of the court order. Unless informed in writing with adequate evidence that a parent is not permitted to have unqualified access to the child, the school may release a child to the non-custodial parent after school hours or allow said parent to visit a child outside of school hours.

Upon request, the school will offer non-custodial parents the opportunity for a parent-teacher conference at a time other than that of the custodial parent.

FIRE DRILLS/DISASTER PROCEDURES/SAFETY DRILLS

Fire, tornado, lock down, evacuation and crisis drills are important. They are designed to teach students and staff procedures to follow in case of an actual emergency. Fire drills will be conducted no less than ten times a year and a tornado drill no less than once a year. A drill is to test the ability of students and staff to act in the event of a real fire or tornado. The plan for each classroom, along with escape routes, is posted in each room. Safe and orderly exit is essential.

In the event of a tornado drill, the school will take shelter in the 1st and 2nd floor hallways and the foyer inside of the office. Students will kneel against the wall and cover their heads with their arms. Students are to remain in this position until they are instructed to return to their room.

Crisis folders and maps for evacuation are in each classroom. All rooms have posted fire drill escape routes. Students in PS-3rd grade line up along the building located on the NW corner of 37/Lowe, while students in grades 4-8 line up along the fences in the back of the school. Students are to line up behind their teacher and remain calm and quiet until they are told to return to the building.

Students MUST follow the rules during emergency safety drills, which include: always following the directions of the teacher or administrator. Staying with one's class; if a student becomes separated, he/she must go to the nearest adult. Silence is required so all can hear emergency information.

GANG ACTIVITY

Gang-related activities are contrary to Catholic Social Teaching and have no place in the Catholic School. Intimidation and/or disrespect of any person are unacceptable.

The following may be subject to disciplinary action:

- Intimidation and threat of physical harm of others
- Symbols that may be gang-related in the manner displayed, including but not limited to jewelry, jackets, sweatshirts, caps or other forms of clothing
- Display of signs/symbols on paper, notebooks, textbooks, and other possessions that may be gang-related
- Conduct on or off premises that may be gang-related

Parents/guardians are notified when their children are either suspected of being involved in gang related activities or are a victim of gang-related activity.

Gang activity may result in probation, suspension, and/or expulsion.

The principal has the authority and responsibility to investigate and report suspected gang activity to local law enforcement.

HARASSMENT

The Pastor, administration, and staff of Bridgeport Catholic Academy believes that all students and employees are entitled to work and study in school-related environments that are Christ-centered and free of harassment. The school will treat complaints of harassment seriously and will respond to such complaints in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner. Harassment of any type will not be tolerated and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. Disciplinary action may include suspension, expulsion, or termination.

School administrators recognize and respond to harassment which includes, but is not limited to:

- verbal or written taunting, teasing, gossip, threats, name-calling, whether in person, through any form of electronic communication or social media, the internet or written communication

- physical acts which include punching, poking, stalking, hair pulling, beating, biting, strangling, spitting, pinching, destruction of property, theft, or excessive tickling

- rejecting, intimidating, humiliating, defaming, terrorizing, extorting, blackmailing, isolating, ostracizing, peer pressure, hostile, rating or ranking of personal characteristics such as race, disability, ethnicity, perceived sexual orientation, manipulation of friendships, or any other offensive, unwanted conduct

- jokes, stories, pictures, cartoons, drawings or objects which are offensive, tend to alarm, annoy, abuse, or demean an individual or group

Harassment of any type is unacceptable in Catholic schools. Parents/Guardians should be notified immediately when their child is the victim of another student's harassment or if their child is the harasser of another student.

Reference: Sexual Harassment: (Archdiocese of Chicago Employee Handbook)

Bullying/Harassment (Handbook for School Administrators 2015)

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONDUCT POLICY

As partners in the education of children, parents/guardians are expected to demonstrate respectful behavior at all times toward faculty, administration, staff, students, and volunteers—whether on school grounds, off campus, or at any school-related event. A strong partnership between home and school is essential to a positive learning environment.

If, in the opinion of the principal, this partnership is no longer viable due to a parent's/guardian's conduct, the school reserves the right to require the parent/guardian to remove their child(ren) from Bridgeport Catholic Academy or to decline re-enrollment for the following school year.

Unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Harassment, verbal abuse, or threats toward faculty, administration, staff, students, or volunteers.
- Defamatory, false, or threatening statements about the school, its staff, students, or families, whether spoken, written, or posted on social media or other public platforms.
- Disruptive actions that interfere with teaching, learning, or the creation of a positive school environment.

Parents/guardians who post or share defamatory, false, or threatening content about the school, its staff, or its students may be required to remove the material immediately. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of their child(ren) from the school.

While the school aims to avoid penalizing a student for the actions of a parent/guardian, one or more of the following actions may be taken to permit the student to continue enrollment:

- Scheduling meetings between school staff and the parent/guardian outside of regular school hours in a monitored setting.
- Conducting school business solely with the other parent/guardian listed on the student's record.

When, in the judgment of the principal (and confirmed by the pastor or juridic person), a parent's/guardian's behavior seriously interferes with teaching, learning, or a positive school climate, the principal may:

- Temporarily or permanently suspend the parent's/guardian's right to be present on school grounds.
- Temporarily or permanently dismiss the child(ren) from Bridgeport Catholic Academy.

DIABETES - CARE OF STUDENTS WITH DIABETES ACT GUIDELINES

The State of Illinois enacted the Care of Students with Diabetes Act in December 2010 (the "Care Act"). Under the Care Act, a student cannot be denied access to any school or any school-related activities on the basis that the student has diabetes. This law applies to Catholic schools as well as public schools. The Care Act does the following:

- allows parents/guardians to request assistance with their child's diabetes management from a "delegated care aide" during the school day and at school-related activities;
- allows capable students to manage their own diabetes care during the school day and at school functions; and
- mandates certain minimum training requirements for all school employees in schools that have a student with diabetes.

THE DIABETES CARE PLAN

To receive assistance with diabetes management at school, the student's parent/guardian must submit a "Diabetes Care Plan" to the school. The Diabetes Care Plan is a document that specifies the diabetes related services needed by a student at school and at school-sponsored activities. It identifies the

appropriate staff to provide and supervise these activities. The parent/guardian must include the following information in the Diabetes Care Plan, including:

1. the treating health care provider's instructions concerning the student's diabetes management during the school day;
2. a copy of the signed prescription and the methods of insulin administration;
3. appropriate safeguards to ensure that syringes and lancets are disposed of properly;
4. requirements for diet, glucose testing, insulin administration, treatment for hypoglycemia, hyperglycemia, and what to do in emergency situations;
5. procedures regarding when a delegated care aide (defined below) must consult with the parent/guardian, school nurse (if available), or health care provider to confirm that an insulin dosage is appropriate; and,
6. the signature of the student's parent/guardian.

STUDENT SELF-MANAGEMENT

Students must be allowed to self-manage their diabetes in the school setting if they are authorized to do so by their diabetes care plans. The diabetes care plan should specify the nature of the student's self management and may include: allowing the student to check blood glucose levels when and wherever needed; self-administration of insulin; self-treatment of hyperglycemia or hypoglycemia; and allowing the student to possess, at all times, supplies and equipment necessary for diabetes management including syringes, food and drink.

TRAINING FOR ALL SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

The Care Act mandates basic diabetes training for all school employees in any school that has a student with diabetes during the required annual school in-service training which should be completed before the beginning of the school year. School employees shall receive training in the basics of diabetes care, how to identify when a student with diabetes needs immediate or emergency medical attention, and whom to contact in the case of an emergency. It is the principal's responsibility to arrange for this annual training with a Certified Diabetes Educator or a licensed health care provider with experience in diabetes care.

The training requirements of the Care Act also include providing an information sheet to any school employee who transports a student for school-sponsored activities that identifies the student(s) with diabetes, identifies potential emergencies and appropriate responses to such emergencies, and contains emergency contact information.

DIABETES - CARE OF STUDENTS WITH DIABETES ACT GUIDELINES

THE DELEGATED CARE AIDE

A school employee who has agreed to receive training in diabetes care and to assist students in implementing their diabetes care plan is referred to as a "Delegated Care Aide." To become a Delegated Care Aide, a school employee must enter into a written agreement with the student's parent/guardian and the school. School employees who agree to serve as Delegated Care Aides must be trained to perform these functions:

- Check blood glucose and record the results.
- Recognize and respond to the symptoms of hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia according to the

student's care plan.

- Estimate the number of carbohydrates in a snack or lunch.
- Administer insulin according to the student's diabetes care plan.
- Keep the uniform record of glucometer readings and the amount of insulin administered using the standardized *Insulin Administrative Chart* provided by the Illinois State Board of Education. ● Respond in an emergency, including how to administer glucagon and call 911.

It is important to note that the position of Delegated Care Aide is voluntary; no school employee can be compelled to become a Delegated Care Aide. The school is not expected to hire additional personnel to serve in the position of Delegated Care Aide. A school may not take disciplinary action against a school employee who chooses not to serve as a Delegated Care Aide.

TRAINING OF THE DELEGATED CARE AIDE

Initial training of a delegated care aide shall be provided by a licensed healthcare provider with expertise in diabetes or a certified diabetic educator and individualized by a student's parent or guardian. Training must be consistent with the guidelines provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in the guide for school personnel entitled "Helping the Student with Diabetes Succeed."

Written documentation that the Delegated Care Aide has successfully completed the training for the six functions listed in the section above and is able to perform them independently should be presented to the principal and the school's Delegated Care Aide by the trainer before the agreement with the parent/guardian is signed. The training shall be updated when the diabetes care plan is changed and/or at least reviewed annually.

Civil Immunity (105 ILCS 145/45)

(a) A school or a school employee is not liable for civil or other damages as a result of conduct, other than willful or wanton misconduct, related to the care of a student with diabetes.

(b) A school employee shall not be subject to any disciplinary proceeding resulting from an action taken in compliance with this Act, unless the action constitutes willful or wanton misconduct.

REFERENCE: http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=3284&ChapterID=17
http://www.iitdiabetes.org/assets/docs/DiabetesRightsBrochure.pdf

ILLNESS/IMMUNIZATIONS/INJURY/MEDICATIONS

ILLNESS: **If your child appears ill or is symptomatic before the start of the school day, the child should remain at home.**

If a child becomes ill during the school day, parents will be called at home or work. Parents are responsible to have the child picked up and taken home. The child will not be dismissed from school without an authorized adult to accompany him/her home. The parent or authorized adult must sign the child out in the school office.

If your child has been vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, earache, a heavy discharge from the nose, skin rash, eye infections, or an elevated temperature of 100 degrees or above, he or she should be at home.

Temperature must be normal, without medication, for 24 hours, and there must be no vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school. To protect your child and his/her classmates, it is important to cooperate with the school following the rules of the Board of Health for Isolation and Quarantine Requirements of Communicable Diseases.

1. **Strep Throat.** Keep children at home until mediation prescribed by a doctor has been given for a 24-hour period. Remember to send medication to school with a doctor's written note describing the amount and time of dosage.
2. **All Communicable Diseases.** Children must remain home during the quarantine period, three or more days, and a doctor's note is required for the student to return to school. Communicable diseases include: chicken pox, scarlet fever, German measles, mumps, measles, and whooping cough. Have a doctor see the child and notify the school. Children who have been in contact with disease need not be kept at home. Parents of other children will be notified.
3. **Worms and Lice.** Keep children at home until symptoms disappear, including the eggs. Children must be nit free in order to return to school. Lice requires careful, special shampooing and house cleaning.
4. **Impetigo.** Have your child seen by a doctor and keep your child home until symptoms disappear.
5. **Conjunctivitis.** Keep your child home until the symptoms disappear.

CHILDREN MUST HAVE A SIGNED NOTE FROM THEIR DOCTOR IF THEY ARE TO REMAIN INDOORS DURING GYM OR RECESS.

IMMUNIZATION: The health of your child is very important to us. To insure that your child complies with the regulations passed by the Illinois Board of Health and the Illinois Board of Education, the following is required:

1. A physical examination complete with required immunizations for all new students as well as those entering grades K and 6.
2. Dental examinations are required for the students entering in grades K, 2, and 6.
3. Students entering K are required to have proof of a vision screening.
4. A child will be excluded from school if a record of these required immunizations is not on file in the school office **by October 1**. Medical, dental, and vision forms can be obtained from the school office or via our website.

INJURY: In the case of injury where medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted. If parents or emergency contacts are not available, the child will be taken to an emergency facility. We need to be informed of changes in work and home phone numbers as they occur in case of emergency. Information regarding any chronic illness (asthma, diabetes, etc.) requiring attention during school hours should be on file in the school office.

All injured students requiring medical attention will have an Accident Report Form sent to Gallagher Bassett Insurance Company. The main office will handle the filing of this report.

MEDICATION: Parents/guardians have the primary responsibility for the administration of medication to their children. The administration of medication to students during regular school hours and during school related activities is discouraged unless necessary for the critical health and well-being of the student.

The following instructions regarding medication are written to comply with the Office of Catholic Schools:

1. No school staff member may dispense medication of any kind, including non-prescription drugs such as a pain reliever, without written authorization from the parent.
2. No student may take prescribed medication on school property without signed written authorization from both the student's doctor and parent. Forms for this purpose are available in the school office.

3. All prescribed medication must be brought to the school office by a parent with appropriate authorization. Students may not carry any type of medication around with them in school. 4. Any student needing to take non-prescription medication of any kind at school should bring his/her medication and the parent authorization, including detailed instructions, to the school office. Parents should inform the teacher with a note or email.

5. All authorized medication must be taken in the presence of two office personnel. 6. Emergency medication, such as inhalers, can be carried by the student or left with the child's teacher. All appropriate authorizations of doctor and parent must be on file in the school office.

CONCUSIONS: Prior to participation in any practice or competition, all student-athletes must have a current sports physical completed within the past 395 days. Sixth grade students who have submitted the State-required physical for that school year are exempt from submitting a separate sports physical, provided that:

- The required health form has been submitted to the school, and
- A physician or qualified healthcare provider has indicated that the student is eligible to participate in physical education and interscholastic athletics.

Please Note: A sports physical may not replace the State-required physical for sixth grade.

Concussion Policy

Prior to participation in any practice or competition, all student-athletes and their parent/guardian must review and sign a Concussion Information Document (available in English and Spanish), which outlines the school's policies on concussions and head injuries.

The Concussion Oversight Team is responsible for ensuring that any student suspected of having a concussion is immediately removed from participation.

Any student-athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion—including but not limited to loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance difficulties—must be immediately removed from play. The student may not return until evaluated by a licensed healthcare professional. A student may not resume practice or competition until all concussion protocols have been properly followed.

Before a student-athlete may return to athletic participation, the following steps must be completed:

1. The student must be immediately removed from practice or competition if concussion symptoms are observed.
2. A parent/guardian must provide written consent for the student to be evaluated by a Licensed Healthcare Professional.
3. A Licensed Healthcare Professional (MD, PA, or NP) must provide written clearance, including a diagnosis and a plan outlining the student's progression through **Return to Learn** and then **Return to Play**.
4. The student must be symptom-free and fully participating in normal classroom activities before returning to athletic participation.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Bridgeport Catholic Academy is operated under the auspices of the Catholic Bishop of Chicago, a corporation sole, in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Bridgeport Catholic Academy admits students of any race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin to all the rights and privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students in the school.

Bridgeport Catholic Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies, admission policies, athletic, or other school administered programs. Bridgeport Catholic Academy embraces the racial and cultural diversity of the family population evident within the school.

As per Illinois PA 102-0360, Bridgeport Catholic Academy does not prohibit hairstyles that are historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture, including, but not limited to, protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists.

Bridgeport Catholic Academy allows student athletes to modify their athletic or team uniform for the purpose of modesty in clothing or attire that is in accordance with the requirements of their religion, cultural values or modesty preferences. If a student chooses to modify his or her athletic or team uniform the student is responsible for all costs associated with the modification of the uniform and the student shall not be required to receive prior approval from the school for such modification.

It is the policy of Bridgeport Catholic Academy to provide equal opportunity in employment to all employees and all applicants for employment. No person shall be discriminated against in employment by reason of such an individual's race, color, sex, national origin, age, military discharge, marital status, mental or physical handicap unrelated to the ability to perform the duties of the position, except when of these characteristics is a necessary qualification of a position.

The school complies with applicable state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination, including, but not limited to:

The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (29 USC 621 et seq.)

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC 2000e et seq.)

Applicable sections of the Illinois School Code [105 ILCS 5]

Questions and/or concerns regarding perceived discrimination in admissions should be directed to the Principal, the Pastor (or parish administrator) and the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools.
Questions

SCHOOL INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM (SIRS)

Illinois Compiled Statutes mandate that certain types of incidents (drugs, weapons, and attacks on school personnel) occurring in or on school property be reported to local law enforcement authorities and the Illinois State Police (ISP) within one to three days of the occurrence of the incident. In order to satisfy the reporting of incidents to the ISP requirement, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), in conjunction with the ISP, have created the School Incident Reporting System (SIRS). SIRS is a web-based application used by schools to report incidents electronically but which does not satisfy the requirement to report incidents to local law enforcement authorities.

TYPES OF INCIDENTS TO REPORT

- ***Drug-related incidents in schools*** "Upon receipt of any written, electronic, or verbal report from any school personnel regarding a verified incident involving drugs in a school or on school owned or leased property, the superintendent or his or her designee, or appropriate administrative officer for a private school, shall report all such drug-related incidents occurring in a school or school property to the local law enforcement authorities immediately and to the Department of

State Police in a form, manner, and frequency prescribed by the Department of State Police."

- ***Firearms in schools*** "Upon receipt of any written, electronic, or verbal report from any school personnel regarding a verified incident involving a firearm in a school or on school owned or leased property,…the superintendent or his or her designee shall report all such firearm-related incidents occurring in a school or on school property to the local law enforcement authorities no later than 24 hours after the occurrence of the incident and to the Department of State Police in a form, manner, and frequency as prescribed by the Department of State Police."

- ***Attacks on school personnel*** "Upon receipt of a written complaint from any school personnel, the superintendent, or other appropriate administrative officer for a private school, shall report all incidents of battery committed against teachers, teacher personnel, administrative personnel or educational support personnel to the local law enforcement authorities immediately after the occurrence of the attack and to the Department of State Police *Illinois Uniform Crime Reporting Program* no later than 3 days after the occurrence of the attack."

- ***For any incidents that have already occurred, please be sure to enter that incident data and any new incidents into the reporting system.***

Resources:
SIRS User's Guide: http://www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/UsersGuideV1.pdf For questions: Contact the Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division at 217-782-3850 For Technical Assistance: Contact the helpdesk at 217-558-3600

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment by students is unacceptable conduct that may constitute grounds for expulsion. Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or language or conduct of a sexual nature when such activity is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive so as to limit a person's ability to participate in or benefit from school programs or so as to create a hostile or abusive educational environment. Any person who has a complaint of a sexual harassment by a student must bring that complaint to the attention of the school Principal. All such complaints will be promptly investigated. If the complainant is uncomfortable for any reason with discussing such matters with the principal, or if the complainant is not satisfied after bringing the matter to the attention of this individual, the complainant shall report the matter promptly to the pastor or the school consultant at the Office of Catholic Schools.

Every effort will be made to maintain the privacy of the charging person and the person or persons complained about. School officials will keep documentation of all allegations and investigations of student sexual harassment confidential and take appropriate corrective action including disciplinary measures if justified to remedy violations of this policy.

Any student who knowingly makes false charges against an employee in an attempt to demean, harass, abuse, or embarrass that individual shall be subject to the sanctions for misconduct set forth above.

SMOKE/DRUG FREE ENVIRONMENT

Bridgeport Catholic Academy School is a smoke/drug free learning environment. Smoking is NOT permitted on school grounds.

STUDENT RECORDS

Bridgeport Catholic Academy keeps a permanent record of each student's grades, attendance, and test results. The Buckley-Pell Act, PL 93-358, was signed into law in December 1974. This act provides access

on the part of parents/guardians to student records maintained by an educational institution. The Archdiocese of Chicago has adopted Guidelines for School Records as a means to describe what the parents' rights are.

These rights include:

1. The right to look at all of your child's records maintained in the official school file. 2. The right to prevent disclosures: The school will not disclose anything to third parties from your child's records unless
    a. you consent in writing prior to the disclosure, or
    b. the information is directory information which you have not requested be kept confidential, or
    c. the request for the information meets one of the limited circumstances described in the Guidelines.
3. The right to request correction: You have the right to present evidence that the school should amend any part of your child's record which you believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise violates the student's rights. If the school decides not to change the record, you may insert an explanation into the record.

Once a student turns eighteen, he or she alone obtains all the above rights.
Your request to view the records must:

1. Be in writing
2. State the specific record desired
3. State the reason for the request. Within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the request, an appointment will be made with one of the authorized school personnel to interpret the record for the parent/guardian.

School Student Records / Missing Persons Records Act: Bridgeport Catholic Academy has a written system/procedure in place that flags records for any current or former student who has been reported missing by the Illinois State Police**.**

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Anytime a student is representing Bridgeport Catholic Academy, whether in school, on school grounds, during the school day, or at school sponsored activities extending beyond the regular school hours, substance abuse of any kind is strictly prohibited. Substance is defined as illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, anabolic steroids, tobacco, chemicals, inhalants, solvents, prescription or over-the counter drugs used for purposes other than those for which they are intended.

Archdiocesan Medical Cannabis Policy: Students are not permitted to use or possess cannabis infused products in our schools except in accordance with the law and school policy. School policy should provide that if a parent/guardian of an elementary/secondary student who demonstrates his/her son or daughter is a "registered qualifying patient" and has an individual who is a "registered designated caregiver," both of whom hold medical cannabis registry identification cards, then the parent/guardian or registered designated caregiver must be permitted to administer a medical cannabis product to the student (non-smoking/non-vaping form) at school.

The school may not deny a student attendance solely because he or she requires administration of medical cannabis during school hours.

A parent or guardian or other individual may not administer a medical cannabis product in a manner

that, in the opinion of the school, would create a disruption to the school's educational environment or would cause exposure of the product to other students.

TECHNOLOGY
Acceptable Use Procedures

Elementary and secondary schools may provide technology resources to its students and staff for educational and administrative purposes. The goal in providing these resources is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication with the support and supervision of parents/guardians, teachers, and support staff. The use of these technology resources is a privilege, not a right.

Access to computers provides the potential availability of material that may not be considered of educational value in the context of the school setting. Appropriate behavior, as it relates to the use of computers, is no different from behavior expectations in all other aspects of the learning and instructional program. All users are expected to use the computers and computer networks in a responsible and ethical manner. This document is intended to clarify these expectations as they apply to computer and network usage in schools.

Each school will develop procedures stating what the school will do regarding the use of its technology resources.

The school will establish technology protocol that will:

● prevent user access or transmission over its computers and computer network of inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications;

● prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity;

● prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and including but not limited to the intranet, Internet access, fax, email, stand alone computer and telephone;

● comply with the provisions of the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

Use of the technology resources that are prohibited include, but are not limited to:

● violating student rights to privacy/confidentiality, or unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information;

● attempting any unauthorized access, including hacking of any computer system;

● downloading unacceptable materials;

● re-posting personal communication without the author's prior consent;

● violating copyright law;

● using school technology resources for financial gain, credit card fraud, electronic forgery, other illegal activity and political purposes;

● downloading, installing or storing software on a school computer without the approval of appropriate school personnel;

● changing or attempting to alter any configuration, program or password on any computer or system;

● using a school computer without knowledge/approval of school personnel responsible for the computer;

● using inappropriate language, pictures, and gestures in any form on the Internet;

- using the Internet for entertainment or limited self-discovery function;
- using the Internet for unauthorized purchases.

The school is primarily responsible for:

- applying blocking to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or to child pornography or to any material deemed harmful to minors as determined by the school administration;
- teaching proper techniques and standards for Internet participation;
- guiding student access to appropriate areas of the Internet;
- informing students that misuse of the Internet in school could result in loss of access privileges and/or further disciplinary action;
- monitoring privacy, software policy, copyright laws, email etiquette, approved/intended use of the school's Internet resource; and
- disabling, subject to administrative supervision, protection measures in the case of bona fide adult research or other lawful purposes.

The school **is not** responsible for:

- unauthorized costs or charges that are incurred by students over the Internet;
- any damages the student may incur, including loss of data; and
- the accuracy or quality of any information obtained through any school Internet connection.

Local school policies address student use of electronic devices during regular school hours and during school-sponsored activities.

Student-owned computers, when used in school, must follow the same procedures as school-owned equipment. Student-owned computers cannot be used on school premises without the expressed consent of the principal.

Parents /Guardians and students must sign and acknowledge the school Acceptable Use Procedure. The parent/guardian must authorize the student to have access to the school technology resources at the beginning of each school year.

Technology Use Outside of School: Parents/Guardians are primarily responsible for the student's appropriate and ethical use of technology outside of school. However, the inappropriate use of technology outside of school may subject the student to disciplinary action. Inappropriate use of technology may include, but is not limited to harassment of others, use of the school name, remarks directed to or about teachers and staff, offensive communications including videos/photographs and threats. The school, however, does not actively monitor student use of technology (Internet blogs, chat rooms, facebook, etc.). While our filtering system establishes some parameters for appropriate use within our building, students and parents/guardians are primarily responsible for the appropriate and ethical use of technology, especially in the home. While BCA does not seek to enforce the following guidelines for families, we take seriously our responsibility to keep children safe from situations which may prove injurious to their emotional or physical well-being.

All adults must take seriously the risks posed by children who are not appropriately supervised while they are using the Internet and we must all work to protect our children. In order to maximize the protection of children:

- Children should only use computers in the common area of the home. This will provide an easy avenue for parents to properly supervise the sites which are being visited.

● Parents should speak to their children about the risks of using the internet and instruct them as to how to immediately turn off the computer in the event something is perceived to be dangerous.

● Parents should regularly check the “history” of their child’s internet usage as well as their “phone history” in the event the child has a cell phone.

● Children should be instructed to never arrange to meet someone they have met on the internet unless it is first approved by a parent and the parent agrees to accompany the child.
● A “Family Internet Contract” should be established by each family. This contract should clearly establish guidelines for usage and be signed by each member of the family.

● Filtering programs should be used on every computer to which a child has access.
● Children should be instructed to never upload images or send personal information over the internet unless they receive their parent’s permission.
● Cell phones should be given to parents prior to the child going to bed at night.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Students and their parents/guardians are advised that the school, by Illinois statute (Illinois Public Act 098-0129), may not request or require a student to provide a password or other related account information in order to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website. The administration and faculty may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is sufficient evidence to suggest the student's social network account violates the school's rules and/or disciplinary policy. The school may require a student to share content in the course of such an investigation. and/or concerns regarding perceived discrimination in employment should be directed to the Pastor (or parish administrator) and the Human Resources Department of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

VIDEO/PHOTOGRAPHS/WEBSITE

From time to time, promotional videos, brochures, and flyers may be made by our school. During payment days, a photo/video release form is distributed, and it must be signed by each family in order for your child to appear in any print or video materials. If you do not wish for your child to be included, you must indicate this on the form. If your family does not return the form, he/she will not be included in any publications.

Pictures and videos of students participating in BCA school events, whether on campus or off campus, may not be published to personal websites, or any other websites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.

WEAPONS

To uphold the dignity of the human person, the sacredness of human life, and provide a safe, secure environment:

● Students shall not carry, possess, or use weapons in school, or on school premises.

● Weapons include but are not limited to the following: knives, hands, brass knuckles, “billy clubs”, bats, pipes, sticks and any other object that causes bodily harm.

School authorities have the right to inspect and search lockers, desks, parking lots, and school property.

Parents/Guardians of the students involved shall be notified as soon as possible. Students who violate these directives are subject to suspension and/or expulsion.

School officials are required to report weapon violations to the local police. The weapon is turned over to the local police jurisdiction.

The Office of Catholic Schools is notified within 24 hours.

OPIOID INHIBITORS

In accordance with applicable State Law, Bridgeport Catholic Academy maintains a supply of undesignated prescribed opioid antagonists in the name of the School and provides or administers them as necessary according to State law. To the extent the School is able to maintain a supply of undesignated opioid antagonists, they will generally be available during the regular school hours from 7:40 am to 2:45 pm. following designated secure location. However, no one should rely on the School for the availability of opioid antagonists. This Policy does not guarantee the availability of undesignated opioid antagonists.

An opioid antagonist is defined as a drug that binds to opioid receptors and blocks or inhibits the effect of opioids acting on those receptors, including, but not limited to, naloxone hydrochloride or any other similarly acting drug approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. A school nurse or trained personnel, as defined by State law, may administer an undesignated opioid antagonist to any person that they, in good faith, believe is having an opioid overdose while in school, while at a school-sponsored activity, while under the supervision of school personnel, or before or after normal school activities.

The School shall maintain a list of trained personnel. Prior to the administration of an undesignated opioid antagonist, trained personnel must submit to the school administration proof of completion of a training curriculum to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose. Upon any administration of an undesignated opioid antagonist, the School will immediately notify the student's parents or guardian or emergency contact.

Within 24 hours after the administration of an undesignated opioid antagonist, the school must notify the health care provider of the opioid antagonist of its use. Within 3 days after the administration of an opioid antagonist, the school must report the required information to the ISBE on the form entitled Undesignated Opioid Antagonists reporting form.

The Catholic Bishop of Chicago, an Illinois Corporation Sole, the school, their employees and agents are to incur no liability or professional discipline except for willful and wanton conduct as a result of any injury arising from the administration of opioid antagonists, regardless of whether authorization of was given by the student's parents or guardians or by the student's physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse, and the parents or guardians must indemnify and hold harmless the school and its employees and agents against any claims, except a claim based on willful and wanton conduct, arising out of the administration of an opioid antagonist, regardless of whether authorization was given