

# Omaha Catholic School Consortium

## Family Handbook 2023-2024



OMAHA CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
CONSORTIUM

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“The Omaha Catholic School Consortium challenges all students to be disciples of Jesus Christ by empowering them to reach their fullest potential through quality academic, spiritual, and social experiences.”

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Consortium was founded after a study of our Archdiocese completed by the Meitler Group. Archbishop Lucas had the goal to ensure that Catholic education was affordable and accessible to families in southeast Omaha for generations to come. In an effort to achieve that goal, a unique governance model began in 2012—the Consortium. Initially, it brought together five schools: Holy Cross, Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Bernadette, St. Thomas More, and Sts. Peter and Paul. In 2018, we opened the Dual Language Academy, increasing our school number to six. These six schools operate at individual locations but share one leadership team and one business office. The Consortium proudly serves 13% of the overall elementary school student enrollment for the entire archdiocese. The Consortium provides academic, administrative and financial support to its schools to ensure students have access to an exceptional education in nurturing and culturally unique environments, where they are encouraged to explore their Catholic faith and become disciples of Christ.

## **SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Omaha Catholic School Consortium is to challenge all students to be disciples of Jesus Christ by empowering them to reach their fullest potential through quality academic, spiritual, and social experiences.

### **Guiding Beliefs**

#### **The Omaha Catholic School Consortium will....**

1. provide an excellent community of faith and learning.
2. nurture students who will develop a personal relationship with God by witnessing their faith through participation in the sacraments, community worship, and service to others.
3. develop students of character and self-discipline who model personal and social responsibility and who display a concern for others.
4. Empower our students to be critical thinkers who are fully prepared to use technology in an ethical way to further their learning.
5. provide a safe and nurturing educational environment guided by collaborative, professional administrative practices.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Each member of the OCSC community is a person created in the image of God with infinite dignity and self-worth and each has the desire, the capacity, and the responsibility to learn. Each Consortium school admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin. The faculty, parents/guardians, the parish, and the OCSC leadership share responsibility for providing learning opportunities for each child and each child has the responsibility to take advantage of those opportunities. The faculty and staff are responsible for providing a positive, affirming environment for learning that challenges every student and offers every individual the opportunity to experience success and God's love. The parent/guardian is responsible for supporting the school program, ensuring family participation in parish life, and providing time and encouragement for home study and independent reading. The parish is responsible for providing the school with spiritual resources and guidance and education in the faith. The OCSC is responsible for providing leadership and financial

support in order to ensure that Catholic education is feasible for as many people as possible.

### **PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK**

This Handbook is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute a contractual agreement between any Consortium school and any student or any parent/guardian of any student. The information contained in this Handbook provides a general description of rules and regulations. Non-enforcement of any of the rules or regulations does not serve as a waiver of their future enforcement. This Handbook does not create any restrictions upon any Consortium school's right to institute any course of disciplinary action which, in any Consortium school's sole discretion, it believes is necessary and consistent with its Catholic educational mission.

Each Consortium school reserves the right to add, modify, or abolish any of the Handbook provisions at any time with or without notice.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **EPISCOPAL SUPERVISION**

The Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Omaha, Nebraska, as chief representative of the Church's teaching authority, is the head of the school system in the Archdiocese. Practically, the Archbishop delegates comprehensive regulatory and general supervisory authority, including policy-making, to the Archdiocesan Superintendent of Schools, Executive Director of the Consortium, and the Pastor of the Parish. The Archdiocesan Catholic Schools accept the authority of the Superintendent as delegated by the Archbishop. All Consortium schools will work in cooperation with the Catholic School's Office.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

The Executive Director serves as Chief Executive Officer of the Omaha Catholic School Consortium and works closely with the Board of Directors in directing all internal and external activities of the Consortium. The Executive Director meets annually and works closely with the priests who are pastors of the parishes where Consortium schools are located, especially in the assurance of Catholic Faith Identity and the celebration of the liturgy and the sacraments. He/She supervises the principals of the Consortium schools and collaborates with them in all aspects of school operations, including Catholic Faith Identity, academic excellence, school improvement procedures, personnel issues, student discipline issues, extra-curricular activities, use of facilities, scheduling, and other related school issues.

## **OCSC BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

In accordance with the policies and guidelines of the Omaha Archdiocese Catholic Schools Office, the Board of Directors is responsible for establishing uniform policies on all matters pertaining to the school sites, including matters pertaining to employees, salary scales, educational, athletic and related programs, the school calendar, development, finances, physical plans, public relations, educational standards, recruitment, and applying Catholic principles to the educational programs and all catechetical courses. The board also is responsible for establishing a formula for the financing of the school sites.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **Members:**

Mrs. Vickie Kauffold, Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Mike Goetz, Executive Director

Tammy Blossom, Board Chair

Shannan Brommer, Dr. Sarah Kottich, John Maginn, Fr. John Pietramale, Jay Vankat, John Wilhelm

## **THE PASTOR**

The Pastor of the parish acts as the official delegate of the Archbishop in the "teaching mission" of the Roman Catholic Church. All Catholic Schools/programs and their personnel are responsible to the Archbishop and his delegates in all matters concerning the Catholic Faith. This includes serving as the officially designated spiritual leader of a Consortium School, monitoring the Catholic Faith identity and quality Religious education curricular offerings of the school, and overseeing the sacramental preparation for the students of said School.

## **THE PRINCIPAL**

The principal, under the direction of the Executive Director and the Board of Education, is the chief administrative and supervisory office of the school. The principal is the official representative and spokesperson for the school and is the administrator primarily responsible for ensuring the policies enacted by the OCSC Board of Directors and Omaha Catholic Schools Office are put into action.

## **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (SIP)**

Each school must create and maintain a School Improvement Program(SIP). The SIP team is composed of teachers from varied grade levels, including Specials. This group is responsible for the overall School Improvement Process. This process formalizes our School Improvement Process as we analyze the whole institution—the programs, the cultural context, the community of stakeholders—to determine how well the parts work together to meet the needs of students. The SIP teams at each site will be responsible for guiding this continued process of achieving academic excellence at each Consortium school.

## **HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS**

The Home and School Association is the organization at the school level that maintains good communication between the home and the school, provides a vehicle through which parents/guardians can provide service to the school, offers a mechanism for parent/guardian education, organizes fundraising activities, and serves as a structure for political action. Membership is open to all parents/guardians of school children. For information on your school's H&S, please contact your administrator.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

If a parent/guardian has a concern regarding an issue/situation in school, the following steps are recommended and expected. The steps to resolving any conflicts or concerns should be followed in the order they are presented below:

1. Contact the child's teacher to discuss any concern and a possible solution. In cases relating to specific school policies or procedures and outside their child's classroom, parents/guardians should begin with a discussion with the principal.
2. If the concern cannot be resolved with the teacher, the parent/guardian should then schedule a conference with the principal.
3. Should the principal, upon hearing the concerns of the parent/guardian, feel it is necessary, he/she may schedule a meeting that involves the parent/guardian, teacher(s) and the principal to help facilitate a solution to the concerns being addressed in the classroom.
4. If the parent/guardian still feels the problem/concern has not been resolved, the Assistant Superintendent should be contacted. The Executive Director has the ultimate authority for all educational operations in the school.

## **ADMISSIONS**

### **ADMISSION GUIDELINES**

The Principal at each individual school site will make the decision concerning your child's acceptance and placement into our school. We will use the following criteria in descending order when we have a waiting list.

1. The family has current students attending the desired school.
2. The family has siblings of accepted, new students.
3. The family is a registered and active member of the Parish directly connected to the school (length of registration may be a factor).
4. The family is a registered and active member of another Consortium parish.
5. The family is Catholic, non-parishioner; date of school application and availability of parish school will be considered;
6. The family has students planning to attend our K-8th grade program (this applies only to preschool and prekindergarten programs).
7. The family is non-Catholic; date of school application will be taken into account.

As a way to better acquaint them with the given school, all parents/guardians and students will be required to meet with the Principal at school as part of the enrollment process. Each Consortium school requires all parents/guardians to give the school a copy of their child(ren)'s birth certificate and baptismal certificate.

### **NONDISCRIMINATION ENROLLMENT POLICY**

All parishioners, non-parishioners, and non-Catholics are welcome to attend a Consortium school. The Omaha Archdiocesan Schools admit students of any race, national and ethnic origins to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the schools. They do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of their educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

### **ADMISSION AGE REQUIREMENTS**

OCSC complies with Nebraska State age requirements for kindergarten and grade one students. Children entering kindergarten ordinarily must be five years old on or before July 31st. The Principal will make final placement and approval.

### **PRESCHOOL REQUIREMENTS**

To be eligible for the 4/5-year-old class prekindergarten classes, your child must be 4 on or before July 31.

To be eligible for the 3-year-old preschool class, your child must turn three on, or before, July 31. He/She must be independently toilet trained.

### **NEW STUDENT ADMISSIONS**

For the admission of a kindergarten student or a transfer student, the parent/guardian must follow these guidelines:

#### **1. BIRTH CERTIFICATE**

OCSC complies with Nebraska State Law requiring that a Birth Certificate with a raised seal must be on file for every student who is enrolled. The original should be brought to the office to be copied.

#### **2. HEALTH RECORD**

An up-to-date health record must be on file with the school office. Record of a physical examination by a doctor is required of any student entering kindergarten, seventh grade, and of all students who transfer in at any grade level from outside Nebraska. A dental examination is also recommended as well.

#### **3. IMMUNIZATION RECORD**

An up-to-date immunization record must accompany the health record.

#### **4. SACRAMENTAL RECORDS**

Parent/guardian is required to submit a Baptismal Certificate regardless of religion.

#### **5. CUMULATIVE RECORDS**

For students transferring into any Consortium school, a copy of records from the previous school attended is required.

### **Enrollment**

Enrollment for students currently attending a Consortium school will begin in February for the following school year. Confirmation of enrollment is the payment of the Registration Fees, completion of paperwork or completion of on-line forms and, when needed, a meeting with the principal. Open school enrollment is held in February/March for the upcoming school year.

### **Wait List**

If a class is full and a student is placed on a waiting list, the student fee will not be collected. To be placed on a waiting list, the parent communicates with the principal. When an opening occurs, the parent will be notified by the school. Within three (3) days of notification, the parent must pay the student fee and tuition according to the option chosen in the FACTS program. Any special considerations to the above policy must be approved by the Principal with involvement from the Executive Director as needed.

### **Registration Fees**

All families are required to pay a \$100 **non refundable** registration fee per child each year. For families with multiple children, OCSC will collect \$100 per family and the remaining fees will be rolled into tuition. This fee is expected even if students enroll during the school year. It will secure a position in the desired school.

### **Tuition and Student Fees**

Tuition/Student Fees will be reviewed and established annually by the OCSC Board of Directors. Parent/guardians will be advised of tuition and fees in the spring prior to the opening of the school in the fall. Tuition is to be paid either annually (due June 30), or using one of the payment options available in FACTS.

Tuition guidelines have been established in order to create a viable financial structure and process for school families and parish administration.

It shall be the policy the Omaha Catholic School Consortium that:

- Unless an exception is made by the Executive Director, no student will be allowed to re-enroll in a subsequent semester if tuition is not current.
- In addition, all fees (such as lunch, library, damaged text books service hours, etc..) from the year must be paid in full prior to re enrollment or registration being finalized.

Registration fees will be collected at the time of registration for all students. No space will



be reserved until the fees and any required paperwork are received.

*Payment plans are set up through the FACTS program.*

### **Full Payment Discounts**

Full payments made by June 30 will be discounted. Inquire for details.

### **WITHDRAWAL**

Should it become necessary for a student to leave a Consortium for a reason such as moving or transferring to another school, the parent/guardian must give the Principal at least 48-hour notice. The student must return all books, including library books, pay any fines, activity fees or lunch balance, and tuition must be current for OCSC to release any records. If you withdraw a student after school begins for the fall, you will be responsible for the entire trimester of tuition that the student attended. Records cannot follow a student without the completion of a Transcript Request form from the child's next school. All dues, fees and tuition must be paid in order for transcripts to be sent.

### **PARENT'S ROLE IN EDUCATION**

At OCSC, we consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, morally and psychologically. Your choice of a Consortium school involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other and with the Church community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

Once you have chosen to enter into partnership with us at OCSC, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (PreK- 8th grade), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural and physical gifts. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner in education will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect for all authority. If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers/administration will model good mature behavior and relationships.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits which provide a young person with both guidance and security.

It is essential that a child takes responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects and any other assignments. This responsibility also extends to times of absence. Together let us support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she is capable of becoming.

As partners in the educational process at a Consortium school, parents are expected:

1. To set rules, times, and limits so that your child:
  - a. Gets to bed early on school nights
  - b. Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day
  - c. Is dressed according to the school dress code
  - d. Completes class assignments on time
  - e. Has lunch money or sack lunch everyday
2. To actively participate in school activities such as Home & School, Parent/Teacher Conferences, etc.
3. To notify the school with a written note/email when the student has been absent or is tardy.
4. To notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers.
5. To meet all financial obligations to the school.
6. To inform the school of a special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety and health.
7. To complete and return to school any requested information promptly.
8. To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education.
9. To support the Home & School Association, HOPE program, the Church festival, the Annual Gala, or other school events to help meet the essential building needs of the school.
10. To support the religious and educational goals of the school.
11. To support and cooperate with the discipline policy, uniform policy and all procedures in this handbook.
12. Parents/guardians are encouraged to provide input; however, they are expected to treat staff, teachers and administration with respect and courtesy. Discussion on any student or school issues should be done in a professional and respectful manner. If a parent/guardian's behavior is disrespectful, rude or disruptive to the educational program, or damages the reputation of the school, the school administration will decide whether the child(ren) will be allowed to continue education at the school.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION PROGRAM (PPP)**

OCSC recognizes the unique blessings and capabilities of each child. We encourage students to give selflessly to others and to offer their time and talent for the betterment of their school, parish, and community. We ultimately recognize, however, that the best teaching approach is modeling. No one will be admitted, readmitted or be allowed to remain as a student in a Consortium school unless that person and his/her parents/guardians subscribe to and follow the school's philosophy and agree to abide by the educational policies and regulations of the school, the entire staff, administration and the archdiocese.

Many school families already contribute much appreciated time, talent, and resources to our school communities. For their giving, we are grateful. For other families, stewardship (time, talent, and treasure) has yet to become a priority. In recognition that we need to practice what we teach, many of our Consortium schools hold the expectation that all families participate in stewardship opportunities through Parent Participation Programs (at home parish, other Consortium parishes or at the school).

If a PPP exists, the school will track parent involvement/stewardship on a yearly basis. Dual Language Academy families are expected to volunteer for a minimum of 20 hours per school year. We understand that parents work hard and time is limited, however, everyone has something to offer. Please contact the principal if your family needs help deciding on or being creative with volunteer hours. A \$50/hour fee will be charged for unmet volunteer hours.

## **REQUIRED PARENT MEETINGS**

### **Welcome Back Event**

In early August each year, parents/guardians come to drop off supplies, register for the Santitos program, pick up paperwork packets, sign-up for membership and volunteer projects with Home & School, and shop for Used Uniforms, if available.

### **Curriculum Information will be sent to parents through SeeSaw the last week of September**

This is information to learn about your child's teacher and classroom routines and expectations.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and early spring. All parents/guardians are expected to attend these conferences. Parent or teacher-initiated conferences may take place at other times throughout the year. Specific details will be sent home via school newsletters regarding conferences.

## **NONCUSTODIAL PARENT/GUARDIAN**

OCSC policy on the rights to school information by a parent/guardian who do not have custody of their children is as follows:

1. Court Orders: At the time of registration and/or as the parent/guardian becomes aware, court orders must be presented to the Principal by either or both

- parent/guardian.
2. Records: Noncustodial parent/guardian must submit written requests for their children's records, unless a court order prohibits them from doing so.
  3. School personnel may assume that the noncustodial parent/guardian has a right to the student's records unless a court order to the contrary has been provided.
  4. School personnel do not need permission from the custodial parent/guardian to provide records to the noncustodial parent/guardian, but it will notify the custodial parent/guardian that it intends to comply with a request from the noncustodial parent/guardian.
  5. Conferences and information: Noncustodial parent/guardian may attend regular parent/guardian/teacher conferences or arrange special parent/guardian/teacher conferences unless he/she has been restricted from doing so by court order. General school information, such as lunch menus or announcements of school events, is not considered part of a student's records. The school is not required to provide such information to noncustodial parent/guardian but may comply with requests if it is feasible.
  6. Other contacts: The school will not release a child to the noncustodial parent/guardian unless asked to do so in writing by the custodial parent/guardian. If custody has not been decided, the student may leave with either parent/guardian, unless a court order to the contrary has been provided. Noncustodial parent/guardian may visit the student's classes unless restricted by a court order.
  7. Joint Custody Information: If parents/guardians have joint custody, each parent/guardian will have the same rights unless restricted by court order. The school may require a copy of the legal documentation of custody and may also require identification from the noncustodial parent/guardian.

## **PROGRAMS**

### **PRESCHOOL INFORMATION**

PreS Program-- The PreS philosophy is that all children can learn in a play-based setting. A young child learns life-long skills through play. The child must be completely and independently toilet trained and must turn 3 by the first day of school. Absolutely NO pull-up diapers allowed. The PreS program will provide many opportunities for the 3-year-old to enhance his/her growth and development. Each child will learn a host of skills and acquire the confidence and self-esteem to succeed in future school readiness.

PreK Program-- The PreK philosophy builds on the preschool program to continue the academic growth to meet the high expectations of the kindergarten program. School readiness is at the core of the PreK program. Students entering the PreK program must turn 4 by July 31st.. The PreK program places emphasis on academics through play, attention span, and cognitive skills. Each PreK student will be well prepared to meet the challenges at our Consortium schools.

The child's original birth certificate (with raised seal), immunization records, and \$150.00 non-refundable registration fee are required at the time of registration.

## **SANTITOS PROGRAM**

The Dual Language Santitos Program offers children the opportunity to strengthen their relationship with Jesus through a club-based model. Offerings run on a 10 week schedule and the material fee for each club is prepaid only. The clubs are from 3:30 pm until 5:00 pm. \$1.00 per minute will be charged for students picked up after 5:00 pm. Registration materials including information about costs may be obtained from the school office. The Dual Language Academy does not offer a before school childcare program.

The Dual Language Academy disciplinary policy applies to its Santitos program.

## **LUNCH**

### **HOT LUNCH PROGRAM/BREAKFAST PROGRAM**

The Dual Language Academy offers Breakfast and Lunch. Breakfast is \$2.55 and Lunch is \$4.25. Reduced Breakfast is \$.30 and Reduced Lunch is \$.40. Since we participate in the federal government subsidy program, free and reduced prices for lunches are available to children whose families meet the income guidelines. Free and Reduced Lunch applications are provided for each family by email, in the paperwork packets and in the school office. These forms are available in English and Spanish. All information is confidential, and much care is taken to ensure that students receiving aid are not made to feel or appear different from any other lunch purchaser. Any family that qualifies for this assistance is encouraged to participate. Even if you qualify, but do not wish to participate, we encourage you to apply due to the fact that the number of families in the area who qualify for free and reduced lunch determines the number of other services made available to our community schools, public and parochial, such as Title I services.

All families will be charged full price for 'extras,' including those on free and reduced lunches. Parents are encouraged to track their child (ren)'s accounts to make note of extras. Students are only permitted to choose one 'extra' per day.

**Fast food delivery by parents is not allowed.** Students may not bring pop/soda to drink with their lunch.

### **BREAKFAST**

Free and reduced pricing will also be available for the breakfast program. Children may come to school beginning at 7 am for breakfast. Breakfast ends at 7:40 am. An adult must walk their child to the cafeteria for breakfast and sign them in.

### **USDA Nondiscrimination Statement**

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with

disabilities

who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print,

audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that

administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact

USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA

Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at:

ASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-

0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf'&gt;[OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf, from any USDA office, by](https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the

complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory

action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and

date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to

USDA by:

(1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

1400 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) Fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

(3) Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## **K-8th GRADE ACADEMICS**

### **CURRICULUM**

Our curriculum provides for the proper education of the student at each grade level. The subjects of Religion, Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies are taught in each grade. Basic instruction in the core subjects is enhanced by placing additional emphasis on the processes of learning, creativity and the acquisition of study skills. Each school offers added support to students and their families through our resource program.

### **SPECIALS**

#### **Visual Art**

All students are scheduled to have art once per week. For some schools, this is taught by a classroom teacher, while others have a part-time designated art teacher. Exploration in art helps our students with the development of motor skills, language skills, social skills, decision-making, and creativity.

#### **Music**

K-8 Students are scheduled to have Music class at least once a week. Once each year, the students will showcase their musical abilities to their family and friends with a performance that will be scheduled. See the school calendar for more details. In addition to vocal music, students may experience instruments like the recorder, guitar and keyboard. Students also have the opportunity to participate in Music in Catholic schools band program beginning in fifth grade.

#### **Physical Education**

Students are scheduled to have PE class at least once per week. On P.E. days, students should wear appropriate shoes (tennis shoes). If a child is unable to participate in P.E., a doctor's written note should be provided to excuse them from class. Students in grades 5-8 will be required to dress out for PE. Shorts and t-shirts that adhere to the school's dress-down day policy are to be worn. PE grades will be based on participation, appropriate dress, and behavior.

#### **Spanish**

The Dual Language Academy is a Spanish immersion program and fulfills the requirements for Spanish education.

#### **Library/Media**

Students in K-8th grade have a scheduled weekly library/media period. During this time they learn library skills and have the opportunity to check out books. Students will also engage in reading, writing and research in the media center. In many of our buildings, the library media specialist may teach classes on video, animation, coding, or other digital media.

## **COUNSELOR**

In partnership with Catholic Charities OCSC schools have a licensed behavioral therapist available one day per week. The therapist will provide services to students to facilitate the emotional and social development of our school communities. The therapist will serve as a resource for family members and students on issues that are related to or impact the student's school life. Also, the therapist will be available to the principal for consultation regarding school related issues.

## **STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND IN-SERVICES**

OCSC teachers spend countless hours throughout the year, especially during summer months, preparing their classrooms, creating engaging lessons, and enhancing their teaching techniques. The week before school starts, faculty members attend meetings and ready their classrooms in anticipation of the upcoming school year. Once school starts, teachers continue to meet and communicate how best to serve the students numerous in-service opportunities. Staff serve on multiple committees related to curriculum and improving access to the latest technology.

## **RELIGIOUS FORMATION**

The traditions and teachings of the Catholic Church and the values of Christian living permeate the school day. This high priority is expressed through worship, prayer, religion class, and the general climate of the school. Catechesis on justice, mercy, and peace are an integral part of the curriculum and school because of our need to live them in our daily lives. Each student receives daily instruction in religion. The instruction follows the Archdiocesan curriculum guidelines. Content includes Doctrine, Scripture, Tradition, and Church History. Topics are taught using methods appropriate to the various age levels. Daily prayer is an integral part of the school day. Students use both formal and spontaneous forms of prayer several times daily. Prayer services are planned for special feasts and liturgical seasons, such as Advent and Lent.

## **MASS AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES**

OCSC students will attend Mass on every Holy Day. School Masses are planned for each week at the school level as well. Please note the calendar for the Mass schedule. All students are expected to fully participate in Mass by singing and responding in prayer. All students in 2nd grade through 8th grade will participate in reconciliation at least once each semester. With the assistance of our 2nd grade & middle school teachers, the Religious Education program will prepare the 2nd graders for their First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion and 8th graders for Confirmation. In October, the Month of the Rosary, and May, the Month of Mary, each class will recite the Rosary. During Lent, the children will attend the Stations of the Cross. By their good example and frequent reception of the Sacraments and weekly attendance of Sunday Mass, parents/guardians can establish, in their children, habits that will remain with them forever.



## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are usually sent home on the first Tuesday following the end of each trimester. Trimester progress reports are indicators of progress at the mid-point in the trimester and are not recorded on the student's cumulative folder. Trimester grades must be recorded on the cumulative folder along with attendance at the end of each trimester.

Omaha Catholic School Consortium Grade Scales OCSC

Omaha Catholic School Consortium Grade Scales  
OCSC 3rd-8th Scale

OCSC K-2ND Scale

E (100%-90% equivalent) E : Exceeds Grade Level Expectations

S+ (89%-80% equivalent) S+ : Satisfies Grade Level Expectations (+=slightly exceeds)

S (79%-70% equivalent) S : Satisfies Grade Level Expectations

S- (69%-60% equivalent) S- : Satisfies Grade Level Expectations (-=slightly below)

N (≤ 59% equivalent) N : Needs Improvements to meet Grade Level Expectations

Letter Grade Scale GPA

A+ 98% 4.0

A 97-95% 3.85

A- 94-93% 3.7

B+ 92-91% 3.5

B 90-87% 3.25

B- 86-85% 3.0

C+ 84-83% 2.85

C 82-80% 2.5

C- 79-78% 2.0

D+ 77-76% 1.8

D 75-72% 1.6

D- 71-70% 1.4

F < 70% 0

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

Please be advised that it is the policy of our school that if your child has earned an F for two trimesters in one or more subjects, he/she will not participate in the graduation ceremony. Failure for two trimesters means that the student has not met the requirements in that subject. Students are given all the assistance needed to be successful, whether it be extra tutoring from a teacher(s), or from outside help, staying in the Homework Room to complete work, or redoing work to be certain students have understood the concepts taught. Failure in a class would only result from a lack of cooperation in completing assigned tasks.

Parents/guardians should be aware from the first trimester and then second trimester grades if their son/daughter is in jeopardy. Frequent communication between parents/guardians, teachers, and students will occur during the fourth quarter to help students achieve passing grades.

### **HONOR ROLL**

OCSC curriculum challenges students to strive to become their best academically and recognizes achievement quarterly in the 7th – 8th grades through an honor roll system. Students' G.P.A.s can earn them placement on honor roll.

“First Honors”-for students who earn between 3.75 and 4.0

“Second Honors” - for students who achieve between 3.25 and 3.74.

### **HOMEWORK**

Teachers may assign special projects or individual activities to engage the interest of students or to supplement assigned class work. Parents/guardians are encouraged to set aside time each evening for skill practice - approximately three to four minutes per year of age is a good rule to follow. During skill practice time, children should read, write, draw, or do homework. The teacher may request that a child stay after school to complete assignments. The Dual Language Academy does not keep students in from recess as physical movement is an important part of the day.

### **HOMEWORK REQUESTS**

#### **Excused Absence**

If a student is absent from school, teachers will follow the guidelines noted with regard to missed schoolwork.

- Parent/guardian must notify the school office by email or phone by 8:30 am if they wish to have homework sent home with a sibling or another student. The office will then notify the classroom teacher. Homework will be available at the office after dismissal. **Teachers will not be able to make homework available during the school day. The homework available will be a pared down version of the daily work due to the limited time the teacher has to prepare. Homework is not available for students taking vacation.**
- When a student is absent, he/she will be expected to complete missed homework in one day's time for each day absent. Occasionally, the allotted times for homework assignments may be extended or altered by the teacher or principal.
- Each grade will have a policy for late work not returned. Please refer to the grade level expectations for specifics.
- Students who miss a test/tests during this time will take the test/tests before/after school or during recess time. The time will be set up by the teacher.

### **RETENTION**

A teacher may recommend retention of a student after conferring with the principal and the parent/guardian. Reasons for retention include, but are not limited to:

1. Low grades
2. Excessive absences

3. Immaturity/inability to interact with peers
4. Emotional immaturity

**After conferring with the parent/guardians and teacher(s), the principal will make the final decision as to the appropriate placement and/or retention of all PreK-8<sup>th</sup> grade children.**

### **STAR TESTING**

Our Consortium utilizes a computer-adaptive assessment called Renaissance Star Assessments. Star Assessments are a comprehensive Pre-K – 12 assessment solution that helps to accurately measure students' reading and math achievement and growth.

Star Benchmarking Assessments can be given as often as three times a year (fall, winter, and spring). Benchmarking helps educators plan and deliver the most appropriate instruction by giving them reliable data and information about each student. Star Assessments can also be used to set and track student progress toward individual goals. Individualized goals can be measured as often as weekly and allows teachers to monitor student progress toward those goals. The Star Assessments program then provides instructional resources that teachers can assign to address individual needs. Some of these assignments may be worked at home or students may participate with others during class time. The goal is improved learning on targeted standards.

### **STUDENT ASSISTANCE TEAM (SAT)**

Recognizing that individual differences exist among students, reasonable adjustments and accommodations will be made to help students develop skills affecting academic growth.

Enrichment instruction shall be offered when possible and deemed appropriate by the teacher in consultation with the parent(s) or guardian and the Principal.

The Student Assistance Team (SAT) is comprised of the resource teacher and several classroom teachers. Classroom teachers with concerns regarding student performance may initiate the SAT process. The classroom teacher will bring samples of work and strategies or modifications that are already being used in the classroom. The team will offer additional suggestions and strategies for classroom implementation or will recommend resource support if needed. If significant progress has not been made, the team may suggest further testing by the local public-school district.

When the diagnosis is made through the Omaha Public Schools, suggestions for helping the student will be reviewed by the school and public-school representatives.

Recommendations will be made to the parent based on the information gathered through assessments, teacher recommendation and observations. Parents may be encouraged to seek tutoring or other support services offered through the Omaha Public Schools.

## **SCHOOL INFORMATION AND POLICIES**

### **ATTENDANCE**

**According to Nebraska State statute, 20 (five or more a quarter) absences in a school year are considered excessive. State statute section 79201 (compulsory attendance law) reads as follows:**

**“Every person residing in a school district within the State of Nebraska who has legal or actual charge or control of any child who is not less than seven years of age and not more than sixteen years of age, or any child under the age of 7 who is currently enrolled in school...shall cause such child to attend regularly the public, private, denominational, or parochial day’s schools...each day that such schools are open and in session, except when excused by school authorities...”**

The school calendar is provided to all families each spring, and is available online through Sycamore. Please use this calendar when planning vacations or other non-school related activities/events which would be considered unexcused. We also ask that you do all you can to schedule doctor/dentist appointments when school is not in session. Removing children from the learning environment is detrimental to the educational process and should be avoided if at all possible. Excused absences include those due to illness or family emergency (death of a family member, serious illness, etc.). All other absences will be considered unexcused. This would also include a child coming later in the morning or leaving early in the afternoon for appointments or other non-school related activities.

Unexcused Absence: a student who engages in unexcused absences may be considered truant as per state law (Ne. Rev. Stat. 79201). Truancy is a violation of school rules. When a student is going to be absent or tardy, a parent/guardian is to telephone the school office (551-3773) by 8:25 a.m. This is necessary for safety reasons as well as record keeping. An answering machine is connected outside office hours to make calling more convenient for parents/guardians. When leaving a message, please give the following information: Your name, student’s name, homeroom teacher’s name, reason for absence or tardy, expected time of arrival, and whether or not your child(ren) will order A, B, or C lunch for that day. Each morning the lunch count is placed by 9:00 a.m. If a student is tardy, arrives past 9:00 a.m., and has not made arrangements to order lunch for that day, he/she will be unable to order hot lunch. The student must bring a sack lunch. If an absence occurs without a parent/guardian reporting it, school personnel will notify the parent/guardian or the emergency contact person as soon as possible.

### **Attendance Protocol:**

1. If a child accumulates 5 absences within a quarter, the Principal will send a letter of concern home to the parents/guardians. The letter will include a summary of all absences and/or tardies the student has accumulated to that date. A return signature, to indicate receipt of the letter, is required.
2. If a child accumulates 8 absences within a semester, a letter of concern will be sent home to the parents/guardians. This letter will include a summary of all absences and/or tardies the student has accumulated to that date. A return signature, to

indicate receipt of the letter, is required. Also, parents will be required to meet with the principal to discuss attendance problems.

3. If a child accumulates 10 absences within a semester, a letter of concern will be sent home to the parents/guardians and an attendance report will be sent to the Douglas County Attorney's office for violation of the Nebraska compulsory attendance law.

**According to the Nebraska State Statute, 20 (ten or more a semester)**

**absences in a school year are considered excessive.** The parents/guardians will also be expected to contact the principal's office.

4. If the student's attendance continues to be a problem, the child's status for promotion to the next grade level will be in jeopardy. This decision will be up to the principal after she consults with the child's teacher(s) and others if necessary. Other mandatory action may include:
  - a. required summer school time and work
  - b. working with a social worker
  - c. public health nurse
  - d. a petition to family court due to educational neglect
  - e. other to be decided by principal

### **Tardy Policy**

A student is considered tardy if he/she is not in the classroom by 8:00 am

1. Students are expected to receive a pass from the school office before going to their classroom if they are late for school.
2. Parents/Guardians are expected to call if their child(ren) is going to be late for school. Parents must request lunch before 8:00 am.
3. Parents/Guardians are responsible for writing a note indicating why their child(ren) is late for school, and must come into the building to sign the child(ren) in.
4. Three or more tardies for a quarter will disqualify students from receiving perfect attendance for that quarter and/or a total of eight for the total perfect attendance award at the end of the year.
5. A student who is tardy/gone for more than two hours during the day will be counted as absent for ½ day.
6. Students who are late for Mass must first check into the office, and then must be escorted into the church by their parent(s).

### **BAND**

Music in Catholic Schools provides band opportunities for students in fifth through eighth grade. This is a service offered to families at cost and is coordinated by an employee of the Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Office. Participating schools provide a location for lessons and permits students to be excused from classes twice per week for 30-minute sessions. All costs, personnel, and arrangements are under the control of the Music in Catholic Schools coordinator. Students are responsible for all work missed in class due to band.

## **BICYCLES**

Students are permitted to ride bicycles to and from school. It is the responsibility of the student to lock his/bike to the bike rack provided. Students choosing to ride to/from school must wear a helmet and must walk their bicycle across any street monitored by a school safety patrol.

## **BOOKS & CLASSROOM MATERIALS**

Each child is responsible for the care and proper use of school books, equipment, and school property. Students are to care for school/parish property in a respectful manner. Students, who lose, deface or damage school/parish property or the property of others will pay a financial restitution. The parent will be billed for any lost, damaged property and appropriate disciplinary measures will ensue as determined by the principal.

## **BULLYING POLICY**

OCSC strives for an environment in which our children can grow academically, behaviorally and spiritually in a compassionate and respectful environment. In order to maintain this Catholic-Christian environment, incidents of bullying, which are contrary to these values, will NOT be tolerated. Incidents of bullying or harassment during school activities or school-sponsored activities on or off campus will be addressed.

### **Definition:**

Bullying is a repeated pattern of offensive behavior in an environment of an imbalance of power which includes, but is not limited to the following categories:

- Physical intimidation
- Assault
- Social intimidation
- Oral or written threats
- Forced isolation

Specific examples of bullying behavior may include, but are not limited to:

- offensive references, gestures, language, jokes, graffiti based on specific traits of in individual including gender, race, religion, disability, or age
- unwelcome physical contact, verbal or written suggestions
- name calling or taunting

### **Responsibility:**

It is the responsibility every member of the each OCSC community, including parents, to report suspected bullying to the appropriate authorities; the appropriate authorities include:

- Teachers
- Administration

It is then the responsibility of these authorities to take the appropriate steps necessary to deal with the situation, using the guidelines listed below.

**Guidelines/Procedure:**

When the appropriate authority receives a first complaint of “bullying” type behavior, it will be promptly investigated and if valid, addressed using discipline policy. Staff members directly responsible for supervision of the students involved in the bullying complaint will be notified, as well as parents of students involved. Continued repeated bullying behavior that has been identified by the appropriate authorities, will be investigated by the school. Consequences for repeated bullying behavior may include, but are limited to:

- notification of the parents of both students
- meeting with one or more of the following people: classroom teacher, principal, parents, students
- detention
- in/out of school suspension
- Saturday School/Extended Day
- Expulsion
- contact with the police

Final decisions for actions taken and consequences given are at the discretion of the Principal.

**Confidentiality:**

Reasonable efforts will be made to keep a report of bullying and the result of the investigation CONFIDENTIAL; however, student confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. All parties involved in the situation would be informed of the confidential nature of the situation and would be asked to refrain from disclosing any information about the situation to others.

Consortium schools will not tolerate retaliation against any employee or student who complains in good faith of offensive or bullying behavior or provides, in good faith, information in connection with any such complaint.

(Policy developed from Archdiocesan Policies #5032, # 5033)

**CELL PHONES/Smart Watches**

Students are encouraged to leave cell phones at home. If a child brings a cell phone to school, he/she must observe the following:

Due to the distractions electronic devices create for the educational purposes of the school, cell phones are to be turned off during school hours and must be stored in backpacks/lockers. Students are allowed to bring cellphones to school with the following stipulations:

1. The school will not be responsible for lost, stolen or damaged cell phones.
2. The use of cell phones at any time during the school day is not permitted.
3. Cell Phones are to be on power-off mode at the start of the school day and remain that way until the end of the school day. Leaving the cell phone on vibrating mode is not permitted.

Students relinquish any reasonable expectation of privacy when they use cell phones to call or send text messages at school. If a cell phone rings, buzzes, flashes, etc., the school staff has the right to confiscate the phone and search the call log to determine who has been contacting the student. In the event the call was initiated at school, appropriate disciplinary action according to the discipline outlined below will be taken against everyone involved. Phones ringing or buzzing in back packs/lockers will be considered in violation of school policy.

Students will be permitted to possess and use cell phones during the school day in response to a health related emergency when a licensed physician has indicated in writing that the device is essential for the health of the student and the student has received prior permission from the school Principal or designee to possess and use electronic devices in response to health related emergencies.

Discipline: The device will be confiscated, taken to the school office, and held until a parent or guardian comes to pick it up. If it is determined that the device has been used for cheating, harassment, or some other inappropriate behavior, the device will be returned to the parent at the discretion of the principal, with the potential for additional disciplinary actions.

### **CHEATING**

Cheating is defined as representing another's work as your own, manipulation of information to gain an unfair advantage, and enabling others to use your work as their own. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Providing or obtaining answers to test/quiz questions or class assignments from sources other than those allowed by the instructor.
- Appear to be providing or obtaining answers to test/quiz questions or class assignments from sources other than those allowed by the instructor.
- Plagiarizing any portion of reports, essays, papers and other assignments/projects.
- Submitting information from the Internet without proper documentation.

In cases when cheating has been determined, the student may receive a zero for the test, quiz, assignment or project. The parent/guardian will be notified by the teacher or the principal and additional disciplinary action may be taken.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL OR SCHOOL CLOSING**

If school closes during the day, A REMIND notification will be sent. For that reason, please be sure to notify us of any changes of address, phone numbers, and/or emergency contact persons.



### **ELECTRONICS AT SCHOOL (Other than Cell Phone)**

Students are **not permitted** to bring electronic devices (other than cell phones) to school. This includes, but is not limited to handheld games, iPods or other audio players, etc. These items are costly, distracting, and often cause problems among peers. Any such item visible during the day will be confiscated by faculty and will be turned over to the principal. Devices will be released only to the student's parent/guardian. Consequences, such as detentions, will occur if this policy is continuously violated. Teachers and the principal retain the right to remove any item that could be distracting to students in the classroom.

### **EVACUATION PLAN**

An evacuation plan has been developed by each school's Safety Committee if the entire student body needs to evacuate the school buildings and reassemble at an alternate site. Depending on the situation, parents/guardians would be notified by a REMIND notification. If there should ever be an occasion to utilize this plan, please be advised that students will not be released to anyone except their parents/guardians and those listed as an Emergency Contact on the student's census card. Parents/guardians or Emergency Contact persons will need to come to the specified site, where they will be asked to sign out their child(ren).

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are intended to enhance curriculum and are selected carefully by the classroom teachers. Students may be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavior requirements. Teachers must have a parental permission slip for each occasion. Parents may be asked to assist in chaperoning a field trip; if there is room, parents may ride on the bus at no charge to them. Please make every effort to leave siblings at home if you are chaperoning a field trip as the young children can often distract a chaperone from his/her duties. If a parent requests that he/she provide transportation for his/her own student in his/her own car, no other students may ride with them. If there is a fee for the field trip, parents will be notified. The fee will include the cost of the bus per student. All adult chaperones **MUST** be Safe Environment trained through the Archdiocese of Omaha.

### **HARASSMENT AND OFFENSIVE STUDENT CONDUCT**

Student offensive conduct or harassment based on a person's gender, sexual orientation, race, color, age, religion, national origin, marital status, or disability is prohibited. Repeated incidents of offensive conduct directed to the same person or group of persons constitutes harassment. Offensive conduct or harassment may result in suspension or expulsion.

Examples of offensive conduct which when repeated constitute harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Explicit and offensive sexual references and gestures.
2. Name calling or taunting on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, marital status, or disability.
3. Language of any kind, including graffiti, epithets, vulgar or profane jokes, which is disparaging or demeaning to others on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, race,

color, religion, national origin, marital status, or disability.

### **PERFECT ATTENDANCE**

Students will be recognized for perfect attendance or nearly perfect attendance at the end of each school year provided they meet these guidelines:

Perfect Attendance—Miss less than 1 day and accumulate fewer than 5 tardies

Almost Perfect Attendance—Miss less than two days and accumulate fewer than 5 tardies

### **PLAYGROUND RULES**

The kindergarten through 2nd grade students will have two recess periods. The 3rd-8th graders will have a noon recess.

Following is a list of rules for the playground, but they are not all inclusive:

1. No food or drink will be allowed on the playground
2. Only school equipment or equipment approved by the teacher will be allowed on the playground - no toys from home are allowed. Students bringing balls to school for recess assume the risk of loss/damage to their personal equipment.
3. Children must ask permission to enter the building during recess
4. Children are to change shoes if/when the weather is wet
5. If/when the temperature (including the wind chill factor) is at 10 degrees or lower, the principal will consider not having outdoor recess

#### Playground Equipment Area

1. No running
2. No jumping off the equipment
3. Slide down the slides only (feet first); no climbing/walking up is allowed
4. No games of tag are permitted
5. Do not throw mulch or snow at any time

#### Blacktop/Basketball Hoops

1. Stay on the blacktop
2. Stay out and off the mounds of the snow.
3. Stay off the fences and retaining wall.

### **SAFETY TO AND FROM SCHOOL**

Please follow the carline procedure for the morning drop off. If your child is not ready to exit the vehicle when you pull up to the door, please park and walk them in. Do not leave the line to go around other cars, this is very dangerous. For dismissal, parents must park and go to the back entrance of the gym. Enter the gym, make contact with your child's teacher or assistant and then take your child. Do not enter the gym from the lobby. Your child will not be released from this door.

### **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

The school administrator with the cooperation of the school board and staff develops an annual calendar which:

1. Provides an optimum number of instructional days in recognition of the direct correlation

- between instructional time and student learning;
2. Fulfills the minimum state and applicable accrediting agency requirements;
  3. Gives priority to the number of instructional days and length of each school day.

### **SKATEBOARDS, ROLLER SKATES/BLADES, SCOOTERS**

For safety reasons, skateboards, roller skates/blades, or scooters are prohibited on school grounds before school, during school hours, or at dismissal time. Storage of these items would be difficult at school and riding them on crowded sidewalks on the way home would pose a danger.

### **SNOW DAYS**

In the event of bad weather, please listen to Radio Station KFAB or KKAR and watch channels 3, 6, and/or 7 for closing of school, late start or early dismissal. A REMIND notification will be sent. If school is closed or dismissed early due to inclement weather, all events or activities after school will be canceled or postponed to a later date. A In case of early dismissal, students will be sent home their usual way--walking, carpool, etc., unless we are notified otherwise. No child will be dismissed unless proper provisions have been made. OCSC will follow the recommendations of the Catholic School Office and Omaha Public Schools regarding announcements made concerning dismissal because of weather. In the event of bad weather and no early closing, children can be released early only if a parent/guardian comes to school to pick them up. However, parents/guardians may not take children other than their own unless we have oral or written permission from the parent/guardian to take their child home.

### **STUDENT BIRTHDAYS**

A student's birthday is a special day. Each classroom honors that child in a manner that is appropriate for his/her grade. **Invitations** for student's birthday parties **must not** be distributed at school. Please refer to the student directory and mail invitations to the addresses provided. **Birthday treats are not allowed for individual students. This is due to allergies and the equity of all students.** The birthday child will come to the office for the Lollipop Tree. The student will fill the tree for their class and return to the class for the Lollipop Birthday Dance Party.

Please do not have **flowers or balloons** delivered to the school. These will not be delivered to the student and will remain in the office until dismissal time, when the student may pick them up.

### **STUDENT DESKS & LOCKERS**

Lockers and desks are provided to the students by the school and are considered school property. Because they are school property, lockers and desks are subject to search by the school administration at any time.

### **SUPPLIES, EQUIPMENT, AND BOOKS**

A school supplies list is made available to parents/guardians each spring and can be found

on the school website. Textbooks and many classroom materials are provided with a percentage of their cost covered by the annual book/materials fee. Students and/or parents/guardians are expected to pay for lost or damaged books, supplies and equipment.

Students and/or parents/guardians will be held responsible to pay for willful damage to any school property.

Desks, lockers, or any other storage equipment remain the property of the school and as such can be opened, inspected, or cleaned at any time. The school is not responsible for items left in these storage spaces.

#### FACTS Management Student Information System

FACTS is a program that allows parents and staff to communicate online. Each registered family will be given an access code and password. Families and students will have access to the school calendar, lunch menu, school news, teacher classroom pages, student assignments, and student grades. Parents are encouraged to check FACTS regularly.

### **TECHNOLOGY**

Computers and other technologies provide teaching and learning opportunities for students and staff. They are installed in the school for the benefit of all learners. In order for technology to be in working order and available to everyone, students must respect the hardware and software in the school, computer lab, and classrooms. The following general policy statements and guidelines pertain to all technology usage at Consortium schools. Failure to obey the following statements will result in loss of computer privileges and/or disciplinary actions (up to and including suspension or expulsion) and/or appropriate legal action. Whether the use is considered inappropriate or violates this policy is a matter within the discretion of the Principal, and her decision is final.

No student shall intentionally cause damage to any school equipment including hardware and software.

1. All computer use must be for educational purposes.
  - a. Use the technology resources for academic purposes as directed by the teacher.
  - b. Downloading or playing any non-educational games on a school computer is prohibited.
  - c. Any instant messaging or chat programs is prohibited.
  - d. Downloading or playing music or videos from the Internet is prohibited, unless directed by the teacher.
  - e. Using any non-school e-mail address while at school is prohibited.
  
2. Personal privacy must be respected.
  - a. Do not give out any personal information about anyone (home address, telephone number, social security number, etc.)
  - b. Do not send anyone your picture without parent or teacher permission
  - c. Do not give password(s) to any other users.

- d. Use personal computer account only and don't use anyone else's login id and/or password.
  - e. Do not respond to messages that make you feel uncomfortable.
  - f. Never agree to get together with someone you have only 'met' online.
  - g. Always represent yourself honestly online.
  - h. Conduct yourself online as you would in any public place, keeping in mind that you represent your family and community to a world-wide audience.
  - i. Remember the values and morals of yourself, your family, and your church; do not purposefully seek out information online that is inappropriate or immoral.
  - j. Follow the rules of network etiquette, which include use of appropriate language and polite responses.
  - k. Abusive language (including name calling and swearing) and bullying is prohibited.
  - l. Do not copy, change, read, or use files that belong to another user.
3. Software and ideas are protected by copyright laws.
- a. Do not copy information received from any source and submit it as your own work.
  - b. List all sources of information used in projects and work.
  - c. Do not make copies of any software found on school equipment or on the Internet.
  - d. Do not copy any personal software onto any computer at school.
4. Educational technology is available for the use of all students.
- a. Do not deface, damage, or destroy the equipment.
  - b. Do not waste or take supplies, such as paper, printer supplies, or disks provided by the school.
  - c. Follow the school's computer use rules.
5. Follow county, state, and federal rules when using technology.
- a. Do not try to bypass the security measures of any computer equipment.
  - b. Do not knowingly create or introduce any virus to school equipment.
  - c. Do not send or distribute unethical, illegal, immoral, inappropriate or unacceptable information of any type through electronic mail or telecommunications.
  - d. Follow the rules listed above or expect to lose computer privileges and face other consequences.

Computers and other technologies provide teaching and learning opportunities for students and staff. They are installed in the school for the benefit of all learners. In order for technology to be in working order and available to everyone, students must respect the hardware and software in the school, computer lab, and classrooms. The following general policy statements and guidelines pertain to all technology usage at OCSC.

## **UNIFORM POLICY**

In adherence with the mission statement, all Consortium schools adopted a uniform policy to enhance the learning environment. Personal appearance and hygiene should reflect an attitude of self-worth and school pride on the part of the student. Any teacher(s), staff member and/or principal will determine compliance with the dress code and necessary disciplinary actions will be given as deemed appropriate.

Only the principal may excuse students from following the uniform policy. Some events that would include Spirit Day dress or Free Dress are spirit weeks, holidays, incentives, service activities etc. Students not following the uniform policy will receive a Uniform Policy Violation Notice that will need to be signed by the parent and returned to school. If this occurs more than twice, the parent will be called to bring uniform clothing to the school.

Please label your child's clothing, particularly boots, sweaters, and sweatshirts. The following are general guidelines.

### **All uniform items are for Preschool-5th Grade All clothing should be clean and not tattered or torn**

#### **Boys:**

**Pants**-Pants must be solid navy-blue woven fabric Docker's style slacks. NO skinny-leg pants, sweats, cargo pants, or leggings. These pants can be purchased at J.C. Penney's, Walmart, Target, Costco, Old Navy, online etc.

**Shorts**-Shorts must be solid navy-blue walking shorts. Shorts must be no more than 3 inches above the knee. NO oversized, baggy, cargo style shorts allowed. Shorts may be worn in August and September and again after April 15th.

**Shirts**-Solid red polo shirts-long or short sleeved. Shirts must be tucked in.

**Sweatshirts/Sweaters**-Students may wear a SOLID navy-blue or red sweatshirt or sweater or a DLA logo sweatshirt or sweater-NO other jackets or sweaters will be worn in the building.

**Socks**-Navy blue, red or white socks. A small logo on the socks is acceptable (like a Nike swoosh etc.).

**Shoes/Boots**-Athletic shoes must be worn during the school day-students may bring boots for recess during inclement weather-Students not wearing athletic shoes will NOT be permitted to enter the gym.

## **Girls:**

**Pants-** Pants must be solid navy-blue woven fabric Docker's style slacks. NO skinny-leg pants, sweats, cargo pants, or leggings. These pants can be purchased at J.C. Penney's, Walmart, Target, Costco, Old Navy, online etc.

**Shorts-** Shorts must be solid navy-blue walking shorts. Shorts must be no more than 3 inches above the knee. NO oversized, baggy, cargo style shorts allowed. Shorts may be worn in August and September and again after April 15th.

**Skirts/Skorts/Jumpers-**Skirts, skorts and jumpers must be solid navy-blue or Dunbar plaid (Purchased from Dennis Uniform) cotton twill and must be no more than 3 inches above the knee. Red, or Navy shorts must be worn under all skirts and jumpers. Navy blue jumpers, skirts and skorts can be purchased at Old Navy. Costco has navy blue dresses that are also appropriate.

**Shirts/Blouses-**Solid red polo shirts-long or short sleeved.

**Sweatshirts/Sweaters-** Students may wear a solid navy-blue or red sweatshirt or sweater or a DLA logo sweatshirt or sweater-NO other jackets or sweaters will be worn in the building.

**Socks/Tights-**Socks must be solid navy blue, red or white only. A small logo on the socks is acceptable (like a Nike swoosh etc.). Tights must be solid red, navy blue or white only. NO patterns. Girls may wear solid red, navy blue or white leggings under their skirts and jumpers, but not as uniform pants.

**Shoes/Boots-**Athletic shoes must be worn during the school day-students may bring boots for recess during inclement weather-Students not wearing athletic shoes will NOT be permitted to enter the gym.

**Jewelry-**Students are discouraged from wearing personal jewelry to school. The school is not responsible for lost or damaged items. Earrings should be small post-style. Dangling earrings and necklaces are dangerous during recess and gym class. Medical Alert identification products may be worn as necessary.

**Hair-**Student's hair must be clean, well-groomed and a natural color. No extreme hairstyles. Headbands, Hair Ribbons and Barrettes must be solid, red, navy blue, white or Dunbar plaid. Headbands with cat ears, unicorn horns, or other non-uniform items are NOT allowed.

**Spirit Days-**Students may wear a DLA Logo shirt, sweatshirt or sweater or an SJA/DLA Athletic Shirt or Sweatshirt with UNIFORM bottoms.

**Free Dress Days**-Students may not wear shirts with inappropriate sayings or logos, tank tops or spaghetti straps. Students may not wear ripped jeans or shorts or skirts that are an inappropriate length. Leggings must be covered by a shirt that is fingertip length. Clothing must be in line with the dress code for the students' birth gender.

**Cold Weather Clothing**-Please ensure your child has a warm winter coat, hat, mittens, and boots during winter weather. Omaha is cold and we go outside unless the temperature is below 20 degrees. Label all winter clothing.

### [Target Uniforms](#)

### [Walmart Uniforms](#)

### [Old Navy Uniforms](#)

### [J.C. Penney Uniforms](#)

### [Dennis Uniforms-DLA wears Dunbar Plaid](#)

726 N 109th Ct, Omaha, NE 68154

[\(402\) 496-9911](#)

### **VANDALISM**

Our school and school equipment is OCSC property. Willfully damaging or destroying this property is vandalism and is cause for immediate suspension and possible expulsion.

In addition, it is the student and/or parent/guardian's responsibility to repair or replace any damaged property. If a student accidentally causes damage, it should be reported to a teacher immediately so that the damage is not misconstrued as vandalism. No student is to forcibly open or "jimmy" a locked door on school or church property at any time. Doors are locked for a reason. To break into a room through a locked door is considered breaking and entering and is punishable by law.

### **VISITORS**

ALL PARENT VISITORS & VOLUNTEERS MUST CHECK IN AT THE SCHOOL OFFICE. Everyone, with the exception of staff and students, who comes to the school during school hours (6:30 am to 6:00 pm) must check in at the school office and receive a visitor's pass. This is done to ensure the safety of all students and staff. Visitors, including parents/guardians, should come in the main entrance. Other entrances will be locked during school hours. Parents and visitors are welcome to visit school classrooms for special presentations. **Drop-in visits, however, tend to be disruptive and are strongly discouraged.**



If you need to visit with your child's teacher outside of scheduled conferences, please contact the school office, send a message, via email, or send a note with your child to schedule a time to visit your child's teacher before or after school hours.

## **SCHOOL OFFICE**

### **DRUG-FREE AND ALCOHOL-FREE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

**Tobacco:** State laws and school policy strictly prohibit students from carrying and/or using tobacco products on school property or at school-sponsored activities. Students who violate this policy may be suspended. Repeated violations of this rule may result in expulsion. This may include:

- Cigarettes
- E-cigarettes and vaping devices
- Chewing tobacco

The Nebraska Clean Indoor Air Act (*Nebraska Statute Sec. 71-5701 to 71-5713*) prohibits smoking in any form in any place of employment or public building. A person in violation of the Nebraska Clean Indoor Air Act is guilty of a Class V misdemeanor for the first offense and a Class IV misdemeanor for the second and any subsequent offenses.

**Alcohol:** State laws and school policy strictly prohibit student possession or use of alcoholic beverages on school property or at any school-sponsored function. Students who violate this policy may be suspended, referred to legal authorities, and/or required to participate in a counseling program at the expense of the parent/guardian. Repeated violation of this rule may result in expulsion.

**Drugs:** State laws and school policy strictly prohibit the use, evidence of use, or possession and/or transfer of narcotics, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, look alike pills of any type, or possession of drug-related paraphernalia anywhere on school property or at any school-sponsored activity. Students who violate this policy may be suspended, referred to the appropriate legal authorities, and/or required to participate in a counseling program at the expense of the parent/guardian. Repeated violation of this rule may result in expulsion.

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

OCSC adheres to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act regarding access to student records.

### **OFFICE RECORDS**

Parents/Guardians are requested to notify the school in writing of any change of home telephone numbers and/or addresses, business telephone numbers, and telephone

numbers of emergency contacts so that office records may be accurate, complete, and up to date.

### **LOST & FOUND**

Lost articles, clothing or school materials may be claimed at the Lost and Found box in the school office. Twice each year (January & May), unclaimed items are donated to charity. Parents are encouraged to label clothes and other items so that they can be properly identified and returned to the owner.

## **HEALTH AND MEDICATION**

### **ASTHMA PROTOCOL**

Catholic schools, both accredited and approved, should be prepared to implement an emergency treatment plan, known as a protocol, anytime a student or staff member experiences a **life-threatening asthma attack or systemic allergic reaction**.

#### **Emergency Protocol: (Implemented by designated, trained non-medical staff)**

- Call 911
- Epi-Pen injection is given
- Albuterol is provided through a nebulizer

The school's Epi-Pen and Albuterol do not replace a child's own prescribed medications for asthma/allergy control and management. Parents/guardians of students with known diagnoses related to asthma and allergies are expected to ensure their children continue to have medications available. Parents must provide to the school staff for students having a known allergic condition or asthma the following:

- Written medical documentation
- Instructions
- Medications as directed by a physician

### **HEALTH SCREENING**

School health screening is not diagnostic nor is it intended to replace regular preventive health care. The goal is to assist parents/guardians in the identification of potential health problems so they may seek appropriate medical evaluation. Annual health screenings are as follows: **First Grade:** Height, Weight, Blood Pressure, Vision, Color vision (if not done in kindergarten), Hearing and Oral Exam. **Second Grade:** Height, Weight, Blood Pressure, Vision, Hearing and Oral Exam. **Third Grade:** Height, Weight, Blood Pressure, Hearing and Oral Exam. **Fourth Grade:** Height, Weight, Blood Pressure, and Oral Exam. **Fifth Grade:** Height, Weight, Blood Pressure, Vision, and Oral Exam. **Sixth Grade:** Height, Weight, Blood Pressure, Vision, Hearing, Scoliosis (Girls only), and Oral Exam. **Eighth Grade:** Height, Weight, Blood Pressure, Vision, Scoliosis (Boys *and* Girls), and Oral Exam.

Annual hearing testing will be performed for students who exhibited abnormal hearing screening results during the previous year.

The “**Annual Student Health Update**” is sent home at the beginning of the school year with the registration materials. It is important that it be completed and returned to school as soon as possible so the school is aware of your child’s health status. It is the parent/guardian’s responsibility to notify the school office if health changes occur. A Health Record Card is on file for each student. Please help to keep this card up-to-date by reporting to the school any booster shots, new glasses or any other pertinent health information.

### **HEALTH UPDATES AND MEDICATIONS**

Health updates and Medication Authorization forms must be signed and on file in the school office. If a **student has a special health concern or allergies, these MUST be identified on the Health Update.**

If a student is on medication that must be administered during school hours, the medication should be brought to the school office by a parent. Do not send medication with your child in their backpack to school. Prescribed medications must be properly labeled with a legible pharmacy label. All over the counter medications must be in the original manufacturer’s container. A Medication Authorization form must be filled out and signed by the parent/guardian for all prescription and over the counter medications.

### **IMMUNIZATION POLICY FOR SCHOOLS OF ARCHDIOCESE OF OMAHA**

In Nebraska, children cannot attend classes in public or private school until the school has written proof of their immunization status (Neb. Rev. Strat. 79-217—79-223)

#### **General Rule**

To attend school, children in Nebraska are required to be immunized against the following diseases:

- Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTaP, DTP or Td vaccine)
- Polio
- Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR or MMRV)
- Chicken Pox (MMRV or Varicella)
- Tdap (7th grade)

Each school in Nebraska is required to keep the immunization history of the students enrolled on file. In addition, schools are required to report information on a student’s immunization status annually to the Nebraska Immunization Program. School reporting is conducted on-line via survey, and the deadline is November 15 of each year.

These statutes of the State of Nebraska, because of the religious exemptions provided and their intent to safeguard individuals and the public from harm, conform to the Church’s teaching regarding the common good. The Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Omaha will follow these state requirements.

#### **Exemptions**

Nebraska does allow for two types of exemptions: Medical and Religious.

**The Medical Exemption** requires “a statement signed by physician, physician assistant, or an advanced practice registered nurse stating that, in the health care provider’s opinion, the required immunization would be injurious to the health and well-being of the student or any member of the student’s family or household.” A model form for this exemption can be found in this section of the handbook. Forms signed by a health care provider which simply state the parents do not feel it is in the best interests of the child are not sufficient to satisfy the medical exemption. The health care provider must indicate on the form used that the vaccine(s) in question are “Injurious to the health and well-being of the student or any member of the student’s family or household.” The term “physician” means an individual licensed under the Nebraska Medicine and Surgery Practices Act to practice medicine and surgery or osteopathic medicine and surgery; the term “physician” does not include a chiropractor.

**The Religious Exemption** requires “an affidavit signed by the student, or if he or she is a minor, a legally authorized representative of the student stating that the immunization conflicts with the tenets and practice of a recognized religious denomination of which the student is an adherent or member or that the immunization conflicts with the personal and sincerely followed religious beliefs of the student.” For those who seek a religious exemption, the Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Omaha will require that the parents indicate the religious denomination of the student in question.

Immunizations do not conflict with the “tenets and practice recognized” by the Catholic Church. Catholics are however obliged to avoid vaccines derived from cell lines from aborted fetuses when there are alternatives available to them. Alternatives to such vaccines are available in the United States for diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio and hepatitis b. A list with the names of those alternative vaccinations is available on the school website or can be obtained from the school office.

Unfortunately, there are no alternatives currently available in the United States for the Rubella and chickenpox which have been derived from cell lines from aborted fetuses. Because of the grave harm that can be caused by these diseases and because of the lack of alternatives, it is morally licit for a Catholic to use these vaccines, and it is recommended by the Archdiocese of Omaha that students submit to these vaccinations for the sake of the common good. A statement explaining the Church’s teaching regarding the common good and vaccines can be found on the school website or can be obtained from the school office.

Nevertheless, though morally licit and despite the potential harm to the common good, a Catholic may, in good conscience, submit a religious exemption for those vaccines which contain the rubella and the chickenpox vaccines (MMR, MMRV and varicella) and the Catholic Schools will honor that limited exemption request. Catholics may not submit a religious exemption for any other vaccines. A model affidavit for this exemption request is found on the school website or can be obtained from the school office.

The Archdiocese of Omaha interprets the phrase “the personal and sincerely followed religious beliefs” to refer to conscientious objections founded on religious belief. For Catholics, religious belief comes from the teachings of the Church as transmitted and interpreted by the magisterium. Therefore, while those who object to vaccines based on medical opinion may have deeply held conscientious objections, theirs is not a “religious belief.” For this reason, they may seek a medical exemption, as indicated above, if the vaccines cause harm, but they do not qualify for a religious exemption.

Students who have been granted an exemption may need to be excluded from school if there is an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease. The school is not required to modify services for a student who has been excluded due to an outbreak. The period of exclusion shall be no less than the minimum isolation period for that disease and when all signs or symptoms of acute illness have disappeared. The period of exclusion should extend throughout the period when acute signs of illness are present, or until the student is fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. Minimum isolation periods can be found on the school website or be obtained from the school office.

If a student cannot provide a proper medical or religious exemption, the student may not attend any of the Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Omaha without proof of the required immunization.

All Catholics are encouraged to formally object to the way the unethical vaccines are created and to the lack of alternatives. A model objection form which is to be mailed to the producer of these vaccines can be found on the school website or be obtained from the school office. Catholics may never choose a vaccine derived from aborted fetal cells if there is an alternative available.

### **SCHOOL NURSE**

Creighton University nursing students oversee all the medical needs and records for OCSC schools. The administrative assistant, along with trained volunteers, have been charged to assist the nursing students. General screening programs for vision, hearing, dental and scoliosis will be set up by the nursing students.

### **SCHOOL MEDICATION POLICY**

Sick children should not be sent to school. A child will never be sent home unless a school official contacts a parent/guardian. Please notify the school if your child has an exceptional health problem which may affect his/her daily school routine. General screening programs for vision, hearing, dental, and scoliosis will be arranged. Necessary follow-up will be done, and the parent/guardian will be notified.

In accordance with recommendations by the Douglas County Health Department, the following policy regarding prescription and non-prescription medications is effective immediately:

1. A physician must provide written orders with the name of the drug, dose, time interval when the medication is to be taken, and diagnosis or reason the medicine is needed.
2. The parent/guardian must provide a written request that the school comply with the physician's order.
3. Medication must be brought to the school office in the original container appropriately labeled by the pharmacist and/or physician.
4. Non-prescription medications including aspirin, Tylenol, cough drops, or cough syrup will not be administered without the written permission of the parent/guardian. No child will take any medication without supervision of the administrative assistant, principal or other trained personnel.

### **SELF-ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION**

Should a parent request that a student self-manage his/her asthma, anaphylaxis, or diabetic conditions while at school, the school will adhere to the following steps:

1. OCSC will require a written request from the parent/guardian that the student self-manage his/her condition.
2. OCSC will develop, with the help of the parent/guardian and physician, a medical management plan for the current school year. This plan must:
  - a. Identify the health care services the student may receive at school relating to such condition;
  - b. Evaluate the student's understanding of, and ability to, self-manage;
  - c. Permit regular monitoring of the student's self-management by a credentialed health care professional;
  - d. Include the name, purpose, and dosage of the prescription prescribed;
  - e. Include the procedures for storage and access to backup supplies of such prescription medication; and
  - f. Be signed by the parent or guardian and the physician responsible for treatment of the student's condition.
3. The medical management plan must be kept on file at the school.
4. The student's parent/guardian must sign the Release and Indemnification form on file in the school office before the student is allowed to self-administer medication.
5. Once the medical management plan is in place, the student shall notify the school office when he/she has self-administered medication to be used according to the plan.
6. Once the medical management plan is in place, the student shall be allowed to self-administer medication on school grounds, during any school-related activity, or in any private location to be specified according to the plan.

### **SCHOOL PHYSICAL AND VISION EXAMS**

The Nebraska School Law requires all students entering the kindergarten, seventh grade, or transferring from an out-of-state school have a physical examination by a physician,

physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse within six (6) months prior to school entrance. A dental examination is recommended at this time. State law also requires students entering kindergarten or transferring from an out-of-state school provide proof of a visual evaluation within six (6) months prior to school entrance. The visual evaluation performed by a physician, physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse, or optometrist shall include testing for amblyopia (lazy eye), strabismus (cross eye), internal and external eye health, and visual acuity.

Exceptions to the physical examination or visual evaluation requirement may be made if the parent/guardian submits a written statement refusing a physical examination or visual evaluation.

### **SICK CHILDREN**

When a child becomes sick at school, the school office will call the parents. If a student is too ill to return to class, he/she must be picked up by a parent/guardian or an emergency contact. **Sick children will NOT be kept at school.**

- If a child has a temperature of 100 degrees or more or flu-like symptoms. Flu symptoms include acute respiratory illness, such as fever, chills, plus cough or sore throat. Other possible flu symptoms are runny nose, feeling very lethargic/fatigue, body aches, headache, loss of appetite and in some cases, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. A child should not return to school unless they have been fever-free and/or free of flu like symptoms for 24 hours.
- Students recovering from pink eye (conjunctivitis) must be on medication to treat the infection for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- All rashes are considered contagious unless otherwise diagnosed by a physician and parents/guardians will be contacted. Children may return to school with documentation that the rash is not contagious, or the rash is resolved.
- If a child vomits or has other flu like symptoms at school, they must be picked up by a parent/guardian or emergency contact.
- Parents are required to notify the school office of communicable diseases such as influenza, pink eye, or head lice.

### **STUDENTS WITH NUT ALLERGIES**

It will be the policy of OCSC to do its best to minimize the risk of exposure to nuts for our students and to have a plan in place to respond to an emergency. A parent or guardian should inform the school of any peanut or tree nut allergies of their child. Communication between the school and home is important to ensure the continued safety and welfare for all of our students. Ultimately, all students with dangerous allergies must be educated in how to protect themselves.

To minimize the risk of exposure to nuts for our students, our school will:

1. Direct the school lunch program to not offer peanut butter products and items containing other nuts.
2. Discourage students and parents from bringing treats to school that contain nuts or were processed and packaged in places where other nut products are prepared. The school encourages students who have nut allergies to bring their own supply of snacks to school to lessen the risk of exposure.
3. Promote the implementation of guidelines from the [www.attackonasthma.org](http://www.attackonasthma.org) site which directs the response to severe asthma or anaphylaxis (severe allergies) and requires any parent who has a student with severe asthma or anaphylaxis to have an Action Plan on file with the school. This plan will contain Action Plan forms completed by the physician or school nurse and by the parent or guardian.
4. If requested by a parent or guardian, provide an allergy-free computer (or more, if necessary) for use by students with nut or other life-threatening allergies.
5. In classrooms of students with life-threatening allergies, educate the other students and their parents about the allergy and ways to minimize exposure of nuts or other life-threatening foods to affected students. For example: Discourage the use of candies and other products that were processed and packaged in places where other nut products are prepared in projects or activities in school and communicate to parents that items brought for the completion of projects should be checked that they do not contain nuts and were not processed in a factory that manufactures nuts.

## **WELLNESS POLICY**

In order to comply with the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, OCSC has created a Wellness Policy to address the areas of nutrition, physical activity, and health. This policy was enacted with the foundational belief that the guidelines for good nutrition, physical activities/education, and health/nutrition education is essential for our students and staff. Research shows that children who begin each day as healthy individuals are better learners. The complete policy and resource links can be found on Sycamore.

### **Physical Education (PE)**

All students in grades K-8 will receive physical education class for 40 minutes per week for the entire school year. All physical education students will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

### **Daily Recess**

OCSC students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

### **Physical Activity Opportunities After School**

The Santitos Program will provide and encourage – verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities – daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.



## **Meals Served**

Meals served at Consortium schools will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk; and will
- ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

## **Mealtimes and Scheduling**

OCSC schools will:

- will provide students with 20 minutes for lunch;
- schedule meal periods at appropriate times, between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
- will not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities; and
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.

## **Sharing of Foods and Beverages**

OCSC discourages students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

## **Nutrition Education and Promotion**

OCSC schools aim to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students by providing nutrition education that:

- is offered at each grade level designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is part of not only PE/health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, and social studies;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services.

## **Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting**

For students to receive the nationally recommended amount of daily physical activity (*i.e.*, at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a

personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end:

- classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- classroom teachers may provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

## **DISCIPLINE**

### **RESTORATIVE PRACTICES**

OCSC schools will use restorative practices, a research-based practice for building healthy communities. This is a tiered system of communication for both proactive and restorative building of relationships. Three specific restorative practices that will be used include restorative circles, listening circles and restorative conferencing.

Restorative Circles are proactive opportunities to learn about one another. In circles students build relationships, foster empathy and learn in a more meaningful way about all those in their community.

Listening circles are also proactive, students are given the opportunity to share their voice on any topic that is relevant to them, and they learn to listen attentively to others, even those they may disagree with.

Restorative conversations or conferences are reactive and are held when a disagreement or harm has taken place. Restorative conversations are structured conversations led by a trained restorative facilitator to bring about resolution.

### **Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS)**

PBIS is an evidence-based, data-driven framework proven to reduce disciplinary incidents, increase a school's sense of safety and support improved academic outcomes. The premise of PBIS is that continual teaching, combined with acknowledgement or feedback of positive student behavior will reduce unnecessary discipline and promote a climate of greater productivity, safety and learning. PBIS schools apply a multi-tiered approach to prevention, using disciplinary data and principles of behavior analysis to develop school-wide, targeted and individualized interventions and supports to improve school climate for all students. (OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports).

The foundation of PBIS happens in Tier 1, which supports ALL students. The core principles guiding Tier 1 PBIS include:

- Effectively teaching appropriate behavior to all children
- Early intervention before unwanted behaviors escalate

The use of research-based interventions whenever possible  
The monitoring of student progress  
The use of data to make decisions

Tier 2 practices provide targeted support for students who are not successful with Tier 1 supports alone. This may include social skills groups, self-management, and academic support. At times, there are students who need tier 3 support; these students will be identified through the use of our Student Assistance Teams and parents will be an integral part of this process.

### **Weapons**

Students are forbidden knowingly and voluntarily to possess, handle, transmit or use any instrument in school, on school grounds, or at school events that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon.

Any object which could be used to injure another person, and which has no school-related purpose will be considered a weapon for purposes of this code.

The following are examples of instruments ordinarily or generally considered weapons: knives of all types, guns, lead pipes, chains, chuck-sticks, throwing stars, darts, metal knuckles, blackjacks, unauthorized tools, fireworks, lighters, matches, explosives or other chemicals.

Police will be contacted when there is a suspected violation of criminal laws concerning weapons.

A first offense in violation of the weapons policy will result in immediate suspension and may result in expulsion.

A second offense in violation of the weapons policy will result in immediate expulsion.

### **Suspension/Expulsion Policy**

On occasion, students can be suspended and/or expelled, not only for their well-being, but for the well-being of all the other students and staff at a Consortium school. Any serious behavior infractions regarding a student, on or off school grounds during school or a school sponsored activity, can/will be grounds for suspension or expulsion. Also, serious behavioral infractions done outside of school or off of school grounds will be investigated by the principal, and if deemed as a situation that may harm any portion of the school community, then serious disciplinary action may or will follow. This decision, and all disciplinary actions, will rest with the principal.

When a student is suspended, the parents/guardians will be notified. A meeting with the parents/guardians and the principal may be scheduled in order to discuss the student's academic future at the school. Documentation will be sent to the executive director, and one copy is placed in the student's discipline file. This copy does not leave the school; it is for our documentation alone, and it does not follow the student when he/she leaves or

graduates from eighth grade.

Suspension is a temporary exclusion of a student from school and school activities. A suspension may be for a few hours during the day or up to several days. When a student is suspended, he/she will do homework to be determined by the classroom teacher/principal. School personnel strive to resolve discipline problems in a Christian manner with parent/guardian and student involvement and cooperation. However, in serious situations, it may become necessary to discipline a student with an in or out of school suspension. The decision to suspend a student rests with the principal.

Expulsion is the permanent exclusion of a student from school and school activities. Consortium schools will use expulsion when the student's behavior is a hindrance to the welfare, learning, and progress of the school community and/or there is evidence of repeated disregard for the philosophy, policies, rules, and regulations of the school.

- The principal will investigate the behavior problem by talking to the person(s) involved and the student involved.
- Parents/guardians will be involved in the expulsion process; including a written notice identifying the reasons for the expulsion.
- The decision to expel a student rests with the principal and the executive director is informed.
- The principal will notify the Archdiocesan Superintendent of Schools and, upon request, provide a record of the evidence justifying expulsion of the student.
- The principal will also notify the public-school authorities.

### **STUDENTS CHARGED WITH CRIMINAL OFFENSES**

In the event of criminal charges against a student, the pastor/principal will take actions deemed in the best interest of the school. Such actions may include suspension or expulsion. The executive director/principal will notify the Superintendent of Schools of such charges immediately.

### **USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION**

Physical restraint and seclusion of students for behavior management shall be used in circumstances and under conditions that are in the best interests of students.

Physical restraint is appropriate when a student is displaying physical behavior which presents substantial imminent risk of injury to the student or others, and the student is demonstrating the intent and the ability to cause injury within a matter of seconds or minutes. The degree of physical restriction employed should be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident, the size and condition of the student, and the potential risks for injury to the student or others. Physical restraint does not include: (a) taking away a weapon; or (b) breaking up a fight.

Seclusion is appropriate when a student is displaying physical behavior that presents a substantial imminent risk of injury to the student or others, and the threat could be diminished if the student were placed in a safe environment away from other students and staff. Seclusion should only be used as long as necessary and should be discontinued

when the student is no longer a threat to himself/herself or others. Time out procedures which do not constitute seclusion are permitted in school.

Immediately after the student has restored emotional and behavioral control following the use of physical restraint and/or seclusion, a staff member not involved with the incident shall examine the student to ascertain if the student has sustained any injury. The Principal will verbally notify the parent/guardian as soon as possible (no later than the end of the school day in which the physical restraint or seclusion occurs).

All use of physical restraint or seclusion must be documented in a memorandum within one school day of the incident. The principal will send a copy of the memorandum to the parent or guardian within two school days following the use of the restraint or seclusion.

## **FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

### **TUITION POLICY**

**Adopted by the OCSC Board of Directors, November 19, 2013**

#### **Registration Fees**

All families are required to pay a \$100 **non refundable** registration fee per child each year. This fee is expected even if students enroll during the school year. It will secure a position in the desired OCSC school.

#### **Tuition/Student Fees**

The annual rate of tuition and fees of a future academic year for the schools of the Omaha Catholic Schools Consortium is determined by the Board of Directors in January for the upcoming year and communicated to school families and others in preparation for registration procedures in February and March. Tuition is to be paid either annually (due June 30), or using one of the payment options available in FACTS, unless a separate arrangement has been made with the business office of the Consortium.

#### **Financial Aid**

Financial aid is available through the following sources:

- Children's Scholarship Fund
- Latino Scholarship Fund
- Parish-based Financial Aid
- Consortium-based Financial Aid

The first step in applying for financial aid is to complete the form of the Children's Scholarship Fund. Data from this form will be used to determine aid from the other sources. The award decision by the Children's Scholarship will precede any decision for the

awarding of financial aid from the other sources.

Financial aid decisions from the Children's Scholarship Fund will be made by the officers of the Fund.

Financial aid decisions from Parish-based Financial Aid will be made by the Pastor or other designated individual from the particular parish.

Financial aid decisions from Consortium-based Financial Aid will be made by the Executive Director of the Omaha Catholic School Consortium.

Regular tuition payments will be processed through FACTS. In specific circumstances, payments may also be processed through the Consortium business office.

### **Parish-based Tuition Assistance**

Several Consortium parishes have financial aid available for parishioners. Contact your school or parish office to explore those options.

### **Other Information:**

Contributions designated to Tuition Assistance are accepted at any time from corporations, groups and individuals; these are legally tax deductible. Donations made which benefit a family directly without going through the above described process is considered "tuition paid" and therefore, not tax deductible.

### **FACTS**

The Omaha Catholic School Consortium partners with FACTS Management Company to help us manage our tuition payment program. Monthly payments are to be scheduled. Automatic payments can be made from a checking or savings account or from a credit card (Master Card, American Express, and Discover are accepted and will cost you a convenience fee of 2.5%)

Enrolling in FACTS: You will receive an invite from FACTS with information necessary to enroll. Included in the invite will be the website you will need to access.

Convenience & Security: Along with multiple payment plan options, your payments are processed securely through a bank to bank transaction. You may check your personal account or make payments online from the convenience of your home or office anytime. Automatic payment reminders will be sent.

Even with FACTS, OCSC maintains decision-making control. As always, we will continue to work with families should special circumstances or "hardship" cases arise during the school year. If questions or concerns arise, you are asked to contact the OCSC business office.

Delinquent tuition accounts will be handled as follows:

- FACTS will mail an invoice to families and request payment of the delinquent amount.
- Families may then contact the Consortium Business Office to make special

arrangements for addressing the delinquent amount and future payments.

- o If no response is forthcoming from the mailing of the FACTS invoice after 20 working days, contact will be made by letter, email, telephone, or person to person.
- If no response is forthcoming from the above contacts, the tuition account will be referred to the executive director.
- Unless an exception is made by the executive director no student will be allowed to re-enroll in a subsequent semester if tuition is not current.

### **END OF SCHOOL YEAR FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

OCSC expects that each family has all school related financial obligations paid before the last day of school. These obligations include the following: current year registration fees, tuition, Extended Care charges, outstanding lunch balance, PSP Hours/fee, library lost book replacement charges and any other fees that are left unpaid that are not noted here. Unless special circumstances have been approved, the family will not receive report cards and if necessary, transcripts will not be released to the student's next school. Special circumstances may be requested by documenting reasons for non-payment along with a documented payment plan. This documentation will then need the signature of approval by the Principal and/or executive director before report cards and/or transcripts are released.

### **SAFETY**

#### **CHARTER FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN TO PROTECT THE FAITHFUL IN THE FUTURE**

**ARTICLE 12:** Dioceses/eparchies will establish "safe environment" programs. They will cooperate with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children. Dioceses/eparchies will make clear to clergy and all members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in positions of trust with regard to sexual abuse.

**ARTICLE 13:** Dioceses/eparchies will evaluate the background of all diocesan/eparchial and parish personnel who have regular contact with minors. Specifically, they will utilize the resources of law enforcement and other community agencies. In addition, they will employ adequate screening and evaluative techniques in deciding the fitness of candidates for ordination (cf. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Program of Priestly Formation, 1993, no. 513). *The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People was developed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse of the United States Conference*

#### **Cooperation with Law Enforcement and Other Governmental Agencies Requesting Access to Students**

In all cases where Law Enforcement Personnel enter a school building to interview or apprehend a student, the school shall follow the procedures set forth below. Law Enforcement Personnel shall include police officers, fire officials, and employees of the Nebraska Health and Human Services Department.

- Arrival of Law Enforcement Personnel. Law Enforcement Personnel desiring to interview or apprehend a student shall inform the Principal of the school and state the nature of the inquiry or investigation.
- Student Interviews. In cases where Law Enforcement Personnel wish to interview a student, the Principal shall make the student available and provide the Interviewing Officer a room where the student may be interviewed. The student's parent or legal guardian shall be contacted and present during the interview unless otherwise directed by the Interviewing Officer. In instances where the parent or legal guardian is not notified, or is unavailable, the Principal shall remain present during the interview unless otherwise directed by the Interviewing Officer.

Notification.

- Parental Notification. In all cases where a student is interviewed by Law Enforcement Personnel without the knowledge of the student's parent or legal guardian, the principal shall immediately contact the student's parent or legal guardian and advise him or her of the interview unless otherwise directed by the Interviewing Officer.
- In all cases where a student is taken into custody and removed from school premises, the principal shall promptly notify the student's parent or legal guardian.

Superintendent of Catholic Schools Notification. In all cases where a student is interviewed or apprehended, the Principal shall notify the Superintendent of Catholic Schools of the incident and the procedures followed by the school.

Documentation. In all cases where Law Enforcement Personnel have interviewed a student or taken a student into custody, the Principal shall document the date and time of the incident, the identity of the Law Enforcement Personnel (including badge number, if applicable), and the procedures followed by the school.

### **Reporting Of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect**

State law requires that any St. Bernadette employee is required to notify Child Protective Services of the Nebraska Department of Social Services and law enforcement officials if they believe a child has been subject to abuse or neglect. OCSC cooperates in the investigation of such cases.



## **VISITORS**

Everyone, with the exception of staff and students, who comes to the school during school hours (6:45 am to 6:00 pm) must check in at the school office and receive a visitor's pass. This is done to ensure the safety of all students and staff. Visitors, including parents/guardians, should come in the main entrance. Other entrances will be locked during school hours.

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

The school regularly conducts emergency drills. Detailed escape plans and shelter areas are posted inside the door of each classroom. The purpose of these drills is to practice the safe and swift removal of all students and staff to safe areas.

### **Fire Drills**

Consortium schools will conduct a monthly fire drill to prepare our students in case of an emergency and to be in compliance with the State Fire Marshall.

### **Tornado Drills**

Tornado or severe thunderstorm drills are held regularly throughout the tornado season.

### **Emergency Crisis Drills**

Each Consortium school has a crisis management plan for emergencies. The purpose of the crisis plan is to ensure that any crisis that may affect members of our school community will be handled in an appropriate manner.

## **POLICY FOR REPORTING DANGER TO SELF OR OTHERS**

If a student knows of an abusive situation (sexual or physical), hears threatening statements of violence made, hears rumors or guns, drugs, or any other type of violence, they immediately:

1. Tell their homeroom teacher, or any teacher present, when the situation occurs. If they are not comfortable doing this, they may
2. Request to see the Principal and report the information to him.
3. If they are not comfortable with either of the above options, they may fill out our reporting form explaining in detail the information they have, including the name of the person in danger and the person causing the alarm. The student may place the letter in the classroom "Worry Box" or deliver it to the office.

Upon receiving the information, the administrator will investigate the situation. We will follow the student code of conduct when deciding disciplinary action. If we are unable to obtain enough information to take action, the teacher and administrator will closely monitor the situation. Please remember that intentionally reporting false information is as severe as making a threat yourself.

If it is determined that misconduct has occurred, appropriate relief for the individual bringing the complaint, and appropriate disciplinary action against the person(s) engaging in such conduct, up to and including expulsion/ termination, will follow.

## **VOLUNTEERING**

### **YOU, THE VOLUNTEER, CAN AND DO MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE!**

You, the volunteer, can and do make a big difference! Thank you for volunteering your time at a Consortium school. In today's world, with budget constraints and working parents, volunteering is becoming an ever-increasing important commodity. Your involvement as a parent and the work of our Home and School Association will have a tremendous positive impact on our educational program for our children.

### **CODE OF ETHICS**

Volunteers play a critical role in the operation of our schools and their activities. Through their responsibilities the volunteer receives rewards such as personal development, recognition, feedback and the personal satisfaction of helping others. In return, the volunteer must be expected to conduct their efforts in a manner that will allow the values, goals and mission of our school to be achieved.

The purpose for the Code of Conduct is to provide a benchmark for the personal and professional behavior of the volunteers of Consortium schools whenever they are identifiable as members. Failure to adhere to this code will represent unacceptable behavior and will undoubtedly damage the school; therefore, the volunteer may be dismissed from their volunteering opportunities.

In signing up as a volunteer at your school, you agree to the following:

**Charter for the Protection of Children & Young People:** This Charter includes the Safe Environment Training program and background checks as established by the Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse of the United States Conference carried out by the Archdiocese of Omaha. As a volunteer who has regular contact with the youth of the parish, I agree to abide and adhere to this Charter.

**Your status as a Volunteer:** In performing services in connection with a Consortium school, you shall operate as, and have the status of, volunteer. You shall not act as or be an employee of the school. All of your activities will be at your own expense. As a volunteer, you shall refrain from using your position to secure special privilege, gain or benefit.

**Treatment of Confidential Information:** In reference to private information, you agree not to disclose, divulge, copy or reproduce any of the proprietary or confidential information/materials regarding students, staff or curriculum unless authorized to do so by the school principal.

**Representation:** As a volunteer, you do not represent the school on matters of policy, procedure, programs and personnel. When approached with concerns, you agree to refer parents to the principal and/or appropriate personnel. Volunteers should represent the school in a helpful, friendly and professional manner at all times. Our existence and effectiveness is dependent upon the goodwill of the parish/school community. The image people form of the organization may be based on their contact with volunteers. For this reason, it is important for volunteers to always represent the school in a positive manner and promote the beliefs and practices of the organization.

**Media Contact:** As a volunteer, you do not represent the school on inquiries and matters of the Media. You agree to refer all media contacts to the principal.

**Attendance and Commitment:** For most of the volunteer programs, volunteers are assigned a schedule and are expected to follow that schedule. Volunteers who are unable to make a scheduled shift are expected to contact their program leader or manager as soon as possible. Volunteers should inform their program leader or manager if they need to resign their position.

**Professional Behavior:** In the performance of duty, volunteers should:

- Be polite at all times when dealing with students, staff and visitors
- Treat other volunteers, students, staff with courtesy and sensitivity to their rights and responsibilities
- Take the personal initiative to learn, respect, communicate and adhere to the rules of the school
- Agree to a time/task commitment and fulfill that commitment in a timely manner, or else inform the program leader or manager
- Follow reasonable directions from their program leader or manager and those of the organization who have appropriate authority

**Personal Behavior:** As a volunteer, to the best of my ability, I agree to:

- Treat everyone fairly within the context of their activity, regardless of gender, place of origin, color, religion, political belief, or economic status
- Consistently display high personal standards and project a favorable image of the school
- Strive to achieve the highest quality, effectiveness and dignity in the process of volunteer work without promoting self-interests
- Refrain from public criticism of fellow volunteers, students and staff
- Be honest and trustworthy
- Respect the privacy of others
- Regularly seek ways of increasing professional development of self-awareness
- Be passionate about what you are performing and be an advocate in the parish/school community
- Respect the dignity of others; verbal or physical behaviors that constitute harassment or abuse are unacceptable

### **Lunchroom Supervision**

We want to use the lunchroom as an opportunity to teach our children appropriate table manners. We also want to try and get the children to eat what the parents expect them to eat and not give it to other children or throw it away.

### **Classroom Volunteer Duties**

There are a number of duties and activities that might be performed by the volunteers. It is difficult to identify all of them, however, some common duties might be:

- Assist the teacher while he/she is teaching in all subject areas.
- Read and tell stories to our children when directed by the teacher.
- Assist children in performing activities that have been initiated by the teacher.
- Assist with supplementary work for advanced and/or enrichment activities.
- Help tutor students in all subject areas.
- Work with and teach students in small group settings.
- Provide special help, such as drilling with flash cards, spelling, and play activities.
- Work on the computer as directed by the teacher or office staff.
- Assist students on the computer when needed.
- Help maintain bulletin board displays.
- Maintain individual classroom folders of the student's work.
- Assemble materials and equipment needed by teachers.

### **Volunteer Office Duties**

Often there is additional work needed to be completed in the school office. This position will prove to be very rewarding for those individuals who love to interact with both adults and children. Additional office assistance can include filing, making copies, proofreading, typing on the computer, and many more clerical related activities. All volunteers in these areas as well as all areas of the school should keep in mind the importance of confidentiality of all student records or actions.

### **Volunteering While at Home**

Our teachers and the office have extra work that can be accomplished at home. These things may include typing, making flash cards, and many other clerical duties. Contact your child's teacher and/or contact the school office for more information.

### **ASBESTOS**

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act, passed in 1987, requires all public and private schools to inventory and inspect all buildings for asbestos containing materials. All asbestos areas will continue to be inspected on a regular basis as required by law, and procedures implemented to assure no health hazards are present. All materials containing asbestos are sealed and in good condition and will be kept that way. The management plan has been filed with the Nebraska Department of Health and is on file in the office of the school's maintenance engineer/asbestos program manager. Copies of the management plan will be provided to requesting parties for the cost of reproduction.

