

**ST. FRANCIS XAVIER  
SCHOOL  
HANDBOOK**

2020 Edition

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*Dear Parents,*

*Welcome to St. Francis Xavier School! We are pleased that you have chosen Catholic education to support your role as primary educators of your children. Our staff is eager to join you by providing the formal educational needs of your family. We are dedicated to strengthening spiritual beliefs, developing academic excellence and building character, confidence and positive self-image. We plan to reach these goals through mutual respect, communication and teamwork among parents, students and staff.*

*Parent involvement is the backbone of success in Catholic education. We encourage all parents to be involved with their child's school and gratefully acknowledge the contributions of time, talent and resources of the many parents and parishioners who have lifted our school to the present day. Our staff is well prepared and ready to move into the future in partnership with you, our dedicated parents of today.*

*This handbook is a living document that grows with us and reflects the continuing refinement of our path for on-going success. Each family will receive one copy for reference to school policies and procedures during their St. Francis Xavier School days. As new information develops, it will be sent home through your child's classroom. Please keep this handbook in a convenient place for quick reference. Of course, if you have a question not addressed in our handbook, we welcome your call to our office.*

*To the future in faith,  
From all the staff at  
St. Francis Xavier School*

## **HISTORY & GOALS**

### **MISSION**

*St. Francis Xavier School, with family partnership, is dedicated to the development of the whole child through the spiritual and academic excellence of Catholic education.*

### **HISTORY**

St. Francis Xavier School began in 1883 as a one-room school house located in the priests' house. Mr. Phillip Schmidt, the first teacher, taught from 1883 to 1890. On August 26, 1890 the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity arrived from Manitowoc, Wisconsin to serve the parish as teachers until 1999. They are remembered as the only religious community ever to teach at St. Francis Xavier School. In 1980, Kindergarten was added and Pre-Kindergarten followed in 1987. The Child Development Center and the Before and After School programs opened in September 1991. St. Francis Xavier School achieved full accreditation status through the Michigan Non-Public School Accrediting Association (MANSAA) on August 15, 1989 and continues to be actively accredited by submitting a yearly report that records the on-going school improvements.

### **GOALS**

Christian education has three principle goals. They are message, community and service.

1. Message: We strive to *teach* the message of Jesus Christ in the Gospel and the tradition of the Catholic Church so students can learn and live lives of faith.
2. Community: We strive to *inspire* our students to live the commandment of Jesus Christ, "Love one another as I have loved you" to build a faith community.
3. Service: We strive to *lead* our students to use their time, talents and treasures to serve the needs of all people.

## **SPIRITUAL FORMATION**

### **SPIRITUAL FORMATION & SUPPORT**

St. Francis Xavier School promotes Gospel values and the message of Jesus Christ in a Christian environment. The school is based in the Catholic faith according to the directives of the Diocese of Gaylord and supported spiritually and financially by St. Francis Xavier Parish. We acknowledge that parents are the primary educators of their children by their word and their example.

Christian values are integrated into all areas of the school curriculum. Students receive daily instruction in Scripture and Catholic doctrine, as well as moral decision-making. The students participate in weekly liturgies, morning all-school assemblies and daily classroom prayer. Opportunities are presented for students to volunteer time and talents to benefit the Parish community and local area. Middle school students are given opportunities to take leadership roles in serving the school and parish community.

### **SACRAMENTAL POLICY FOR SCHOOL AGE YOUTH**

The process of Faith Formation involves our whole parish—priests, parish staff, parishioners, sponsors, godparents, catechists, and especially parents—sharing the faith by inquiring, responding, and telling our stories. This is the faith formation process. It does not happen overnight or in a year. It occurs gradually as a child develops into adulthood with a mature understanding of the Catholic faith. “Passing on the faith” to our children is the responsibility of the parent, the Parish Community, the Director of Faith Formation and the Pastor.

In keeping with the guidance of the Diocese of Gaylord, the General Directory for Catechesis, and the National Council of Catholic Bishops’ document, Sharing the Light of Faith, the following policy has been established for the youth of St. Francis Xavier Catholic community. Please call the director of faith formation at St. Francis Church to sign your child up to receive their sacramental preparation.

## **STAFF**

All St. Francis Xavier School teachers are State Certified. Our teachers view their work as both a career and a ministry. Their respect for each student, confidence in your child’s ability, and genuine concern set a standard for relationships among peers. Our teachers offer personal attention to each student to more fully develop the child’s intelligence and creativity.

## **ST. FRANCIS XAVIER SCHOOL** **ADMISSION POLICY**

Admission to St. Francis Xavier School is for those who seek a Christian education within a faith community environment for the development of the whole child. Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Gaylord do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin in administration of their educational policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletics or any other school administered programs.

Pre-K (2 day program): Student must be 3 years old by September 1

Pre-K (3 day program): Student must be 4 years old by September 1

Kindergarten Program: Student must be 5 by September 1

### **REQUIRED PROCEDURES TO ENROLL** **FOR CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE**

Student Enrollment Form

Support Agreement and Registration Fee

Review & Sign handbook acknowledgment

Birth Certificate

Proof of immunization from vaccine preventable disease

Health Appraisal including vision screening (Kindergarten only)

Proof of Custody in cases of divorce

Proof of Guardianship if child does not reside with a parent

Request for Record Release (Transfer students only)

Social Services Child Information Card (Child Development Center Programs only)

Continuing students need only a new Financial Support Agreement completed and signed by the parent/guardian on file for each new school year of attendance. Updates of address, phone, and emergency data must be reported to the school office as they occur.

When all documents are on file in our administrative offices, the child may enter the classroom.

### **THE TRANSFER STUDENT**

All transfer students are designated as probationary for a period of not less than one semester. The entrance process shall include:

1. Parent and student interview with the principal
2. All required paperwork on file in our administrative offices
3. The student's school record is reviewed or testing is completed to verify that the program is able to serve the needs of the student.

### **CLASS SIZE POLICY**

St. Francis Xavier School determines class sizes annually based on the number of students enrolled per

grade level, the physical space available for classrooms, the qualifications of available teaching staff, and any other factors determined relevant by the principal and pastor. The following class sizes are our maximum ideal.

Grades K-3	17 students
Grades 4-8	25 students

Our first goal is always to make Catholic education available to all enrolled students. This means that class sizes or split classes at any grade level may vary from our ideal. Where class sizes are larger than we can accommodate for Grades Pre-K through Grade eight, enrollment priority will be given according to the St. Francis Xavier Admission Policy, in the order in which the completed enrollment packet was received by the deadline date. Placement will be made according to the following criteria.

1. Currently enrolled students (Contributing SFX parishioners)
2. Currently enrolled students (Contributing area parishioners)
3. Currently enrolled students (Non-parishioners)
4. Siblings of current students (By length of time the family has supported the school)
5. New students (Contributing SFX parishioners by length of time registered in parish.)
6. New students (Contributing members of an area Catholic parish, that does not have a Parish school, beginning with families registered in their parish the longest.
7. Children of Non-Parishioners (Entry on a “first come” basis if the family’s intent and motivation is in accord with the ideals of Catholic education.
8. Transfer students (Contributing SFX parishioners, area contributing parishioners then Non-parishioners)
9. Waiting list (Beginning with all criteria listed above.)

Families with students on the waiting list will be notified when an opening occurs. If the first person on the list chooses not to enroll at the time, the next person on the list for that grade level will be contacted and offered the opportunity to enroll. Names will remain on the waiting list for one school year.

## **FINANCING CATHOLIC EDUCATION**

Catholic education is financed by three sources. First, the school is a part of the parish community ministries and is supported financially through the offertory collection and other community donations. Tuition and fees paid by the school families cover a portion of our budget and fundraising completes the support. Staff members consider their work both career and ministry and accept less than market wages in support of Catholic education.

### **ST. FRANCIS ANNUAL AUCTION FUNDRAISER**

School families are expected to support the annual fundraiser. Yearly commitments of time, talents, and treasures are printed on the financial support agreement. The success of this event is crucial to the school



budget.

## **TUITION AND FEES**

A current list of tuition rates and fees can be obtained by contacting the school office. Students entering St. Francis Xavier School at the second semester or later in the year will be charged one half of the yearly tuition, the full registration fee and any other fees that may be applicable.

To provide our families with a re-enrollment process that is both seamless and paperless, SFX has adopted a Continuous Enrollment system where students will be continuously enrolled until graduation. Families will need to fill the Continuous Enrollment form out online, at our website, for each child that will be attending our K-8 program. Families will only need to fill this form out once, instead of yearly, and will still need to fill out the admission paperwork at time of enrollment. If your child will not be returning to SFX for a subsequent year, written notice must be presented to the school by the end of April.

## **REFUND POLICY**

Because tuition and fees reflect purchases and hiring policies that have already been put into place and for which contracts have been let, refunds will be given only according to the following:

### **All requests must be in writing.**

- \*If a student withdraws from St. Francis Xavier School after registration but prior to the first day of classes, the parent may request a full refund of tuition.
- \*If a student withdraws before the second marking period begins, 75% of tuition is refundable.
- \*If a student withdraws before the third marking period begins, 50% of tuition is refundable.
- \*If a student withdraws any time after the third marking period begins, there will be no refund of tuition.

The registration fee is non-refundable.

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Financial assistance in the form of a tuition loan, grant, scholarship or forgiveness may be available for your family. Free and reduced lunches are available for qualifying families. Contact the school office for further information. Contact the principal to apply.

## **PAYMENTS**

Our staff follows diocesan guidelines in financial matters. All payments are made through the FACTS online site at <https://online.factsmtg.com/signin/3GBMF>. If you have questions feel free to contact FACTS at 1-866-441-4637.

## **STUDENT SUPPLIES**

Students will need a number of consumable items (pens, pencils, crayons...) to start the school year. These items may need to be replenished mid-year. The list is given to families in June or a copy can be obtained from the school website.

# **PROGRAMS**

## **CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

**Daycare Program**-We are pleased to be able to offer child development services within our building from 6:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. Our Child Development Center is designed to offer a loving, stimulating and nurturing Christian environment for your child in daycare, before/after school care or in Pre-Kindergarten classes. The children are encouraged in the development of social skills, sharing, interacting with others and helping those in need. These skills are reinforced positively each day. Age appropriate learning activities are a part of all our daily programs with an emphasis placed on learning through children's play. All of our programs give priority to St. Francis Xavier parishioners and those from supporting parishes. Our pre-school teachers support your child's transition to our Kindergarten.

**Latchkey Program** - Our before/after school program is designed to provide quality care for your school aged child before and after school hours. The staff will direct games, activities and homework time. Children of kindergarten age or older may be registered.

**Pre-Kindergarten Program**- Half day classes are offered for pre-kindergartners. The age requirement must be met on or before **September 1 before classroom entry.**

Pre-K 2 Day	Tuesdays & Thursdays	Child must be at least 3 years old on Sept. 1
Pre-K 3-Day	Monday, Wednesday, Friday	Child must be at least 4 years old on Sept. 1

For further information, current fee schedule and hours of operation, or to enroll your child, contact the **Child Development Center Director at 231-347-3860.**

## **DEVELOPMENTAL KINDERGARTEN**

Meets Monday through Friday from 8:00am-11:00am. Child should be 5 between August and October. Teacher discretion for students falling outside this parameter.

## **KINDERGARTEN**

**Focus**-St. Francis Xavier School offers a Full-Day Kindergarten program. The children attend Monday through Friday. The all-day experience provides for additional learning time to enhance the child's language and social development. Full-Day Kindergarten helps to build self-confidence and independence which provides a positive transition between Pre-Kindergarten and First grade.

**Curriculum**-Learning experiences include religion, reading readiness, math readiness, phonics and language development, science, social studies, music, art, computer technology, physical wellness education, and Spanish. Christian values are integrated into all areas of the curriculum. Field trips throughout the school year enhance the learning experience.

**Admission**-Enrollment is open to any child without discrimination, provided that the school can meet the needs of the child. Children must be **five years old by September 1** of the entering year.

## **ELEMENTARY**

### **GRADES 1-5**

**Focus** -The instructional program of the elementary grades takes into consideration-varied student learning styles. Using a holistic approach, teachers assist students in growing spiritually, socially academically, and physically

**Curriculum** The core subjects for Grades 1-5 are religion, language arts including comprehension, vocabulary, writing, reading and phonics, math, science and social studies. Special classes include music, art, computer technology, physical education and Spanish. We are committed to student success and to providing a seamless transition to our middle school.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL** **GRADES 6-7-8**

**Focus** -The middle school teachers work as a team to guide our middle school students' personal and academic growth. Teachers strive to meet the needs of each individual student for diversity, self-expression, positive social interaction and personal achievement.

**Curriculum-** The core subjects for Grades 6-7-8 are religion, language arts, math, science and social studies. Specials include band through PMS or art, music, computer technology and physical education. Advanced classes, enrichment and extra-curricular activities complete the opportunities for the middle school student. When exiting, our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are well prepared academically and socially for the challenges of High School.

## **PROGRAM ENRICHMENT**

### **FIELD TRIPS**

As part of the classroom curriculum, your child's teacher may plan a traveling field trip. Field trips are part of the curriculum and children are expected to attend. Parents may decide to excuse their child, and this would be an excused absence from school. Parents should not pull their child from a field trip and allow the child to attend the field trip with the parent. A parent permission form will be sent home before each event, asking for the parent's signature of approval. A new form will be sent for each event and must be returned to the teacher in order for the child to participate. **A phone call to the office will not suffice.** The only exception will be the general permission form for walking field trips/media release. (Refer also to SAFE ENVIRONMENT: Background Check/Virtus & Driver/Vehicle Information).

### **LIBRARY**

The main goal of the St. Francis Xavier School library is to encourage reading and library skills. To help develop responsible behavior, students who have books over-due will not be allowed to check out a book. Lost books are to be returned or replaced within one month of the due date.

## **EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Opportunities abound for enriching our students' learning experience. Our offerings are determined by student interest and adult support. Some of the current opportunities are:

Mass Readers & Servers	Parish Children's Choir	National Spelling Bee
Science/Art/Culture Fair	National Geography Bee	Boy Scouts
Young Authors Tea	Young Authors Tea	Girl Scouts
Poetry Contest	One Room School House	Band
Christmas Concert	School Newspaper (Gr. 6-8)	Ellis Island
Yearbook Staff (Gr. 6-8)	Junior Achievement	Enrichment Play
Revolutionary War	Sports (PMS 6-8 <sup>th</sup> )	
Student Council (Gr. 1-8)	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Class Trip	
Sports, SFX basketball, volleyball		

## **TECHNOLOGY POLICY** **CODE OF RESPONSIBLE COMPUTING**

1. Students shall use computer software and related technologies for purposes that are beneficial to others, that are not harmful to others or to others' property, and that are within the law.
2. Students shall not use the school's equipment to transmit, download or otherwise access materials, which could be considered slanderous, racist, sexist, pornographic or inappropriate.
3. Students shall respect others' right to privacy and property. Students will only access, view, or use information or program files belonging to someone else with the owner's permission.
4. Students shall have a conditional right to access the Internet, with guidance, to promote learning and personal growth in technology, information gathering and communication skills.
5. Students shall accept the responsibility for keeping files dangerous to the integrity of school systems from entering the school.
6. Students shall accept the responsibility for notifying the Technology Director or other responsible staff member of violations of this code.
7. Students shall not load any type of outside disk or program onto St. Francis Xavier School equipment.
8. Students shall accept responsibility for monitoring material that may be transmitted via the Internet under any account.

# **ATHLETICS POLICY**

This policy is written for St. Francis Xavier Middle School students who are members or intend to be members of St. Francis Xavier Middle School athletic teams. It is to be carefully read by every student athlete and by the athlete's parent/guardian.

\*See SFX computer, network and internet student and staff acceptable use policy.

## **Philosophy**

The philosophy of the St. Francis Xavier School athletic program is to compliment the home and school in developing the "whole person". Activities of the program are for the benefit of the student and are appropriate to their age and physical growth.

## **Goals**

1. To raise awareness that physical fitness is necessary for the wholesome growth of the person.
2. To provide opportunity for interaction with students from other schools.
3. To develop physical talents and skills, self-esteem and character
4. To develop a healthy, life-long interest in sports through participation.
5. To provide enjoyable recreational activities where Christian attitudes of teamwork, cooperation, good sportsmanship and fair play can be developed.

## **Leadership**

The Athletic Director's responsibility is to coordinate the school's sports programs and to hire and supervise all coaching staffs with the approval and guidance of the principal. This includes monitoring the academic and social conduct of all athletes. In the absence of the Athletic Director, all athletes and coaching staff are under the direction of the principal.

## **Eligibility**

The student-athlete is expected to abide by the requirements below to be eligible to play. If help is needed, athletes are expected to ask. If a student is ineligible, he/she will be required to sit out but attend all practices and games.

1. Student-athletes must be enrolled and regularly attending class at St. Francis Xavier School.
2. Student-athletes must display positive behavior and attitude at school, at practices and games, and in any situation relating to his/her participation in the athletics program.
3. Student-athletes must be achieving grades higher than a D+ in all classes and may have no more than three C's in all classes.
4. Student-athletes must also comply with the Michigan High School Athletic Association rules for eligibility.

To assure compliance with the eligibility rules, the following procedures will be used:

A weekly eligibility list will be completed by the teachers on Friday. A teacher will circle the student's grade if the student has an unreasonable number of missing assignments in his/her class.

A student will be ineligible for one week (Monday to Monday) under the following circumstances:

A student is receiving a D+ or lower, or more than three C's in his/her classes.

Two or more teachers circle the student's grade or a teacher circles the student's grade for two consecutive weeks, meaning the student is behind in his/her assignments.

### **Attendance**

All students are required to attend at least 4 academic hours of classes on the day of the practice or contest to be eligible to participate. Only illness or deaths in the family are considered excused absences. If a student athlete will be absent on the day of a game or practice the parent is asked to call the school attendance desk at 347-3651 ext. 424 to request notification be placed in the coaches' mailbox.

### **Health**

Only students who have a physical card, completed by a physician, and a medical information and release form, signed by the parent/guardian, on file in the school office will be eligible to participate in any practice or contest. This form must be dated within the last 12 months.

### **Uniforms**

On game days, the team shall dress alike either dressed up or in the sport uniform. The athlete is responsible for maintaining the cleanliness and repair of the uniform from the date of issue until the date of return. The return date for all uniforms will be one week following the last contest. Any school athletic uniforms and jackets should be washed. Athletes who do not return uniform items by the specified date will be charged \$1.00 per day for each item until returned. Athletes will be billed for the replacement cost of lost or damaged items.

### **Travel**

Travel to and from any contest must be with the team unless there is a written request by the parent that has been approved by the coach. Any student athlete participating on any interscholastic team must abide by the rules set by the school concerning travel from one school to another.

**Sportsmanship** Participation in athletics is a privilege that is earned and maintained by each individual student. Any student athlete participating on any interscholastic team is responsible for his/her behavior on and off the playing field. The student athlete will practice good sportsmanship while participating as a school team member at home or away.

### **Spectator Conduct**

Obscene cheers, littering of basketball courts, throwing objects, verbal indignities, and other harassing or inappropriate behavior, directed toward athletes, officials and/or spectators has no place in athletics.

### **Liability**

Student athletes participate on a voluntary basis with the knowledge of the risks involved in sports and with the consent of their parent/guardian. The Diocese of Gaylord and St. Francis Xavier School do not assume any legal responsibility arising out of the athlete's participation in sports.

*Students will only be allowed to participate in any athletic activity when the student and parent/guardian have signed and returned the Athletic Policy Acknowledgement to the school office. Contact the athletic director or school office for a copy of this form.*

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Catholic schools depend upon the involvement of parents for continued success. All parents are welcome and expected to be involved at St. Francis Xavier School to the level they are able. The following are some of the ways our parents help make St. Francis Xavier School great.

### **School Advisory Committee (S.A.C.)**

St. Francis Xavier School Advisory Committee serves in a consultative manner to the principal and pastor in matters related to formulation of policy and long-range planning. The committee meets five times a school year (minimally). These meetings are open to the public. The School Advisory Committee follows a current charter to guide policy and procedure.

### **School PTO**

Every school parent is a member of the School PTO. Meetings are held once each month during the school year and all parents are invited and encouraged to attend. The work of the P.T.O. parents is supported by a small dues collected in the fall of each school year and by fundraising.

**P.T.O. Mission Statement** St. Francis Xavier School PTO support fund-raising and strive to provide one another with positive support and encouragement as primary educators and role models. They support the administration and faculty of the school with respect, encouragement and gratitude.

### **Goals**

1. Promote the school family
2. Support the students
3. Support the teachers
4. Involve the parents

### **Student Progress Conferences**

Formal conference times for parents to learn about their child's academic progress are available each year in late fall and as needed in February. Sign up with your homeroom teacher at the new school year open house to schedule an appointment. Parents are also welcome to meet with the teacher any time during the school year, as needed, by making a mutually convenient appointment directly with the teacher.

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

Qualified parents provide a number of volunteer services within our school building each year. If you have a service and time to donate contact the principal about how you might enhance St. Francis Xavier School's curriculum and services. Some services that have been offered are:

Doctors & Nurses	Health Services
Certified Teachers	Substitute Teaching
Police Officers	Cosmetologist
Business/Finance	Junior Achievement Classes
Office/Tech. Skills	Printing & Packaging Mailings
Firefighters	Catholic Schools Week Celebration Support
Foreign Language	Field Day Assistants
Sports	Orientation Day Hosts & Hostesses
Artists	Bake Sale Assistants
Cooks	Used Uniform Sales Service
Restaurants & Caterers	Enrichment Classes
Substitute Cook	Mid-Day Break Student Supervision
Coaching	Picture Day Photographer's Assistant
Enrichment Class	Teacher's Aides
Yearbook Advisor	Holiday Classroom Party Services
Classroom Items for Auction	
Special Events Hospitality Service	
Assistants to Non-Profit and Research Services	

### **School Community Enrichment**

Parent and student interest initiate a variety of activities to build community among our families. They may be organized and serviced by our school PTO, class parents or staff members all with the guidance of our principal. Some of these activities are:

Catholic Schools Week Sunday Mass	Middle School Dances
Awards & Appreciation Receptions	Middle School Lock In
Chili Dinner	Grade 8 Graduation Reception (Hosted by 7 <sup>th</sup> grade students and parents)



## COMMUNICATION

Communication between the teacher and the parent is vital. Please check your child's backpack daily for notices. Any forms or paperwork should be completed and returned as soon as possible.

**Address Change** It is imperative that current address and telephone information be on file in our school office for the family and persons authorized to pick up your child. Please notify the school office immediately when there is any change in this information.

**School Website:** The Principal's Newsletter and School Calendar are available at our school website: <http://petoskeysfxschool.org>. Parents can access their child's daily attendance record and homework assignments through RenWeb.

**E-Mail:** All staff are accessible via e-mail. Use **first initial.last name@petoskeysfx.org**.

**Report of student absence and requests for appointments can be made to staff through e-mail.**

**Friday Folder:** The annual school calendar, monthly lunch menu and other information will come home via your child's weekly envelope. The principal's newsletter and teacher's classroom news, field trip permissions, sport schedules, enrichment opportunities, parent group fundraisers and community opportunities will be included. Please read all materials, sign as required and return to the classroom the next day. Ask the homeroom teacher what the specific weekly envelope procedure will be for your child's class and when to follow up with your child to support responsible delivery.

**School Closings:** Severe weather may warrant the closing of school before the usual end of the school day. We follow the Petoskey Public Schools for all such closings. Information is broadcast on local radio stations and television. In the event that school closes early, we will send your child home by their usual route (busing, walking or daycare). Parents need to have arrangements in place for someone to be responsible for their children if they are unable to be at home. Like your home fire plan, this plan should be discussed and in place before the event occurs.

**Student Records:** Parents have the legal right to view their child's school records under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. **A 24 hour notice is required to arrange an appointment.** As a courtesy, non-custodial parents can receive general school information. The school is obligated to follow particular court orders regarding accessibility to confidential student records.

**Teacher Requests:** The main priority as we split classes for the upcoming year is to look for the right balance of personalities and academic levels that will create a strong classroom community. We will also take into account other requests that may come in and will try to honor your request the best we can. We ask that requests be made to the principal in writing no later than **April 1<sup>st</sup>**.

## TRANSPORTATION

**Petoskey Students** St. Francis Xavier School students who reside in the Petoskey School District can ride the same buses as the public school students. Mr. Don Johnson of Johnson's Busing is the Bus Transportation Supervisor. If you have questions or concerns, contact Mr. Johnson at **348-0178**.

## ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS/ABSENCES

Students are required to attend school regularly in compliance with the law for compulsory attendance. Principals are authorized to require a satisfactory explanation from the parent or guardian for the absence of a student for all or any part of the school day. Parents are required to call to report the child's absence with indication of any communicable disease diagnosed by the child's physician. A report can be called in to the school office attendance desk voicemail @ 347-3651 ext. 424 (24 hr./7da.).

**Tardiness** Students are expected to be in the classroom and ready to work by the 8:00am. Any student who arrives after 8:05am is expected to pick up a tardy pass with parent from the school office and give it to the teacher upon entering the classroom. Frequent tardiness (10/semester) will be addressed with the parent by the teacher or principal for corrective action, up to or including after school detention.

**Official Record of Student Attendance (CA-60)** Tardiness and absence shall be recorded in the student file according to the following measure:

Official Start Time	8:00am
Tardy	Arrival after 8:05 a.m. and before 9:00 a.m.
½ Day (A.M.) Absence	Out of class between 9:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.
½ Day (P.M.) Absence	Out of building between 11:30 a.m. and 3:05 p.m.
Full Day Absence	Arrival after 11:30 a.m.

**Excused Absence** Excused absences are those due to illness of the pupil, medical/dental care or death in the family. If your child is well enough to be in school, he/she is expected to participate in all school activities including liturgies, music, physical education classes and outside recesses.

**Partial Attendance** If for medical reasons, a student must be excused from any part of the school day activities, arrangements must be made at the school office. If a student will need to remain indoors for more than two days, a note from the physician is required.

**Unexcused Absence** A student returning to school after an unreported absence is required to deliver a parent signed, written excuse to the school office or the absence will be counted as unexcused.

**Excessive Absence** If a student is absent ten (10) days in a quarter, in order for the teacher to assign a grade, homework must be satisfactorily completed. This will be brought to the attention of the principal.

**Communicable Disease** Any student absent because of a communicable disease must bring a notice of freedom from contagion from their physician.

**Travel Absence** If parents choose to take their child out of school for an extended period of time, the student is responsible for completion of the work missed. **Teachers are under no obligation to provide students homework in advance.**

## **HEALTH**

The health care of our school community is guided by the Michigan Departments of Health and Education with the assistance of the Northwest Michigan Community Health Department.

St. Francis Xavier School staff are not responsible for the diagnosis and treatment of student illness. The administration of prescribed medication to a student during school hours will be permitted only when failure to take such medicine would jeopardize the health of the student, or the student would not be able to attend school if the medicine were not made available during school hours. For the purposes of this policy, “medication” shall include all medicine prescribed by a physician and any patent drug.

The total responsibility for dispensing or administering any non-prescribed (over-the-counter) drugs, medications, preparations, and/or natural remedies shall rest solely with the parent(s) or legal guardian of and that student.

**Medications** All medications must be stored in the medicine cabinet located in the school office. Before any medication may be administered to any student during school hours, the school shall require a completed and signed medication administration direction form. This document shall be retained in the school office. Contact the school office for the form.

Only medication in its **original prescription container**, labeled with the date of prescription, student name and exact dosage will be dispensed. Office staff will dispense the medication as indicated and record the administration by date and time. Office staff will not accept responsibility for cutting pills.

Students who may require emergency application of medication may have such medication, identified as noted above, stored in the school office.

The principal shall prepare administrative guidelines to ensure the proper implementation of this policy.

**Blood Borne Pathogens** To protect our students and staff from infectious disease transmitted through bodily fluids, the parent may be contacted to bring a change of clothing to school in the event of an accident or other emergency.

**Illness** Children should be free of fever and symptoms based on the current recommendations of our local health department before returning to school after an illness. If a child becomes ill during the school day, the parent or other designated persons listed on the family emergency form will be contacted.

**Food Allergy Policy** St. Francis School recognizes there is an increasing number of students enrolling in our schools with potentially life-threatening food allergies. As Catholic School educators, we recognize it is the responsibility of our organization to work collaboratively in partnership with parents and students to develop appropriate health plans for each student with food allergies, addressing all of their specific needs. Each individual plan will detail emergency treatment while proactively addressing conditions to prevent exposure to specific food allergens. We believe this joint effort between administration, parents and students is the best way to ensure all students with food allergies are SAFE during the school day, while increasing each student’s independence to care for himself/herself.

**Head Lice Policy** Any student with live lice (or nits within one quarter inch of the scalp) may remain in school until the end of the school day. Immediate treatment at home is advised. The student will be readmitted to school after treatment and examination. If, upon examination, the school-designated

personnel find no live lice on the child, the child may reenter the school. Any student with nits (farther than one quarter inch from scalp) will be allowed in school. Parents should remove nits daily and treat if live lice are observed. Periodic and confidential checks of the student's hair by designated school personnel will be done over the next few weeks to assure successful treatment. We request that parents continue daily lice checks and nit removal at home for the next two to three weeks and retreat as necessary according to the product label. If recurrent or chronic cases (continued active infestation after appropriate treatment has started, persistent infestation after six consecutive weeks, or three separate cases within one school year) then a group consisting of parents, teachers, administrators, social workers or other appropriate individuals can work together to determine the best approach to resolving the issue and improve school attendance.

**Injuries** Serious accidents occurring during the school day, especially those that may require medical attention; will be reported to the parents immediately. An incident report and follow up will also be completed for each accident/injury. If the parents cannot be reached, the alternate person listed on the family emergency form will be contacted. Parents are expected to inform the school office staff of any change to the family emergency plan before an emergency occurs. Contact the school office staff for an information update form.

**Middle School Sports Physical** A Sport Physical Form completed and signed by the child's physician and a Play and Medical Treatment Consent signed by the parent/guardian are required on file with the St. Francis Xavier School Athletic Director before a student can begin practice for any school sponsored sport. Contact the Athletic Director at 347-3651 ext. 405 or the school office for this form. Physicals are available through the public school in the spring.

**Accident Insurance** St. Francis Xavier School participates in the Michigan Catholic Conference statewide accident insurance policy. This policy is provided without cost to the families of our students and extends to all students enrolled in a diocesan school. This policy provides limited coverage for school related activities including interscholastic sports. Claim payments for a student accident medical expenses will be made after any personal insurance of the student or parent has made its payment. The parent is responsible for requesting the claim form from the school office and mailing it to the insurance company within 30 days of the accident.

**Please note: If there is any possibility that you may need insurance coverage from Michigan Catholic Conference to help with bills incurred in a school related accident, submit the claim form immediately. Do not wait for your insurance company to notify you about whether they will cover all of your expenses or not; by that time, it may be too late to make a claim. Keep in mind, the claim must be submitted within 30 days of the accident to be eligible for consideration.**

## **STUDENT ATTIRE**

**Outdoor clothing** All students go outdoors during the mid-day lunch break. Please be sure that your child has the appropriate clothing for the season. Boots, snow pants, hats and gloves are required during the winter months.

**Physical Ed Classes** All students participate in Physical Education Classes as part of our curriculum. Students need a pair of athletic shoes that are used only in the gym.

**Uniform Code:** Request current code from the school office. If a student is in violation of the

uniform code

- Step 1 is to send a note home
- Step 2 we will call home
- Step 3 forfeit non uniform day
- Step 4 student will be sent home

**Non-Uniform Days** Non-Uniform Days are listed on the monthly school activities calendar. The student may be dressed in the theme of the day or generally out of uniform, however, no clothing with inappropriate words or pictures can be worn, nor spandex/leggings, skinny jeans, beachwear or torn clothing. On game days, students on the sports team may wear the team jersey *with* the uniform slacks-no shorts. Students in a scouting program may wear the scout uniform on the days scheduled for their meetings.

**Hair Styles:** Students' hair shall be cut in a style out of the child's face to avoid vision obstruction. Boys' hair shall be no longer than the bottom of the shirt collar. No tails or extreme styles.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

### **Kindergarten & Grade 1**

1. Rapid Progress
2. Steady Progress
3. Needs extra time/help

### **Grade 2**

1. Very Successful
2. Steady Progress
3. Experiencing Difficulty

### **Grade 3**

1. Very Successful
2. Steady Progress
3. Experiencing difficulty/Performance below grade level

In the **fourth quarter** of the **third grade year**, students will receive their first letter grades:

**Grade 4-5-6-7-8** At these grade levels, St. Francis Xavier School employs the same basic point value system that is used at area middle and high schools as well as major universities around the country. Grade point averages are calculated quarterly and cumulatively, on a yearly basis.

<b><u>Letter Grade</u></b>	<b><u>Range</u></b>	<b><u>Point Value</u></b>
A	100-94	4.0
A-	93-92	3.7
B+	91-90	3.3

B	89-85	3.0
B-	84-83	2.7
C+	82-81	2.3
C	80-76	2.0
C-	75-74	1.7
D+	73-72	1.3
D	71-67	1.0
D-	66-65	.7
F	64-0	0.0

**Honor Roll:** All core subjects are worth one credit toward the honor roll. Special classes are averaged for one credit.

**Core Subjects**

Religion  
 Language Arts  
 Reading  
 Social Studies  
 Mathematics  
 Science

**Specials**

Computer Technology  
 Music  
 Art  
 Physical Education  
 Band-MS only  
 Foreign Language

**Awards:** Gold: 4.0-3.85      Silver: 3.84-3.7      Bronze: 3.69-3.5

**DISCIPLINE**

One of the goals of our educational program is to encourage a sense of Christian responsibility. Since a respectful atmosphere is essential for academic, social and spiritual growth to take place, these guidelines are intended for the personal welfare of the students as well as for the common good of the school. Disciplinary infractions may affect eligibility for honor roll status.

**K-8 Progressive Consequences**

- 1. Warning with an Interaction:** What did the student do wrong? What Is the next consequence: Student commits to improving behavior.
- 2. Behavior Improvement Plan:** Student describes the inappropriate behavior, establishes a plan and commits to improving behavior.
- 3. Phone Call to Parents:** The student calls the parent using the Calling Form. An adult witness signs the calling form after the call is completed.
- 4. Meeting with the Principal:** Student meets with the teacher and principal to support student behavior change.

**5. Meeting with the Parents:** Student, parents, teacher and principal meet together to develop a group behavior plan to support the student's behavior change

**6. Meeting with the Pastor:** Student, parents, teacher, principal and pastor meet together to revise the group behavior plan to support the student's behavior change.

**7. Expulsion**

**Playground Guidelines** Only students accompanied by a parent or childcare provider should be on the school grounds before or after class time as playground supervision is not provided beyond these hours. Our Child Development Center has been established to assist parents with childcare needs before and after school hours. Contact the Director to arrange for these services.

**Class Time and Mid-Day Recess** The following guidelines have been established for safety and for the support of the re-creative energy of all students.

**1. Respect the Supervisors**

- a. Have a positive, cooperative attitude
- b. Listen and follow directions

**2. Respect Fellow Students**

- a. Include all students in games
- b. Take time to apologize if someone is hurt
- c. Help injured students to the school office

**3. Follow the Safety Rules**

- a. Choose constructive activities (Make playtime re-creative)  
Gymnastics and rough play of any kind is not permitted. (Flips, tackle football...)
- b. Absolutely nothing can be thrown except a ball.  
(No snowballs, snow, ice, stones, woodchips, sticks, dirt...)
- c. Enter the building only when accompanied by a staff member or with the written permission of a staff member
- d. Leave the school grounds *only if* you have a signed parent permission, principal approval, or are signed out in the school office.
- e. Never play around vehicles parked on the playground.
- f. Never climb on the boiler room roof or the wall at the east end of the playground.
- g. Never play near the electrical boxes at the east and west ends of the playground.

**Leaving School Grounds** St. Francis Xavier School is responsible for the safety of the students during school hours. No student may leave the school grounds without the permission of the principal. To minimize classroom disruptions, students who, by parent request, will need to leave the building during school hours will be called from the classroom to meet their parent at the school office. The parent will be required to sign their child out before leaving school grounds.

**Suspension** Suspension shall be for a minimum of three (3) school days. In reaching a decision to suspend, consideration will be given to the welfare and Christian development of the individual student and the practical common good of the entire student body.

Parents shall be notified of the suspension and requested to attend a joint conference with their child, the school principal, and any appropriate faculty member(s). In no instance shall a student be asked to leave the school during regular school hours and proceed home without prior

notification to and consent of the parent (s)/guardian. The decision to require a student to proceed home alone or await the arrival of a parent/guardian shall be made jointly by the parent/guardian and the principal.

The conference with the parent(s)/guardian and child will take place within the three (3) school days from the suspension, if possible. If the principal and parent(s)/guardian and child are unable to meet within that time period for any reason, the conference shall be scheduled as quickly as possible. Within that same three day period, the principal will continue investigation of the facts and circumstances leading to the suspension, and shall document the reasons for the suspension. Documentation of the suspension shall be placed in the student's file.

The principal shall have discretion to extend the suspension beyond three (3) days, with notification to the parent(s)/guardian.

**Property Damage** The parents/guardian of students will be held responsible for the replacement of property and/or materials damaged or lost through willful negligence of their children.

**Expulsion** Expulsion is defined as the permanent dismissal of a student from the school within a given school year. Three (3) situations can lead to expulsion.

1. Moral or physical endangerment of the student body, staff or building.
2. Prolonged and open disregard for school policies or authority
3. Habitual truancy

Expulsion of a student from a Catholic school is such a serious penalty, the principal uses all available means to discover the cause of a student's problems and will attempt to utilize remedies such as suggesting that parents refer the student to a guidance clinic, physician, or priest if, in the principal's discretion, such remedies are likely to resolve the problems. There may, however, be situations where immediate expulsion of a student from the school is appropriate. These situations include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of any school or church personnel, student or volunteer.
2. Assault, battery, or any threat of force or violence directed toward any school or church personnel, student or volunteer
3. Use, sale, possession, or control of narcotics or illicit drugs on or about school/church property
4. Use, sale, possession, or control of alcoholic beverages on or about school/church premises
5. Vandalism of school/church property
6. Possession or control of any weapon or other dangerous instrument on or about school/church premise
7. Any criminal behavior

### **Grievance Process**

St. Francis Xavier students and their parents have the right to appeal teacher and/or administrative decisions with which they disagree. At each level, a meeting shall take place if requested by either party. If all parties cannot achieve consensus after a wholehearted attempt, either party can appeal



to the next level. The request for a review at a higher level must be made **in writing within five days** of receiving the previous decision. The levels of appeal are as follows:

- Level 1        Student's Teacher
- Level 2        School Principal
- Level 3        Pastor
- Level 4        Diocesan Superintendent

## **SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

**Adults at School** All adults entering our building are expected to identify themselves and the purpose for their visit. They are required to sign in and out in our main office, obtain a school pass from our office staff and wear the pass while in the building or on the school grounds.

**Background Check** Diocesan policy requires all adults working with our students whether in the building, driving or chaperoning school sponsored sports, activities or field trips to provide proof of background check. All volunteers must also complete Virtus training. Applications can be obtained from the school office or on our website. Plan at least two weeks in advance.

**St. Francis Xavier School Anti-Bullying Policy** St. Francis Xavier School is committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for our students. We believe that all people have dignity as they are created in God's image, and each individual has immense value. As a Catholic community we are called to reflect the values of Jesus and to have respect for all people. St. Francis Xavier School will not tolerate behavior that negatively impacts the safety of any student. A student shall not intimidate, harass, or bully another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes: direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults, such as teasing or name-calling; and social isolation or manipulation.

St. Francis Xavier School expects students and/or staff to immediately report incidents of bullying to the principal or designee. Staff who witness such acts take immediate steps to intervene. Each complaint of bullying should be promptly investigated. This policy applies to students on school grounds, on the school bus, and at school-sponsored activities.

The following behaviors are prohibited: bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, retaliation against those reporting such defined behaviors, and making knowingly false accusations of bullying behavior. Any person who engages in any of these prohibited behaviors regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions.

### **Definitions and Criteria:**

**Bullying** – when a student or group of students attempts to take or use power over another student which results in someone being physically or emotionally hurt. Bullying is intentional, often repetitive (though can consist of a single interaction), and often involves an imbalance of power between the bully and his / her target. Retaliation against an individual who reports bullying or that cooperated with a bullying investigation, will also be identified as bullying.

## **Bullying Subtypes:**

**Physical Bullying** – using physical force to hurt another by behaviors that may include but are not limited to hitting, punching, pushing, shoving, kicking, spitting, pinching, or getting in the way of or holding a student. It is also physical bullying to interfere with another student's belongings, to take or break possessions, and to demand or steal money.

**Verbal Bullying** – repeated or pervasive taunting, name-calling, belittling, mocking, put-downs, intimidating, or demeaning humor. It is also considered verbal bullying when a student uses hostile gestures towards another student.

**Relational Bullying** – when a student influences other student's friendships and relationships with others, including but are not limited social exclusion, spreading gossip and rumor, ostracizing or scapegoating. Relational bullying also includes writing words or creating drawings about another student designed to hurt or humiliate that student.

**Cyber Bullying** – the use of cell phones, text messages, emails, instant messaging, web blogs and postings to bully another student in any of the ways described above. Examples of cyber bullying include but are not limited to sending threatening or insulting messages by phone and email, posting embarrassing pictures and personal information about others, forwarding to others a private email or text message that was meant for a single individual, and spreading hurtful rumors online.

## **Determination of Bullying**

To determine if an act is bullying, the claim will be investigated by the school using the previously discussed definitions/criteria. The following examples are judged to be bullying only if the action is deliberate, one sided and there are repeated instances. It is important to clarify the types of behavior that we feel are unacceptable but are not examples of bullying:

- Where two children of equal size and strength have a fight or dispute in or out of school.
- Where one child calls another a name on one occasion.
- Where a child has hit or kicked as a response to being hurt him/herself.

These types of behavior are not regarded as bullying but they are regarded as unacceptable forms of behavior.

## **Procedure for Reporting/Action Regarding Allegations of Bullying or Harassment**

Any employee, volunteer, student, parent, or guardian of a student at St. Francis Xavier School who feels that a person has been bullied or harassed or who feel they have witnessed incidents of bullying or harassment shall contact the building principal immediately.

All reported bullying concerns will be handled seriously and promptly by the faculty and administration. The principal or designee will interview those with bullying or harassment.

Based on the findings from the investigation, the school will determine an appropriate course of action including steps to restore a sense of safety. The school will maintain documentation of alleged cases of bullying and subsequent investigation.

**Fire, Tornado, and Lockdown Drills** All schools are required by law to hold ten emergency drills during the school year.

***In the event of a fire or other building disaster, parents should meet their children in the Church or in the Central School Gymnasium on State Street.***

**Locked Door Policy** Our building has secure entrances that are locked and programmed to be open at specific times.

**Parking--Not Allowed** at no time should a parked or idling car block the driveway entrances to the playground. Parking on the playground is prohibited on school days from 8:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.

**Parking--Drop offs** maximum ten-minute drop offs can be made in front of the Child Development Center on Howard Street.

**Personal Property/Lost & Found** Student clothing and supplies should be labeled with the full name of the child. Unlabeled lost & found items become the property of the school and will be discarded or redistributed to local charities.

**Telephone Use** While we try to encourage students to be well prepared for the day, we understand that things come up. We will allow children to make phone calls to their parents/guardians if they have forgotten something or need information from them along with emergency use. All other calls are not permitted.

**Cell Phones:** Students are required to keep cell phones off and in the locker during school hours. The teacher may remove a cell phone from the student's possession and retain until meeting with the parent.

**Transportation** Diocesan policy requires all drivers of personal vehicles who transport students to school sponsored events to provide St. Francis Xavier School with complete and up-to-date information regarding vehicle, driving record and car insurance. To transport students, each vehicle must be insured for a minimum of \$500,000 (Single Combined Limit).

**Weapons Policy** The following is the official weapons policy of the Diocese of Gaylord established for all Catholic schools of our diocese.

## Definitions

- A. **Weapon:** A “weapon” is an object, which can be used to threaten or injure another. It includes but is not limited to, “dangerous weapons” as defined by state law, which includes a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with blade over 3 inches long, pocket knife opened by mechanical device, iron bar or brass knuckles.
- B. **School Premises:** “School premises” include the school building and the adjacent grounds, including, but not limited to, parking playground, student lockers, and busses.
- C. **Immediate Vicinity:** The “immediate vicinity” of the school means within a block radius of the school, and any off-premises school activity site.

## Rules

- A. Any student discovered to be, or suspected of, carrying, possessing, concealing, or transferring a weapon upon school premises or in the immediate vicinity of the school will be immediately excluded from classes pending investigation.
- B. A search may be conducted to verify the suspicion or clarify the discovery. The search may include, without prior warning, an inspection and search of a student’s pockets (the student empties his/her own pockets), book bags, purse, lunch pail, locker, automobile, or any other items the student has in his/her possession or control. Questioning for the same purposes may include questioning by the principal, a member of the administrative team, a schoolteacher, the pastor/pastoral administrator, or a person acting in the place of any of these persons.
- C. If a student refuses to cooperate or interferes with a search, said refusal to cooperate or interference will result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from school.
- D. The student will be detained whenever the school has reason to suspect a student may have a weapon or when a weapon is present on school premises or in the immediate vicinity of the school. Depending on the nature of the weapon, the local police department may be notified.
- E. Any student found to be in violation of the school’s weapons policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Any student determined to have brought a weapon to school shall be expelled for a period of not less than one year.
- F. The rule regarding expulsion can be modified by the school principal or superintendent on a case by case basis whenever, in the principal’s sole judgement:
  - i. The weapon was not possessed by the student for use as a weapon
  - ii. The weapon was not knowingly possessed by the student
  - iii. The student did not know or have reason to know that the

object constituted a dangerous weapon

- iv. The weapon was possessed by a student at the suggestion, request or direction of a school or police authority
  - v. Mitigating circumstances justify other disciplinary action besides expulsion
- G. If an injury occurs in school, on school premises or in the immediate vicinity of the school, as the result of a weapon, the principal and teachers shall endeavor to:
- 1. Have students remain calm and avoid panic.
  - 2. Notify the police, the pastor/pastoral administrator of the parish/inter-parish school secures the school.
  - 3. Notify the Superintendent's Office of the Diocese of Gaylord.
- H. Principal may use discretion to keep non-school persons out of the school and/or retain students in the school until police have completed their investigation.



**ST. FRANCIS XAVIER SCHOOL**  
**HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I have reviewed the St. Francis Xavier School Handbook and understand that the policies and procedures addressed are the guide for actions of all students, staff and parents in any school-related activity.

Print Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name	Grade
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

*Please sign and return to the St. Francis Xavier School K-8 Academic Office*