



**PARENT/STUDENT  
HANDBOOK  
2019-2020**

## SAINT AGNES ACADEMY MISSION STATEMENT

St. Agnes is a Catholic parish school, united by God's love, living and sharing our faith daily. We strive for academic success while promoting awareness and appreciation of community involvement as a lifestyle. Within this secure, welcoming environment, our experienced, dedicated faculty and staff celebrate the uniqueness of each child from pre-school through grade eight.

### STAFF DIRECTORY

NAME	TITLE	EMAIL
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## ABSENCES & ATTENDANCE

### NOTIFYING THE SCHOOL

Parents or guardians should please call St. Agnes (413) 684-3143, Inform the school of the absence of their pupil and the reason thereof. Current law requires parents or guardians to furnish the school with a home, work or other emergency telephone where they can be contacted during the school day. Please keep your numbers updated. If a pupil is absent and the school has not been notified by the designated time, the school will call the telephone number or numbers furnished to inquire about the absence.

### ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance enhances learning through uninterrupted access to academic content, more continuous direct instructions and more consistent development of skills and application of knowledge. More excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused; tardiness; and leaving school before scheduled dismissal times have a negative effect on student performance.

- Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 76, Section 2 and Session Laws of 2012, Chapter 222 defines school attendance regulations
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- Each school district is required to have a policy of notifying parents if their child has 5 or more unexcused absences a year. 1.
- School principals are required to request a meeting with parents/guardians of a child who has 5 or more unexcused absences for the purposes of developing an action plan to improve student attendance.
- St. Agnes adheres to and is in full compliance with these regulations
- Parents/Guardians have legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school during the school year.

At St. Agnes, after 5 unexcused absences or Tardies a meeting will be scheduled with the Principal. The solution could be as simple as meeting with the parent or guardian and working together to improve that student's attendance. ***However, in extreme cases or if this pattern continues, the next step may be for the school to solicit assistance from the Court (by filing a Failure to Send) or the Department of Children and Family Services.***

- **Excused absences** include absences due to illness/medical reasons (documented by doctor notes), bereavement, religious holidays, time spend with a family member home on military leave and court appearances (documented)
- If your child is dismissed by the school nurse for medical reasons and she requests that you keep him or her home for an additional period of time, this will also be considered an excused absence.
- **Unexcused absences** include vacation, truancy and absences due to illness without medical documentation.
- If you feel your child is missing school due to anxiety, or emotional causes, please contact us so that we may be of help to you and your child. Your child's safety and success in school are our priorities.

**School starts each day at 7:50.** Students entering the classroom after 7:50 will be considered tardy and will need a late slip from the main office. Students who enter class tardy have a harder time settling in to the classroom routine, and may disrupt classroom instruction. Please make every attempt to schedule medical and other appointments after school hours whenever possible. We appreciate your efforts with this.

If your child will be absent:

- Each day that your child is going to be absent or tardy, please call the school (684-3143) before 9:00 AM. If you have not called by this time, our office staff will be calling you as a precautionary measure.
- To leave a message before 8:00 AM call the school (684-3143) .
- If your child visits the doctor or is triaged over the phone, please ask for a note for the school to excuse your child's absence. These notes can be faxed by the doctor's office to 684-3124 or sent to school when your child returns.
- The classroom teacher will provide make up work as appropriate.

#### Early Dismissals:

- If you need to have your child dismissed before the end of the school day your **MUST** send a note with your child including the date and time of the dismissal and the name of the person who will be picking them up.
- Adults **MUST** report to the office in order to sign out the child.
- There will be **NO** office dismissals after 2:15 due to the afternoon bus dismissal procedure.
- Office staff will call down and have the child sent to the office. Please do not go to the child's classroom to pick them up
- Individuals unknown to the office staff will be requested to produce a proper form of identification prior to releasing the child(ren).
- For the safety of our school community all visitors must use the front entrance and ring the bell to be let in the building.
- **These safety policies are in place for the safety of the entire school community. We thank you for your understanding.**

#### School Cancellation or Delays

- If school is cancelled or delayed due to poor weather conditions or other emergency, parents will be contacted as soon as possible. This notice will occur through an automated telephone service. The status will also appear on the school website at [stagnesc.com](http://stagnesc.com). St. Agnes follows the calendar and cancellation/delay days of the Central Berkshire Regional School District. Central Berkshire school status can also be found on local radio and television (Albany) stations.

#### **A.M. PROCEDURES**

Before the school doors open at 7:40 A.M., students will be directed to morning care. After 7:40 Morning care students will be directed to the playground area or, in the case of inclement weather, to the cafeteria. They may not leave the school grounds. After 7:50 parents and students must come only to the front door on Carson Avenue to be checked in.

#### **HOURS OF SCHOOL OPERATION**

**Full Day: 7:50-2:25**

**Half Day: 7:50-11:00**

**Two-Hour Delay: 9:50-2:25**

#### **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE**

St. Agnes Academy provides a morning care program that operates from 7:10-7:40AM. The cost is \$2.00 per day. The after care program is held daily from 2:30-5:30PM. Students have time to play, use computers, do homework, etc. The cost is \$5.00 per hour Students are supervised in the Pastoral Center by St. Agnes Staff. The discipline policy is the same as that of the regular school day.

Each family that requires these services must complete a registration form and return it to the school office as soon as possible. Forms are sent home on the first day of school or you by calling the school office at 684-3143. Each family that utilizes these services will be billed monthly. Families who owe more than two month's payments will not be allowed to send their children to the program until fees are paid or arrangements are made with the pastor or Principal .

After care ends promptly at 5:30. Please make every effort to pick up your child on time so that our staff can get home to their own families. If your child is picked up after 5:30, you will be charged a late fee of \$25.00. Parents will be notified as soon as possible if after care is canceled because of inclement weather or other extenuating circumstances.

#### **BUS CONDUCT & TRANSPORTATION**

Students are responsible to act as guests on the bus. We do not have to provide transportation to any student who cannot behave on a bus. A student may be suspended from riding the school buses for a period of time. It then becomes the responsibility of the parents to see that the student gets to and from the school.

Pupils transported in a school bus shall be under the authority of the School and under control of the bus driver, a legal representative of the school. The safety of pupils riding school buses cannot be left to chance, and it is imperative that good order and discipline be maintained on each bus. Continued disorderly conduct or persistent refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be sufficient reason for a pupil to be denied the privilege of transportation in accordance with the general rules and regulations of the School Committee.

Students are encouraged to use the same bus stop for both AM and PM stops. If, because of day care requirements, a different PM stop or different PM route is needed, said service may be provided both on a space available and a regular basis only. A student needing a different PM stop or different PM route for one day may be provided with said service in the event of a legitimate family emergency. Any request for deviation from this policy must be made through the office 48 hours in advance of the requested change.

### **WALKING STUDENTS**

Are asked to use the public sidewalks and not to use shortcuts through anyone's property. During the winter months when many sidewalks are snowed in, walking students are asked to walk on the left side of the road facing traffic and to walk in a single line. Walkers may request transportation during the winter months by filling out a "Request for Special Winter Bus Stop" application. These forms are available in the main office in mid-October.

### **CAFETERIA**

Our cafeteria provides nutritious lunches in accordance with all provisions of the Massachusetts Department Elementary and Secondary Education. The cost of a school lunch is \$3.00 and milk is \$.40 as per Federal guidelines. Parents of students who qualify for free or reduced cost lunches should fill out the appropriate paperwork and submit it to the Principal. This is a "blind process" and the status of each child's lunch account is confidential.

There is a lunch account for each child and it is recommended that you deposit funds into that account if your child will purchase school lunch. When students purchase a lunch, their account is debited. When the amount in the account is low, you will be contacted in case you wish to deposit more money. You can send a check in to the main office if you will be using this service.

The School reserves the right to discontinue the lunch program for students whose documents are depleted and proceed with legal action

### **CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Every student is expected to treat the school property, including building, books and lockers, musical instruments, and technology devices with respect. Books and lockers are on loan, and it is the responsibility of each student to return them when required in good shape.

**LOCKERS (where applicable):** Each middle school student will be issued a locker. Students are to use only the lockers they have been issued. Lockers belong to the school and may be examined at any time by the administration of this school.

**TEXTBOOKS:** Once the student has been furnished with textbooks by the school it becomes his/her responsibility. Students must remember that the school has only loaned you these books and that they must be returned at the end of the school year. Students with damaged or lost books will be charged a replacement cost as determined by the administration. This policy extends to library books.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Electronic devices are not to be used in school between the hours of 8:00 AM and 2:35 PM. This includes cell phones, iPods, video games, apple watches or similar devices. These devices must be turned off and stored in lockers during the school day. Students may not use or operate these devices (PCDs) during the school day unless at the direction of teacher or administrator as part of a learning experience.

### **EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL**

At times it becomes necessary to close school, have a delayed start, or an early dismissal. If this occurs before the start of the school day, area radio/TV stations and the St. Agnes website will carry the message. "Blackboard Connect" an automated phone notification service will also be utilized.

## EMERGENCY DRILLS

During the school year we will hold several fire, lockdown and evacuation drills. Each room in the building has its own instructions. Staff will familiarize the students with the procedures to be used.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an integral component of a school experience. However eligibility for participation in any field trip or off-campus activity is contingent on good standing in the following criteria:

- academic standing
- attendance
- violations of the student reporting code
- adhering to field trip deadlines

If No permission form is hand, the child will not be permitted to go on a field trip. NO EXCEPTIONS can be made.

These decisions will be based on a careful study of the individual student and reached by a committee consisting of the students' teachers and the Principal.

## HEALTH CENTER

**Screenings:** All students entering 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade are required by State Law to have a physical exam on file with the school nurse. The exam should be within 12 months of starting 7<sup>th</sup> grade and mailed or brought in to the school nurse.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health requires the schools to conduct the following screenings: Vision- Pre-K-6/ Hearing-Pre-K, 3 and 7/ BMI- 1,3 and 7/ Postural- 5-8.

Parents are notified of the results only when the screening requires physician follow up.

An **emergency card** is kept by the nurse for each student. Please notify the nurse of any changes in your child's health, medication, immunizations or emergency contacts during the school year. In the case of injury or illness, the nurse will provide first aid and nursing assessment and care. If an EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE is summoned, every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian. It is therefore imperative that students return their emergency cards the first week of school. The card has a place for parents to give permission for the nurse to administer a few medications, if the nurse assesses that it is warranted. The administration of any other medication during the school day requires a written physician order (for long term medication) and parent/guardian written permission. All medication must be delivered to the school nurse in a pharmacy labeled container. The student is responsible for reporting to the nurse for scheduled medication.

Massachusetts State Law requires all students show proof of having received the required **immunizations** for their age, before attending school. The only accepted exceptions are for medical or religious reasons. Students should be feeling well before coming to school. Students should stay home if they have had fever of over 99 degrees, vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hrs. Parents are asked to notify the school nurse if their child develops a contagious illness such as mononucleosis, or sustains a significant injury. Students with chronic health conditions and their parent/guardian are asked to meet with the school nurse at the beginning of the year to develop or update their health care plan.

A student is welcome to discuss any problem or concern with the school nurse. A parent or teacher may also refer a student to the nurse if a concern becomes evident. Students are required to get a pass from their teacher before reporting to the nurse during the school day unless it is an emergency situation.

## HOMEWORK

Homework is a necessary and integral component of a student's academic program; it is both meaningful and purposeful. Homework is designed so that students can perform it independently and in a reasonable length of time. We consider homework to be the shared responsibility of the teacher, parent(s), and child. Homework when assigned will be for any one or more of four reasons:

- The assignment will help students to think more deeply about questions that matter.
- The assignment will help students to practice a skill or concept previously taught.
- The assignment promotes good study habits.
- The assignment introduces new content.

Homework is meant to be an essential aspect of the learning experience and will be reflected in the student's overall grade. The cumulative grade for the class will be an accurate indicator of student achievement and understanding of the stated learning standards as a whole.

### **LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS**

At no time during the school day may any student leave school grounds without special permission from the Principal . Bus students are to come on and remain on school property as soon as their bus arrives in the morning.

### **LIBRARY / MEDIA CENTER**

The St. Agnes Library is open during regular school hours. All students in grades K-8 are scheduled to go to the library one time per week

### **IOWA TESTS**

Iowa tests are a nationally normed test that is administered to students in grades 3-7 in the spring. It is helpful for parents and guardians to prepare their children for IOWA tests through the following suggestions:

- Have regular discussions with your child's teacher(s) to see what you can do at home to support your child's work in school.
- Make sure your child gets enough rest, eats properly, and arrives at school on time every day.
- Send your child to school prepared to learn.
- Discuss with your child subjects that need improvement. Talk about whether he or she thinks there has been improvement. If the answer is no, find out why.
- Ask your child about homework that is due tomorrow and next week, and make sure this homework is completed.
- Ask your child to explain what he or she is studying.
- If your child has a disability, ask his or her teacher(s) how IOWA fits into your child's IEP or 504 plan.
- In addition we encourage you to engage your children in each of these conversation points. We encourage you to encourage them to work hard and take all of their studies, which would include IOWA tests, seriously.

### **LITURGY**

All students attend Mass every First Friday of the month and on all Holy Days that fall during the school week. Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend all liturgies and celebrations. Please watch the school calendar and the parish bulletin for announcements regarding liturgies.

### **PLANNER**

Each student will be provided a Planner on the first day of school. Students should have their planners with them at all times. If a planner is lost or damaged, additional planners may be purchased through the office. The planner is to be used throughout the year for the following:

- Keeping track of school assignments and important school activities
- Communication between home and school

## STUDENT DRESS & GROOMING

At St Agnes we are committed to a specific uniform for all students to ensure a safe and respectful school environment. This dress code has been in effect since 2012 and has been shown to enhance our educational interests by

- Focusing attention on learning/Increasing school unity and pride
- Ensuring safety/Reducing discipline problems
- Improving self-respect/Promoting our mission

Gender /Grades	Shirt	Trouser/Skirt	Socks	Shoes	Sweater	Other/notes
Male K-5	White oxford with button down collar	Navy pants	Navy crew socks	Black, tie dress shoes No strobes except for Gym days	Navy sweater vest with logo	Plaid Tie, Black Belt, Shirts tucked
Female K-5	White shirt w/ Peter Pan collar*	Plaid drop waist jumper	Navy knee socks or tights	Black Shoes, Mary Jane Style	Navy button up sweater with logo	
Male 6-8	White oxford with button down collar	Khaki slacks	Khaki crew socks	Black, tie dress shoes	Navy V neck, cardigan or sweater vest with logo	Striped Tie, Black Belt, Shirts tucked
Female 6-8	White oxford open collar shirt.	Plaid skirt or skort, knee length	Navy knee socks or tights	Black Shoes, loafer style no more than ½ inch heel	Navy V neck, cardigan or sweater vest with logo	

**All uniforms must be purchased through Donnelly’s Uniforms with the exception of belts, socks and shoes**

**Gym Uniforms:** For all K-8 students it is a solid gray t-shirt with solid navy blue shorts, sweatpants or wind pants and sneakers. Solid Navy sweatshirts may be worn. All items except sneakers and socks must be purchased from Donnelly’s. Students will not change in and out of gym clothes during the day and so they should report to school in gym uniforms when they have Physical Education. These uniforms must be purchased through Donnelly’s uniform company

**Hair:** Hair should be neatly kept and cut so that eyes are visible. Any hair extensions or artificial color (i.e. purples, green blue, etc.) is prohibited.

**Jewelry:** Bangle style bracelets or any other form of jewelry that is noisy or distracting is not allowed. Earrings should be “stud” style or hug the earlobe. Large, distracting necklaces or headbands are not allowed.

**Makeup:** Makeup in any form is not acceptable for student wear

**Hats:** Hats may not be worn in the building

It is strongly suggested that all items of clothing (especially for the younger students) have a name or initials written on the inside with a permanent marker. Many of the items can be misplaced and returning them to the rightful owner may be difficult without identification,

Students are expected to be in uniform at all times unless they are otherwise notified (field trip, field day, etc.). Any student who comes to school with inappropriate clothing will be required to call home for replacement



clothing. Repeated infractions will be considered a discipline issue and will be treated as such. The Principal reserves the right to determine the acceptability of questionable items.

Parents will be notified if child is not dressed appropriately. If parents can't be notified, child will remain in the office for the day and will be marked absent from classes.

**Other information:** Donnelly representatives will be at St. Agnes in the spring to fit students for uniforms. If you order prior to June 15, there is a 10% discount on the order and there are free alterations. Uniforms are delivered in early August to the Academy. You may pick them up here and if there are problems with the order, including the fit, they can be sent back and new/altered ones will be back in time for the first day of school.

Uniforms in schools have the following advantages:

- Places emphasis on learning, not clothing
- Simplifies dressing and dress code
- Reduces peer pressure and social stigmas
- Encourages distinctions of character and personality instead of appearance
- Equalizes economic diversity
- Lowers long-term clothing costs
- Allows for cohesive presentation as a group
- Facilitates security by identifying outsiders
- Enhances school spirit
- Decreases property theft
- Makes laundering simple

#### **TELEPHONE**

The school telephones are business telephones and are to be used by the students only with permission from an adult.

#### **VISITORS**

All visitors, including volunteers, are required to identify themselves at the main office where they will be required to sign in and wear ID badges until they return to the office to sign out.

#### **SPECIAL SERVICES**

In accordance with the Massachusetts Law any student found to have needs which are not being adequately met by the regular school program, should be referred for an evaluation by student services staff members from the child's home district to determine how best to meet the student's individual needs. Any parent, faculty member, or administrator can request that a student be evaluated. If a parent has reason to believe a student has special needs, please contact your child's teacher or the Principal and the necessary procedures will be implemented.

#### **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

The PTO at St. Agnes is a very active group of parents. All parents are members and encouraged to become involved in the many activities of this organization. They sponsor family nights, special events and field trips for our students and greatly enhance our programs. In order to maintain this reputation we are always looking for volunteers to join our ranks. Please consider becoming an officer by contacting the Principal .

#### **SCHOOL BOARD**

The St. Agnes School Board is an advisory board, which meets each month. Their purpose is to give input to the pastor and Principal for the development, implementation, and assessment of school matters including and in the formulation of the school long range plans.

#### **TITLE I**

The St. Agnes Title I Program offers help in reading and mathematics. It is a federal program administered by local public school districts. Please contact the Principal to discuss eligibility requirements.

#### **ACADEMICS**

All students in grades K-8 have the following major subjects:

Math, Science, Language Arts, Reading, Social Studies and Religion.

In addition, these students take the following minor subjects:

Art, Music, Technology, Physical Education and Spanish.

St. Agnes Academy follows the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks

For a more detailed description of any course, please contact your child's teacher directly.

### **POWER SCHOOL**

St. Agnes uses the PowerSchool Online Portal for grading and attendance in grades 4 through 8.

PowerSchool is an advanced Student Information System used by schools across the country. Its functions include grading, attendance, and the scheduling of courses, teachers and students. PowerSchool is capable of allowing parents and students to access student grades and attendance in real time. The purpose of this feature is to increase communication and collaboration among parents, students, and teachers. While it gives parents and guardians more information about their child's education, at the same time it encourages students to take increased ownership of their learning. Information about how to access Power School will be sent home at the beginning of each year

### **GRADING Grades 4-8**

Students are graded using numerical and letter grades

97-100= A+	74-76=C
94-96= A	70-73=C-
90-93= A-	67-69=D+
87-89= B+	64-66=D
84-86=B	60-63=D-
80-83=B-	Below 60= F
77-79=C+	

There are four (4) reporting (REPORT CARDS) times during the school year:

November      January      April      June

If the student is not producing in a subject as well as the teacher would like, the student's parent or guardian may be contacted at any time. REPORT CARDS should be taken home, signed by a parent/guardian and returned the following school day in the envelope provided to the teacher who issued it.

If you have questions about your child's progress, please contact their teacher for an update.

Note that the grading periods may vary for Kindergarten.

### **SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES**

Students are expected to be on their best behavior at all school-sponsored activities. When attending a school-sponsored activity, all school rules are in effect.

- You are not to loiter outside the building at any time.
- Once arriving at an activity, you **MUST** stay inside. Once you leave, you are not permitted back in the building.
- Prior approval to attend must be made for students who do not attend St. Agnes or students who are homeschooled.
- Students who are suspended, absent or dismissed due to illness on the day of a school activity will not be allowed to participate in that school activity.
- Any student receiving an office disciplinary referral with consequences will not be allowed to attend the next school function; this may include students who chronically fail to complete schoolwork.

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY CODE**

All students are expected to adhere to standards which place their honesty, self-respect, respect for others and qualities of good character above all else.

1. Students must treat teachers and other students with respect, regardless of sex, race, color, creed, ethnic background, socio-economic status, or minority group membership.

2. Students must refrain from impairing the educational process or depriving students or teachers of their right to learn or teach.
3. Students must respect the personal property of others as well as school property.
4. Students must refrain from acts endangering students or teachers, or impairing the condition or maintenance of school buildings or grounds.
5. Students must recognize the authority of teachers and adults.
6. Students must refrain from rude language or conduct.
7. Students must adhere to school rules and attempt to institute change through legally acceptable channels.
8. Students must apply their best efforts in studying and learning in each subject and class.
9. Students must keep their parents and or/guardians informed of all important school matters and events.
10. Students must respect the rights of others.
11. Students must respect the individual right of each human being to differ and be different from them.

### **Violations of Student Responsibilities**

- minor and infrequent offenses will be handled by the individual classroom teacher
- more frequent and/or more serious offenses will result in a formal discipline that will be referred to the Principal

**Progressive Penalties:** (depending on severity of the offense)

**FIRST OFFENSE** - warning

**SECOND OFFENSE** - lose of recess with call or note to parents

**THIRD OFFENSE** - request for parent meeting

**FOURTH OFFENSE** - meet with parents, possible in-school or out- of school suspension

**FIFTH AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES** - meet with parents, possible in-school or out- of school suspension

## **DISCIPLINE**

### **ALCOHOL & CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

Possession and/or distribution of controlled substances (drugs) carries with it heavy penalties and is prohibited by law

**Drug:** As defined in Chapter 94, Section C of the Massachusetts General Laws, stimulants, amphetamines, depressants, tranquilizers, narcotics, relaxants, and hallucinogens or any other controlled substance regulated by the FDA and not administered as a properly prescribed medication.

**Look-Alike-Drug:** A substance or combination of substances, liquid or solid, which stimulate, appear like, or are intended to be drugs. (Examples are dry spices in cigarette wrappers and over the counter prescription drugs passed off as controlled substances.)

**Use:** The ingestion, inhalation, or injection of an alcoholic beverage, drug, or look-alike-drug.

**Possession:** The possession of an alcoholic beverage, drug, or look-alike-drug or drug paraphernalia

- a) on one's person, or
- b) among one's personal possessions such as a locker, book bag or purse, or within the reasonable immediate vicinity of the person.

**If a student is found to be in possession or under the influence of Drugs or Alcohol, they will be immediately evaluated by the school nurse and parents or guardians will be contacted. Parents will be required to meet with school administration and consequences, including suspension and expulsion will be considered.**

### **ASSAULTIVE BEHAVIOR AND FIGHTING**

Any type of intentional physical contact between students is not permitted. Students who engage in assaultive behavior or fighting will be subject to consequences including suspension. Students who routinely engage in assaultive behavior or fighting may be expelled from school.

## **BUS MISCONDUCT & PROGRESSIVE CONSEQUENCES**

Suspension of bus riding privileges does not relieve the responsibility of the student to attend school. It is the responsibility of the parent to arrange transportation for their child to and from school during periods of suspension from bus riding privileges.

- **FIRST OFFENSE** - may result in a warning, which will be sent via letter to parents. If, however, the first offense is serious enough, it may result in suspension of bus privileges, as deemed necessary by the Principal . This suspension will normally be for three (3) days. However, based on the Principal 's judgment of the severity of the offense, this suspension may be for up to ten (10) days.
- **SECOND OFFENSE** - may result in suspension of bus privileges as deemed necessary by the Principal . This suspension will normally be for seven (7) days. However, based on the Principal 's judgment of the severity of the offense, this suspension may be for up to ten (10) days.
- **THIRD AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES** - may result in suspension of bus privileges as deemed necessary by the Principal . The Principal may impose a long- term suspension on any given offense.
- **FOURTH AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES** - may result in the permanent suspension of bus riding privileges.

Parents are responsible for restitution, as defined by statute, for damages to the school bus, or other properties as a result of their children's actions.

## **WEAPONS**

Weapons and "look alike" weapons are not permitted at any school in Massachusetts. A weapon is defined as any item (device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate) that may be used to cause harm. Students found to be in possession of a weapon will be subject to discipline by the Principal in accordance with state and local law.

## **BULLYING & HARRASSMENT**

**Bullying** is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property.
- Places the target at reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property.
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the target
- Infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

**Cyber Bullying** is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings.

**Harassment** is the persistent irritation or torment of a person about the person's race, color, gender, national origin, disability, physical or personal characteristics or appearance.

**Sexual Harassment** is an advance, a request for favors and other verbal or physical conduct of an inappropriate nature. Such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's education by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive educational environment.

St. Agnes Academy will endeavor to maintain a learning and working environment free of all forms of bullying including: physical, verbal, sexual harassment and cyber bullying.

Examples of bullying include but are not exclusive to:

- Intimidation, either physical or psychological.
- Threats of any kind; stated or implied.
- Assaults on students, including those that are verbal, physical, psychological and emotional.
- Attacks on school property.
- Cyber bullying through social networks; i.e. Facebook, texting, email, etc.

School staff will make clear to students that bullying or harassment in the school building, on school grounds, on the bus or school sanctioned transportation, or at school-sponsored functions will not be tolerated and will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion of students, and/or court action. The school will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment, including bullying. The Principal or his designee will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging harassment, including bullying.

Bullying or harassment contact is Fadia Rostom Makdisi, Principal . (413)684-3143

[fmakdisi@saintagnescc.com](mailto:fmakdisi@saintagnescc.com)

## SAINT AGNES BULLYING POLICY

### Introduction (from the Diocese of Springfield Policy)

The Diocese of Springfield ("Diocese") and the Catholic Schools Office ("CSO") believe that each Catholic school in the Diocese of Springfield must be aware that its purpose is rooted in the mission of the Church. Each Catholic school, in fulfilling its role within the educational mission of the Church, must share and live out, through Catholic Christian tradition, the message of Jesus Christ and be committed to providing an integrated Catholic educational environment that permeates all aspects of its daily life and operations.

Each child should be challenged to reach his/her full potential, develop a love of learning and learn in an environment that fosters respect and understanding of one another. It is essential that a safe, positive and productive educational environment be established where students can achieve the highest academic standards and where no student shall be subjected to Bullying, Cyber-Bullying or Retaliation. Bullying, Cyber-Bullying or Retaliation or other like disruptive or violent behaviors constitute conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe and embracing environment. Pastors, principals, faculty, Staff and volunteers are expected to demand that all students behave appropriately and treat others with civility and respect. Bullying, Cyber-Bullying and Retaliation are not to be tolerated.

Accordingly, Mitchell Rozanski, Bishop of Springfield, (the "Bishop") hereby promulgates this Bullying Prevention Policy (the "Policy") which shall be applicable to all Catholic parish schools and all other Catholic schools over which the Bishop has authority to appoint trustees, directors, governors or officers (each herein sometimes referred to as a "school").

### Definitions.

For purposes of this Policy, the following definitions shall apply:

"Aggressor", means a student who engages in Bullying or Retaliation.

"Bullying" is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a Target that:

- causes physical or emotional harm to the Target or damage to the Target's property
  - places the Target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself, or of damage to his/her property;
  - creates a Hostile Environment at school for the Target;
  - infringes on the rights of the Target at school; or
  - materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- For the purpose of this Policy, whenever the term "Bullying" is used it is to denote either Bullying or Cyber-Bullying.*

"Cyber-Bullying" means Bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by:

- wire
- radio
- electromagnetics
- photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

"Cyber-Bullying" shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of Bullying.

**“Cyber-Bullying”** shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of Bullying.

**“Hostile Environment”** means a situation in which Bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

**“Plan”**, Bullying prevention and intervention plan established by a school.

**“Retaliation”** means any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports Bullying, provides information during an investigation of Bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about Bullying.

**“School Grounds”** mean property on which a school building or facility is located or property that is owned, leased or used by a school for a school-sponsored activity, function, program, instruction or training.

**“Staff”** includes, but is not limited to, educators, faculty, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletics coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, and paraprofessionals.

**“Target”**, a student against whom Bullying or Retaliation has been perpetrated.

### **Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation.**

Bullying and Retaliation is prohibited:

- On School Grounds owned, leased or used by a school;
- On property immediately adjacent to School Grounds;
- At any school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off School Grounds;
- At a school bus stop;
- On a school bus or any other vehicle owned, leased or used by the school; or,
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school;

Bullying is also prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school if the act or acts in question:

- create a Hostile Environment at school for the Target;
- infringe on the rights of the Target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

**Who** All students and staff shall be afforded the same protection regardless of their status under the law.

**Retaliation** Retaliation against a person who reports Bullying, provides information during an investigation of Bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about Bullying shall be prohibited.

**Training** Annual training on the Plan shall be provided for Staff and, at the discretion of the Principal, for volunteers who have significant contact with students.

**Publication and Notice** At the beginning of each school year, the Principal or his or her designee shall provide notice to the Staff of this Policy and the Plan. Relevant sections of the Plan relating to the duties of Staff shall be included in the school employee handbook.

Annual written notice of the relevant student-related sections of the Plan shall be included in the school handbook provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms and in languages which are most prevalent among the students, parents or guardians.

The Plan shall be posted on the school's website.

**Reporting** A Parent, Student or member of a Staff shall immediately report any instance of Bullying or Retaliation they have witnessed or become aware of to the Principal . Reports of Bullying or Retaliation may be made anonymously; provided, however no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. A person who reports Bullying, provides information during an investigation of Bullying or witnesses or has reliable information about an act of Bullying shall be protected from Bullying or Retaliation. A student who knowingly makes a false accusation of Bullying or Retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

**Investigation** Upon receipt of such a report, the Principal or his or her designee shall promptly conduct an investigation utilizing (**Exhibit B**) “Bullying Prevention and Intervention incident Reporting Form”

### **Minimum Required Actions.**

If the Principal or his or her designee determines that Bullying or Retaliation has occurred, he/she shall:

- notify the local law enforcement agency if they believe that criminal charges may be pursued against an aggressor;
- take appropriate disciplinary action;
- notify the parents or guardians of the aggressor; and
- notify the parents or guardians of the target and, to the extent consistent with Massachusetts and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of Bullying or Retaliation.

If the reported incident of Bullying or Retaliation involves students from more than one school district, Catholic school, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the Principal or his or her designee first informed of the incident shall, subject to Massachusetts and federal law, promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school district or school(s) of the incident so that each school district and school may take appropriate action.

If an incident of Bullying or Retaliation occurs on School Grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the Principal or his or her designee informed of such incident shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to do so.

**Discipline** The range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against an aggressor for Bullying or Retaliation shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach developmentally appropriate behavior.

**Notification** Parents or guardians of a Target and an Aggressor shall be notified immediately of the incident(s) and shall also be notified of the action(s) taken to prevent any further acts of Bullying or Retaliation. The Dalton Police shall be notified when criminal charges may be pursued against the Aggressor;

**Target Assistance** St. Agnes Academy shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both alleged Targets and Aggressors, affected by Bullying or Retaliation, as necessary. It is the goal to restore a sense of safety for all students and staff. Counseling or referral to appropriate services for Aggressors and Targets and for appropriate family members of said students may be recommended.

**Available Consultation** If any Staff member has questions concerning this Policy, he or she is encouraged to contact the Catholic Schools Office or the Office of the General Counsel of the Diocese.

**Training and Outreach** From time to time there will be ongoing professional development to build the skills of all Staff members to prevent, identify and respond to Bullying.

Parents shall be informed about the Bullying prevention education in the school and shall include ideas about how parents and guardians can reinforce the curriculum at home and support the school; the dynamics of Bullying; online safety and Cyber-Bullying. (**Exhibit E**)

## **SCHOOL RECORDS**

Students have the right to inspect their school records in accordance with the provisions of the "Students Records Regulation" approved by the Massachusetts Board of Education on January 28, 1975, and as amended in Ch.71, 34D and E in the 1981 statutes, Ch. 460, 1 and 2.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Students shall be free from searches and seizures of their persons, papers, and personal effects with two exceptions:

- (1) articles in the possession of students in violation of school regulations may be seized if in plain view or as provided in the 1985 Supreme Court decision: "New Jersey vs. TLO" (This decision gives flexibility to school officials and teachers to conduct reasonable warrantless searches of students.)
- (2) The student's lockers or desks, belonging to the school and supplied for student convenience, may be searched by a school official provided that the official has a reasonable basis to believe that articles are kept therein in violation of law or of school regulations.

## CHAPTER 227: AN ACT PROVIDING FOR DRUG FREE SCHOOL ZONES

Effective July 11, 1989, anyone convicted of dealing drugs within one thousand feet of an elementary, vocational or secondary school will face a two year mandatory prison sentence. It will not matter whether the dealer knew he was near a school, whether it is a public or private school, or in session. The law will pertain to drug distributors, manufacturers or persons possessing a controlled substance with intent to distribute it. A fine of up to ten thousand dollars may also be imposed but not in lieu of the two-year term of imprisonment.

## CHAPTER 269: HAZING

All persons must refrain from "*hazing*" as defined in Chapter 536, Acts of 1985, also known as **Massachusetts General Law Chapter 269**. At St. Agnes Academy, Hazing will be subject to the school discipline codes, including suspension or exclusion.

**Section 17** Whoever is a principle organizer or participant in the crime of "*hazing*" as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment. The term "*hazing*" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

**Section 18** - Whoever knows that another person is the victim of "*hazing*" as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such a crime shall be punished by a fine or not more than one thousand dollars (per state law).

## JURISDICTION OF THE SCHOOL

**6510.1** Students of St. Agnes Academy are considered under the jurisdiction of the school, while on school grounds or within the school, while traveling to and from school for a reasonable amount of time as determined by the administration or while at any school-sponsored activity

## SMOKING POLICY

There will be no smoking, including Cigarette or any another kind, by anyone at any time in any building or on school grounds as per Massachusetts State Law.

## DIRECTORY AND YEARBOOK INFORMATION

The following public notice shall be published in the legal section of the school paper, school handbook, and local newspaper displayed on each school's bulletin board by September 1 of each year:

### NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN:

That St. Agnes Academy pursuant to the U.S. General Education Provisions Act declares the following directory information" as provided in said act, and that information relating to students may be made public if said information is any of the following categories:

- A. Student's name, address, telephone listing.
- B. Date and place of birth
- C. Major field of study.
- D. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports.
- E. Weight and height of members of athletic teams.
- F. Dates of attendance.



- G. Degrees and awards received.
- H. The most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student, and
- I. School-related photographs for use in yearbooks.

Law requires this public notice before such information can be placed in yearbooks or student directories. Any parent of any student in the district may notify the district by notifying the principal of the school in which said student attends, of the parent's desire that none of the above information may be released without the parent's consent, provided that such notification is given the district within thirty (30) days of this publication notice.

### **RIGHTS OF NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

If notified of a pending or actual divorce or separation between parents of a school-age child, the following policy and procedure shall apply:

A natural parent who is separated or divorced from the parent with legal custody of their child shall have the same rights as custodial parents in the following areas, unless these rights have been limited by court action:

- Access to their child's records/Visitation to observe their child, in accordance with the school's visiting policy/Conference with teacher to discuss their child's educational progress.

Custodial parents who wish to limit the above rights must provide the school with a copy of the relevant court document. To save children, parents, and the school from embarrassment and anguish, the following matters -if not already classified by a legal document - should be spelled out in writing by the custodial parent:

- Opportunity for the non-custodial parent to meet privately with a child in school;
- Opportunity for the non-custodial parent to take a child away from the school.
- Lacking specific instructions in writing from the custodial parent or a court document on the matters in the above, school principals will assume non-custodial parents do not have these opportunities.

### **ACCEPTABLE INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY USE AGREEMENT**

Internet access and computer use through St. Agnes Academy is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, student access may be limited or revoked by School officials at any time if this privilege is abused or violates acceptable use in any way. Students engaged in unacceptable use of the Internet or computer use will also be subject to disciplinary action. St. Agnes Academy does not guarantee the reliability of the data connection and does not verify the accuracy of information found on the Internet.

any technology that is not appropriate by classroom teacher is prohibited.

All student use of the Internet is to be conducted under faculty supervision, in classrooms, libraries, or laboratories. Students are responsible for acceptable use of the computers, the Internet, and the network, just as they are responsible for their behavior in other areas of the school, as outlined in other areas of the student handbook.

The computers and associated networks are provided for students to conduct educational research and support educational endeavors.

Students may use their own devices such as smart phones, iPads, notebooks, etc. during classes when appropriate as determined by the teacher. Student and/or parents assume all risk and liability if personal equipment is used. Personal equipment used on school property whether through personal data plans or connection to school provided wired or wireless networks shall be governed by this policy.

#### **Acceptable uses are characterized by:**

1. Abiding by generally accepted rules of computer use etiquette including being polite, using appropriate language, and demonstrating courtesy toward others.
2. Respecting the privacy of personal data.
3. Respecting the integrity of the computer, the computer system, network, and associated data.
4. Pride in one's own work as well as the recognition and acknowledgement of the intellectual property of others.
5. Exercising due care in the utilization of computer hardware and software, as well as to respect and follow procedures and guidelines issued in order to respect and ensure the security of the St. Agnes Academy

computer system and its resource limits. These include, but are not limited to, guidelines and virus protection procedures.

6. Sharing limited resources with others.
7. Reporting misuse of any of the equipment, hardware or software, to school authorities. In addition, students should promptly inform their teachers or school administrators of any on-line communication that is, in any way, threatening, harassing, or otherwise inappropriate.
8. Being accountable for all actions undertaken while using the computer, including Internet use.
9. Using computing and communications facilities in a manner consistent with local, state, and federal laws and policies.
10. Showing consideration toward the school and community.

**Unacceptable uses of the computer and associated networks are characterized by:**

1. Fostering private or personal information about yourself or others. Any individual's information is his or her own property and is not to be accessed, exposed, or exploited in any way.
2. Attempting to log in through or to access another person's files
3. Accessing or transmitting pornographic, obscene, offensive, or threatening material of any kind.
4. Posting or sending messages, accessing social networking sites, either by internet or intranet mode.
5. Violation of St. Agnes Academy's Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy, engaging in racial or other forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment, hazing, plagiarism, cheating, or interfering with the rights of reproduction or transmission of material that is protected by copyright. Infringing upon copyrights is the inappropriate reproduction or transmission of material that is protected by copyright. Copyright laws will be respected.
6. Participation in any communications that facilitate gambling, the illegal sale or use of drugs, alcohol, or weapons, gang activity, or that threatens, intimidates, or harasses any other person, or that violates any local, state, or federal law.
7. Participating in commercial activities that are not directly related to the educational purpose or financial status of St. Agnes Academy, i.e. online shopping in any form, online auction sites, online wallet/credit card software sites, and related activities.
8. Downloading music and music software, games, software/ hardware/firmware upgrades/updates, or any other download not authorized by appropriate school personnel.
9. Use of cell phones during school for any phone calls or non-school related texting/communicating is prohibited.
10. Any deliberate destruction, mutilation, modification, tampering with, or activity which inhibits or interferes with the normal operation of the computer hardware, software, or Local Area Network system, subject to referral to law enforcement authorities.

Failure to abide by the procedures stated in this Policy and the Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy can result in the following penalties:

**FIRST OFFENSE** - 3 days' revocation of computer use privileges.

**SECOND OFFENSE** -10 days' revocation of computer use privileges

**THIRD OFFENSE** - Permanent revocation of computer use privileges

Additional access to network services, such as access to network printers, will be provided to students who agree to act in a considerate manner and demonstrate individual responsibility in their use of the computer system.

Access to our telecommunications network will enable student to explore the many libraries, databases, and other providers of information throughout the world.

St. Agnes Academy believes that the benefits to students from access to these information resources and opportunities for collaboration exceed any potential for abuse.

Ultimately, however, parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media, communications, and information sources. To that end, Saint Agnes Academy School respects each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for independent Internet access.

Students should not assume that their use of the computers and associated systems would be private. All student files and records may be accessed and examined by the school administration, the Network Administrator, and other staff for educational and administrative purposes, including the need to ensure that this Policy is being followed. Pursuant to local, state, and federal laws, administrators and staff may provide access to student files and records to law enforcement authorities. All files will be subject to the St. Agnes Academy Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy and local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

#### **Disclaimer of Liability**

The Internet is accessible to the public. St. Agnes Academy, in its commitment to promote a safe and secure learning environment, cannot screen the Internet for all inappropriate contacts. St. Agnes Academy disclaims all liability for the content of material that a student may access on the Internet, for any damages suffered in the course of or as a result of the student's Internet use, and for any other consequences of a student's Internet use.

St. Agnes Academy reserves the right to change this policy at any time.

Before students are authorized to access the computers and associated networks, including the Internet, they and their parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are asked to sign a statement that they have read and understand St. Agnes Academy's Acceptable Internet and Computer Use Policy and agree to abide by its provisions.

PLEASE SIGN, DATE AND RETURN TO SCHOOL

ACCEPTABLE INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY USE AGREEMENT

Student User Agreement

As a user of the Saint Agnes Academy computer network, I hereby agree to comply with the stated Acceptable Use Policy for the Internet and agree that I will communicate over the network in a reliable fashion and will honor the Policy and any applicable law.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Parent/Legal Guardian Agreement

As a parent or legal guardian of the minor student signing above, I grant permission to my student to access networked computer services on the Internet. I agree that my student will be responsible for any violations of the Policy. I understand that some materials on the Internet may be objectionable and I accept the responsibility for providing guidance and standards to my student when selecting, sharing or exploring information on the Internet.

Please check either Yes or No

\_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

PARENT/STUDENT SIGNATURE SHEET

We have read and agree to be governed by the 2019-2020 St. Agnes Academy Parent/Student Handbook and will support the policies of the school. We understand that these policies apply to the school day, field trips and all school related activities and functions. We understand that this handbook may be amended at any time at the discretion of the pastor/principal. Parents/guardians will be notified in writing of any such amendments.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature(s)

Grade

Date