



Middle and High School (6-12)
Family Handbook
2026-2027

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Mr. Patrick Cochran
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Mrs. Beth McCandless
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Fine Arts

Mrs. Annie McClendon
Mrs. Andrea Moen
Mrs. Jennifer Polstra

Foreign Language

Mr. Kade Foster
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Health, Career, and Technical Sciences

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Mr. Joseph Moore
Ms. Tracey Raines

Mathematics

Mr. Tommy Flowers
Mrs. Anna Gibbons
Dr. Timothy Gibbons
Mr. Kevin King, Department Chair

Physical Education

Mr. Joseph Moore
Ms. Tracey Raines, Department Chair
Mr. James Tidwell

Science

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Social Sciences

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Mr. Michael Hartzell, Department Chair
Mr. Aren Heitmann
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Special Education/Resource

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Mrs. Angela Brown
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Mrs. Jennifer Mitchell
Mrs. Megan Scalfani

Theology

Ms. Olivia Daidone
Mr. Kade Foster, Department Chair
Ms. Judy Halli
Mr. Michael Hartzell
Mr. Chris Wright

Handbook Disclaimer

The contents of this handbook are based on the policies and procedures established by the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama, the Holy Spirit Advisory Council, and the administration. All policies listed in the Policy Manual for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Birmingham apply to Holy Spirit. In the event of inadvertent conflict, the diocesan policy supersedes. The handbook is intended to serve as a guide to our programs and opportunities as well as set forth expectations and agreements.

No set rules or guidelines can cover every conceivable situation that may arise at school. The guidelines, rules, and policies set forth in this handbook are intended to apply under normal circumstances. Occasionally, there may be situations that deviate from the normal rules and procedures as set forth. In those cases, each situation will be handled in a manner deemed most appropriate by the school administration. Final interpretation of policies and procedures is at the discretion of the administration. Faculty and administration may take disciplinary action for any behavior that violates the spirit and philosophy of Holy Spirit even though it may not be specified in this handbook.

The administration (in accordance with diocesan policy) reserves the right to determine policy should the need arise. Deviations from or amendments to this handbook may be made at any time by the administration. The handbook may be revised or updated periodically. Such changes become effective when published either electronically or in print media.

We require parents and students to certify that they have received and reviewed the handbook each year. Sign the copy provided for you at the end of the handbook and return it to each student's homeroom teacher no later than the Friday of the first full week of school.

Each school will evaluate its policies and procedures annually with the School Advisory Council. Proposed changes must be reviewed by the Superintendent of Schools prior to implementation.

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Mission and Vision of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Birmingham

The primary purpose of Catholic schools is to give witness to the life of Jesus and his Lordship of the Church.

The mission of the Diocese of Birmingham Catholic Schools is to educate our students to seek God in Truth and for loving service by teaching the message of the Gospel, forming a community of faith, providing the whole child with a Catholic and Christ-centered environment, and inspiring all to reach their full academic and spiritual potential.

Catholic schools educate the whole child. Schools provide instruction in music, art, foreign language, and technology through special area classes or through integration into the core curriculum. Physical education must occur in schools daily, with specific instruction provided. Recess is also essential but is not part of the daily physical education requirement.

The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama provide an excellent educational experience in the Catholic tradition enabling all students to develop their God-given talents.

- We lead students to recognize the wonder of God in all things and to inspire them to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ with joy.
- We send them into the world to actively share their faith with others.
- We develop disciples with substantial knowledge and skills, a genuine thirst for the truth, and a sincere desire to love and serve the Lord and others.

Holy Spirit Mission Statement

The Holy Spirit Catholic School family honors the dignity of each person and provides a strong foundation for lifelong learning within the framework of a Catholic faith community.

Holy Spirit Vision Statement

Our vision for Holy Spirit Catholic School is to create an environment in which gospel values are integrated into the life of our school community. We envision a school community where all people are welcomed and encouraged to grow spiritually and academically.

Holy Spirit Belief Statements

1. Holy Spirit is committed to educating each student by promoting spiritual, academic, physical, emotional, and aesthetic development in a Christ-centered environment.
2. Holy Spirit challenges students to develop their abilities to attain academic success.
3. Holy Spirit motivates students to live and serve as part of a Catholic faith community.

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4. Holy Spirit encourages students to appreciate various cultures and creeds and to respect the diversity of God's kingdom.
 5. Holy Spirit promotes a curriculum that prepares students to become lifelong learners, enabling them to become responsible, productive citizens.
 6. Holy Spirit believes the school and family share the responsibility for preparing students for a lifelong journey of faith and learning.

Parents as Partners in Education

We at Holy Spirit Catholic School believe parents are the primary educators and role models for their children. Your choice of Holy Spirit exhibits a commitment and concern for not only your child's education but your child's future. As collaborative partners in your child's education, we are committed to working with you in the best interests of your child. We hope that you will view us as partners during these years. If you have concerns or questions, we encourage you to first communicate with your child's teacher or coach. If you have further concerns, then please contact the office to set up a meeting with the appropriate administrative staff member or the principal so that we can further discuss your child's needs. Through this collaboration, we as partners can support one another in helping our young people become the men and women God is calling them to be.

History of the School

Catholic education has been continuous in Tuscaloosa since 1863 when classes were held in rooms adjoining St. John the Baptist Church (located on Lurleen Wallace Boulevard North and Eighth Street). In 1920, St. John's School, built across the street from the church, opened for students in elementary and high school grades. In 1932, the Benedictine Sisters from Cullman came to Tuscaloosa to teach at the school. The high school classes were discontinued, but the elementary school continued at that location until 1963 when a new school building was dedicated at the current location of Holy Spirit Catholic School. A kindergarten class was added in 1979, a preschool was opened in 1987, and Holy Spirit Catholic High School was opened in 1995. Many outstanding Catholic and non-Catholic students have been educated in our school. We have experienced much growth, while maintaining a tradition of academic excellence.

Accreditation

Holy Spirit is accredited by Cognia through the Diocese of Birmingham. Holy Spirit is also recognized as a registered private school by the Alabama State Department of Education. Holy Spirit has the responsibility to meet the accreditation standards and requirements as set forth by Cognia.

Governance of Holy Spirit

The Bishop of the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama exercises vigilance over all Catholic schools pertaining to the Diocese of Birmingham. The Bishop is also the ultimate authority and teacher of Catholic faith in the diocese. The Diocese of Birmingham Catholic schools and their personnel are responsible to the Bishop and his delegates in all matters concerning the Catholic faith.

The Superintendent is appointed by the Bishop of Birmingham in Alabama and executes the Bishop's vision for Catholic education in the Diocese of Birmingham.

The Superintendent:

- Serves as the primary administrator and supervisory officer of the Diocese of Birmingham Catholic Schools.
- Develops policy and supplies direction that exercise and develop the mission of Catholic education in the diocese.
- Provides leadership for developing and implementing plans that ensure a Catholic school climate that teaches Catholic values and is conducive to effective teaching and leadership.
- Serves as the Bishop's delegate in exercising vigilance over all aspects of the administration of Catholic Schools pertaining to the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama.
- Develops and communicates a clear vision for the Diocese of Birmingham Catholic schools and mobilizes resources necessary to align with that vision.

The Diocesan Advisory Council for Catholic Education is the chief advisory body to the superintendent regarding the formulation of policies and advising on initiatives affecting diocesan, parochial, and regional Catholic schools.

The Diocesan Advisory Council for Catholic Education is appointed by the Bishop. The bylaws of the Diocesan Advisory Council for Catholic Education are available from the Catholic Schools Office and the Catholic Schools Office website.

The pastor of the parish or the designated Priest-Administrator of the regional parishes of the school is the spiritual and canonical leader of the school. The ultimate responsibility for decisions rests with the pastor according to Canon Law and Diocesan Policy. He has the overall responsibility for the spiritual and administrative leadership of the school/early learning center.

The Pastor:

- Develops the faith community of the school and the School Advisory Council.
- Approves the selection of the principal.
- Provides liturgical and sacramental opportunities and ensures that the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church are clearly and accurately presented in the school.

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- Establishes the School Advisory Council to assist in the governance of the school and serves as an ex-officio member of the Council.
 - Approves School Advisory Council recommendations, including policies.
 - Approves the school budget and monitors the financial affairs of the school, ensuring consultation with both the School Advisory Council Finance Committee and the Parish Finance Council.
 - Approves the selection and termination of faculty and staff. Signs contracts.
 - Evaluates the principal's performance on an annual basis.

Under the supervision of the pastor and the superintendent, the principal is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the school.

The Principal:

- Serves as the executive officer of the School Advisory Council.
- Ensures compliance with all policies and regulations.
- Approves or vetoes School Advisory Council recommendations.
- Approves the school budget and monitors the financial affairs of the school, in consultation with the School Advisory Council Finance Council.
- Approves the selection of faculty and staff.
- Evaluates other staff, as designated by the job description.
- Keeps the School Advisory Council adequately and timely informed about the operation of the school. Executes the day-to-day functions as the spiritual and administrative leader of the school.
- Develops the instructional and operational programming of the school within the policies of the Policy Manual for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Birmingham, the state (as applicable), and the accrediting body.
- Hires faculty and staff with the appropriate credentials in alignment with the faith and mission of the school.
- Develops the curriculum and oversees instruction.
- Supervises staff performance.
- Prepares and manages the school budget with the School Advisory Council finance committee and in consultation with the Parish Council.
- Ensures compliance with all policies and regulations.
- Engages in ongoing assessment and advancement of the mission of the school.
- Keeps the School Pastor adequately and timely informed about the operation of the school.

Holy Spirit is a parochial school—sponsored by a single parish and governed by the Pastor of the parish—with a regional school component—sponsored by multiple parishes that are geographically contiguous, in our case St. Francis of Assisi University Parish. As a Diocesan

school, we are overseen by the superintendent of schools, or his/her delegate. Holy Spirit is part of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office and subject to the Policy Manual for Catholic Schools.

All schools and school personnel are to follow the policies, regulations and guidelines established and implemented by the superintendent of schools and the [Employee Reference Manual](#) of Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama.

All personnel within Diocese of Birmingham Catholic schools shall be directly accountable to the principal for carrying out assigned responsibilities.

Admission Policy and Procedure

Holy Spirit admits students without regard to sex, race, color, national and ethnic origin, to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the schools. Schools do not discriminate based on sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin in its employment practices, administration of educational policies, admission and treatment of students, reduced rate programs for eligible families, and athletic and other school administered programs.

While Holy Spirit does not discriminate against admitting students with special needs, the full range of services may not be available to them.

All applicants are considered, and priority for enrollment is as follows:

1. Currently enrolled students and siblings of currently enrolled students
2. Active, practicing Catholic families within Holy Spirit or St. Francis parishes
3. Other Catholic families
4. Non-Catholic families

Non-Catholic students are required to participate in all religious programs with the exception of the reception of the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.

If the administration closes a grade level because it has reached maximum enrollment, applicants will be placed on a waitlist to be managed by the Enrollment Director and administration. Students will be admitted from the waitlist as spots become available.

Students applying for grades 6-12 must submit a completed application form (with fee). They must also submit a copy of the current report card and transcript (for high school applicants), records of special education services, standardized test scores, and letters of recommendation. These will be reviewed to determine whether the program at Holy Spirit will meet the educational needs of the students. An interview with the prospective student is part of the admission process. Testing in some academic areas may be held for incoming students.

Holy Spirit presumes each parent/guardian has the authority to enroll the student, consent to programs and activities, have custody of the student, or discontinue enrollment. When there is a custody agreement, schools shall be given the portion of the agreement that stipulates custody or pertains to school. When consent by both parents/guardians is required by the court decree, parents/guardians must submit in writing their consent to any relevant decision. Students shall be released according to court documents on file.

New students are on a probationary status for the first semester after admission. During this time, the student can adjust to Holy Spirit and to prove him/herself both academically and socially. If there are any problems during this trial period, the student may be asked to withdraw. The recommendation and decision of the school is final.

Immunization

The Catholic Church does not prohibit the use of any vaccine and generally encourages the use of safe and effective vaccines as a way of safeguarding personal and public health and out of concern for the common good. The Diocese of Birmingham understands that there are children who may be medically ineligible to receive certain vaccines, and there may be moral objections to vaccines derived from cell lines of aborted children (*i.e.*, vaccines which contain these cell lines). We seek to balance, as best as possible, these doctrinal, moral, and medical concerns so that we can provide healthy environments for all students, faculty and staff in our parish and diocesan Catholic schools and early learning programs.

Code of Alabama, 1975, §16-30-4 outlines that boards of education and the governing authority of each private school shall require each pupil who is otherwise entitled to admittance to kindergarten or first grade, whichever is applicable, or any other entrance into an Alabama public or private school, to present a certification of immunization or testing for the prevention of those communicable diseases designated by the State Health Officer, except as indicated by a licensed medical professional or by obtaining religious exemption based on objection in writing to specific tenets or practices of his or her faith.

In addition, the Alabama Department of Human Resources has required each child two months of age or older attending any childcare center/home to present a Certificate of Immunization for the prevention of diseases administered according to the most recent version of the Recommended Immunization Schedules for Persons Aged 0 Through 18 Years, as published by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

As such, any child enrolling in or re-entering a school serving prekindergarten through 12th grades or an early learning program serving infant through K4 in the Diocese of Birmingham must provide an appropriate Certificate of Immunization on a form approved by the Alabama Department of Public Health. *A student without an appropriate Certificate of Immunization may*

not be enrolled in the school or early learning program, unless a medical or religious exemption have been obtained in accordance with requirements set by the Diocese of Birmingham.

If a medical or religious exemption has been granted to a child in a Diocese of Birmingham school or early learning program, the exemption lasts throughout the child's educational tenure in our schools. Upon leaving a Diocese of Birmingham school or early learning program due to graduation, transfer, relocation, or withdrawal, the exemption letter or certificate is returned to the parent with a copy retained in school or early learning center records. The school or early learning program may also provide a copy of the letter or certificate to the transferring school or early learning program if it is within the Diocese of Birmingham.

Medical Exemption

For children enrolling in a Diocese of Birmingham school or early learning program with medical contraindication to any of the required vaccinations for school admittance, a Certificate of Medical Exemption, obtained from a licensed medical professional or the County Health Department must be provided. In addition, the Diocese of Birmingham will accept a letter provided by a physician who is licensed to practice medicine, surgery, or osteopathy that indicated an accepted medical contraindication to vaccination or an allergy to any of the ingredients used to formulate the vaccine, as consistent with the labeling of the vaccine as regulated by the Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Any vaccination(s) required for school or program admittance not medically contraindicated must be obtained.

Diocesan procedures for medical exemption may be obtained from the school office and website.

Religious Exemption

Students in schools or early learning programs in the Diocese of Birmingham may receive a religious exemption from vaccination under certain circumstances. Religious exemptions will be granted through diocesan procedure and are limited to those objections that are in adherence with the tenets of the Catholic faith as identified and accepted by the Bishop of Birmingham in Alabama. Specifically, exemptions may be granted to students whose parents demonstrate a sincere, conscientious objection to vaccines derived from descendent cell lines of aborted fetuses. Certificates of Religious Exemption issued by State or County Health Departments are not accepted.

This limited religious exemption only covers those vaccinations derived from descendent cell lines of aborted fetuses. All other vaccinations required for school or early learning program admittance must be obtained. A Certificate of Immunization showing the vaccinations received must be on file with the school or early learning program to be admitted.

Diocesan procedures for religious exemption may be obtained from the school office and website.

Spiritual Life

Holy Spirit is committed to educating each student in a Christ-centered environment. To honor this commitment, students take theology classes each year. In addition to regularly scheduled theology classes, there are many opportunities for each student to deepen his or her relationship with Christ and to strengthen the bond which unites all in the family of God. The acting campus minister is available to offer spiritual guidance and to coordinate liturgical and social outreach activities.

Holy Spirit incorporates in the religion curriculum the Catholic Church teachings on chastity, marriage, and family life through a Theology of the Body curriculum.

Mass—All students and teachers attend school liturgies. The entire student body (PK-12) attends Mass weekly. We invite parents to attend the celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy as well as monthly adoration.

Prayer:

- **Daily prayer**—Each day at Holy Spirit begins and ends with prayer.
- **Classroom prayer**—Each class begins with a short prayer. This prayer may be teacher-led or student-led.
- **Retreats**—Each grade level participates in a half-day or whole day retreat every year. Holy Spirit conducts retreat experiences that are structured appropriately for each grade level and are designed to help students deepen their relationship with Jesus, fellow students, and themselves. Retreats are an integral part of the religious formation program and attendance is mandatory. Students who do not participate in their class retreat must have approval from the principal at least one week in advance with a remediation plan for the experience.
- **Monthly adoration**—All students attend Eucharistic adoration monthly with the opportunity for reconciliation during that time.

Celebrations:

- **Seasonal celebrations**—Each liturgical season is celebrated in appropriate ways. For example, each class has Advent wreath ceremonies, there are Stations of the Cross during Lent, and there are Marian observances during May and October.
- **Reconciliation**—Students participate in reconciliation services at least twice during the year for Advent and Lent and most months during Eucharistic adoration.
- **Class activities**—Major class events (such as graduation, distribution of rings for the juniors, etc.) are celebrated in the context of Eucharistic liturgy.

Service Activities: Holy Spirit students are involved in various service activities. Students also work to provide materials and funds for Catholic Social Services through monthly spirit day donations. We conduct other service activities according to the needs of the community, including a school-wide Service Day. Campus ministry coordinates other service-related activities during Advent and Lent.

Community Service

Service to God by serving others is at the heart of spiritual education at Holy Spirit. Our service program is rooted in the Gospel call and reflects our Catholic identity. It is our goal to assist each student in embracing the values of the common good that comes from serving others and instilling the desire for a lifelong commitment to service within the community.

High School Graduation Service Requirement: Holy Spirit students complete at least one hundred (100) hours of service as a graduation requirement, completing 25 hours per school year during high school. (Transfer students complete twenty-five (25) hours per school year while at Holy Spirit.) Service hours prior to Holy Spirit enrollment date will not transfer. Senior transfer students have until April of the second semester to complete their service hours. Incoming freshmen may begin community service projects as soon as they complete eighth grade.

The 25 hours must be completed during each school year. Students cannot complete 100 hours freshman year and apply those hours for future years. Anything qualifies for this graduation requirement EXCEPT: 1) School coordinated service projects such as Service Day, Box of Joy, class service projects, etc. AND 2) Service completed for the student's family, such as yard work, taking out the garbage, washing the car, etc. Family conducted service projects do count, such as family serving at Jeremiah's Garden. Students who have not completed and submitted their annual service hour requirement will have their report cards and records held until submitted. Seniors who have not completed their service hours will have their diploma and final transcripts held until complete. Students in grades 9-11 must have their hours in by the last day of school.

Seniors must have their hours in by the first Monday of May. Any hours completed over the summer will count toward the upcoming school year.

Students are encouraged to choose service projects sponsored by pre-approved specified agencies, such as registered non-profit agencies. Projects for organizations that are not known non-profits must be pre-approved by the administration before any work is begun. Opportunities with individual agencies are posted on the website and included in the Counselor's Corner newsletter. Service hours are not considered complete until the appropriate information is completed and submitted on a signed service hours form. Service hours verification by an adult outside the household must be completed on the service hours form. The correctly dated service hour form must be used. Service hour forms will not be accepted past six months after completion of service.

Key Club Service Requirement: Key Club members must earn 50 service hours each school year. 25 hours earned over the summer can count toward this amount for the upcoming school year. Any service can count toward Key Club hours, including those that are school coordinated, except for Service Day. To earn a Key Club cord, you must complete 50 hours during your sophomore, junior, and senior years of high school. Your 50 hours for each school year must be completed by May 1.

National (Junior) Honor Society Requirements: N(J)HS members must complete 20 service hours for the full school year. 10 hours must be completed each semester. Service activities eligible for National Junior Honor Society must align with Graduation requirements.

Presidential Volunteer Service Award Requirements: Religious and political affiliated service activities cannot count toward the Presidential Volunteer Service Award. Hours for donating goods also cannot count. Hours at each level must be completed in a single calendar year. For Holy Spirit, that year will go from April-April. For example, to achieve the Silver Teen Award you must complete at least 75 hours from April 2026-April 2027.

Age Group	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Teens (11-15)	50-74 Hours	75-99 Hours	100+ Hours
Young Adults (16-25)	100-174 Hours	175-249 Hours	250+ Hours

Academic Information

Holy Spirit endorses the call of the Catholic bishops of the United States to express its educational ministry through the objectives of personal spirituality, social justice, and a strong academic program in accord with the curriculum guide for Catholic schools in the Diocese of Birmingham. The curriculum stresses academic achievement within a Christian community where the student

feels loved and respected by teachers and peers. At Holy Spirit, we are attempting to “teach as Jesus did.” The Diocesan curriculum guidelines, consistent with the state of Alabama guidelines, are followed for the teaching of all secular subjects. The theology curriculum for middle and high school classes complies with the guidelines set forth by the bishops of the Catholic Church. Students who do not conform to the academic environment of Holy Spirit, as determined by the administration, may lose the opportunity to enroll in future academic sessions.

Academic Progress

FACTS Family Portal: Parents have access to student grades online through the FACTS Family Portal. Outstanding financial obligations may result in the loss of access to the Family Portal until the balance is cleared.

Report Cards: Report cards are released after each nine-week academic quarter. Dates for report card distribution are listed on the school calendar. All report cards are issued electronically in the FACTS Family Portal. Report cards are not printed and mailed. All financial obligations to the school must be met before report cards are distributed.

Academic Honor Roll (All A’s/All A’s and B’s): The academic honor roll recognizes students who have made all A’s and also students who have made all A’s and B’s each nine-week marking period. These students are recognized at the end of each of the first three quarters. In the spring, students who have been on the academic honor roll for each of the first three quarters are honored at the annual Honor Roll Breakfast.

Athletic Eligibility: Refer to page 51.

Middle School Grading Scale (diocesan policy):

Letter Grade	Value of Letters
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60

There is no GPA in Middle School and students do not earn credits for courses passed.

Middle School Failure: If a sixth, seventh, or eighth grade student receives an “F” in English or math, he/she must attend summer school or be tutored by a certified teacher over the summer to be promoted. In addition, a student fails for the year if he/she has a yearly average of “F” in two or more of the following areas: English, math, science, or social studies. Any individual exceptions are made at the discretion of the administration.

High School Grading Scale

Percentage	Letter Grade	Value of letters College Prep GPA	Value of letters Honors Prep GPA	AP and Dual Enrollment Classes
97-100	A+	4.33	4.763	5.33
93-96	A	4.0	4.4	5.00
90-92	A-	3.67	4.037	4.67
87-89	B+	3.33	3.663	4.33
83-86	B	3.0	3.3	4.0
80-82	B-	2.67	2.937	3.67
77-79	C+	2.33	2.563	3.33
73-76	C	2.0	2.2	3.0
70-72	C-	1.67	1.837	2.67
67-69	D+	1.33	1.463	2.33
64-66	D	1.0	1.1	2.0
60-63	D-	.67	.737	1.67
0-59	F	0	0	0

Grade point average (GPA) is a numerical value for the credits earned by a student. This is determined only after credit has been earned in a course. The cumulative GPA is the numerical value for all credits earned at Holy Spirit. Transfer students' GPA is calculated based on the grading scale above, regardless of the prior institution's grading scale.

Valedictorian and salutatorian are determined by the cumulative grade point average of high school classes taken in grades 9-12 at Holy Spirit or other accredited high schools, including ACCESS. Dual Enrollment classes from any higher education institution (UA Early College, Auburn First, Shelton State, etc.) receive the additional one-point credit for GPA; however, the courses are not included in calculating GPA values for valedictorian and salutatorian.

High School Student Promotion: A student who successfully completes the criteria established by the school for passing an academic course will receive the appropriate unit or fractional unit of credit. A passing grade is a 60 or better for the final course grade. Semester grades are calculated by weighting quarter and exam grades as follows: 40% (first nine week average), 40%

(second nine week average), and 20% (semester exam grade). The course grade is calculated by averaging the semester grades.

High School Failure: Any student who fails any subject must take a recovery course to graduate on time. Courses recovered by attending summer school classes must be approved in advance by Holy Spirit administrators. In some cases, other options may be available. The administration advises on alternative coursework.

Online Coursework: Students must complete required courses offered by Holy Spirit during the school year to earn credit. Credits from other institutions (traditional or online) will only be accepted at the administration's discretion. Any attempt to earn a course credit to advance in the curriculum must be approved by the administration during course selection in the spring semester. The administration advises families and reviews requests.

Diploma Requirements: To receive a diploma, students must earn the following credits:

College Prep Diploma

Required Subjects	Credits
Theology	4.0
English	4.0
Mathematics (including Geometry, Algebra I, and Algebra II)	4.0
Social Studies	4.0
Science	4.0
Foreign Language (two consecutive years of the same language)	2.0
Physical Education	1.0
Career Preparedness	1.0
Computer Science	0.5
Health	0.5
Electives	4.0
Total Credits	29

Honors College Prep Diploma

Required Subjects	Credits
Theology	4.0
English (at least 3 honors/AP, including senior year)	4.0
Mathematics (including Precalculus or Calculus senior year)	4.0
Social Studies (at least one AP, effective class of 2026)	4.0
Science (including two honors or AP sciences)	4.0
Foreign Language (three consecutive years of the same language)	3.0
Physical Education	1.0
Career Preparedness	1.0
Computer Science	0.5
Health	0.5
Electives	3.0
Total Credits	29

Students complete course requests in FACTS near the end of the second semester. Classes may only be changed with the approval of both teachers (current and new request) and the parent. No class changes will be permitted after the first four weeks unless the student is failing the course. No changes will be permitted for yearlong courses after the first semester. Any exceptions are at the discretion of the administration. If a student is granted a waiver to take a course not recommended by his/her teacher in that subject area, no course changes will be permitted after the first two weeks of school.

AP Courses: Advanced Placement courses are nationally standardized courses with an approved curriculum designed to be college level coursework. The Holy Spirit AP program complements the college preparatory curriculum by creating opportunities for eager students to challenge themselves within disciplines of interest, experience the rigor of college level coursework, and engage with content and peers in an advanced academic setting. Earning college credit with qualifying scores on the AP exam and receiving AP GPA credit are secondary advantages and should not be primary motivations for enrolling in AP courses. The AP program provides college level academic coursework within the high school support system—full-year courses, instructor support, and a Gospel-centered environment. Expectations for student effort and excellence are high and the course work demanding. AP classes, like college classes, feature fewer assessments that individually have a greater impact on the final grade. Students should only enroll after consultation with current teachers, AP teachers, and parents. A teacher recommendation is required for enrollment. AP course descriptions can be found by visiting [AP Central](#). Students who take the AP exam in the spring are automatically exempted from the spring exam. It is the student's and parents' responsibility to ensure that the student is registered to take the AP exam

in the spring by following the schedule for registration provided by CollegeBoard. Students who take the exam must pay the exam fee to the school by the designated due date each year.

Dual Enrollment: Eligible students may enroll in postsecondary institutions in order to earn credits for a high school diploma and/or postsecondary degree. Students may earn both high school and college credits for the same course. Students will receive one credit for the successful completion of a term college course. Dual enrollment courses are taught and graded by the instructor at the postsecondary institution. Holy Spirit partners with Shelton State, UA Early College, Auburn First, and UWA. Dual enrollment requires high motivation, organization, time management, and independent learning skills. At the end of the term, the postsecondary institution sends a transcript to Holy Spirit. The grade for the course and corresponding credit is entered on the student's high school transcript regardless of the final grade. The final grade affects both the high school and college GPA. Junior and senior students taking a dual enrollment course may choose to be placed in a study hall for an elective course once dual enrollment is confirmed. Students may not substitute a dual enrollment class for Holy Spirit core requirements. For instance, a student may take an English course in a dual enrollment program and receive credit for the course; however, the student will still take English at Holy Spirit. Dual enrollment courses do not count in the calculation when determining valedictorian and salutatorian.

Graduation Requirements: Participation in the graduation ceremony is a privilege. In addition to fulfilling the criteria for receiving a diploma, a student must fulfill several other obligations, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Having the required credits for graduation as detailed above
2. Passing the subjects required by Holy Spirit
3. Completing 100 hours of community service (see Community Service above)
4. Paying all debts: tuition, fines, and fees
5. Fulfilling all disciplinary obligations
6. Participating in the senior retreat, graduation practice, and all other required senior activities
7. Returning sports uniforms and paying all fees owed to the athletic department.

Graduation Ceremony Requirements: In order to participate in the graduation Mass and ceremony, a student must have completed all of the required credits for graduation and passed all the required courses. A student who does not meet these criteria may not participate in senior end of the year activities (including the retreat, Senior Mass, and the graduation Mass and ceremony).

Transcripts: The school maintains a transcript for each high school student enrolled. Information on the transcript includes the student's name, directory information, courses taken, semester grades, credits earned, and GPA. The student transcript is a permanent, confidential record of the school and is kept in the school office. Faculty members have access to their students' transcripts. A student's transcript may be released to the student's parents or guardians, a third party at the written request of the parents, or to the student at age 18. All financial obligations

must have been met before the transcript release is authorized. Holy Spirit will honor two transcript requests at no charge. . Requests must be made at least two working days before the transcript is needed.

Financial Obligations: Before a student will be allowed to take midterm or final exams, the parents must have paid tuition in full along with any fees and fines. Report cards will not be released if there is a financial obligation outstanding.

Academic Honesty

Students at Holy Spirit pursue their education with honesty and integrity. A student's work and achievement must be the result of his or her own efforts. When a student cheats, he or she compromises the Christian values for which Holy Spirit stands. In effect, the student steals someone else's work. If it has been determined that a student has cheated on a test, the student will earn reduced or no credit on the test/assignment at the discretion of the teacher and will be referred for additional disciplinary action (refer to the Discipline section). Honesty and integrity are expected of Holy Spirit students. Violations of the cheating/plagiarism policies are cumulative for the four years the student attends Holy Spirit.

Cheating/plagiarism includes:

- Possessing or using "cheat sheets" in any form at any time.
- Talking during a test or quiz.
- Accessing any electronic device without permission during an assessment.
- Providing answers or questions of a test to students of another class period who have not yet taken the test or quiz.
- Copying material from another student, either word-for-word, or by altering a few words. This is true of homework as well as any other graded material.
- Adding the name of another student to a group project if that student did not work on the project.
- Using work previously handed in by another student.
- Helping another student to cheat in any way.
- Plagiarism, including the submission of text by generative artificial intelligence as the student's own work (see section on plagiarism in the appendix of this handbook).
- Using generative artificial intelligence to complete assignments.

Attendance and Absence Policies

Attendance at school is a state law. Every child between the ages of six and seventeen years required to attend school. Moreover, attendance records are legal documents and must be accurate.

Each student enrolled at Holy Spirit is expected to be present and punctual for all assigned classes every day that school is in session. Regular attendance is essential to the mastery of any subject. It is difficult to teach students who are frequently absent.

Every absence requires an explanation. Parent excuses are accepted for five absences per semester. Once a student accumulates five parent-excused absences, only doctor or court excuses will excuse an absence. Only the administration approves exceptions. All excuses must include the student's name, the date of absence, reason for absence, parent/doctor signature, and parent/doctor telephone number.

If eight or more absences occur during any single semester course, the administration will arrange a conference with the parties involved to make a determination regarding course credit. The school reserves the right to refuse credit to any student who misses more than 10 classes in any course during a semester. Any student absent more than 20 days will not receive credit for courses and must repeat courses or the grade level or may be referred for expulsion unless extenuating circumstances exist and are approved by the administration. Truancy will be reported according with state law.

Students may be unable to attend school for valid reasons. Holy Spirit considers the following to be excused absences from school: sickness, death in the family, court appearances, driver's license tests, and health treatment. The following are considered examples of unexcused absences from school: traffic, extended weekends, oversleeping, job interviews, work, shopping, attendance to games or other celebrations, travel absences not approved in advance, staying home to complete schoolwork, etc. Patterns of absences, such as missing mass or avoiding tests or certain class periods will be addressed with the parents. Excused absences are at the discretion of the administration.

Vacations and trips taken during school days are strongly discouraged. The school calendar is issued in advance, and families are expected to plan accordingly. If circumstances require that a student be absent from school due to travel, the parent must send the request seven days in advance. Travel absences will count toward exam exemption minimums.

We recognize that some non-school experiences may be of benefit to students. The administration may grant excuses for educational trips or meetings. An Educational Leave form must be completed and submitted to the office at least three days prior to the trip. Educational Leave forms are available in the office. Teachers are not required to give assignments or tests in advance of planned, excused absences.

Participation in extracurricular activities is also an excused absence. To be eligible to participate in an activity, a student must be in school for at least half the school day (three and a half periods) on which the activity is scheduled. Check-in or out must be excused to participate in athletics that day. Students who have exceeded ten absences may not participate in athletics. Students

with ten tardies will not be allowed to participate in athletics for the remainder of the semester. Students who leave for extra-curricular activities should take tests or quizzes missed during the absence on the next school day. All homework and projects due during the time missed for the activity must be submitted prior to departure.

When a student will be absent, parents must communicate the absence through the Absence/Check-in/Check-out portal. Entry in the portal is not an excuse; it is strictly communication of the event. When a student returns to school after an absence, he/she must submit all required documentation to the office, such as a doctor's excuse or parent excuse. A paper parent excuse must indicate the dates of and reason for the absence from school and should be turned in to the office before the start of school. All excuses for absences must be turned in the day the student returns. Zeroes are recorded for assignments missed during an absence (excused or unexcused) until the assignment is submitted. If a note is not received within three days, the absence will be recorded as unexcused. Any requests for absences to be excused beyond the three-day policy period must be presented to the administration. Students will receive a zero for missed work or tests on the day(s) of an unexcused absence.

Arrival and Departure Times and Procedures

The building will open and supervision will begin at 7:15 a.m. Students must report directly to the gym. Students will not be permitted in the school wings without having made prior arrangements with a specific teacher. The school day begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. Students not in their designated assembly areas at 8:00 a.m. will be considered tardy. Upon arriving, students may not loiter in the parking lot or leave campus. Once the student arrives on campus, he/she may not leave campus without checking out in the office until the school day has ended. Dismissal for all students is at 3:05 p.m. (2:15 p.m. on Thursdays). After school care is provided at the elementary school for a fee. Leaving without permission will result in disciplinary action (refer to the discipline section).

Illness and Medical Appointments

Students who become ill during the day are to alert their teacher and report to the office. The school will contact parents if it is necessary for the student to leave school. Students may never leave school because of illness unless the parents have been notified by the administration. Students should not go to the restroom and stay there. Under no circumstances are students to self-medicate during school. All authorized medications are to be dispensed by the school administration or designee.

Parents are to schedule doctor appointments outside school hours whenever possible. Personal business and appointments should not be scheduled during the school day. If a student is to be absent from classes during a portion of any day, a parent must submit the information on the Portal before the beginning of the school day. The entry must state the reason for the absence,

the departure time, and the time of return. The student must report to the office and sign out before leaving campus. Upon returning to campus, the student must sign in, present the paper excuse—such as a doctor’s excuse—and get a pass before returning to class. Any assignment due the day of a check-in/check-out must be turned in that day. Check-in and check-out absences are counted as tardies on report cards. If a student leaves for a doctor’s appointment unaccompanied by a parent, a note from the doctor’s office must be submitted to the office before the absence can be excused.

Tardiness/Check-in

Punctuality is an essential characteristic of a responsible person. Students and families must make every effort to be on time to school and classes. When a student is not in class on time he/she is missing valuable instructional time.

“Tardy” refers to a student being late to class. “Check-in” refers to a student being late to school. Students who are in the school building by the 8:00 a.m. bell but not in their assigned place receive a tardy. Students who enter the school building after the 8:00 a.m. bell receive a check-in. Tardies and check-ins may be either excused or unexcused. Habitual tardiness will result in a parent conference with school administration to discuss disciplinary consequences.

When a student is reporting late to school, a parent must complete the Absence/Check-in/Check-out Portal noting the reason for the check-in; the student will receive a pass to be admitted to class. All Portal entries for check-ins must be verified with a written excuse within three days after the tardy for the check-in to be excused. Any requests for check-ins to be excused beyond the three-day policy period must be presented to the administration. Students will receive a zero for missed work or tests on the day(s) of an unexcused tardy. Excessive, unexcused tardiness to school will result in disciplinary action (see discipline section).

Check-out before 11:30 a.m. is counted as a full day’s absence. Check-out after 11:30 a.m. is counted as a half day’s absence.

The Check-in/Check-out/Absence Portal

The Portal is to be used by parents to indicate that a student is checking in, checking out, or absent. The Portal is located on the school website under About then Parents and Students. Absences due to doctor’s visits, etc. may be reported in the Portal but still require the submission of a note upon return. **The Portal is only to be used by parents and does not guarantee an excused absence.** All absences are noted as excused or unexcused according to the policy above.

The Portal may also be used by parents to indicate that a student is checking in late or checking out early. As with absences, proper documentation must still be submitted for the check-in or check-out to be excused.

Students are not allowed to submit information in the portal. Any student falsifying information in the portal will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the discipline section.

Make-up Work

Prior to a student returning to class after an absence, it is the student's responsibility to get all assignments given during the absence and arrange a deadline for completion with each teacher. Assignments may be accessed via the school's LMS system, and teachers can be reached at their Holy Spirit email addresses. Students are normally allowed 3 school days upon returning from an absence to complete any major assignments such as tests, projects, papers, or quizzes that are assigned during the student's absence. If a student cannot complete other assignments posted to the LMS due to absence, they are required to email their teachers prior to returning to class to set up alternate arrangements. If a student is present on the day when a pre-announced quiz or test is given, the student must be prepared to complete that quiz or test on the day he/she returns to school.

Homework

Homework, including study, written work, and out-of-class independent work, is integral to the student's academic progress. The purposes of homework are:

- to preview material for the next class
- to provide general review for reading
- to reinforce the acquisition of concepts of the course being studied
- to provide the needed drill and application of the skills to be mastered in the subject
- to promote independent study skills and confidence in becoming a self-learner
- to stimulate creative intellectual activity through problem-solving and self-expression.

Homework takes many forms. Teachers are asked to provide purposeful variety in assignments, considering the academic ability of the class and the learning styles of the individual students. Homework is not only written assignments. Reading and reviewing notes nightly are important homework activities.

Because Holy Spirit offers a rigorous college preparatory program, high school students should expect nightly (including weekends) homework and study in each course. Honors and advanced placement students can expect to spend more time on assignments.

Middle school students should expect nightly homework, especially in English and math. Middle School students are just beginning to balance the demands of nightly assignments versus long-term assignments; they are also beginning to develop organizational and study skills.

There is a great variability in how long individual students need to spend on assignments. If at any time parents feel that too much homework has been assigned, they should contact the child's teacher to discuss the situation.

Satisfactory completion of homework is essential for students to keep up with the sequential development of the course and ultimate mastery of the material. Failure to complete homework limits the acquisition of knowledge as well as poor performance or participation in class.

Middle and High School Exams

Examinations are given at the end of the second and fourth quarters and are designed to test a student's comprehensive and cumulative knowledge in a particular course. The midterm and final exam dates are posted well in advance on the school calendar so that all students and families may plan appropriately. Exams may not be rescheduled because of family vacation plans.

- If an exam is withheld due to outstanding financial obligations, the student will be informed approximately one week before exams.
- Absences due to illness or emergency must be verified and exams made up according to a schedule set by the administration. Failure to take or make up an exam results in a grade of zero on that exam.
- Any exception to the above policies must be approved by the administration.

High school students take exams in all credit-bearing courses.

7th and 8th grade students take exams in English, math, religion, science, and social studies.

6th grade students do not have cumulative exams; however, they have end-of-term tests or projects that are not cumulative and that are similar in nature to their normal tests. End-of-term tests may be longer than a regular test, especially during the second semester as they prepare to begin taking exams in the 7th grade.

High School Exam exemption

Exempting exams is a privilege afforded to students who demonstrate academic, attendance, and disciplinary excellence. Students who are not in good academic, attendance, or disciplinary standing may be ineligible to exempt exams.

In order to qualify for an exemption, high school students must:

1. Have no more than 2 detentions, no suspensions, or no cell phone infractions for the semester.
2. Have no more than 3 total unexcused absences, check-ins, or check-outs for the semester.

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3. Have no more than 5 total absences per semester (excused or unexcused), not including documented severe/extended illness.
 4. Have no more than 3 unexcused tardies for the semester in the class to be exempted.
 5. Have a 60 overall semester average based on the average of the 2 nine-week periods.
 6. Have a passing average for the year in the class for which the first exam is exempted. Have at least a 90 in the class for any additional exemptions allowed by grade level.

- Freshmen may exempt one exam per semester.
- Sophomores with a 70 semester average in both Computer Science Principles and College/Career are automatically exempted from a semester exam in those courses. Sophomores may exempt one additional exam each semester.
- Juniors may exempt two exams per semester.
- Seniors may exempt two exams in the fall semester and three exams in the spring semester.

Students may not exempt an exam both semesters in the same class. (Excluding AP exams; see below.)

Students taking AP classes who take the AP exam are exempt from the second semester exam regardless of whether they exempt the first semester exam. AP students may opt to take a second semester exam to improve their final grade.

Disciplinary Guidelines

We believe a disciplined and structured atmosphere is necessary for students to achieve their potential academically, physically, socially, and spiritually. The purpose of discipline is to maintain a safe, honest, and caring environment for students to thrive. Each student is expected to develop and maintain a high standard of personal integrity and honor. Families are expected to be committed and supportive of the school's behavior philosophy.

As a condition of initial and continued enrollment as a student in a Diocese of Birmingham Catholic school, a student's conduct (both in and outside of school and in-person or online) must be consistent with Catholic faith and morals. Conduct which is inconsistent with Catholic faith and morals, which is a threat to the health, safety, reputation and welfare of other students or personnel and/or which causes scandal, impairs or threatens to impair the reputation of the Church or its schools, is grounds for disciplinary sanctions up to and including immediate dismissal/expulsion.

It is vitally important that the good name and reputation of each student, faculty, and staff member as well as the good name of each school in the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama as an institution of the Catholic Church be protected.

In order to protect students, school employees, the school and the diocesan education institution as a whole, all students enrolled in a Diocese of Birmingham Catholic School are expected to treat the good name and reputation of each of the above with dignity and respect. The same is expected of each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in our schools. Public defamation of any student, employee, or Catholic school by a student or parent/guardian is a serious matter and will not be tolerated. This includes whether defamation is done orally, in writing, via email, or social media and covers whether it occurs on or off campus, on personal time or on personal devices. Any student or parent found to be participating in any defamatory activity will be subject to disciplinary/responsive action by the school. This could include dismissal of the student whether the action is by the student or his/her parent/guardian.

It is the expectation of the Diocese of Birmingham Catholic Schools that students will behave in a dignified, Christian manner in accordance with the policies, rules, and regulations of the schools in which they are enrolled. When the rules are violated, the school will impose reasonable disciplinary measures within the established authority of the school and according to procedures outlined in the school handbook so that students are treated with fairness and firmness. Any display of violent behavior, which may include but not be limited to the verbal and/or physical threat, including online or on social media, to do harm to oneself or to another person shall be promptly and appropriately addressed by administration in accord with the guidelines and procedures set forth in this handbook.

Each Holy Spirit student and parent/guardian will be held to the following expectations:

- Treat adults and peers with courtesy and respect.
- Show respect for all people regardless of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background.
- Show respect for the property of others.
- Show respect for the environment by maintaining the cleanliness of the building and surrounding campus.
- Help maintain a positive atmosphere with appropriate behavior in the classroom, school assemblies, meetings, and other small and large gatherings, both on and off campus.
- Be responsible for honest/ethical behavior in all pursuits.
- Promote the safety and well-being of all students.

A cooperative relationship between Holy Spirit personnel and parents/guardians is essential for the overall education of a student. It is critical that a cooperative relationship be maintained through constructive dialogue with the parent/guardian. All behavior and disciplinary notices will be posted in the FACTS Family Portal under Behavior. Parents will receive at minimum an email notification regarding minor offenses. Phone calls and conferences will be used to communicate major offenses.

When it is deemed necessary to take extraordinary disciplinary action, the behavior of the student and the recommended action will be reviewed by the school administrator(s) responsible for student discipline according to school and diocesan policy and implications. After a thorough investigation, administration will notify the parents/guardians verbally and in writing of the findings and action.

School administration may conduct a search of student property or person when there is reasonable suspicion of possession of harmful, dangerous, illegal, or prohibited items.

Bullying/Cyberbullying/Harassment

As Christians, we believe that all persons are created in the image of God and have dignity and worth. Accordingly, Holy Spirit does not tolerate any form of bullying, harassment, disruption of the educational process, or interference with another's educational or work environment. This prohibition applies to all students, employees, and volunteers in the school building, on school property, or at any time while representing the school.

Harassment occurs when an individual is intimidated, teased, bullied, threatened, or discriminated against because of race, religion, age, gender, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation. Harassment creates an offensive, hostile, and intimidating environment. Examples of harassing behavior include but are not limited to the following:

- Verbal Harassment: Derogatory, prejudiced, or racist comments, jokes, or intimidating words spoken to or about another person or group.
- Physical Harassment: Unwanted physical contact, touch, blocking movements, assault, hazing, or any intimidating interference with normal activity or movement.
- Visual or Cyber Harassment: Derogatory, demeaning, prejudiced, racist, or inflammatory drawings, written words, cartoons, posters, gestures, or photography produced, published, or posted online in any form, on social media, and in text messages, including sexting.
- Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome comments and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Students' home and personal use of technology can have an impact on the school and on other students. If a student's personal expression involving technology creates a likelihood of disruption of the educational process, the student may face school discipline, at the discretion of the administration, as well as criminal penalties.

Classroom Conduct

Students are expected to participate in classroom exercises, lessons, and discussions. Furthermore, they are expected to contribute positively to the classroom learning environment and to facilitate classroom management and discipline. This positive interaction and

participation satisfies our call to family, community, and participation. Teachers will handle minor discipline infractions with the full support of the administration. Any major offense or an excessive number of minor offenses will be referred to the administration.

Detention

After school detention is held from 3:10–4:00 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. These detentions address minor infractions of school rules. Parents are notified via email if a student receives detention. Any student committing an infraction that requires detention will serve the detention on the very next school day if the infraction is committed before noon on Monday or Tuesday. Detention for infractions committed after noon on Tuesday will be served on the following Monday (or Tuesday should too many students be assigned detention on Monday). Students who report late for detention will be assigned an additional detention.

Detention involves manual and/or academic labor. Committing infractions involves a loss of personal dignity and damages the dignity of fellow students and the school in general. Detention gives students an opportunity to improve the dignity of the Holy Spirit School family. Detention takes precedence over appointments, practices, tutoring, games, and any other after school activities. A doctor's excuse is required to reschedule any detention.

Any teacher or staff member may recommend detention. The administration assigns detention based on guidelines in the handbook.

Any student accumulating three or more detentions for the same offense will be recommended for In-school Suspension upon further infractions regarding the same offense.

Teachers may assign informal detention, such as lunch or break detention, at their discretion. The teacher will supervise any informal detention he/she assigns.

Suspension

When it becomes necessary to suspend a student, either in school or out of school, because of a disciplinary problem, violation of school regulations, or pattern of behavior the appropriate school authority will notify the student and the student's parent or legal guardian immediately by telephone and in writing. The reason for the suspension, the duration of the suspension, and any requirements for reinstatement will be included in the communication. Circumstances for how school assignments will be handled are made by the principal, in accordance with the policy below.

Parents will be notified before a student is suspended. There are two kinds of suspensions used at Holy Spirit:

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1. **In-school suspension (ISS)**—A student is isolated from his/her peers during the school day. Students are given their assignments to complete, but they do not go to class, break, or lunch with their classmates. Students may receive credit for work completed during ISS. They may not participate in extra-curricular activities, including athletics, during the term of the ISS.
 2. **Out-of-school suspension (OSS)**—A student is not allowed on campus during the suspension period. The student is not allowed to participate in any school functions, curricular or extra-curricular, for the duration of the suspension. OSS disqualifies a student for any honor or office for the current school year. One already holding office may be required to relinquish the office if suspended. In some instances, students may not be readmitted until professional help is sought. Absences from class during OSS are unexcused. Students are responsible for turning in all schoolwork and submitting assignments either electronically or in person on the first day of their return. **Students do not receive credit for any academic work during OSS.**

Demerit System and Disciplinary Probation

Students accrue demerits for infractions as follows:

- 1 demerit for each detention
- 4 demerits for each day of ISS
- 6 demerits for each day of OSS

If a student commits infractions resulting in 10 or more demerits, he/she will automatically be placed on disciplinary probation for the remainder of the current semester and for the following semester. If the student fails to show positive progress in this time, as measured by an average of 5 demerits or less per semester (prorated for the part of the current semester remaining) he/she may be expelled. If the decision is made not to expel at that time, the disciplinary probation period will be extended.

Students placed on Disciplinary Probation are automatically suspended for a minimum period of three weeks from the privilege of representing the school at any official functions or competition. The administration will meet with the coach and/or sponsor and the Athletic Director (if a sport is involved) to determine if a suspension of longer than three weeks is warranted. They will also determine the extent of participation permitted in practice or planning sessions during the suspension period. Suspension periods may also be extended by the administration should the student fail to make satisfactory progress.

Any student incurring more than six demerits per year will NOT be considered for any honor society membership for the current or following school year.

Expulsion

When it becomes necessary to consider the expulsion of a student because of a disciplinary problem, violation of school regulations, or pattern of behavior, the principal will meet with the student and the student's parent or legal guardian. The principal must consult with the pastor/president and the superintendent prior to meeting with the parent(s) and/or guardian(s). If the principal decides that an expulsion is warranted, a written notice of expulsion will be sent to the parent or legal guardian no later than three (3) days after meeting with the student and the student's parent or legal guardian.

In certain circumstances, the following may be grounds for expulsion as determined by the school administration:

- willful destruction of school property
- being under the influence or in the possession of drugs or alcoholic beverages (or look-alikes) at school or school-related activities, including those held off campus
- drug trafficking
- possession of any tobacco products or vaping products at school or school-related activities
- possession of inflammables/explosives
- possession of weapons, on campus or at a school function held on or off campus
- possession of look-alike weapons that may be capable of inflicting serious harm
- arrest and final conviction by civil authorities for criminal action
- behavior that affects the status of the school and/or causes unfavorable publicity or criticism of the school
- any other behavior deemed not in keeping with the mission statement and philosophy of Holy Spirit
- accumulation of excessive demerits as defined by the above policy

Before a student is expelled, a meeting will be held with school administration, parents, and the student. Students who are asked to withdraw or who are expelled may not attend any school event after the withdrawal or expulsion date and are not to be present on the campus at any time.

Suspension and Expulsion Appeal Procedure

Expulsions may be appealed to the principal in writing by the student's parent or legal guardian no later than 5 school days after the date the parent/legal guardian was notified of the expulsion. The written appeal should be submitted to the principal that clearly states the grounds for the appeal and all the pertinent information and documentation.

Sufficient grounds for an appeal are limited to the following criteria: (1) an issue of procedure, i.e., school officials inappropriately followed procedures explained in the applicable Student Handbook, (2) an issue of policy, i.e., school officials did not follow policy as explained in the

applicable Student Handbook, or (3) substantial new information has come forward after the censure was administered.

The principal will immediately forward the appeal letter to the superintendent of schools, who establishes a Disciplinary Review Committee from a list of previously selected principals and assistant principals. The Committee will consider the application of school policy as indicated in the Student Handbook and will determine if due process was followed.

The Disciplinary Review Committee will communicate its decision to the principal and will send written notification to the parent or legal guardian within 10 business days of receipt of the written appeal by the superintendent. The decision of the Disciplinary Review Committee is final.

The review will be conducted anonymously, and the committee will be made up of principals, schools pastors, and/or assistant principals from diocesan school locations other than the one named in the appeal. Records of all proceedings will be retained in the superintendent's office.

School advisory councils or boards are not involved in discipline decisions or appeals at any time.

Disciplinary Consequences

Deviations from this code will be made only with permission of the school administration. Consequences not covered are at the discretion of the administration.

Depending on the circumstances of an infraction, first or second steps may be bypassed.

OFFENSE	ACTION
Absence without leave (truancy or skipping any class period). There are no "cut" or "skip" days for any class at Holy Spirit.	1 st offense: Detention and parental conference 2 nd offense: ISS and parental conference 3 rd offense: OSS and/or referral for expulsion
Alcohol or drugs on campus	Referral for expulsion; see detailed policy in appendix

OFFENSE	ACTION
Misuse of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and/or violation of the AI procedures and expectations outlined below. If the misuse is determined to be cheating, the cheating disciplinary consequences for cheating, as outlined below, will be followed.	1 st offense: Conference with student and recompletion the assignment for reduced grade. 2 nd offense: Detention and parental conference 3 rd offense: ISS and parental conference 4 th offense: OSS and/or referral for expulsion
Assault of a school employee, student, or visitor	1 st offense: OSS or referral for expulsion 2 nd offense: Referral for expulsion
Cheating/plagiarism <u>Offenses are cumulative for the four years of high school.</u> All offenses will result in parental notification and a grade of zero on the test/assignment or reduced credit or a requirement to recomplete the assignment for partial credit (all at teacher discretion).	1 st offense: Detention 2 nd offense: Two detentions 3 rd offense: ISS 4 th offense: ISS and loss of all exam exemptions for the duration of the student's time at Holy Spirit 5 th offense: OSS and loss of all student privileges (including participation in extracurricular activities) for one calendar year 6 th offense: recommendation for expulsion
Chewing Gum	1 st offense: Documented written warning 2 nd offense: Detention 3 rd and subsequent offenses: ISS
Classroom disruptions and/or interference with school activities	1 st offense: Documented warning or detention at the discretion of the administration. 2 nd offense: Detention 3 rd offense: ISS 4 th offense and subsequent offenses: OSS or referral for expulsion

OFFENSE	ACTION
Damage, destruction, or theft of private property (including textbooks)	Restitution is required for all damage, destruction, or theft. Consequences range from student conference through expulsion, depending on the circumstances, at the discretion of administration.
Defiance of Authority	1 st offense: Detention 2 nd offense: ISS 3 rd offense and subsequent offenses: OSS or referral for expulsion
Disrespectful or rude behavior toward another student or toward a teacher, staff member, or another adult	Consequences range from student conference with parental notification through expulsion, depending on the circumstances, at the discretion of administration
Failure to attend detention	1 st offense: Additional detention 2 nd offense: Additional detention 3 rd offense: ISS
Failure to follow directions	1 st offense: Documented warning or detention at the discretion of the administration 2 nd offense: Detention 3 rd offense: ISS
Falsifying a signature or making a false statement	1 st offense: Parental notification and detention 2 nd offense: Parental notification and detention 3 rd offense: Parental notification and ISS
Fighting with other students on campus or at a school activity	Consequences range from student conference with parental notification through expulsion, depending on the circumstances, at the discretion of administration
Gambling on school property or at school functions	1 st offense: Detention and parental notification 2 nd offense: ISS 3 rd offense: OSS

OFFENSE	ACTION
Inappropriate language	1 st offense: Detention 2 nd offense: Detention 3 rd offense: ISS
Misconduct on school campus or at school activity (including encouraging others to misbehave)	Consequences range from student conference through expulsion, depending on the circumstances, at the discretion of administration
Violation of no-contact policy/horseplay	1 st offense: Documented warning or detention at the discretion of the administration 2 nd offense: Detention 3 rd and subsequent offenses: ISS
Obscene materials—use or possession of any type	Consequences range from student conference with parental notification through expulsion, depending on the circumstances, at the discretion of administration
Being in unassigned area alone with a member of the opposite sex	Consequences range from student conference with parental notification through expulsion, depending on the circumstances, at the discretion of administration
Presence in an unassigned area	1 st offense: Documented warning or detention at the discretion of the administration 2 nd offense: ISS 3 rd and subsequent offenses: OSS
Leaving campus without permission	Consequences range from student conference with parental notification through expulsion, depending on the circumstances, at the discretion of administration
Parking/traffic violation on campus, including using cell phone while driving	Consequences range from student conference with parental notification through expulsion, depending on the circumstances, at the discretion of administration

OFFENSE	ACTION
Cell phone seen, used, heard, or chronically not turned in OR smart watch or unauthorized use or wearing of earbuds/headphones seen, used, or heard, from 7:50 a.m. until dismissal	1st offense: Detention, loss of exam exemptions, device confiscated and held for parent pickup 2nd offense: Student suspended for the remainder of the day with required parent pickup. Reinstatement meeting held the following morning. Subsequent offenses: Minimum of 2-day suspension through expulsion at the discretion of administration, device confiscated and held indefinitely
Unauthorized, non-Holy Spirit technology device (computer, mobile tablet, etc.) seen, used, or heard from 7:50 a.m. until dismissal	1st offense: Warning 2nd offense: Detention 3rd offense: Student suspended for the remainder of the day with required parent pickup. Reinstatement meeting held the following morning. Subsequent offenses: Minimum of 2-day suspension through expulsion at the discretion of administration, device confiscated and held indefinitely
Public display of affection	1st offense: Documented warning 2nd offense: Detention 3rd offense: ISS
Sexual misconduct or harassment, including but not limited to inappropriate touching	Consequences range from student conference with parental notification through expulsion, depending on the circumstances, at the discretion of administration

OFFENSE	ACTION
Tardies	At 3 rd unexcused tardy: Parent contact At 4 th unexcused tardy: Detention At 6 th unexcused tardy: ISS Each subsequent unexcused tardy: ISS At 15 th unexcused tardy: Referral for expulsion
Threats, harassment, bullying, cyberbullying; prejudiced or racist language or action; intimidation of another student	Consequences range from student conference with parental notification through expulsion, depending on the circumstances, at the discretion of administration
Tobacco and/or nicotine products or any type of vaping devices—use or possession	Consequences range from student conference with parental notification through expulsion, depending on the circumstances, at the discretion of administration
Using profane, vulgar, obscene words, gestures, or other actions or blasphemy	Consequences range from student conference with parental notification through expulsion, depending on the circumstances, at the discretion of administration
Use of or possession of dangerous instruments at school or at a school activity	Referral for expulsion
Weapons: use of or possession at school or school activity	Referral for expulsion

Uniform Policy

Schoolbelles is our exclusive uniform provider. The Schoolbelles online store for Holy Spirit includes all approved uniform items. Only uniform items purchased from Schoolbelles and spirit store items purchased through Wagners may be worn. Non-Schoolbelles shorts and slacks are not allowed.

Shirts:

- Holy Spirit polo shirts in red, black, and white ordered from Schoolbelles with the Holy Spirit logo are required daily wear Monday through Thursday. Holy Spirit sponsored t-shirts may be worn in lieu of the polo shirts on Fridays only. Shirts must always be tucked in.
- Shirts worn under the Holy Spirit polo shirt must be white, black, or gray with no visible writing. Short sleeve undershirts are not to exceed the polo shirt sleeve.

Slacks/shorts:

- Students may wear the gray uniform shorts and slacks purchased through Schoolbelles. Shorts must be no higher than the fingertips when arms are extended down to the side. Non-Schoolbelles shorts and slacks are not allowed.
- Students must wear a traditional solid black or brown belt with an appropriate belt buckle. Belts must always be visible.

Skirts/skorts:

- Female students may wear the Holy Spirit plaid skirt available through Schoolbelles. Skirts must be no more than three inches above the top of the knee. Skirts must be worn with the monogrammed polo shirt. No mid-calf or longer length skirts are permitted. Skorts are not allowed in grades 6-12.

Outerwear:

- Sweaters and fleece jackets are available through Schoolbelles. Holy Spirit athletic outerwear is available in spirit packs and the school spirit shop through Wagner's Team Sports. Outerwear through Schoolbelles and Wagners is the only outerwear that may be worn in the school building during the school day. Hooded sweatshirts and jackets may not be worn in the building during the school day.

Footwear:

- Shoes are required and must be safe for indoor and outdoor wear. Shoes must be clean and have a closed heel and toe and must be hard-soled. Boots of any type (rain, work, cowboy, etc.), including Uggs of any variety; house shoes/slippers; flats; Birkenstocks or sandals of any type; Crocs or Croc-like slip-ons; or heels are not allowed. Students must wear socks; socks may be any color.

For all school field trips (unless instructed otherwise), students are to wear a red uniform shirt.

On out-of-uniform days, garments exposing cleavage or the midriff (when raising the hand or bending over), see-through or mesh clothing, sleeveless shirts, clothing with holes/tears, pajamas, or sleep or loungewear are not permitted. All items must be modest and school appropriate.

Approved items may be purchased from the following vendor:

- Schoolbelles: www.schoolbelles.com
- School Code: S3236

Dress code violations (wrong shirt, skirt not meeting length guidelines, slacks/shorts not from Schoolbelles, no belt, no socks, wrong shoes):

1st offense: Documented warning and parent contact

2nd offense: Detention and parent contact

3rd offense: Suspension for the remainder of the day with parent pickup required and reinstatement meeting the following morning

4th offense and beyond: 2 day suspension with parent meeting upon return

- Boys grooming
 - Hair is to be a male-style haircut that is above the eyebrows and above the collar. Ponytails, tail knobs, mohawks, punk haircuts, dyed or bleached hair, and wigs are not allowed. If a student is notified that he is not in compliance with hair rules, he will have one week to comply. If he does not comply in that time, he will have detention, and parents will be contacted. The student will serve detention for each day not in compliance. If, after three days of detention, the student is not in compliance, he will have ISS.
 - Boys must be clean-shaven every day. Sideburns must not come below the ears. If a student is not in compliance, he will be given one documented warning with one day to shave. For all future non-compliance, his parents will be called, and he will be sent home from school and may not return until clean-shaven.
- Girls grooming
 - Hair is to be neatly groomed and out of the eyes. Mohawks, shaven heads, punk or spiked haircuts, readily noticeable dyed or bleached hair, or wigs are not allowed at Holy Spirit. If a student is told that she is not in compliance with the hair rules, the policies applicable to boys will be enforced.
 - Excessive makeup is not allowed; only natural, light makeup (including light mascara) is allowed. Nail polish is restricted to one color.
- Jewelry
 - Boys' earrings/studs may not be worn at school or when representing the school at school-sponsored events.
 - Girls' earrings must be studs or small earrings (no larger than a quarter or one inch in length). No dangling earrings are allowed.
 - No body piercings are allowed other than conservative earrings for females.
 - Visible tattoos are not allowed.
 - Only minimal conservative jewelry is allowed.

Any item of clothing or any accessory (hair bows, etc.) that is distracting is not allowed.

Consistent violation of dress code or grooming rules will be considered defiance of authority and will be disciplined accordingly.

General Information

Accident/injury: The safety and well-being of all students is a priority of the school. In the event of an accident or injury during the school day or at a school-sponsored activity, the following procedures will be followed:

- All accidents and injuries must be reported immediately to the school office and will be documented in an official incident report.

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- School staff will provide appropriate first aid as needed. All faculty and staff are trained in First Aid, CPR, and the use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).
 - Parents or guardians will be notified promptly of any accident or injury involving their child.
 - If school personnel determine that an injury or medical situation requires urgent care, emergency medical services (911) will be contacted without delay.
 - In serious or life-threatening situations, emergency services may be contacted prior to notifying parents or guardians.
 - The school maintains and regularly reviews an Emergency Action Plan, a Cardiac Arrest Response Plan, and emergency action plans for all school and athletic facilities to ensure a timely and coordinated response to emergencies.

The school will make every reasonable effort to ensure timely communication and appropriate care in all situations.

Advisory council: Each Catholic school in the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama must have a School Advisory Council that follows policies, procedures, and best practices as determined by the Catholic Schools Office for operating Catholic school advisory councils. The purpose of the School Advisory Council is to advise and support the pastor and the principal.

The School Advisory Council must have a written constitution and bylaws which shall be in accordance with diocesan policies and procedures. Operational procedures provided by the Catholic Schools Office shall be followed.

Membership should include representation from the supporting parish(es), parents, and non-parent supporters of the school. Members should be supportive of the school and demonstrate a willingness to ensure the mission and future of the school. Advisory Council members must support and promote the official teachings of the Catholic Church.

The president/chairperson of the School Advisory Council must be a practicing Catholic in good standing.

After care: All students are to be picked up at dismissal time. Any student who is not in a supervised activity and who has not been picked up twenty-five minutes after dismissal (3:30 p.m. Mon., Tue., Wed., and Fri; 2:40 p.m. on Thur.) will go to After Care at the elementary school. Parents must sign students out from After Care and will be charged a program fee. Accounts must be paid monthly to continue use of After Care. Students attending After Care must abide by the program's policies and may be held responsible for consequences of misbehavior according to the Family Handbook. All students must be picked up from After Care by 6:00 p.m.

Allergies: The safety and well-being of all students is a priority of the school. The school recognizes that some students may have allergies, including food allergies, that can pose serious health risks. The school is committed to fostering a supportive environment that promotes awareness, reasonable accommodations, and shared responsibility among families, students, and staff.

Parents or guardians are responsible for notifying the school, in writing, of any diagnosed allergies at the time of enrollment and whenever new allergies are identified. Medical documentation and an Allergy Action Plan must be provided for students with known allergies, including instructions for emergency care and any prescribed medications, such as epinephrine auto-injectors. Required medications must be properly labeled and supplied to the school office, in accordance with school procedures.

School staff are trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of allergic reactions and to respond appropriately in an emergency. Reasonable precautions will be taken to reduce exposure to known allergens; however, the school cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment. Families and students are expected to cooperate with allergy-related guidelines, including restrictions on food sharing and adherence to classroom or schoolwide food policies.

In the event of an allergic reaction, school personnel will follow the student's Allergy Action Plan, notify parents or guardians promptly, and contact emergency medical services when deemed necessary.

American flag: The flag of the United States of America is displayed in every classroom, and the pledge of allegiance is recited daily. Teachers promote and teach respect for the flag as well as the symbolism and values it represents.

Ancillary organizations: Holy Spirit has a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and Athletic Association (Booster Club) whose major function is to foster quality education, extracurriculars, and community-building through cooperation and communication between parents and staff. These organizations are under the direct supervision of the principal and have the approval of the pastor. Each organization has a written constitution or charter and by-laws and operate according to all policies and procedures set forth by the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama. No ancillary organization may be founded without the approval of the administration.

Artificial Intelligence: As a Christ-centered community, Holy Spirit believes that teaching and learning is a relational act grounded in love and presence. Artificial intelligence should be viewed as a complementary tool for teaching and learning that promotes digital literacy while at the same time preserving human dignity and connection as well as student engagement and critical thinking. It remains the student's responsibility to deeply engage with course content, discussion, and classroom activities.

Students must:

- Only use AI tools for school assignments or assessments when given permission by a teacher.
- Use AI in ways that support the purpose of the assignment and personal growth.
- Use AI tools responsibly, avoiding content or actions that could cause emotional or reputational harm to oneself or others. Outputs created with AI must respect the dignity of the human person.

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- Not share personal, sensitive, or confidential information with AI tools, including uploading images of oneself or others.
 - Use the designated AI tool(s) if the teacher or the school has recommended a specific AI tool.
 - May use AI outside of class to support understanding but never use it to complete or submit work. Unapproved use of AI to complete an assignment is cheating.
 - Be honest and disclose when and how AI is used in schoolwork and homework. If AI is used, it must be noted on the assignment.
 - Will follow the teacher's directions on how to cite/note AI and carefully check the content for accuracy and appropriateness if AI is used to assist with an assignment.
 - Will ask the teacher before using AI if unsure whether AI is allowed or appropriate for an assignment.
 - Understand that AI may provide inaccurate or biased results and will use it carefully and critically, taking full responsibility and ownership of all work submitted.
 - Will not use AI carelessly or without purpose and will use it thoughtfully, respecting both the task at hand and our responsibility to care for God's creation. (AI tools require significant energy and resources to operate).
 - Understand that this policy may be updated as technology and school practices change and follow any new guidelines shared by teachers or school leaders.

Misuse of AI in academic work is considered a violation of academic integrity and will be addressed by the school administration and faculty. School administration and faculty will follow the handbook for the consequences of AI misuse.

We ask that parents monitor AI use at home and assist with reinforcing school policy.

The Diocese of Birmingham Guidelines for AI in Catholic Schools is available on the website and is reflected in both the student and teacher procedures and rules for the use of AI.

Asbestos plan: Holy Spirit Catholic School has an Asbestos Plan that abides by federal regulations. Review of the plan is available upon request. The principal and the director of maintenance are trained in asbestos management. The elementary building has contained, undisturbed asbestos. The middle and high school building does not contain any asbestos.

Athletics: All athletic programs offered at Holy Spirit reflect the values of and are consistent with the mission and principles of the schools and the diocese. Athletic programs at the middle and high school levels are offered in compliance with the Alabama High School Athletic Association. All programs must abide by the academic, behavioral, and safety policies, guidelines, and procedures set forth by the AHSAA and Holy Spirit as found in the athletic handbook.

Backpacks: Middle school students may bring backpacks to school but may NOT bring any backpack or other container of any kind used to carry multiple books and other items into any classroom during school hours. High School students may take backpacks into the classroom as long as the bag is used to carry allowed schoolbooks and supplies and the bag fits neatly under or in front of the student desk and is kept out of the classroom aisle. Each student is expected to use his/her locker to store a backpack, if necessary, during the school day. Backpacks or other book containers may not be left in the gymnasium, gym locker rooms, hallway, or any other common area.

Books: Each student is responsible for all books and materials issued to him or her for each class. A student is responsible for any book that is lost, stolen, or damaged in any way. He or she is expected to pay for damages or for replacement of the book. Books are not to be left in classrooms, on hall floors, in the foyer, in the gym, or in the lunchroom. Any books that are found in the above-mentioned places will be taken to the lost and found in the cafeteria. Students must return all textbooks issued to them or pay for lost or damaged books before final grades are recorded.

Break: Holy Spirit middle school students have a break each morning. Food and drink are permitted in the cafeteria only. There is to be no eating or drinking allowed in the hallways, classrooms, or gym except for water.

Cafeteria: The cafeteria, besides being a lunchroom, is a place where good human relations can be developed. Each student is expected to practice good manners and personal responsibility in the cafeteria. Simple rules of courteous behavior include leaving the table and surrounding area clean and orderly, replacing chairs, and putting trash in the proper containers. Purchase of carbonated drinks and snacks is not allowed during the middle school lunch period. Carbonated drinks may not be brought from home.

Students are not to be in the cafeteria between classes. Students are not allowed to use the ice machine.

Lunches must be pre-ordered and pre-paid through FACTS. Families must have an active FACTS account to order and pay for lunches. Students may bring lunch from home. Lunch, whether purchased at school or brought from home, must be consumed in the cafeteria. All items, including napkins, straws, etc., used by students who bring their lunches, are to be paid for. Microwaves are available for heating lunch materials. Students, parents, or visitors may not bring fast food to the school for lunch. Lunches brought to students more than three times will not be accepted and the student will be provided a small snack.

Cell phones/electronic devices/smart watches/headphones/computers: The policy below adheres to the legal requirements of Alabama's FOCUS Act and is in place for the safety and security of our students and faculty.

All electronic devices except for Holy Spirit-issued iPads are prohibited. Cell phones; non-school issued electronic devices, including laptop computers and personal tablets; smartwatches; and headphones are not to be seen, used, or heard during the instructional school day. Headphones may be used with the school-issued iPad in the classroom for an assignment or activity with the teacher's permission. Smart watches with communication features may NOT be worn. Laptop computers may not be used. Students may only use the school-issued iPads during the instructional school day.

All students will turn their cell phones off and turn them into their homeroom teacher upon reporting to homeroom. If it is seen, used, or heard, it will be confiscated. Once the bell rings at 7:50 a.m. for students to report to homeroom, cell phones may not be used by students. Failure to comply will result in the device being confiscated and held in the office for parent pickup and will result in disciplinary consequences as outlined above. Holy Spirit reserves the right to review calls and messages on confiscated phones. Students needing to call home must do so in the office. If a parent needs to contact a student for an emergency during the school day, the parent should call the office, and the message will be delivered to the student.

Character rating for co-curricular participation: Students involved in an activity or program—such as elected or appointed officers, teams representing Holy Spirit School, clubs, etc.—must realize that they represent not only themselves but also the school. Participation in co-curricular activities is a privilege, not a right, and as such may be suspended for disciplinary and/or academic reasons after a consultation between the administration and the coaches/sponsors.

Child abuse laws: Holy Spirit abides by child abuse laws of the state of Alabama which mandate that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to the Department of Human Resources.

Clubs/organizations: Holy Spirit offers clubs and organizations which provide opportunities for student participation. All Holy Spirit clubs have a faculty sponsor and are approved by the administration. Clubs and organizations must abide by all school rules and regulations. All fundraising must be approved in advance by the administration.

College visits: College visits are considered excused absences. Juniors are allowed two days during the second semester for college visits; seniors are allowed three college visits through the end of the third quarter. These days need to be approved in advance, and proof of attendance is due in the office upon return to school. The College Visit Form must be signed by a parent and returned to the office prior to your visit. The College Visit Verification Form must be signed by the college and returned to the front office upon return to school.

Communication: The school has the responsibility of communicating directly with the parents of each student. If, at any time during the school year, there should be a change in the marital status of the parents, the parent who is the custodial parent shall notify the office. Also, the office

should be notified if there is a change of address or phone numbers. No student will be allowed to check out with anyone who is not on his/her FACTS profile for pickup or communicated in writing to the office.

Conferences/ staff communication: Conference times with teachers are available after the first quarter. Parents may schedule appointments at any time by contacting the school office, who will inform the appropriate person. Parents may contact teachers by email, school phone, or scheduled conference at any time. Teachers' email addresses are available on the school website. Parents should contact teachers first regarding class and academic questions or concerns. Parents are encouraged to contact the administration with questions or concerns beyond those handled by the classroom teacher.

Corporal punishment: Corporal punishment is not to be used under any circumstances in any Diocese of Birmingham school or early learning center. Corporal punishment is the use of physical punishment, involving physical force, such as hitting, paddling, or spanking, as a means of discipline or correction.

Course of study: Holy Spirit teaches according to the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama Content Area Standards. The standards include the subject areas and minimum standards to be taught in English language arts, math, science, and social studies.

Crisis plans/school closings: In case of inclement weather, Holy Spirit typically follows the Tuscaloosa City Schools; however, variations may occur at the discretion of the administration. Announcements will be made by means of the FACTS automated message system. Crisis plans (tornado, fire, disaster, intruder, etc.) are available for review in the Holy Spirit office. Holy Spirit devotes sufficient instructional time for fire and safety emergency procedures, to include time for the entire student body to practice emergency procedures in accordance with Alabama Code of Law.

Curriculum: All curriculum is consistent with the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, conform to guidelines and standards of the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama, and appropriate to the grade level and age of the students.

Dances: School dances, whether held on the school premises or away from school, are school functions and, as such, will be governed by school regulations. High school dances are not open to the public. Students may invite a guest, who will be required to submit the appropriate permission form in advance and will be expected to abide by the same standards of conduct as Holy Spirit students. Normally, high school dances end at 11:00 p.m. and operate on the once-in-and-out rule. This means that after a student enters the dance, he/she (and date) must remain for the entire dance; if they leave, they will not be readmitted. Students on disciplinary probation may not attend dances.

Only students in 9th-12th grades are allowed to attend high school dances, such as the Homecoming Dance and Winter Formal. Individuals who have graduated high school or are above the age of 19 are not permitted to attend.

Only students in 11th and 12th grades are permitted to attend prom. No guests 10th grade or below are permitted to attend. Guests who have graduated high school are permitted to attend prom upon request from the administration. No guest over the age of 20 is permitted.

Only students in the 7th and 8th grades are permitted to attend the 7th/8th Grade Dance. Social activities for middle school, including the 7th/8th grade dance, occur throughout the year. These activities are open to Holy Spirit middle school students only unless otherwise indicated.

Dismissal/parking lot: Students are to exit the building when dismissed so that the car line is not delayed. Students are not to be in the halls or classrooms unless they are supervised by a teacher. Students who have practice will go to the gym, where they will be supervised until their coaches arrive. Once a student is in the gym, he/she may leave only with a coach or stay in the gym until 3:30 p.m.

Parents should follow the carpool driving directions for entering and leaving the campus during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up of students. Siblings of younger students will be picked up between the buildings. For the safety of students, parents should avoid use of cell phones while driving on the school campus.

Elementary students will be dismissed to older siblings only if they are being picked up in a car. If an elementary student is coming to the high school for any reason after school, he/she will be dismissed to a high school teacher or staff member when students are brought to the elementary school for after care. Coaches do not supervise younger siblings while older students are practicing.

The driveway between the buildings is closed and barricaded 3:00-3:20 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, 2:10-2:30 p.m. on Thursdays, and 1:00-1:20 p.m. on early release days. **No cars are allowed to go to the back of the high school building until car line has ended.** Drivers parked in the back of the school should not attempt to exit between the buildings until car line has ended. Drivers should not park in handicap spaces, even during dismissal. Drivers should stop at all stop signs, even if a faculty member is directing traffic in that area.

Displays: Schools should prominently display a Vatican flag, a photograph of the current Pope, and a photograph of the current Bishop of Birmingham.

Drug Testing (Mandatory): All students enrolled in Holy Spirit will be tested for drugs during the school year. Thereafter, students may be tested on a random basis throughout the school year or may be tested when there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the terms or

conditions of the program. On a periodic basis and without prior notice, students will be selected to submit to testing in accordance with this program. Since the selection is random, some students may be selected several times for a random testing during the school year, and others may not be tested through random selection. Prior negative test results of a student do not exempt a student from additional testing.

Detailed policies, guidelines, and procedures regarding school drug testing are on file with the administration and may be requested with two days' notice.

Financial Obligations and Transfer of Records: It is the responsibility of each family to keep the Business Manager informed of the need to make any changes in the preferred tuition payment plan or adjustments in the tuition paid. Without such information, the following will apply when tuition payments are received late:

Families who miss a monthly payment due to insufficient funds or other reasons will be assessed a \$30.00 missed payment fee by FACTS and may incur a fee from their own financial institution. The missed tuition payment will be re-attempted by FACTS on the next payment date (5th or 20th of the month). In addition, families who have missed two monthly payments will be contacted by the Business Manager and given 10 business days to bring the account current (No personal and/or business checks will be accepted as payment, only cash, cashier's checks or money orders). If the account is not brought current within that period, the student will not be allowed to return to school until the account is brought current.

After a student graduates or transfers to another school, the cumulative record shall be retained permanently at the school according to the retention of records guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office and the Diocesan Office of Archives.

Families are expected to have met all outstanding financial obligations to the school before official records will be sent to the receiving school.

Outstanding financial obligations will be communicated to the receiving school when a student is transferring from one Diocese of Birmingham school to another.

Checks returned for any reason will be assessed a \$15.00 returned check fee. Payment for a returned check and fee must be made by cash, cashier's check, or money order. A flat \$25.00 late charge will be incurred for any late payment.

Families who received CHOOSE Act funds will be invoiced for the full amount of tuition up front and remit at minimum the full \$7,000 by August 15. Any remaining balance will be billed monthly through FACTS. Families who withdraw or are expelled before the end of the school year, will have their tuition prorated by month. Funds will be reimbursed to their ClassWallet account for

the months remaining in the school year. Attendance one day of a month constitutes a full month of tuition.

Field Trips: Field trips and outings are learning experiences and privileges. All field trips are approved by the principal. Diocesan permission and liability forms and procedures are used. The Youth Protection Code of Conduct is followed for all aspects of the trip, including the proper ratio of male and female chaperones for the age of the students. Trips are planned according to alignment with curriculum, the educational or spiritual opportunity, appropriateness for the age level, distance and time spent traveling. Most trips take place within the regular hours of the school day; however, there are times when extended trips may be warranted. Trips for students in 5th-8th grades should not exceed 200 miles (one-way). Trips that deviate from any one of these parameters must be approved by the Superintendent. Accommodations for overnight trips are arranged in accordance with the Youth Protection Code of Conduct and when the educational and/or spiritual impact is significant. Students must abide by all school policy when on a school field trip. Students who violate school regulations may be sent home immediately at the parent's expense and may be subject to additional disciplinary action.

Gifts and Invitations: Students are not to bring personal or private party invitations or gifts to be exchanged at school. Students may not receive delivery flowers or gifts at school.

Grievance: A grievance is a formal complaint about any serious issue regarding a diocesan, parochial, or regional Catholic school or its personnel that needs a formal process of reconciliation for it to be resolved.

Any serious grievance regarding a Diocese of Birmingham Catholic school or its personnel that cannot be solved through an informal process using the local chain of authority (teacher, school administrator/principal, pastor) shall be resolved through Administrative Recourse. Administrative Recourse shall constitute the exclusive method for resolving such disputes after informal attempts at reconciliation have failed. The parties are bound by its determination as final and binding. Administrative Recourse is specifically limited to grievances as defined within the Administrative Recourse Procedures.

The primary purpose of Administrative Recourse shall be to secure, at the most proximate administrative level possible, equitable solutions to problems which may from time-to-time arise affecting the welfare or working conditions of persons associated with the school when informal attempts using the local chain of authority (teacher, school administrator/Principal, Pastor) have failed to resolve the grievance.

The failure of a grievant to act within the prescribed timeframes shall act as a bar to any further appeal and the school administrator/principal's failure to give a decision within the timeframes shall permit the grievant to proceed to the next level. (See procedure below.) The grievant agrees that discussions during the procedural stages of a grievance shall be kept confidential. There

shall be no retaliation against any party or participant in Administrative Recourse. Meetings held pursuant to this procedure shall be conducted by mutual agreement at a time and place that will afford a fair and reasonable opportunity for all persons, including witnesses to attend. Records of formal proceedings at every level shall be kept and made available to all parties involved.

Before differences become formal grievances, every effort shall be made to resolve local-level disputes by way of a free and open discussion between the parties involved in the grievance. Accordingly, a grievant shall not pursue a grievance through the formal procedures outlined in this policy unless the grievant has first engaged in informal attempts with the normal chain of authority (teacher, school administrator/ Principal, Pastor) to reconcile the difference beginning with the person whom the grievance is against. The school administrator/principal or pastor may ask a third party to attend and assist the discussion.

If informal attempts at resolving the dispute have been unsuccessful, the formal procedures outlined below shall be observed. Complaints to be resolved through these procedures, the following guidelines shall apply:

- For complaints relating to a school principal, the grievant will begin with level two.
- For complaints relating to a pastor, the grievant will begin with level three.
- All other complaints will begin at level one.
 - Level one—Principal: The grievant shall submit the complaint in writing to the school Principal within 10 business days following the occurrence of the event. In the complaint, the grievant must specifically request resolution through Administrative Recourse. The school Principal will hold a meeting within 7 business days following receipt of the written statement of grievance. The school Principal, a grievance representative designated by the pastor, and the grievant shall be present for the meeting. Within 7 business days following the meeting, the school principal shall provide the grievant with a written decision.
 - Level two—pastor: If the grievant is dissatisfied with the principal's written decision, the grievant may appeal the decision in writing within 5 days to the pastor. If the formal procedure begins with level two, the grievant shall put their complaint in writing and submit it to the pastor within 10 business days following the occurrence of the event. The pastor will hold a meeting within 7 business days following receipt of the written statement of grievance or the appeal, as applicable. The pastor, a grievance representative designated by the pastor, and the grievant shall be present for the meeting. Within seven business days following the meeting, the pastor shall provide the grievant and the school principal with a written decision.
 - Level three—Catholic Schools Office: If the grievant is dissatisfied with the pastor's written decision, the grievant may appeal the decision in writing within 5 business days to the Catholic Schools Office. If the formal procedure begins with level three, the grievant shall put their complaint to writing and submit it to the Catholic Schools Office within 10 days following the occurrence of the event. The Catholic Schools Office or a designated representative of the superintendent will review all evidence and may choose to hold a meeting within 10 days following receipt of the appeal. The Catholic Schools Office will

render a decision in writing stating findings of fact and conclusions within 10 business days of the evidence review and a copy of the decision shall be delivered to the grievant, the pastor and the school principal.

- **Level four—Office of the Bishop:** If the aggrieved person is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at level three, a written appeal may be made within 5 business days to the Bishop. The Bishop or his designee will review the entire record relating to the grievance and may choose to hold a meeting which shall not be later than 15 business days after receipt of the written appeal. The grievant is entitled to attend the meeting, should one be held. The Bishop will render and communicate his recommendation to the Catholic Schools Office and the grievant of his ruling. The decision of the Bishop shall be final and binding.

Gymnasium/fields: The Holy Spirit gym and fields are used primarily by Holy Spirit students; however, they can be made available to other groups for different activities provided all insurance, supervision, and agreement requirements are met in advance. For information, contact the school office. All Holy Spirit events take precedent over other events.

Health and communicable diseases: Holy Spirit will implement programs to teach children to protect and improve their health. We will cooperate with the State and County Departments of Health in all matters pertaining to school to the extent feasible and in line with Catholic teaching. Students having or suspected of having a communicable disease as defined by the Alabama Department of Public Health will be handled according to guidance specific to the illness as provided by the child's physician and/or from the Alabama Department of Public Health. We will follow Alabama Department of Public Health guidelines for reportable conditions.

Parents and/or guardians must report a communicable disease to the school.

No person seeking employment or employed, nor persons seeking admission to or currently enrolled in Holy Spirit will be discriminated against for having a blood borne disease unless the nature or extent of the illness precludes performance, impairs the school operation, or is a risk to public health.

Honor societies: For induction into all Holy Spirit honor societies, the Chapter Advisor will determine academic eligibility first. Chapter Advisors will then evaluate that the candidate meets other requirements. Chapter Advisors for National Junior Honor Society and National Honor Society will gather input from the five-person Faculty Council following the procedure of the national organization and the school guidelines indicated below. Students who meet all requirements will be notified either in writing or verbally by the Faculty Advisor.

Latin Honor Society

National Latin Honor Society membership criteria: 5 or more semesters of Latin coursework, a minimum GPA of 3.5 or higher in all Latin courses, a member in good standing of the National

Junior Classical League (completed by the school), and demonstration of the Roman virtues of comitas, prudentia, pietas, and veritas (humor, prudence/respect, piety/respect, and honesty).

Mu Alpha Theta

Mu Alpha Theta membership criteria: complete at least one semester of Honors PreCalculus and have and maintain a minimum GPA of 3.5 in all math courses.

National Honor Society

National Honor Society membership criteria: 3 or more semesters of high school, a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5, a grade of B or above in at least one honors or AP course, no grade below a C in the academic year of application, demonstration of proven character, leadership, and service as determined by the Faculty Council, and submission of the Activity Form by designated deadline.

National Junior Honor Society

National Junior Honor Society membership criteria: be in 7th or 8th grade; at least three A's and no C's or below for the previous semester averages in English, math, religion, science, and social studies; demonstration of character, citizenship, leadership, and service as determined by the Faculty Council; and submission of the Application by designated deadline.

Spanish Honor Society

Spanish Honor Society membership criteria: on track to complete Spanish III/IV for the first time and a minimum average of 3.5 in all Spanish courses.

Instructional time: Holy Spirit provides class schedules that most effectively serve the essential components of instruction: namely, the needs of the students, our philosophy and goals, religious instruction, Catholic Schools Office recommendations for allotted instructional times, and the programs that flow from these. Permission to deviate significantly from the Catholic Schools Office recommended time allotments in the overall school schedule must be obtained in writing from the Superintendent of Schools.

Internet Policy: The good name, reputation, and personal safety of each student, faculty, and staff member as well as the good name of each school in the Diocese of Birmingham as an institution of the Catholic Church, is vitally important. Two specific aspects of this are:

1. Internet activities (such as blogs, chat rooms, gaming, social media, etc.) that a student may independently choose to participate in can make the student vulnerable to predators. We strongly advise our students to be careful about the personally identifying information they share via the Internet. We also advise parents to monitor these sites to be sure their children remain safe. Should information come to the school regarding a student sharing personally identifying information and/or information concerning a student demeaning him/herself, the school will notify the parents, and it will be the parents' responsibility to take action.

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2. To protect each student as well as employees and the institution itself, each student enrolled in a Diocese of Birmingham Catholic School must treat the good name and reputation of each of the above with dignity and respect. The same is expected of each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in our schools. Public defamation of any of student, employee, or Catholic school by a student or parent/guardian is serious whether this is done orally, in writing, via email, or on the web and whether it is done on a school computer or not and on school time or not. Any student or parent found to be participating in any defamatory activity will be subject to disciplinary/responsive action by the school. This could include dismissal of the student whether the action is by the student or his/her parent/guardian.

Library/computer lab: All students may use the library with a pass or during a class library period if adult supervision is confirmed. Books may be checked out for two weeks and renewed for the same period. Books must be brought to the library to be renewed. Reference books and magazines may only be used in the library. The cost of a lost book is \$20.

Students must also have a computer lab pass to be in the lab unless they are with a class.

No food or drink is allowed in the computer lab. Bringing food or beverages into the computer lab may result in the loss of privileges to use them and disciplinary action.

Lockers: Hall lockers for the storage of student books and equipment are available. Students are not to share lockers and should not reveal their combination to anyone. Lockers are the property of Holy Spirit Catholic School. Students should not keep money, jewelry, or other expensive items in the lockers. The school does not accept responsibility for, and cannot replace, items stolen from the lockers. Items such as opened drinks, food, etc. are not to be kept in lockers. Any locker that does not function properly should be reported to the office.

Lockers should remain closed and locked when unattended. Lockers may not be modified or propped open. It is the student's responsibility to see that the locker is kept locked and in order (inside and out). No lockers should be jammed open. Students will be held financially responsible for damaged lockers. All student lockers must be cleaned out prior to the beginning of the second semester exams. Unauthorized entry into another student's locker is considered a major offense against Christian respect and is subject to disciplinary action.

Holy Spirit reserves the right to search lockers and any items brought on campus at any time.

Locker rooms: The athletic locker rooms are open in the mornings for students to store athletic bags and equipment. The locker rooms are open during P.E. classes for the class in P.E. The locker rooms are off-limits during the school day. Items needed during the school day must not be stored in the locker rooms.

Lost and found: Students who find lost articles are requested to turn them in to the office. Students who lose items may claim them from lost and found (located in the cafeteria). Items that are not claimed by the end of the semester are turned over to a charitable agency.

Medication: The school is not permitted to dispense non-prescription medicine of any kind without written parental permission as indicated on the health and emergency record sheet. Parents must send in unopened containers of non-prescription medication for their child's use. Prescription medicine may be dispensed from the front office only with written permission from the parents and written instructions from a licensed medical professional. These forms are available in the office. All medicines, prescription and non-prescription, must be kept in the office and may not be in the possession of the student. Medication is kept in a locked cabinet in the front office and is periodically reviewed and is administered by the front office staff member.

Motor vehicles/parking lot: Motor vehicles must be licensed and insured. Operators of motor vehicles on campus must also be licensed and insured, and they must operate their vehicles in accordance with state law. Students may not ride in the cargo bed of any vehicle while on school property. Students must complete a parking application, receive a parking permit, and park in the spaces specifically assigned when they register their cars. Speeders on campus, or violators of motor vehicle regulations, forfeit their right to operate a vehicle on the campus. For safety reasons, no drivers are permitted to use cell phones while driving on campus. Violators will forfeit their right to operate a vehicle on campus and may be subject to a fine. **Driving infractions beyond two will result in loss of privileges.** Upon parking their cars in the morning, students are to leave the vehicles and not return to them until dismissal.

Off-campus Conduct: Off-campus conduct reflects the good reputation of students, parents, and faculty. People are often quick to label an entire group wrongly after experiencing unpleasant associations with some members of the group. Students coming to and from school, at school events, and at social, or athletic functions of other schools, bear the good name of Holy Spirit. All school rules apply to students at these times.

Any off-campus behavior that subjects the school to negative publicity or perception by the public in the opinion of the school administration is considered a serious infraction. The students involved will be disciplined as determined by the administration.

Parental support: Registration at Holy Spirit Catholic School is an agreement by the parent/guardian to abide by the rules and regulations of the school and to support its mission and belief statements. A cooperative relationship between Holy Spirit personnel and a parent/guardian is essential for the overall education of a student. Parents are the primary educators of their children, and as such, are expected to display an attitude of respect and support toward the school, the staff, and the educational process. If a parent repeatedly or seriously violates proper school protocol and/or displays disruptive, harassing, or inappropriate behavior toward a student, teacher, or staff member, the school administration may take

corrective action. This may include, but not be limited to, imposition of rules or procedures the parent must follow in interacting with the school and its students and staff, restriction or termination of the parent's access to school property, or dismissal of the parent's children. Parents who verbally or physically attack a faculty member or coach will be banned from campus for one calendar year. The school may impose other appropriate corrective action, without prior recourse, based upon the nature of the parent's conduct and the surrounding circumstances.

Photographs/audio recordings/video recordings: Holy Spirit Catholic School reserves the right to use photographs, videos, and names of students in publications, news releases, or on the web unless otherwise notified in writing by a parent or guardian by the end of the second week of school.

Students are not allowed to take photographs or make video or audio recordings, including AI generated images or video, at school without permission of their teacher or an administrator. Additionally, the person who is photographed or recorded must give permission for his/her image/voice to be made public or published in any format (including online publication). Violations may result in disciplinary consequences (see discipline code). Photos and videos, including AI generated images, may not depict illicit or immoral items or activities in violation of Christian principles.

Photos or videos maintained by the school can be considered part of the student's educational record in certain circumstances. When the school uses the photo or video for official purposes, such as disciplinary action, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student directly related to the photo/video may, upon request, inspect and review the photo or video in the presence of school administration. Copies of the photo or video will not be released directly to the parent or guardian.

Power 45: Power 45 is a 45-minute lunch period that allows students the opportunity to eat lunch, meet with student groups or individual teachers, make up missed work, etc. It is a student privilege. Power 45 is to be used purposefully and responsibly. Students may consume drinks, snacks, lunch etc., whether purchased from the cafe, purchased from the snack machines, or brought from home, in the cafeteria. During Power 45, high school students may be in the cafeteria, the high school hallway, or teacher classrooms. All organizations will have prescheduled meeting times during Power 45. Teachers will hold office hours two days a week during Power 45. During Power 45, high school students may not be in the Middle School wing (library, offices, etc.) or gym without a pass.

Pregnant and Married Students: Pregnancy and marriage are considered reasons for automatic expulsion. A pregnant or married student may be allowed to continue in attendance or, wherever possible, arrangements may be made to allow the student to receive the credits necessary for graduation. The principal, in consultation with the superintendent, is to determine a) whether the

student may continue to attend regular classes or b) the manner of fulfilling graduation requirements.

Printing: Printers are located on the middle and high school hallways for student use. Students may print school related material from school iPads. Students printing non-school related material are subject to disciplinary action.

Sacramental preparation: Though the religious education program at Holy Spirit address the sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation, the preparation for first reception of these sacraments is handled by the parish and under the direction of the pastor of the parish.

School calendar: In accordance with diocesan policy, Holy Spirit provides a school term of at least 180 full instructional days, or the hourly equivalent of no less than 1,080 instructional hours, and a minimum of 12 in-service days. Holy Spirit communicates the next year's calendar every spring semester.

School counseling: Counseling services are available to every student in the school. Counseling services are available to assist the student with educational or career plans. Information concerning these areas is available in the counseling office. In addition to college and career counseling, students are welcome to discuss any personal problems they might encounter. Parents are also welcome to confer with the counseling department.

School day: The school day shall be scheduled by the administration within the requirements of the state, the designated accrediting body, and the Diocese of Birmingham Catholic Schools Office to offer appropriate educational experiences. Holy Spirit typically provides six hours of instruction per day. In determining hours of academic instruction, the general assessment for a 5-day week is 6 hours per full-day and 4 hours per half-day. If the school day must be modified because of inclement weather or another emergency issue after school has been in session for 4 or more hours, that day counts as a full day. If school has been in session for 2 hours or more, but less than 4 hours, that session counts as one-half day.

School property: Each student shares the responsibility to treat all school property and buildings with care. Damages resulting from the destruction or defacement of school property, whether willful or accidental, are to be paid for by the student(s) responsible. In addition, the student guilty of malicious damage will be subject to disciplinary action (see discipline section).

Signs/posters: Administration must approve in advance any posters or signs to be placed in the school. Any club or individuals who post signs are responsible for removing their materials.

State laws: Holy Spirit adheres to the laws of the State of Alabama and the regulations of the state Department of Education as they pertain to church or non-public schools.

Student records: Student records are retained based on the retention guidelines outlined by the Diocese of Birmingham. Adult students and parents of minor students may review their child's transcripts, testing, and health records in the Holy Spirit office with an advance appointment. No records will be released without written permission. No student information will be released by Holy Spirit without a subpoena or written authorization of the adult student or parent/guardian of a minor student. Non-custodial parents are entitled to access student, teacher, and non-official records unless prohibited by the courts.

Termination of enrollment/withdrawal: Enrollment at the school is a privilege contingent upon adherence to the school's mission, policies, and enrollment contract.

School-Initiated Termination: The school reserves the right to terminate a student's enrollment if continued attendance is not in the best interest of the student or the school community. Reasons may include serious or repeated policy violations, conduct inconsistent with Catholic values, failure of the family to support school policies, or nonpayment of tuition or fees. Decisions regarding termination are made by administration and are final.

Family-Initiated Withdrawal: Parents/guardians may withdraw a student at any time by providing written notice to school administration. An in-person meeting with administration is required as part of the withdrawal process.

As stated in the enrollment contract, termination withdrawal prior to the end of the school year results in a financial obligation of \$1,500 or the remaining balance of tuition, whichever is less. Student records will not be released until all financial obligations are satisfied.

Testing: The following standardized tests are administered at Holy Spirit to assess knowledge and programs, inform instruction, and guide professional practice:

Grades 6-8—MAP (three administrations August/September, January, and April/May)

Grades 6-9—ARK (April)

Grades 9-11—PSAT (October/March)

Grade 10—ASVAB (Fall)

Grade 12—SAT (Fall)

The exact testing dates will be published on the calendar and in school communications. It is important that students are present for the testing periods.

High school students should have only two tests per day. No tests should be given within five school days before mid-term or final exams (9-12 only). If all students in a class are exempted from the exam, the previous sentence does not apply to that class.

Test procedures: To safeguard the integrity of classroom testing situations, teachers will enforce the following procedures:

- Students will not have access to material that might compromise the testing situation.
- Students will not have any additional books or papers at their desks during the test.
- Students will not have anything on their desks that is not necessary to take the test.
- Students will not leave the room at any time during the testing period (i.e. from the distribution of the test until the last paper is turned in).
- Students will not be allowed to talk during the testing period.
- Students will remain in their seats during the testing period.
- Students will not make gestures, comments, or in any way distract others during the testing period.

Teachers may add other requirements as necessary depending on the testing situation. Any violation of these rules will be considered cheating and will be subject to disciplinary action (see discipline code).

Visitors: Upon arrival, all visitors must report to the school office and obtain a visitor's badge. Students are not allowed to have personal visitors at any time during the school day.

Water bottles/sealable cups: Students may use any plastic or metal water bottle or cup with leakproof lid in the classrooms. No food or drink other than water bottles or leakproof cups are allowed outside of the cafeteria or Power45 designated lunch areas. Any water bottle or leakproof cup that causes distraction or spills is not allowed. Repeated violations will result in disciplinary consequences.

Weapons: It is strictly forbidden for any student to possess a weapon on school premises, including in a student's vehicle, in a school owned vehicle or school-authorized transportation, or during any school-related trip or activity.

- For this policy, a "weapon" is any instrument or device designed primarily for use in inflicting death or injury upon a human being, and which is capable of inflicting death or injury upon a human being when used in the manner for which it was designed. Additionally, any instrument or device of any sort whatsoever which can be used in such a manner as to indicate that an individual intends to inflict death or serious injury upon the other, and which, when so used, can inflict death upon a human being is a weapon. Facsimiles of weapons used in a threatening fashion are subject to this policy.
- Students found possessing a weapon will be subject to expulsion. Law enforcement may also be called.
- The principal will immediately notify the superintendent of any violation of this policy.

Appendix A

Alcohol, Drug, and Tobacco Policy

The constant teaching and Tradition of the Catholic Church uphold the sanctity of life and the dignity of the human person. As Catholics, we believe men and women are made in the image and likeness of God. We believe our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. The Fifth Commandment—you shall not kill—forbids the abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs that alters our consciousness and harms our bodies. This profound and overarching belief in the dignity of the human person and the sanctity of life is the foundation of the following Diocesan Policy pertaining to alcohol, tobacco and drugs:

It is strictly forbidden for any student to use, possess, or distribute alcohol, tobacco and drugs on school premises, in a school-owned vehicle or school-authorized transportation, or during any school-related trip or activity. This includes, but is not limited to, alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens, opiates, inhalants, mind-altering substances, drug paraphernalia, controlled substances as defined by federal and state law for which the student has no prescription from a duly recognized medical authority or use of another person's prescription, or an electronic nicotine delivery system or other electronic battery-powered device capable of being used to deliver any e-liquid, e-liquid substitute, tobacco, CBD oil, THC oil, herbal extract, or nicotine salt, or any analog thereof. Students found using or possessing alcohol, tobacco, an electronic nicotine delivery system or other electronic battery-powered device as described above, or drugs on their persons, in their personal effects or in their vehicles shall be subject to disciplinary action as outlined by the school's policies and regulations.

Implementation of this policy is consistent in each of the diocesan high schools. Our Catholic high schools provide a caring family environment that is free of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco. Our school should present to the community a clear witness of our Catholic commitment to respect our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit. Our Catholic faith also teaches compassion. The intent of the following regulations is not to punish but to encourage students to make choices consistent with a healthy lifestyle.

School officials have the responsibility to be proactive in providing and maintaining a safe school environment. To accomplish this, an important component is providing educational opportunities for parents, students, and school personnel. All parents, students and faculty are responsible for attending the alcohol, tobacco, and drug presentations offered by the school. By accepting admission into the school, parents assume the responsibility for cooperating with school officials in fostering in their children healthy lifestyle choices.

The policy of Catholic high schools strictly forbids the possession, use, and distribution of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco. The consequence for violation of this policy is referral for suspension and/or expulsion. In each instance, the administrator's final disciplinary decision will be based on an investigation, evidence, and consultation with the student and parents.

Prescribed medications and other necessary medicines are distributed by the school in accordance with school procedures.

If a school official suspects that a student has violated the policy or may be associated with anyone who has, the school administrator will respond appropriately. For possession, use and/or distribution of a controlled substance, the school has the legal responsibility to notify appropriate law enforcement personnel. School administrators may:

- Search a student's locker, personal belongings, and/or vehicle;
- Require medical evaluation at a designated facility at the school's expense;
- Require additional medical evaluations at the parents' expense if the initial evaluation is positive;
- Require individual and/or family counseling, as needed.

To maintain a safe school environment, the school administrator may authorize random searches (by school personnel or local authorities) of students, their personal belongings, lockers, and personal vehicles. The administration may also authorize random medical evaluations at the school's expense.

Appendix B

Computers/iPad/Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Holy Spirit provides student access to technological devices (as defined below) and internet access for academic and educational purposes only.

Acceptance of policy: The Technology Acceptable Use Policy falls under the guidelines outlined in the Holy Spirit Catholic School Family Handbook. The acceptance of this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is indicated in the signing of Handbook Acceptance letter that is signed by both the student and parent/guardian, indicating that both parties have read and understand the policies regarding technology set forth by Holy Spirit. Failure to sign the policy will result in loss of privileges. The violation of technology policies and any usage deemed unacceptable by either the administration or faculty may result in loss of privileges. Violations of these policies and the resulting loss of privileges may correspond with disciplinary actions outlined in the Family Handbook. Revoked privileges may result in academic failure if assignments require the use of school technology.

Purview of technology policies: Technology devices include but are not limited to desktop computers, laptops, tablets, digital cameras/video recorders, printers, scanners, calculators, hardware/software, and technology infrastructure (e.g. wired and wireless access to school network and servers), whether owned, leased, or loaned to Holy Spirit.

Acceptable Use Policies also apply to any online services provided directly or indirectly for student use including, but not limited to the following: student email, cloud drive, and iPad apps; student information systems such as FACTS; online-based educational tools used online or through the Apple app store; anti-plagiarism software (Turnitin.com); and online database subscriptions (Ebscohost, Gale).

School-issued iPads: iPads issued by Holy Spirit are property of the school. Holy Spirit reserves the right to modify, change, update, and both issue and revoke apps installed on the school iPads, whether purchased by the student/parent or the school. All school-owned iPads are managed by the school. Any attempt to bypass or jailbreak the school management system will result in loss of student use privileges as well as other disciplinary measures for defiance of school policy.

Students' use of the school-issued iPads require adherence to all policy established in this handbook and the following requirements:

- All iPads are to remain in school issued cases at all times.
- All iPad usage in the classroom is determined by the teacher.
- All iPads must have Bluetooth enabled.
- School-issued Apple IDs do not allow use of the app store. Students and parents are responsible for payment for all purchases made through iTunes, iBooks, and the app store if the student manages to circumvent school security measures on the device. The school and

the diocese are not liable for any personal financial, data, or identity loss associated with the use of the iPads or personally managed Apple IDs and linked payment methods.

iPad damage: Accidental or intentional damage to the iPad is not covered by the school. Any instance of damage will be repaired by the school and billed to the family of the student responsible for the damage at full cost.

Unacceptable use of technology: The inappropriate use of technology includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Using the network for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright laws
- Degrading or disrupting equipment, software, or system performance
- Vandalizing the data of another user
- Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities
- Invading the privacy of individuals
- Using an account owned by another user
- Posting personal communications without the original author's consent
- Posting anonymous messages
- Downloading, storing, or printing files or messages that are profane, obscene, or that use language and/or symbols that may degrade or offend others
- Any activity that interferes with the operation of any computer system
- Any activity that damages any equipment or programs (Restitution will be required if this occurs.)

Any usage that violates any of the expected standards of student behavior outlined in the Family Handbook, including but not limited to plagiarism, cheating, bullying, hazing, and harassment will result in disciplinary action as outlined in the Family Handbook.

Network and internet access agreement: The purpose of this agreement is to outline the rules for using the local area network and the Internet at Holy Spirit. Because of the cost and sensitivity of the computer equipment, and because of the unregulated nature of material found on the Internet, the rules for usage must be understood by all parents and students.

The acceptance of this Internet Access Agreement is indicated in the signing of Handbook Acceptance letter that is signed by both the student and parent/guardian, which indicates that both parties have read and understand the policies regarding technology set forth by Holy Spirit. Failure to sign the policy will result in loss of privileges.

1. The use of the school computers is a privilege, which may be taken away if the student uses computers, the network, or the Internet improperly or causes damage to computer hardware or software. This privilege includes all technology resources.
2. The school will remove any material from school computers that is not conducive to the educational mission or is not good for students (i.e. objectionable material).

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3. The computers are to be used only for schoolwork as directed by the teacher or staff.
 4. Each student is responsible for good behavior while using computers and/or the network. The same rules which apply to common courtesy and respect for people and property will also apply about use of the school computer network and the Internet. Improper use will lead to the suspension of computer privileges.
 5. The student will only use the Internet under the supervision of a teacher or staff member.
 6. The school has the right to review (or monitor), access, retrieve, read and disclose to any authorities deemed necessary, all activities, E-mail correspondences, and material created by students on school computers,
 7. The following activities will lead to suspension of computer privileges:
 - Installing or downloading software or other files on school computers
 - Subscribing to any kind of Internet service using school computers (such as Instant Messaging, chat services, etc.)
 - Deliberately attempting to compromise the integrity of the school's computers, network or software
 - Any use of instant messaging software or apps.
 - Possession of food or drink in the computer labs.
 8. Even if the agreement is not signed by the parent or student, improper use of school computers or network will result in loss of computer privileges at school, as well as other disciplinary actions as determined by the administration.
 9. With the current state of popups and ads on the Internet, it is often difficult to avoid popups containing inappropriate content. Because these popups are unintentional, the student will not be punished or blamed. However, the student **MUST** report the incident immediately or risk the loss of computer privileges and further disciplinary action.
 10. The school has installed filtering software for the protection of the students. The school is not responsible for students going outside the protected sites. Any students found doing this will be subject to disciplinary action.

Appendix C

PLAGIARISM

(Adapted from the Sources Listed Below)

Simply put, plagiarism is the academic term used to broadly define any act of copying directly or borrowing directly or indirectly another's words, ideas, form, or intellectual property without giving the original creator credit by properly and formally providing bibliographic information and citations.

Plagiarism, however, is not simply cheating and borrowing. Plagiarism is, more specifically, an act of fraud in which an individual or group steals work, written or otherwise, or ideas of another individual or group and lies about the origin and source of the work or ideas, passing it off as an original creation. According to the Merriam Webster Online Dictionary, to plagiarize is to steal and pass off someone's words or ideas as one's own, to use someone else's words or ideas without properly citing the original source, to commit literary theft, and/or to present as original work a work that already exists or is generated by artificial intelligence. According to U.S. law, an act of the expression of ideas is intellectual property and protected by U.S. copyright laws if the act of expression is recorded in some manner, such as in a book, file, magazine article, internet file or article, or internet site, to name a few.

Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

- Turning in someone else's work as one's own
- Copying the words or ideas of a text without providing credit to the original text
- Copying information, ideas, or exact words from the internet without proper citations
- **Using text generating artificial intelligence and submitting the work as one's own**
- Failing to use quotation marks around direct quotes
- Failing to properly cite a paraphrase
- Failing to properly summarize a source
- Giving incorrect information about a source, whether intentional or unintentional
- Changing the words of a text but keeping the ideas and sentence structure without proper citation.

How to Prevent Plagiarism: First and foremost, formally acknowledge the use of sources from which you have borrowed ideas or words, provide the proper bibliographic information necessary for an instructor to locate the original source, and include the proper use of in-text citations using MLA format.

Steps to avoid plagiarism:

1. Be sure to correctly understand the assignment. Ask the instructor questions before beginning.
2. Know that procrastination is the leading cause of plagiarism.

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3. Understand what plagiarism is and how to properly use the words and ideas of others. If an assignment requires the use of outside sources, use them correctly and provide all required documentation. If the assignment prohibits the use of outside sources, do not consult outside sources whatsoever.
 4. Ask how to properly cite before submitting work if there is any uncertainty.
 5. Be sure to understand the consequences of plagiarism. Plagiarism is an act of stealing, which sabotages the quality of education for all students and undermines the value of education. Plagiarism leads to serious consequences, including detention, ISS, loss of exam exemption privileges, suspension, or even expulsion. More seriously, plagiarism can prevent admission into collegiate institutions or programs.
 6. Know that there are alternatives to plagiarism. Talk to the instructor about problems and concerns before submitting work. Consult the instructor or proper sources on notetaking, summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, citing, and documenting.
 7. Know that all instructors are required to report cases of suspected plagiarism to the administration.

Sources consulted and for further reading:

"Before You Begin That Paper." *First-year Writing Program*. The First-year Writing Program of The University of Alabama, 2011. Web. 27 June 2012.

Brizee, Allen, and Karl Stolley. "Avoiding Plagiarism." *Purdue Online Writing Lab*. Purdue University, 7 May 2012. Web. 27 June 2012.

"First-year Writing Program Policy on Academic Misconduct." *First-year Writing Program*. The First-year Writing Program of The University of Alabama, 2011. Web. 27 June 2012.

Plagiarism.org. Paradigms, LLC, 2012. Web. 27 June 2012.

Appendix D

Athletic Eligibility

Requirements: Students entering the 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades must have passed during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable, at least six new Carnegie units with a minimum numerical average of 70 in those six units. Four core curriculum courses must be included in those units passed and averaged. Any student that accumulates more than four units of core courses per year may earn less than the required four core courses during the school year and be eligible if the student remains on track for graduation with his or her class.

Students entering the 7th grade for the first time are eligible.

(Note: A new unit is one that has not been previously passed. A semester is half of a school year, as defined by the local school system.)

Guidelines: Eligibility will be determined before the start of each new school year. A student that is academically eligible at the beginning of the school year remains eligible for the remainder of that school year so far as grades are concerned. Note: Holy Spirit Catholic School has the requirement that a student must pass at least five classes during the first semester to be eligible for athletic teams that begin competition in the second semester. Students who are failing classes or drop below a 70 average in their core classes will not be allowed to participate in practices or contests until academic progress is made. Students who chronically fail to turn in assignments, may not be allowed to participate in contests until progress is made. Students accumulating five demerits will be suspended from participation in athletic contests until sufficient behavioral progress is made as demonstrated by two weeks without earning additional demerits. Students in ISS or OSS may not participate in practices or contests during the suspension. Students on disciplinary probation will not be allowed to participate in athletics.

Students declared ineligible at the beginning of a school year may regain their eligibility at the end of the first semester by meeting the academic requirements listed above during their last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable. The restored eligibility of any student must be determined no later than the fifth day of the second semester.

A maximum of two units (or subjects) earned in an approved summer school program may be counted. If a unit (or subject) is repeated in summer school, the higher numerical grade for that unit (or subject) may be used to compute the composite grade average. An accredited correspondence course may be accepted by a school but must be completed before the school year starts. Only one unit of physical education per year may be counted. Any questions concerning eligibility should be referred to the athletic director.

Appendix E: Diocese of Birmingham Family-School Agreement

The purpose of Catholic education is the formation of young people who will be good citizens of this world—loving God and neighbor and enriching society with the leaven of the Gospel—and who will also be citizens of the world to come, thus fulfilling their destiny to become saints. This is all done in an environment of academic excellence, where students learn how to become intentional, missionary disciples of Jesus Christ, grow in virtue and holiness, share the Good News of Christ's love with others, and join in the Catholic Christian community of the school. This Family-School Agreement is intended to further these purposes. Catholic schools in the Diocese of Birmingham are open to all students; however, we are first and foremost Catholic.

When enrolling their child(ren) in a Catholic school in the Diocese of Birmingham, parent(s) or legal guardian(s) (hereafter, “parents”) are asked to sign the Family-School Agreement. In signing the Family-School Agreement, it is understood that:

- a. All children are welcome in the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Birmingham. As part of enrollment, parents must sign the Family-School Agreement.
- b. Our schools exist to pass on the Catholic faith in its fullness to students and to form disciples of Jesus Christ. Parents and schools are partners in this mission; parents are expected to cooperate fully in it and shall supervise their children in accordance with this agreement.
- c. As partners in this mission, students and their parents are all part of the school community. As such, students and their parents agree to live their lives in a way that supports, rather than opposes, the mission of the school.

The school joyfully exercises its responsibility to teach Catholic faith and morals in all fullness. Parents whose religious practices and beliefs run counter to Church teaching might experience conflicts as we maintain mission integrity. Sincere questioning of the practices and doctrines of the Catholic faith—whether by students or their parents—in order to more deeply understand them are welcome; but openly hostile or persistent defiance of Catholic truths or morality are a violation of the Family-School Agreement and may result in denial of admission or dismissal from the school.

2026-2027 Family-School Agreement

Diocese of Birmingham

As parents/guardians, we ask Holy Spirit Catholic School to help us in educating and forming our child(ren). We understand and agree that our child(ren) will be taught the teachings of the Catholic Church in their fullness. Our intention is to respect and cooperate with school policies and with those providing a Catholic-based education to our child(ren)—the priests, principal, teachers, parishioners, and all school personnel. We pledge our full cooperation with the school to prepare our child(ren) to be disciple(s) of Jesus Christ. We will make every effort to supervise our child(ren) in accordance with this agreement.

Name of Father/Legal Guardian

Signature:

Name of Mother/Legal Guardian

Signature:

Name(s) of Child(ren):

Grade:

Holy Spirit accepts your request and commitment for a Catholic education and formation for your child(ren). We acknowledge our obligation to assist you in your responsibility of educating your child(ren). We will make our best effort to form your child(ren) as disciple(s) of Jesus Christ, according to the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Principal's Signature: _____

Date: _____

2026-2027 Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please carefully read the Family Handbook for 2026-2027. Parents and students are expected to know and abide by the policy set forth in the handbook.

Print, sign, and return this form by August 14, 2026.

By signing, you acknowledge that you have read the 2026-2027 Family Handbook and agree to follow the school policies and procedures as stated.

Parent/Guardian Name

Signature

Date

Student Name

Signature

Date