2026-2027

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School

Student-Parent Handbook

“Where Fatih and Knowledge Flourish”

1129 Grant Street, Brunswick, GA 31520
912-265-9470
www.sfxcs.org

Dear Families,

Peace be with you!

As we begin a new academic year at St. Francis Xavier Catholic School (SFXCS), I extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to all our students and families. It is both an honor and a blessing to walk this journey with you, united in faith and committed to academic excellence.

At SFXCS, we are dedicated to nurturing the whole child, mind, body, and spirit. Rooted in the missionary example of St. Francis Xavier, our mission is to form a Christ-centered community where students grow in faith, knowledge, and service. Our dedicated faculty and staff provide a rigorous academic program infused with Gospel values, empowering students to discover their God-given gifts and grow into compassionate, responsible, and faith-filled individuals.

Our Catholic identity is the heart of all we do. We believe that a strong partnership between home and school is essential to the spiritual and academic growth of each student. We encourage open communication and active involvement from families as we work together to support your child's success. Please feel free to reach out with any questions, concerns, or ideas throughout the year.

Registration of your child at SFXCS is considered an agreement on the part of the student and parents to adhere to and cooperate with the philosophy and policies of SFXCS. This Student-Parent Handbook contains valuable resources designed to provide important information about our school's policies, procedures, and programs, all guided by our Catholic values.

We ask that both students and parents review the handbook carefully and refer to it throughout the year. Following these guidelines ensures a smooth and successful experience for all members of our school community.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education and spiritual formation. Together, guided by the teachings of Christ, we can make this school year a positive and rewarding experience.

Yours in Christ,

Mrs. Annemarie Marr

"In Thee, O Lord, have I put my hope." St. Francis Xavier

RIGHT TO AMEND – THE ADMINISTRATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO AMEND THIS HANDBOOK. NOTIFICATION OF ANY AMENDMENTS WILL BE WRITTEN & DISTRIBUTED TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY VIA EMAIL. STUDENTS AND PARENTS MUST ACCEPT AND ABIDE BY THE SCHOOL'S POLICIES AND PROCEDURES IN ORDER FOR THE STUDENT TO ATTEND THE SCHOOL.

Diocese of Savannah Office of Catholic Schools policies pertaining to

students, instruction, and Early Learning Programs

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Faculty And Staff

Bagley, Nicole	Administrative Assistant
Benton, Alicia	Middle School ELA
Brown, Teria	Counselor
Burton, Cassidy	Middle School Religion & ELA
Chitty, Pam	Middle School ELA and Social Studies
Collins, Deirdre	Paraprofessional, EDP
Davis, Mary	Reading Specialist/Mentor Teacher
DeVooght, Libby	Director of Advancement
Fell, Mark	Middle School Religion & Social Studies
Govignon, Kari	Middle School Math & Religion
Greer, Edwin	PE
Griffin, Gina	Middle School ELA
Hinson, Allie	5th Grade
Jones, Veronica	PS3 Paraprofessional
Jones, Xavier	Middle School Math, Math Specialist PreK Paraprofessional
Large, Maria	1st Grade
Marr, Annemarie	Principal
Montague-Long, Jill	Middle School Science/Media
Myers, Raquel	PS3 Teacher
O'Connor, Katie	Assistant Principal
Orange, Brooke	2nd Grade
Perez, Anna	Custodian
Perez, Ophelia	Custodian
Baker, Dawn	Kindergarten Paraprofessional
Smith, Anne	Middle School Science, K-5 STREAM
Smith, Josephine	Pre-K Teacher
Spaeder, Kelley	Students Services Coordinator
Toler, Megan	Kindergarten
Turpin, Robyn	4th Grade
Walsh, Leena	Music
Walsh, Melissa	Cafeteria Manager
Yanik, Amber	Art, Religion
Zeno, Frank	Marketing Coordinator

Mission Statement

Inspired by the Sisters of St. Joseph, St. Francis Xavier Catholic School provides an excellent academic foundation, promotes spiritual formation, and instills within each student a desire to serve others.

Philosophy - Educational Beliefs

Inspired by the Gospel of Matthew - 24:32 "Let the fig tree teach you a lesson."

Academically, the Xavier student enriches his/her mental abilities, articulates views orally and visually, becomes technologically sound and evaluates objectives and solutions.

Inspired by the Gospel of Mark - 1:17 "Follow me."

Globally, the Xavier student develops self-guided discipline and dignity, discovers cultural respect, participates in serving others, and raises consciousness of social justice.

Inspired by the Gospel of Luke - 24:29 "Stay with us."

Physically, the Xavier student gains insight to cooperative participation, experiences self-improvement, and develops a keen sense of sportsmanship in competition.

Inspired by the Gospel of John - 20:19 "Peace be with you."

Spiritually, the Xavier student models love of God, appreciates the value of prayer in his/her life, and lives out his/her faith in Church, family, and society.

Profile of the St. Francis Xavier Graduate

Graduates from St. Francis Xavier Catholic school stand at the threshold of young adulthood having grown spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically within a nurturing Catholic community. Throughout the years at St. Francis Xavier Catholic School, students cultivate the knowledge, character, and virtues that prepare them to lead lives of faith, purpose, and service. They leave knowing that Christ is the reason for this school—the unseen but ever-present Teacher in every classroom, the model for our faculty, and the inspiration for our students.

Spiritually, the Xavier graduate knows and loves God, cultivates a personal relationship with Christ through prayer and the sacraments, actively participates in the life of the Church, seeks truth, and allows the Gospel to guide daily decisions. Grounded in Catholic teaching, the graduate makes moral choices, encourages others in their faith journey, and recognizes that faith and reason work together in the pursuit of truth.

Academically, the Xavier graduate demonstrates intellectual curiosity, a strong work ethic, and a commitment to lifelong learning. The graduate reads, writes, thinks critically, solves problems creatively, communicates effectively, reflects on thoughts and actions, and takes ownership of personal growth. Technology is used responsibly and purposefully to enhance learning, collaboration, and innovation while applying knowledge to real-world challenges.

Personally and Socially, the Xavier graduate lives with honesty, integrity, humility, and respect for the dignity of every person. The graduate understands that choices have consequences, exercises sound judgment,

adapts to an ever-changing world, works collaboratively with others, stands courageously for what is right, and continually strives for personal, intellectual, and spiritual growth.

As a Servant Leader, the Xavier graduate recognizes every person as created in the image of God and responds with kindness, compassion, justice, and mercy. The graduate willingly shares time, talent, and treasure, seeks opportunities to serve those in need, especially the poor and vulnerable, cares for God's creation, and contributes positively to the Church, school, local community, and the world.

Physically, the Xavier graduate values health, wellness, and responsible stewardship of the body. Through teamwork, perseverance, self-discipline, and sportsmanship, the graduate develops confidence, resilience, and an appreciation for cooperative participation and lifelong well-being.

Together, we prepare Xavier graduates to become faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, compassionate servant leaders, thoughtful lifelong learners, and responsible citizens who strive for excellence while joyfully fulfilling their vocation to serve God and others. With hearts rooted in faith and minds committed to truth, they look confidently toward a future that extends beyond this world and into eternity.

Mission Statement of the Diocesan Department of Catholic Education

In fulfilling the Bishop's vision for the catechesis of children, the Department of Catholic Education - the Office of Catechesis for Children, and the Office of Youth Ministry, commits expertise, time, and energy to provide systemic standards for leadership, support, and service to those who live the mission to prepare hearts, educate minds, reveal Christ and cultivate the Roman Catholic tradition.

School History

The history of the Congregation of Saint Joseph, whose sisters began St. Francis Xavier School, is a long and vivid one – a history of over three hundred years of unswerving devotion to the cause of education of youth in accordance with the highest Christian principles.

Actually, the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph had two beginnings. It was founded at LePuy, France, in 1650 and experienced rapid flowering, only to be dispersed during the storm of the French Revolution, when its convents were pillaged, its records lost, and its members imprisoned or executed for their devotion to Christ.

Soon after the storm of the Revolution had passed, the saintly Mother Saint John Fontbonne restored the Congregation, and not only quickly, regained its former achievements but continued and extended its work in the instruction of the young, the care of orphans and of the sick in hospitals, and the teaching of the deaf. God signally blessed her work, and today there are flourishing communities of the Sisters of St. Joseph in all parts of the world.

In 1836, the Sisters became missionaries to the New World at a time when Native Americans were a familiar sight throughout this country. To their first log cabin convent in St. Louis, Missouri, the Congregation can now conduct its numerous foundations throughout the United States, and in Canada, Japan, Peru, and Chile. The Sisters of St. Joseph are now engaged not only in education, but in a multitude of ministries.

St. Joseph's School was established in Brunswick in 1900. Reverend P.J. Luckie, S.M., requested that Rt. Reverend Benjamin J. Keiley, D.D., Bishop of Savannah, start a Catholic school in St. Francis Xavier parish. The Sisters of St. Joseph started and staffed the school in September of that same year.

A former boarding house on the corner of Richmond and Howe Streets became the first school. Three rooms downstairs were converted to classrooms and accommodations were made for the Sisters on the second floor. The school opened with from 60 to 70 pupils. Even in the beginning, this number of pupils proved to be too many for the building to accommodate, so in the spring of 1902 property was purchased and work begun on the colonial type building which served as convent and school for so many years.

In 1953 a new convent, designed by C.M. McGarvey, was built for the sisters. In 1955 plans were begun by Reverend James Cummings, S.M. for the erection of a new school. The new name, St. Francis Xavier School, replaced St. Joseph School as a tribute to the people of the parish who generously supported a parochial school.

The new building was located at 1121 Union Street, directly east of the Church property, and was also designed by C.M. McGarvey. The building originally consisted of eight classrooms and a Kindergarten, a cafetorium and kitchen, a library and book supply room, lavatories, Principal's office, health room and teacher's lounge. The main building is rectangular in shape surrounding a lovely courtyard. Foreseeing that an addition would be necessary, Father Burkort bought the house and land south of the school in 1961. Two new classrooms were built in 1964. Since then, another extension includes a building for Kindergarten, and one for the Pre-School.

In 1993, because of the decline in the number of sisters, the convent was converted into office space for several ministries of the parish, including the Christian Formation Center with offices and meeting rooms.

A Parish Center, shared by the parish and school, was dedicated in 1996.

By the grace of God, and the support of many generous benefactors, a 30,000 square foot, two-story school was built on a piece of property owned by the parish. The new school was dedicated on May 7, 2023, with the first school year opening in August 2023.

The school principal and staff work to carry out the charisma of the Sisters of St. Joseph as they educate and graduate capable, confident, and caring students who will share their gifts of faith and knowledge in the community and the world.

Accreditation

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School is fully accredited by Cognia Global Commission, the parent company of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). The school is also a member of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA).

In accordance with Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (Bright from the Start) regulations, all parents are hereby notified that St. Francis Xavier Catholic School is in compliance with all Bright from the Start licensing requirements.

Diocese of Savannah Policy Compliance

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School is compliant with all policies and guidelines of the Office of Catholic

Schools and the Diocese of Savannah as published in the current policy manual.

Drug and Tobacco Free Environment

In keeping with Diocesan policy, St. Francis Xavier Catholic School maintains a drug-free and tobacco-free environment.

CIPA Compliance

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School is in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Our school provides technologies that meet all content filtering requirements to ensure that our children are protected.

Responsibility: Parent and Student

We are in partnership with each family, and together we motivate children to lead self-responsible lives in any community setting. Through the light of Christ, we share the joy and pain of enriching future generations of successful Catholic school graduates. "They will listen to My voice and become one flock with one shepherd." (John 10:16)

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

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

During these formative years (Pre-K to 8th grade), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of their educational partner's efforts in the quest to challenge, yet nourish, the student to reach their potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. Dividing authority between school and home, or within the home, will only teach disrespect for all authority. If there is an incident at school, as parents, you must make investigating the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good, mature behavior and relationships.

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

A child must take responsibility for the grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments. This responsibility also extends to

times of absence.

Together, let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child become the best person they can be. Throughout the year, reflect on the profile of an Xavier Graduate to enable our open relationship to be one of fairness and compassion, while we envision together God's children becoming loving, considerate, and self-giving members of society.

Admission

Schools in the Diocese of Savannah admit students regardless of sex (unless traditionally a single sex school), national origin, or disability (if with reasonable accommodation on the part of the school, the disabled person could be accommodated) in the admission of students and in the administration of policies regarding education, athletics, or any school-sponsored programs. In admitting students, Catholic schools give preference to Catholic students whose families are registered at the sponsoring parish; secondly, to Catholic students whose families are registered in a parish other than the sponsoring parish.

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New Student Application Process

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School begins accepting applications for new students each November for the upcoming school year. Applications are submitted online through FACTS; the application link can be found on our website at www.sfxcs.org. A non-refundable application fee of $40.00 per student is required at the time of submission. After an application has been received, our Enrollment Coordinator will reach out to answer any questions and schedule a campus tour. To complete the enrollment process, families must submit all required documentation, including birth certificate, Social Security card, Immunization records, Recent report cards, Standardized test results, and Teacher recommendations (if applicable). We look forward to welcoming new families to our school community!

The principal reviews all applications. Acceptance decisions are based on the school's ability to meet the applicant's needs. Acceptance is generally based on a review of the following factors: age, report cards, standardized test results, student evaluations, teacher observations, and space availability. Falsification of records (birth certificates, report cards, etc.) or the withholding of pertinent information regarding the student may result in the denial or revocation of admission to St. Francis Xavier Catholic School. Additionally, families who are not in good standing with their current school (i.e., past due tuition) will not be considered for admission until such time as all past due accounts are brought current. St. Francis Xavier Catholic School is unable to accept international students.

New Student Referral Program

Any current SFXCS family who refers a family that attends an Open House or takes a school tour will receive a $25 tuition credit. Any current SFXCS family who refers a family that registers a child at the school and completes one full semester (18 weeks) will receive a $200 tuition credit. Notification of your referral must be

made to the admissions coordinator in advance of the referred family's visit to the school.

Age Requirements

PS3 applicants must be 3 years old, Pre-K applicants must be 4 years old, Kindergarten applicants must be 5 years old, and all first-grade applicants must be 6 years old **on or before September 1.** It is also standard practice to expect incoming second, third, and fourth grade students to be 7, 8, and 9 years of age, respectively. All applicants, *regardless of grade level*, must be fully potty trained. Students who are currently enrolled in a Catholic school and relocating to the Golden Isles area will be considered for eighth grade.

Placement Exams

Applicants may be required to complete a placement exam. While the screening is required for all applicants, it does not guarantee acceptance. Factors to be considered in the decision to accept any student are academic performance, effort, behavior, work-study habits, and the school's ability to meet the student's needs.

Placement tests are only one means of determining placement and whether SFXCS can meet the applicant's needs. All students are accepted on a probationary basis for the first year. In some circumstances, additional probationary terms may be implemented.

Admissions Priority

After meeting the admissions qualifications, priority consideration will be given respectively to siblings of current students, students who are children of school employees, Catholic parishioners from St. Francis Xavier Parish, Catholic parishioners from any of the local parishes, students transferring from another Catholic school, and students of other religious affiliations.

Admissions Checklist

For each child applying to St. Francis Xavier Catholic School, the following items must be received before the student's application file is complete and considered for admission. Although the school may request some or all these records from a previous school, ultimately it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to furnish these records. While there is no deadline to apply, incomplete application packages are managed on an individual basis and are reviewed only when they are complete.

- **Application Form**: Complete one form for each child applying for admission.
- **Application Fee**: A non-refundable $40.00 fee must be submitted for *each* application.
- **Baptismal and Birth Certificates**: *For Catholic applicants,* the child's Baptismal Certificate and Birth Certificate must be on file. Please upload certificates through FACTS application. *For Non-Catholic applicants,* please upload the child's birth certificate through FACTS.
- **Parish Verification**: Catholic families must be registered and practicing their faith at a Diocesan Catholic church to qualify for the Catholic parish subsidized tuition rate. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that they are registered and actively supporting their local parish through sharing time, talent, and/or treasure. Parish participation will be verified every year to determine tuition status for the following school year.
- **Student Evaluation/Teacher Recommendation Form**: It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that the appropriate form is submitted to the student's current school. Upon completion, the school forwards this form directly to St. Francis Xavier Catholic School.
- **Authorization to Release Student Records Form:** For students applying to grades 1-6, please submit copies

of: 1) your child's latest report card indicating promotion or retention status and all past report cards, 2) the results of any standardized tests your child has taken, and 3) a complete attendance record and behavior report. This form requests records from the current school. Official transcripts are required upon acceptance.

Immunization Requirements: Upon acceptance, all students must submit the Georgia Certificate of Immunization, Form 3231 **prior** to the first day of school. In addition, Form 3300, Certificate of Ear, Eye, and Dental Examinations, must be completed for all students. A complete record is required by law in the State of Georgia and by the Diocese of Savannah. The Diocese of Savannah requires that all students be completely immunized. Requests for medical exemptions must be submitted to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools and will only be considered if the student's pediatrician completes a statement indicating the contraindication of immunizations and provides a schedule of when immunizations would resume. Only the Superintendent of Schools has the authority to grant an exemption.

Continuing Enrollment

A student's continued enrollment at St. Francis Xavier Catholic School is contingent upon both the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) abiding by all school policies outlined in the school handbook. This includes, but is not limited to, student behavior, academic performance, regular attendance, and maintaining a current financial account status.

Continued enrollment in any given school year and re-enrollment in any subsequent years, are subject to the parent's/guardian's continued support of the mission of the school as documented in the school handbook, the maintenance of a demonstrably effective and supportive relationship between the school and the parents/guardians, and the timely payment of all debts owed to the school. Re-enrollment in any subsequent year is subject to mutual agreement. The student, parents, or school administration may withhold the agreement, with or without cause.

Re-enrollment Procedure

Current students in good standing will be eligible for continuous re-enrollment for the upcoming school year. The non-refundable registration fee will be collected through FACTS on or about March 1. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the principal if their child will not be returning to St. Francis Xavier the following school year.

Student Withdrawal Procedure

When a student withdraws from St. Francis Xavier Catholic School, the parent is required to notify the school in writing prior to the withdrawal. The student's transcripts will be sent to the new school upon written request from the new school. Tuition and all other financial obligations must be paid in full before transcripts are sent. Unless a student is being withdrawn due to a move away from the area, tuition is due as follows plus any additional fees or costs accrued from the beginning of the school year:

- Withdrawal prior to the start of the academic school year from April 1 of the current school year until the start of the next school year – 25%
- Withdrawal or dismissal from the start of school through November 1 – 50%
- Withdrawal or dismissal from November 2 – February 1 – 75%
- Withdrawal or dismissal after February 1 through the end of the year – 100%

Transcripts

Transcripts (report cards and standardized test results), health records, and attendance records will be sent directly to the student's new school. Transcripts are not provided to parents. Parents wishing to send transcripts to various schools to which they have applied may do so at no extra cost by submitting a written

request. St. Francis Xavier Catholic School follows the guidelines of the Buckley Amendment (FERPA). Parents have the right to review their children's records, and those records are kept private within the guidelines of the law. Parents wishing to review their child's records should submit a request in writing at least 48 hours in advance. Records remain the property of the school and may not be removed from the school.

Tuition Agreement

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School offers an outstanding education at a lower cost than most schools in the area. Tuition can be kept at a moderate level due to church subsidy. As a result, no family pays the true cost to educate their child. Tuition rates have been set in two categories: "Catholic" and "Non-Catholic" members. Catholic parishioners who decide to enroll their children are expected to contribute to their parish and take an active role in the community to receive the Catholic rate for tuition. The non-refundable registration fee provides textbooks, workbooks, achievement testing, and classroom materials. Each family provides stewardship to the school through their time, talent, or treasure which is accessed yearly through volunteer hours and contributions to our 1900 Fund Annual Appeal. Fifteen (15) volunteer hours are completed through a variety of activities and logged in FACTS. Families are assessed $60.00 per hour for any unfulfilled volunteer hours. As a requisite of enrollment, a tuition contract must be signed and kept on file by the school.

Tuition

Each family must sign a Tuition Contract for each new school year. The contract will outline the current year's tuition and fees, as well as the payment terms. All families are required to participate in the FACTS service that utilizes electronic banking.

Tuition is the financial obligation that parents accept when their child is admitted to St. Francis Xavier Catholic School. SFXCS relies on this revenue to cover its operating expenses, which include educating and nurturing its students. Advance notice of a problem with paying tuition is required. Please contact the principal or business manager for assistance in finding a solution.

We offer three tuition payment options, all of which **require** establishing a FACTS tuition payment account:

- **Option 1: Annual Payment** - There will be a one-time payment in full to be made on or before July 20. *Diocesan policy does not permit cash/check payments to be accepted at the school. FACTS enrollment is required.*

- **Option 2: Semi-annual payment** – There will be two payments made to achieve payment in full. The first payment must be made on or before July 20. The second payment must be made on or before January 20. *Diocesan policy does not permit cash/check payments to be accepted at the school. FACTS enrollment is required.*

- **Option 3: Monthly payments** – These payments will be broken down into 10 or 11 equal monthly payments through FACTS Tuition Management Program, starting either on July 5 or 20 and ending on April or May 5 or 20, depending on the date selected at enrollment time. This option requires each family to set up an account with FACTS Management Company, Inc. *Diocesan policy does not permit*

cash/check payments to be accepted at the school. FACTS enrollment is required.

Withdrawal prior to the start of the academic school year from April 1 of the current school year until the start of the next school year will incur a penalty of 25% of the full tuition rate per student.

Delinquent Tuition

Non-Payment Penalties

St. Francis Xavier reserves the right to charge late fees, deny admission to final exams, restrict access to online grades, withhold report cards, transcripts, and/or records, and administratively suspend or withdraw students if payments are not received in a timely manner. All tuition collection issues **are** subject to appropriate credit reporting and collection agency follow-up. St. Francis Xavier Catholic School will exercise its legal right to pursue collection of delinquent accounts and will hold parents responsible for all collection costs, including, but not limited to, court expenses and legal fees.

A family 60 days in arrears for payments through FACTS will be considered delinquent and their child(ren) will not be allowed to return to school until parents meet with principal and pastor or making the account current.

Parents assume responsibility for payment. Students with delinquent tuition, Extended Day fees, incidental charges, and/or Sports Fees will not be eligible to participate in co-curricular activities. Online access to grades, report cards, transcripts, and/or records will not be released to the family or any other educational institution while there are delinquent tuition or fees on their account.

Any student, including graduating 8th-grade students, whose tuition is past due as of **May 1**, will not be allowed to participate in graduation or end-of-year activities in addition to the penalties described above. Transcripts, report cards, awards, and diplomas are the property of the school and will not be issued to the student (or the student's parents) if the student's account is delinquent.

A returning student's account must be current prior to the student's last day of school of the current school year. If the account is not current, the student may not be permitted to re-enroll for the upcoming school year.

Returned Checks or Automatic Bank Drafts

Families will be charged $30 for any automatic drafts returned by the bank for insufficient funds or account blocks. This fee will be charged by FACTS. Any returned checks received by the school will be charged $30. Payment of these fees will be subject to the same non-payment policies described above. Families with a pattern of Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) through FACTS will be placed on a cash/money order only status.

Tuition Assistance

Families who have a demonstrated financial need may qualify for tuition assistance. Tuition assistance funds are limited and vary from year to year. One does not need to be Catholic to qualify for tuition assistance; however, some funding sources do have special qualification requirements (i.e., GOAL Scholarships, Endowment Fund, Diocesan aid, etc.).

The following policies and procedures were developed by the St. Francis Xavier Catholic School Finance Committee and the school's administration to establish objective guidelines for awarding tuition assistance:

- The school will announce the availability of tuition assistance applications through its usual methods of communication – school newsletter, website announcements, and/or e-mail. It is the applicant's responsibility to complete the FACTS Grant and Aid application online.
- A completed FACTS enrollment application **must be on file and completely processed by FACTS** before an applicant's request for tuition assistance will be considered. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that FACTS receives all required documents in a timely manner.
- Applications must be submitted to FACTS **on or before** April 1 to receive consideration for tuition assistance. Applications submitted to FACTS after the published deadline will be considered only after all on- time applications have been processed. **Due to limited availability of tuition assistance funds, there is no guarantee that funds will be available after the deadline date**.
- FACTS will process each application and calculate an estimated need based upon data supplied by the applicant and supported by tax returns and other applicable financial documentation.

Tuition assistance awards are determined as follows:
- Only applicants with a demonstrated financial need (as calculated by FACTS) will be considered for tuition assistance.
- Applicants with a recent bankruptcy **will not be considered** for tuition assistance.
- Applicants with a past due balance on their school account **will not be considered** for tuition assistance unless arrangements are made to pay down the balance before the start of the upcoming school year.
- If the overall need for all applicants exceeds the amount of available tuition assistance funds, the principal, in consultation with the Finance Committee and/or Pastor, will adjust the amounts awarded to achieve an equitable distribution among all applicants with a demonstrated need.

All applicants will be notified of the amount of assistance awarded, if any. Applicants will be required to sign and return a form indicating that they accept or decline the award. If a tuition award is declined, that money is returned to the tuition assistance fund from which it was disbursed for future use.

Qualification for financial assistance **does not imply acceptance** into the school program; admission to the school is a separate process.

Other Fees/Payments

The Diocese of Savannah requires the use of FACTS for all payments made to the school.

Registration Fees

Registration fee for all families per child is $360.00.
Application fee for any new student is $40 per student.

Tuition Refunds

Tuition refunds will be considered only for families who have prepaid tuition and who withdraw due to a documented relocation. Any approved refund will be calculated according to the prorated tuition charges outlined in the Student Withdrawal Procedure section of this handbook. Documentation of the move is required.
Students who leave as a result of disciplinary action will not be granted a tuition refund.
Refunds of withdrawal charges and prepaid tuition are at the discretion of the finance committee and will not be considered until the parent/guardian has signed an official notice of withdrawal.

EDP Charges

The Extended Day Program is available from 7:00-7:30 A.M for a monthly prepaid fee of $50 per student or a drop-in fee of $6.50 per day per student, and from 3:15-5:30 P.M. for a monthly fee of $250 per student or a drop-in fee of $20.00 per day per student. EDP charges are paid through FACTS from September through June for the previous month's charges except June billing will be for May and June charges. These rates are a flat monthly or daily rate, and it is applied for any amount of time used. This includes students who are not picked up from tutoring or clubs. A late fee is assessed when children are picked up after 5:30 P.M. at the rate of $1.00 per minute for the first 15 minutes. Under no circumstances should a child be picked up after 5:45 P.M.

Child Custody

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order, to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to academic records and other school information regarding his or her child. If duplicate records (report cards, etc.) and/or communications (newsletters, etc.) are required, it is the parent's responsibility to inform the school of their preferred method of delivery (mail, email, etc.). If a court order specifies that no information is to be given, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide the school with a certified copy of the order. Likewise, if there is a court order prohibiting or restricting access to a child by a non-custodial parent, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide the school with a certified copy of the court order.

Student Insurance

Insurance is purchased annually for every child by the school. The cost is determined by the Diocesan Finance Office and is included in the Registration Fee. The insurance policy covers the student during school hours and during school-sponsored events. School accident insurance is a secondary coverage to the parents' own health care coverage. School claims are processed and filed after the parents' primary insurance has paid its part of the claim.

General Academic Policy

Grade Reporting

The professional staff, under the supervision of the principal, is responsible for reporting a student's academic progress to parents. This reporting typically includes:

- Online grade reports (grades 3 to 8) – updated weekly
- Frequent performance updates (grades Pre-K to 2nd)
- Report Cards – issued at the conclusion of each grading period
- End-of-quarter dates are listed on the school activities calendar

Report Cards

Report cards are electronically shared with parents no later than two weeks after the close of the nine-week quarter. Report cards are issued four times each school year, and they reflect what the student has mastered over the course of the nine-week marking period.

Report cards include: a comprehensive listing of courses/subjects; a letter or numeric equivalent indicating achievement levels (based on the Diocesan grading scale); a record of attendance and conduct and specific comments (when applicable).

Grading Scales

Each grade level has various components of evaluation that are appropriate for the grade level of the students. In Pre-K– second grade, progress is determined by class work, classroom performance, formal, and informal evaluation. Student mastery of curriculum standards is reported using a standards-based report card.

Pre-K – 2nd Grade:

Academic and Specials Classes (Art, Music, P.E., Spanish, Technology, Effort, and Conduct)

- **4** Performance exceeds grade level standards at this time.
- **3** Performance meets grade level standards at this time.
- **2** Performance is progressing toward grade level standards at this time.
- **1** Performance does not meet grade level standards at this time.
- **N/A** Not assessed this marking period.

Student grades in third through eighth grades are determined by class work, classroom performance, projects, long-and short-term assignments, as well as formative and summative assessments.

3rd - 8th Grades:

Academic

- **A** 94-100
- **B** 86-93
- **C** 77-85
- **D** 70-76
- **F** Below 70

Specials and Elective Classes
Art, Music, Technology, P.E., Spanish, Effort, and Conduct are graded as follows:

- **E** Excellent
- **S** Satisfactory
- **N** Needs Improvement
- **U** Unsatisfactory

Honor Roll – Quarterly

Students in grades 3 – 8 are eligible for recognition on one of the school's two Honor Rolls:
Principal's List All A Honors recognizes students who have earned a 94% or above in all academic classes for the quarter and an E in all Specials and Elective's classes.

Honor Roll A/B Honors recognizes students who have earned an 86% or above in all academic classes and at least one A for the quarter and an E or S in all Specials and Elective's classes.

Highest GPA: The student with the highest GPA cumulative grade average from 6th, 7th, and 8th grades in their academic core subjects and religion, and who has been enrolled in at least two honors classes in 8th grade will wear an Honors Cord during the Graduation Ceremony.

NJHS Students: Students who are members of NJHS will wear an NJHS Recognition Cord during the

Graduation Ceremony.

Communication Regarding Student Progress

All teachers will communicate daily with students and a minimum of weekly with parents through up-to-date FACTS grade reports, phone calls or email regarding poorly done or missing assignments. Parents will be contacted immediately if improvement does not occur. Parents may receive other forms of communication from their child's teacher or administration as needed.

Conferences

Parent/Teacher or Student-Led conferences are scheduled twice a year. Conference dates are found on the school calendar and parents will receive information to sign up for a conference time. Parents are expected to take advantage of the opportunity to discuss their child's progress with his or her teachers. All other conferences will be held as requested by the parent or the teacher. A member of the administration may be present at any conference.

During the school year if a teacher sees that a student is not working to potential, if the student's average has dropped significantly, or if the student is in danger of failing, prompt notification will be given to the parents.

Academic Probation

Athletes must maintain at least a 70/S in all subjects, including conduct and effort. Eligibility will be based on the previous quarter. Students will not be eligible to play sports if the previous quarter grades are below 70. The Athletic Director will ensure compliance for athletics; sponsors will ensure compliance for non-athletic activities.

Faculty/Staff Availability

Faculty and staff members may be contacted by email or a phone message left with the school office. Teachers check e-mail regularly, but please allow up to 24 hours for a response. Faculty and staff home telephone numbers are not available to parents, and faculty and staff members should never be contacted at home for school-related matters.

If a parent wishes to schedule a meeting or conference with a teacher, the parent is to contact the child's teacher as noted above. Parents with a scheduled appointment are to sign in at the main office to receive a visitor's badge. *No one is permitted to go to a classroom or other part of the building to speak with a teacher during the school day without a scheduled appointment. If a question or problem arises concerning a child, the parent is to contact the teacher first.*

The administration should be contacted only after all efforts at resolving concerns or issues directly with the teacher or staff member prove unsuccessful. If an issue cannot be resolved with school administration, the proper chain of command would be the pastor, the Diocesan Superintendent of Catholic schools, and the office of the Bishop, in that order. The SFXCS school advisory board is not a grievance committee and is not authorized to resolve any school issues.

Retention Policy

Most students will be successful in the school's regular program of sequential learning. However, testing,

diagnosis, and actual performance may indicate that some students cannot complete a year's work in that time. Therefore, it may become necessary to retain a student for an additional year in a particular grade. Retention may be considered based on any of the following criteria:

- The student is functioning below grade level in reading and/or mathematics;
- The student is failing any of the core subjects*;
- The student's maturity level is significantly below what is expected for the grade in question and is seriously impacting academic progress; (Social retention is not permitted after grade two.)
- The student has accumulated **15 or more absences**.

The final determination regarding retention is the decision of the principal.

Students in grades 3-6 who have failed no more than two core subjects during an academic year will be required to receive remediation over the summer equal to no less than 60 contact hours per subject area through an approved summer school program. Failure to successfully remediate according to school guidelines indicates the parents' choice to withdraw their child and seek an alternative educational placement. Students who have received appropriate remediation may return to the school in the following year with the status of academic probation. Withdrawal may be required if a student fails one or more core subjects (final year average) while on academic probation.

In consideration of social, developmental, and emotional factors, the Administration may place a student who is otherwise eligible for retention at the next grade level, but the Administration reserves the right to not offer re- enrollment to the student if it is determined that the student's needs cannot be met at St. Francis Xavier Catholic School.
(**Core courses are defined as: religion, language arts, reading/literature, mathematics, social studies, and science*.)

Curriculum

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School's commitment to the learning process is reflected in a curriculum that adjusts to the unique needs of individual students while respecting the rights, interests, and personal dignity of each child. School's sound academic curriculum prepares students to become productive members of society in a world that is becoming increasingly competitive. The curriculum at SFXCS encompasses the following subject areas: religion, language arts, reading (grades Pre-K-5), literature (grades 6-8), mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, technology, Spanish, physical education, and STREAM. Each student is required to participate in every subject area taught at his or her grade level. All curriculum is developed by the Diocese of Savannah and is based upon both national and state standards.

Religion

Religion is the heartbeat of St. Francis Xavier. The goal of the religion curriculum is to instill in students an enthusiasm for living the Catholic faith and to provide an in-depth religious education that includes experiences in prayer, the sacraments, and service, while stressing the integration of Christian principles into the total curriculum. All classes participate in weekly liturgies, celebrating a variety of themes that relate to everyday living. Catholic students in grades 2 – 8 are offered the opportunity to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. Catholic students in 2nd grade are prepared for the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion and Catholic students in grade 8 are prepared for the sacrament of Confirmation, although the sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated in 9th grade. In addition, students celebrate special occasions such as feast days of patron saints, Thanksgiving, and

Christmas with special programs and activities. As part of our Diocesan approved religious instruction program, the principles of Christian family life are integrated into the curriculum across all grade levels and include a focus on the sanctity of human life from conception to death. Students in 5th, 6th, and 7th grade also receive instruction on human reproduction as part of this program.

Students put their faith into action through participation in various service projects. During the school year, SFXCS sponsors several drives for school approved organizations. For example, at Thanksgiving food items are collected and distributed through St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry or Sparrows Nest, at Christmas we conduct collections for the needy in our local community, and every year during Catholic Schools Week we focus on a service project that aligns with our mission and serves those in need. During Lent students donate their loose change using the Rice Bowls provided by the Catholic Relief Services. Religion is the thread that weaves faculty, staff, students, and parents together.
Catholic families are expected to participate in weekly Sunday Mass. Students of other faiths are encouraged to attend the weekly weekend religious service of their faith community.

Language Arts

The language arts curriculum incorporates reading, writing, speaking, listening, spelling, grammar, and vocabulary in assisting students with the acquisition of effective language skills. Besides focusing on reading and comprehension, the reading series in grades K-5 takes a linguistic approach to reading that emphasizes word attack skills (phonics and decoding strategies), language skills, and vocabulary. An emphasis on vocabulary development begins in the primary grades. In middle school novels are used to introduce students to different literary genres and to integrate reading skills. Language arts in middle school also focuses on grammar skills and assorted styles of oral and written communication.

Heading

Proper school heading is required on all papers in grades one to eight. Points will be taken from the assignment if the procedure is not followed.

+ +

JMJ or (AMDG)

Subject **Full Name**

Assignment **Date**

Students in grades 4 through 8 are expected to use their best neat cursive writing in dark blue or black ink for all hand-written assignments and tests with the exception of Math class, where pencil is required.

Mathematics

The study of mathematics as a means of exploring the world plays an integral role in the education of each student at St. Francis Xavier Catholic School. While contributing to the development of the whole person, mathematics enriches life and provides students with practical tools for daily living. The school's mathematics program exposes students to a wide variety of mathematical experiences. A hands-on approach to the basic mathematical ideas and concepts encourages children to experience mathematical relationships and inter- connections. Special attention is given not only to the acquisition of the required basic mathematical skills, but also to critical thinking and problem solving.

Science

The science curriculum provides students with a basic knowledge of science as it relates to them and to

their own experiences. The science program exposes students to a full range of activities through which science may be explored. Science integrates and develops basic knowledge, investigative experience, and curiosity through student involvement. We are now equipped with a state-of-the-art Lab Learner program for students in grades Pre-K through 8th grade. All students have the opportunity to participate in Lab Learner.

Social Studies/History

Students begin with a study of their world, communities and regions, and their interactions. In 2nd grade, students are introduced to Georgia history and learn more about the government of the United States. Third grade includes the study of the United States as well as economics. Fourth grade delves into the study of Native Americans and early U.S. history along with a deeper study of economics. Fifth grade focuses on U.S. history from the Civil War period to the present day and includes a study of the U.S. constitution. Sixth grade introduces students to Australia, Europe, Latin America, and Canada. Seventh Grade introduces students to Africa, The Middle East, and Southern/Eastern Asia. Eighth grade focuses on Georgia history.

Fine Arts

The fine arts curriculum develops and stimulates the artistic abilities inherent in all children. Art and music classes develop many valuable skills, including physical and mental coordination, self-expression, group participation, and cooperation. In collaboration with the Golden Isles Youth Orchestra (GIYO), students in grades 5-8 can gain experience playing the violin and receive private lessons. Opportunities are provided for students to highlight their talents.

Technology (Media)

All students gain a working knowledge of computers through classes in the computer lab. A variety of software programs complement classroom instruction. Students learn proper keyboarding techniques, as well as word processing skills. State-of-the-art multimedia computers enable students to conduct online research activities and utilize technology skills to creatively enhance learning and communicate effectively. Interactive whiteboards are used by teachers in the classrooms to enhance their lessons. Chromebooks are available for classroom use.

Spanish

Spanish is offered at SFXCS for Pre-K through 8th grade. Major emphasis is placed on oral communication as students learn to tell basic information about themselves. They acquire vocabulary and learn sentence structure by listening to Spanish spoken to them and then making connections through the use of media, visuals, and nonverbal communication.

Physical Education

Physical education classes assist in the development of physical, motor, and developmental skills, while teaching the importance of teamwork and providing lifetime fitness skills. Health topics are integrated into the physical education curriculum at all grade levels.

Library

The school's library provides a wide range of materials that play an integral role in enhancing the school's instructional program. Use of these valuable resources helps to develop each student's ability to effectively conduct research and retrieve information. Students in grades PreK through 5 have scheduled weekly

library visits with their homeroom teacher, providing regular opportunities to explore literature, develop reading skills, and foster a love for books. All students are encouraged to visit the library and may check out books on a regular basis. Students are charged a replacement cost for lost books.

Counseling

All students at St. Francis Xavier Catholic School have access to a school counselor. The counselor functions as a resource for students on a short-term basis. Our school counselor is not able to provide long-term counseling services. Parents of students in need of long-term counseling should seek the assistance of an outside professional. The school counselor does NOT function as a disciplinarian, that role is reserved for the classroom teacher and the school's leadership team. The school counselor instead provides a listening ear and shares strategies and exercises that may assist students in working through whatever issues they may be facing. The school counselor will keep confidential any information entrusted to them so long as no one's life, health or safety is at risk. The counseling program is part of the regular school program. As such, parental consent is not necessary for students to visit with the counselor; however, parents will be promptly notified of any concerns.

Students who express any thoughts or plans of self-harm or harm to others will be brought to the school counselor, or in his/her absence, to the school principal immediately and the student's parents will be called to the school. A clearance letter from a licensed physician or mental health provider may be required before the student returns to the school.

Academic Support

Teachers may offer extra help/tutoring one afternoon per week—from September through April—to provide additional academic support for students who are struggling (earning a 77% or below). Participation is by teacher invitation, and sessions run until 4:15 P.M. In addition, students who qualify may receive supplemental support through the Title I tutoring program or from an instructional support teacher during the school day.

Standardized Testing Program

Students in Kindergarten through 8th grade will take the NWEA MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) at several points during the school year. The MAP will assess language arts, math and science skills and will allow teachers to track progress throughout the year and adjust instruction to best meet the individual needs of each child. MAP is a computer adaptive assessment that takes less than 45 minutes per subject to complete.

Computer adaptive assessments adjust the difficulty of the questions according to the students' abilities. The result is that the MAP produces more reliable results and causes less stress and frustration on the part of the student. Since the test is completed online, results are also available immediately. Students in grades K-1 take the Religion benchmark twice a year and the ARK (Assessment of Religious Knowledge) is administered to all students in grades 2-8. These assessments enable the administration to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's religious instruction program. It also provides an understanding of the students' faith development. Parents will be notified as to the dates and results of the assessments.

School Liturgies

Students participate in church liturgies and attend Mass on a weekly basis, each Wednesday, and other days as listed on the school calendar. Parents are welcome to attend these Masses. **Please, do not stand up or move your seat to take pictures or videos during our liturgies**. This is ***NOT*** a performance; therefore, a prayerful atmosphere is to be maintained until the celebration is over.

During Advent, Lent, and other liturgical seasons, planned activities help students understand the liturgical meaning of the season and enable them to grow spiritually by becoming a part of the life of the Church. Grades 1 - 8 have the opportunity to plan and lead a liturgical service throughout the year.

Clubs, Competitions, Organizations and Other After School Activities

Clubs, athletics, and organizations are an important part of growing up, and it is a privilege to have extra-curricular activities. All students are expected to take an active role in any event in which they choose to participate. Students participating in such activities are covered under Diocesan Student Insurance during the activities.

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School has several clubs, teams and organizations in which students are encouraged to participate. Most clubs meet after school and separate arrangements must be made for transportation. Some clubs and activities are fee-based. Opportunities may include, but are not limited to: Model United Nations, Art Club, Math Club/Team, National Junior Honor Society, Chess Club, Robotics Club, Student Council, Quiz Bowl, Math Club, Drama/Chorus, and a variety of athletic teams.

Students participating in SFX-sponsored clubs, teams and organizations are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the expectations set forth in the school's code of conduct. Persistent, repeated inappropriate behavior may result in suspension or removal from the club, team, or organization.

Due to lack of available supervision and for the protection of your child, **students who are not supervised must go to EDP if a sibling is participating in after school activities or if they are waiting for an athletic practice or game.** Fees will be charged accordingly.

Homework

Students at SFXCS are assigned homework most nights. Students are encouraged to review the day's lessons if a written assignment is not given. Although the amount of home study will vary within grades and on different days, a reasonable guideline is listed below.

Pre-K– K	10 minutes
Grades 1-2	20 minutes
Grades 3-4	40 minutes
Grades 5-6	90 minutes
Grades 7-8	120 minutes (total for all departments)

Assignments may be given over the weekend. If your child routinely has trouble completing his/her assignments within the suggested time frames, please notify the classroom teacher.

Students who miss a class for any reason are responsible for all missed class work and/or homework assignments. If a student is absent, one day is given to complete missed assignments, including homework, for each day the student has been absent. It is the student's responsibility to see that this make-up work is completed on schedule**.**

Classwork and Homework Make-up Policy

Students who miss a class for any reason are responsible for all missed class work and/or homework assignments. If a student is absent, one day is given to complete missed assignments, including homework, for each day the student has been absent. It is the student's responsibility to see that this make-up work is

completed on schedule**.** Make-up work for students who are absent will be sent home upon the students return to school.

Homework Assignment/Agenda Books

Homework assignment/agenda books are required for students in grades 1-6, and encouraged for students in grades 7 and 8. The books are useful tools for students and parents in planning schedules for completion of assignments and projects. Homework is to be recorded by the student in his/her assignment book. If the assignment book is lost or destroyed, a replacement must be purchased.
Parents are encouraged to look at their child's assignment book, Google classroom, and/or FACTS grade system for details regarding assignments, projects, and assessments. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure homework is completed.

Computer And Technology Policies

The St. Francis Xavier Catholic School computer network, including all school-owned computers and related equipment and access to the Internet, is used to support the curriculum and to augment instruction in the classroom. It is a school-wide policy that the school network and related equipment at SFXCS are to be used in a responsible, productive, moral, and lawful manner. Failure to comply with the Acceptable Use Policy and the rules for school network use, as described below, will result in a loss of computer privileges and possible disciplinary or legal action. This policy applies to **students, staff, and volunteers** and to computer usage anywhere, **using any device**, while on the SFXCS campus, including dismissal, EDP, and after school activities.

Families will be charged a damage fee for any damage found on their student's device up to the cost of replacement.

We ask your assistance in developing responsible attitudes, reinforcing appropriate behaviors, and observing security practices on the school network. Please read these policies and the Network Use Agreement thoroughly and discuss them with your child(ren). **A signed copy of the Acceptable Use Policy for each student must be on file before the student is allowed to use computers at school.**

Acceptable Use, Network And Technology Policies

The Internet

The Internet links thousands of computer networks around the world allowing SFXCS students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, museums, and other repositories of information. In general, electronic traffic passes freely in a trusting atmosphere with a minimum of constraints. Although SFXCS does have a filtered system, it does not have total control of the information on the Internet; thus, families should be aware that some sites accessible via the Internet contain material that is inappropriate for educational use. SFX does not condone the use of such materials. However, we believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet exceed the disadvantages.

Social Media

"Communication is a means of expressing the missionary vocation of the entire Church; today, the social networks are one way to experience this call to discover the beauty of faith, the beauty of encountering Christ." (Pope Francis' Message for the 48th World Communications Day [WCD], 2014.)

Excellence in the Christian education and formation of our students demands a Christian spirit of collaboration between parents and school staff. This social media policy serves to protect the Christian dignity of every student and teacher from the damaging effects of negative social media post by ensuring that electronic communication on the Internet is appropriate, reflective of our Catholic values, and consistent with the rules and values of our school. Social media is defined as any web-based and mobile technologies which are designed to turn communication into interactive dialogue. This includes but is not limited to the use of blogs/wikis, message boards/forums, Microsoft Apps or Google Suite shared documents, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, Google, Pinterest, Vimeo, Edmondo, SnapChat, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube and any derivative applications. The school considers the following examples to be inappropriate social media conduct/content. (This list is non-exhaustive and intended to provide examples only):

• Inappropriate language
• Discriminatory, defamatory, proprietary or slanderous remarks/images or allegations about the Diocese, its entities, employees or students
• Cyber-bullying, harassment or threats of violence
• Complaints about the Diocese, its entities, employees or students
• Links to sites that contain offensive content

Inappropriate content posted to official school social networking sites/pages shall be removed by the school-related administrators designated to maintain the social media presence.

Employees, parents, students, and volunteers must be cognizant that any use of social media is a reflection of our school and the Diocese of Savannah, its mission statement, and values. More importantly, we must set an example for our children about being responsible for what we choose to share online.

Each school shall maintain on file for every student official Diocesan Media Consent Form indicating parent/guardian permission for the sharing of a student's name, image and likeness.

Social media is a great way to promote our school. We have so many wonderful things we do that we need to celebrate and promote. All content which is published on the school website and social media sites can be shared on your own social media accounts. This provides our school with a tremendous amount of exposure and goodwill. We encourage parents and volunteers to engage in the following:

• Participate in and promote official school events, activities, and programs.
• Distribute advance notices of school events and programs.
• Encourage participation in service projects, Sunshine Committee events, fundraisers, food/clothing drives, and other events and initiatives.
• Inform school families, friends, alumni, and supporters about news, events or programs.
• Recognize special achievements or accomplishments of students, families and employees.

We respectfully ask that parents/guardians and students **do not engage** in the following when using personal social media sites:

• Conversations about school business or private discussions in a negative manner.
• Airing grievances with fellow volunteers, school administrators, teachers, parents, students or

other individuals.

Guidelines For Students

Students must learn how to use social media responsibly and effectively.

- Respect the privacy of others by not sharing personal information or hurtful comments about classmates via social media including e-mail and texting.
- Personal videos and photos of individual class activities, concerts, sports, drama productions, class trips extracurricular activities, etc. which are shared social media sites must be appropriate and not libelous.

Guidelines For Parents

- Parents/guardians shall make complaints through official school channels rather than posting complaints on social networking sites.
- Parents /guardians shall immediately bring any social media policy violations or concerns to school officials. Responding in kind to uncharitable communications through social media merely perpetuates divisiveness.
- School officials will not mediate social media issues between students or parents unless it directly affects the school.
- Parents/guardians shall monitor their children's online activity, including their use of social media.
- Parents/guardians shall explain to their children what is acceptable to post online.

E-mail/Web Pages

Students may not create or access personal e-mail accounts (i.e., Hotmail, Yahoo, etc.) or web pages for use at school. Personal and/or school e-mail accounts and/or web pages may not be used to send offensive and/or slanderous messages or pictures.

Instant Messaging and Chat Rooms

Students are not allowed to participate in online chat rooms, use instant messaging programs, or create shared documents for chatting at school.

Acceptable Use Rules

- Be polite when using the Internet
- Ask for permission to use any school computer or Internet
- Do NOT share school computers with others
- Print only what is needed to complete assignments, and do not make any unnecessary copies
- In the event of a problem with a school computer, immediately notify an adult
- Treat all school computer equipment with care and respect
- Only use the Internet when an adult is present, with permission, and only on school approved sites or searches
- Only use school computers for educational purposes such as homework, research, classroom projects, and school activities

Unacceptable Use Includes But is Not Limited to:

- Attempting to access a teacher or administrator account
- Attempting to access any personal email account
- Altering the desktop or any other computer settings without teacher or staff permission

- Using a computer to harm another student or their work
- Accessing, altering, moving, deleting, or otherwise tampering with another student's work
- Damaging the school's computers, hardware, the network, or video equipment in any way
- Wasting limited resources such as disk space or printer paper
- Violating copyright laws or plagiarizing material
- Making changes to the hardware or software configuration of any machine, including installing or deleting software of any type including freeware or shareware or hiding sites or online history
- Using the Internet or any school devices for any illegal purpose
- Accessing, uploading, downloading, viewing, displaying and/or distributing slanderous, pornographic, hate-oriented, profane, obscene, or sexually explicit material
- Posting or providing personal information, photographs, or schoolwork of yourself or another student
- Inserting or connecting any personal disks, flash drives or any other device into school computers without the permission of the teacher
- Using a school computer without permission or adult supervision
- Unauthorized attempts to bypass the security mechanisms of the school network (a.k.a. hacking)
- Introducing or attempting to introduce viruses into the network
- Using online chat or IM sites at school without permission
- Accessing or attempting to access peer to peer, file sharing or proxy servers
- Playing games or any non-educational use without teacher or staff permission
- Uploading pictures taken at school to the Internet, including Social Networking sites
- Any home device such as 3G/4G device, including smartphones, smartwatches are strictly prohibited at school and must remain in the office until check-out
- Placing a password on any file used or stored on the school's network

Violating the Computer Policy may result in:

- Restricted network and/or computer access
- Loss of network and/or computer access
- Disciplinary or legal action including, but not limited to, criminal prosecution under appropriate state and federal laws
- Monetary restitution for any damage to computer, hardware, or video equipment

Attendance Policy
School Hours and Supervision

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School follows guidelines from the Georgia State Board of Education and the Diocese of Savannah. School hours are from **7:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.** Students may be dropped off starting at 7:30 A.M.

- Students arriving between **7:00 and 7:30 A.M.** will be supervised in the Extended Day Program located in the PS3 classroom inside the Early Learning Center doors at the front of the school. (additional fee applies).
- Afternoon pick-up is by **3:00 P.M.** (or **12:00 P.M.** on identified early dismissal days).
- Students not picked up on time will be placed in the Extended Day Program (additional fee applies).
- Early dismissal days are posted on the school website, weekly newsletter, and calendar.

Absences

5060 POLICY: Schools in the Diocese of Savannah must comply with attendance requirements established by the State of Georgia in accordance with Diocesan Regulations.

Absences interfere with the academic progress of all students and should be taken with great consideration. Excused absences include illness of a student, family emergencies, and death of an immediate family member. Trips/vacations during the school year are highly discouraged and are not excused absences. Students may not leave school under any circumstances without parental permission. To be counted as present for perfect attendance purposes, a student must be present for the full academic day.
Although excused, students who must be out of school or class due to their own illness, illness of another family member, death in the family, inclement weather, or necessary travel are marked absent. All other absences are considered unexcused and require no special consideration on the part of the teacher with regard to making up work missed. Upon returning to school it is the child's responsibility to find out what he/she missed and make arrangements for its completion. Teachers are allowed 24 hours for assignment preparation. Absences due to parental neglect and truancy are unexcused absences.

Reporting Absences and Tardies

When a student is absent due to illness, the parent or legal guardian should report the absence by emailing a note with the reason for the absence to the administrative assistant on the date the student returns to school. Failure to provide a written excuse will be documented as an unexcused absence.

Written notification to the administrative assistant can be sent via email and must include:

- Student's name and grade
- Reason for absence or tardy
- Parent or guardian name, phone number, and signature

A written note from a parent or doctor must be provided and approved within **three (3) school days** of the absence or the absence will be marked **unexcused**. The principal reserves the right to approve or deny any excused absence based on documentation, frequency, and academic impact. Please do not send absence or tardy messages through other students.

Parents or guardians must **report absences or tardies in writing to the school office by 8:00 A.M.** on the day of the absence. Written notification can be sent via email and must include:

- Student's name and grade
- Reason for absence or tardiness
- Parent or guardian name, phone number, and signature

The absence will be marked **unexcused** until a written note from a parent or doctor is provided within **three (3) school days**. The principal reserves the right to approve or deny any excused absence based on

documentation, frequency, and academic impact. Please do not send absence or tardy messages through other students.

If a student is absent for three consecutive days, a doctor's note **must** accompany the student upon return to school. In addition, absences of 15 or more days in a year must automatically be verified by the administration and are subject to DFACS referrals without proper documentation.

Prolonged or excessive absences may be a reasonable cause to retain a student. In the event of absence without a school-authorized tutor for more than 20 days in a school year (10 per semester), no credit is earned and student must repeat the year or go to summer school. For medical reasons, any absences beyond the 15 days per year can be reviewed by the school administration at the request of the parent. Official medical documentation must be provided.

Attendance Expectations

Regular attendance is critical for academic success.

More than **ten (10) absences in a school year** and **three (3) tardies in a quarter** are considered excessive.

Tardiness

Being on time sets a positive tone for a child's entire day. Parents are expected to have their children on time for school. A Pre-K3-8th grade student who is not in his or her class by 7:45 a.m. is tardy. If a student arrives on campus after 7:45 a.m. or when carline is finished, the driver should park near the main school office entrance and escort his/her child to the main office to check in. Parents will receive a notice of concern after three unexcused tardies. A phone call will be made after 10 unexcused tardies. A mandatory conference will be scheduled with administration if any family accumulates 15 unexcused tardies. A student with 15 or more unexcused tardies will be placed on written probation with the possibility of administrative withdrawal. Habitual tardiness may affect re-enrollment eligibility.

Illness

Students should not be absent unnecessarily.

Students with contagious illnesses, fever over 100.4°F, vomiting, or diarrhea must stay home and be symptom-free for 24 hours without medication before returning.

- A written note explaining any absence must be submitted to the homeroom teacher or school office on the day the student returns.
- Phone calls alone do not substitute for the written note.
- Absences of three or more consecutive days require a doctor's note.

Excused Absences

- Student illness (doctor's note required after three days)
- Medical or dental appointments (with documentation)
- Death in the immediate family
- Religious holidays

- Court appearances (with documentation)

Unexcused Absences

Absences not meeting excused criteria or lacking proper notification are unexcused and may lead to administrative action.

Excessive Absences

- Students with over **10 absences** will receive formal notification.
- Incomplete grades may be assigned until missed work is completed within the specified timeframe.
- After **15 absences or tardies**, a meeting with parents, teachers, and administration is required. Excessive attendance issues may jeopardize promotion and re-enrollment.
- Parents may be required to hire a certified tutor, with documentation submitted to administration.
- The principal's decision regarding promotion is final.

Early Check-Out

Leaving school early for any reason is highly discouraged during the school day. Each time a student leaves early he/she misses valuable instruction and interrupts instruction for other students. In rare cases, we understand some medical appointments must be scheduled late in the school day. These should primarily be exceptions due to illness. It is requested to promote instructional time for all students, that routine doctor visits be scheduled during the summer months or after the school day (dentist, physicals, eye exams, etc.).

For the front office staff and teachers to focus on getting each student home safely,
Walk-in checkout is NOT permitted after 2:45 p.m. until car line is over. The parent must sign out the student in the front office for any early dismissal before 3:00 pm. Parents are **not** permitted to retrieve their child by going directly to the classroom.
Parent **MUST** accompany their student into the school and sign them in at the school office when returning from an early check-out or appointment.

Vacations

It is strongly recommended that parents give thoughtful consideration before planning vacations during the school term. Although students may have the ability to make up their work, it does not replace the formal instruction given by the teachers. If parents do take their children out of school for extended vacations, they are expected to notify the homeroom teacher and the main office with a note to explain how long their children will be out of school. Please note that these absences are recorded as **unexcused**, which may result in the student not receiving credit for any work missed. Generally, students will receive their make-up work when they return to school. Students will be given one school day for each day absent to make up missed work and/or exams.

In the event of absences due to family vacations or other personal reasons during the school year, the following policy is observed:

- Parents are requested to send a letter to the homeroom teacher and the principal one week in advance of the planned absence of the student;
- Parents or student will contact the teacher AFTER the absence to collect the work missed during that time. Teachers should not be expected to provide assignments in advance;

- Students will be given one day for each day absent to complete any missed assignments unless other arrangements are made with the teacher. It is the student's and parents' responsibility to make arrangements for any missed tests or assignments.

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather or other emergency, St. Francis Xavier Catholic School will follow the directives of the **Glynn County School System and the Glynn County Emergency Management System**. If a situation arises that creates the need to cancel school or adjust the schedule in any way, notification will be made in a timely fashion through as many means of communication as possible including, but not limited to, local TV stations, the school website, Facebook, e-mail, and automated phone calls. If an emergency arises during the school day, school personnel will make every attempt to contact each family through the alert now phone system to relay the information regarding the conditions at school. Parents are asked not to call the school during an emergency situation.

Safety/Security

VIRTUS/Safe Environment

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School and the Diocese of Savannah are committed to providing a safe environment to children and youth. It is important that volunteers who work with students are aware of potentially harmful situations and are empowered to act on behalf of children before abuse occurs. The Bishop has directed that **all** volunteers who work in unsupervised situations with children attend a VIRTUS training workshop. For the purposes of the school, this will include volunteers who assist with school functions such as class parties, sports events, and Field Day, as well as parents who participate as chaperones on field trips. In addition to VIRTUS training, volunteers must also undergo a background screening and sign off on the Diocesan Code of Conduct. **Please note that no one may volunteer at the school unless these requirements have been met.** It is highly recommended that all parents complete the online VIRTUS training workshop as soon as possible. Visit the website for the Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection at https://diosav.org/childyouthprotection for more information about the VIRTUS program and to register for a workshop.

School Security/Visitors

All visitors must report to the front office to obtain a school visitor's pass. The pass must be worn at all times while in the building. This includes all persons volunteering in the classrooms or other areas of the school. **All** volunteers must comply with safe environment requirements, including a background check, Code of Conduct, and VIRTUS training, as set forth by the Diocese of Savannah.

Delivery of Items to Students

In the interest of instilling a sense of responsibility in our students as well as maintaining the integrity of the academic environment, students will not be allowed to call home for missing items, nor will students be called to the front office to pick up items such as forgotten homework or other related items. For the same reason, **students will not be allowed back into their classrooms once school has dismissed to retrieve forgotten items**. *As an exception, forgotten lunches may be dropped off in the front office*. **NO DELIVERY services of food or other items will be allowed or accepted**. Additionally, balloons, flowers, and other

celebratory items may not be delivered to students at the school.

Use of School Motto/Logo/Slogan

The use of the St. Francis Xavier name, logo, or motto on any type of social media or in any other way, e.g., putting the name on t-shirts, is prohibited without the express written permission of the principal.

Cell Phones

House Bill 340 "prohibits personal communications devices in public school classrooms from kindergarten through eighth grade," according to Capitol Beat News Service.

Cell phones, smart watches, or any other electronic communication devices are not permitted at St. Francis Xavier Catholic School. If a student requires their cell phone for after-school activities, they must turn it into the Cell Phone Home locker at the school's administrative office before going to class. Students will be permitted to pick up their device at the end of the day as they leave campus.

Cell phone usage during the school day and while in EDP is prohibited. Use of or disturbances caused by cell phones, or any violation of the above guidelines will result in confiscation of the phone. Additional consequences may also be implemented in accordance with school disciplinary policies. **Please note that Smart Watches and other electronic communication devices are also covered by the above policy.**

Distribution of Printed Material

Posting or distributing flyers, pamphlets, or other written communication on school/church grounds without the authorization of the Administration is prohibited. All school-related flyers must also be pre-approved by the Administration.

Emergency Drills

Emergency drills for fire, tornadoes, and lockdowns are held in accordance with state and local laws. In instances of severe weather, when the National Weather Service has issued watches and warnings, it is imperative that telephone lines to the school be left open in case conditions warrant emergency response. Parents are asked not to call the school in these situations. Should an evacuation of the school become necessary, students will be moved to one of three secure designated locations: Church, Xavier Hall or Off Campus – across the street at Hanover Park.

Emergency Lockdown Procedures

EMERGENCY CODE RED
LOCKDOWN!

- All Activity Stops-Active Threat!
- Doors Locked
- Lights Out
- Move Out of Line of Sight of Hallway
- Remain Until All Clear Is Given
- No One Will Be Allowed to Enter the School & No Student Check-Outs Allowed

Code Yellow-Soft Lockdown

- Doors Locked
- No Leaving Room
- No Class Changes
- Shelter-In-Place
- Classroom Instruction Can Continue
- Monitor Email/Listen to PA
- Remain Until All Clear Is Given
- No One Will Be Allowed to Enter the School & No Student Check-Outs Allowed

Code Purple-Tornado Warning

- Move to Designated Safe Area
- Duck and Cover
- Avoid Glass and Windows
- Remain Until All Clear Is Given

Code Blue-Medical Emergency

- Designated Staff Respond to Situation
- No Movement or Class Changes
- Remain Until All Clear Is Given

Code Orange-Evacuate the Building

- Calmly Evacuate
- Go to Normal Fire Drill Locations
- Take Response Guide

Code Green-All Ok-All Clear

- Normal School Activities Can Continue

Audio/Visual Recording Policy

No audio/visual recording devices may be used for recording of conversations either in person or by telephone by or among students, parents, teachers, or school administrators on school property, with the exception of online learning when required. To ensure compliance with parental permissions regarding the posting of student photos, the official school social media sites will be updated under the supervision of school staff. Parents are requested not to post pictures from school events onto personal social media sites unless the photos are of your child only.

Child Abuse/Neglect

The State of Georgia requires by law that any principal, teacher, counselor, or other school employee report all cases of suspected child abuse or neglect of children under eighteen years of age. In addition, volunteers working at the school or at school-sponsored events are also considered mandatory reporters under this law.
Georgia Law, Code Section 19-7-5, requires the reporting of injuries or neglect of minors, provides immunity for those reporting in good faith, and provides for a penalty for violation of the law. An allegation of child abuse must be immediately reported by telephone, within 24 hours of the time of the suspected abuse, to the Department of Family Child Services (DFCS) by the person who witnessed or first became aware of the suspected abuse or neglect. Law enforcement and DFCS requests to interview students at the school who are suspected victims of abuse or neglect must be honored. The school will make every effort possible to have a staff member present during the interview. It is NOT school policy to contact the child's family prior to filing a report.

Change of Contact Information

It is imperative to notify the school if there is a change in home address, e-mail address, or home, work, cell phone numbers. Change of contact information should be completed through FACTS Family Portal. Updated information is critical to ensure the school's ability to contact you in the event of an emergency and to ensure that you receive all electronic communication from the school.

Arrival And Dismissal

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School does not provide transportation. However, St. William Church may provide bus transportation service for a fee from the St. William Church parking lot to school. Most students are transported to and from school by their parents or in carpools. Students arriving before 7:30 a.m. must sign in to EDP using the Early Learning Center entrance on Grant Street. All students arriving between 7:30-7:45 must be dropped off in the carline at the main school entrance.
Students arriving late must be accompanied by their parent to the front office to sign-in.

Students are dismissed at 3:00 P.M.

Pre-School and Pre-K students: Parents who are not using the carline, must pick-up students at the Early Learning Center entrance between 2:30 P.M. and 2:45 P.M and between 11:30 A.M. and 11:45 A.M. on noon dismissal days.

Half-Day PS3 students are dismissed at 11:30 A.M. from the Early Learning Center Lobby.

K-8 students

K through 8th grade remain until 3:00 P.M: Faculty members will be assigned to the afternoon carline and will call students to the line once their ride arrives. Students will remain in their classroom until their name is displayed on the dismissal board. For out-of-school appointments, etc., please pick up your child before 2:30 P.M, and if plans change to include extended day services, please update PikMyKid before 1:30 P.M. Please *do not* call the school after 2:30 P.M. Be assured that if you are running late or if your plans change, your child will be placed in EDP until you arrive.
Afternoon carline will line up single file behind the old school on Reynolds Street and turn left on Howe Street. Be mindful not to block the intersections of Newcastle or Richmond. Turn left on Grant Street, remaining in one line in front of the new school building. **Do not line up on Bay Street to Howe Street. To**

ensure a safe and efficient dismissal, please do not walk up to the school to pick up your child while the carline is in process, students will not be dismissed until after carline is over.

Dismissal at 3:00 P.M. is the responsibility of the entire community. Parents, teachers, and students work in harmony to ensure the safety of all students. Conferences or questions are welcomed after the carline process is completed.

Change in Pick-Up

If there is a change in the dismissal plan for your child, please update the Pikmykid app and notify both the teacher and school office on the morning of the change.

- **Pikmykid updates cannot be made after 1:30 P.M.**
- Students are not permitted to alter their approved dismissal plan without **written parental permission**.
- In the event of an unexpected emergency, please contact the school office **immediately by phone and follow up with an email**.

Students who are not picked up on time will be supervised as part of the Extended Day Program (EDP), and fees will be charged accordingly.

Field Trips

A field trip is a firsthand experience that supplements classroom learning. It is an observational experience having definite educational objectives. Field trips may be taken only with the approval of the principal who determines whether the trip is a contributing activity to the students' learning experience. A permission slip, signed by the parents, is required before any child is permitted to participate in a field trip. Permission will not be granted by a telephone message. Field trips normally require an additional fee. Parents are encouraged to volunteer as chaperones; however, due to insurance regulations, chaperones are **not** permitted to bring siblings, or any other children not enrolled at SFX on any field trip. **Chaperones must have completed the required background check, VIRTUS training, and must be compliant with all updated training**. VIRTUS training classes are now online, it is highly recommended that anyone who intends to be a field trip chaperone complete the VIRTUS training as early in the school year as possible. VIRTUS training and background checks only need to be completed once every five years, however updates to training may be required sooner.

Participation in field trips is a privilege. As such, students can be denied participation in field trips if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements. Parents have the right to refuse to allow their child to participate in a field trip. Students not participating in the field trip must come to school that day and will be given self-directed work for the entire day. Since most field trips require payment in advance from the school to the field trip site, we are unable to offer refunds if your child does not attend the field trip.

Field trips are charged to each student's FACTS account in advance. Because the school incurs non-refundable costs for transportation, admission, and reservations, field trip fees are non-refundable, even if a student is unable to attend.

In general, school uniforms must be worn on field trips unless the type of field trip warrants different attire (touring a barn, visiting wetlands, etc.). Attire for field trips, other than school uniforms, requires approval by the principal. The teacher will inform families of the required uniform on the permission form. Overnight

field trips and field trips that are not educational in nature are not allowed. **Electronic devices are not allowed on school field trips unless previously approved by the principal.**

Health Regulations

In the case of a communicable disease (i.e.: measles, chicken pox, TB, etc.) a release card from the local health department or a letter from a physician indicating that the health department regulations have been satisfied, must be presented to the main office before the child can return to school. Notes from parents/guardians are not accepted as assurance that the health department regulation has been satisfied. In the case of head lice or other parasitic infestation (i.e.: ringworm, etc.), students will be sent home until there are no longer any visible signs of infestation.

Medications

All medicines, prescription and non-prescription, will be stored in the main office with the **required Medication Consent Form signed by a parent or guardian and prescribing physician.** In accordance with Diocesan policy, no medication (including over-the-counter medication) shall be given to a student by any employee of the school unless the requirements listed below are met.
All prescription medication must be in its original container, clearly marked with the student's full name and dosage, and brought to the school by the parent or guardian. The child will take medication at the designated time, administered by authorized school personnel. Alternatively, a parent may come to the school to administer the medication. It is the responsibility of the student, not the school personnel, to get his/her medication at the designated time. School personnel will make a reasonable effort to assist the student when he/she is taking the medication. Parents must write a note to the school requesting and authorizing any alteration of the student's scheduled medication.

Students must supply their own over-the-counter medications. *Each over-the-counter medication must be in its original, sealed container with a label stating the child's full name and dosage. Parents may make the label; however, the over-the-counter medication must be accompanied by the Medication Consent Form signed by a parent or guardian. If the non-prescription medication is to be given daily or for a time period longer than the manufacturer's recommendation, the child's physician must also sign the form. Parents may come to the school office to dispense medication if they are unable to secure the physician's authorization.*

Other than epi-pens and inhalers, **NO student is permitted to have in his/her possession any prescription/ non-prescription medication at any time.** Epi-pens and inhalers may be in the students' possession if parental permission is granted and under the following conditions:

1. Appropriate documentation from the doctor is on file indicating that the child is capable of self-administration.
2. School health personnel verify that the student is capable of self-administration.
3. Student reports to office after self-administration

The school must be notified of any medication taken daily at school **or at home**. This is necessary in case of an emergency.

Irresponsible use of an inhaler or epi-pen by a student can put the student and others at serious risk. Students who use an inhaler or epi-pen in a manner other than its intended use will lose the privilege of carrying the medication and may also face other disciplinary action.

Dismissal Due to Illness

Under no circumstances is a child to go home or leave the school grounds without authorization. If a child becomes ill during the school day, the following procedures will be in effect:

1. The child will remain in the classroom until the parent arrives.
2. School personnel will contact the parent or other authorized person as indicated on the medical tab in FACTS SIS. **Emergency Contact Information is updated at the time of registration/re-enrollment. It must be completed by the parent and include at least one emergency contact name and number.**
3. The contacted person will indicate the measures to be taken or the expected arrival time to pick up the sick child. If a student becomes ill and has a temperature of over 100.4 degrees, he/she will be sent home. A parent or designated person will be notified to take the child home. Students should be picked up from the school **within 30 minutes** of parent notification. The child will be signed-out from the office by the authorized person. **Children must be fever-free and symptom-free (including vomiting and diarrhea) for at least 24 hours before returning to school. They may return when they have been symptom-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing or other medications for these symptoms.**
4. When a child is seriously injured, the school office will contact a parent or designated person. If no one can be reached and the office determines the injury to be serious, the child will be transported to the local hospital for treatment. In the event this does occur an injury form will be filled out.

A physician's note is required to excuse a child from P.E. or outside recess.

Parents/guardians are required to inform the school as soon as any allergies or special medical needs are diagnosed. This will enable teachers and staff to assist your child in the event of an emergency. Please notify the school in writing if any allergies or special needs change during the school year. Any life-threatening allergy should be reported to the school, accompanied by documentation from a physician.

Teachers are provided with bi-annual training in First Aid and CPR.

The presence of Head Lice is not unusual in schools. The Georgia Department of Public Health provides resources for the understanding, treatment, and prevention of Head Lice - https://dph.georgia.gov/sites/dph.georgia.gov/files/related_files/document/ADES_HEAD_LICE_2012.pdf

Pregnant Students

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School believes in the sanctity of human life beginning at conception. As a Catholic faith community, we offer our support and prayers for any of our students who may become pregnant. A pregnant student may continue to attend classes so long as the student's presence does not disrupt the school's learning environment. If the pregnant student's presence becomes a disruption, the school may ask the student to withdraw.

Communication

Parental Involvement/Volunteers

Parental participation in activities enhancing the mission of St. Francis Xavier is welcomed and highly encouraged. For the safety of our students, volunteers are required to complete the volunteer application process, which includes background screening and safe environment training (VIRTUS).

School Advisory Board

The School Advisory Board of St. Francis Xavier Catholic School is dedicated to assuring that the teachings and values of the Catholic Church are reflected in all aspects of school life. The goal is to help shape the school community by providing the necessary resources to ensure a nurturing, safe, and Christ-centered environment, and by supporting and furthering the school's mission.

The purpose of the Advisory Board is to:

- Support effective administration, operation, and maintenance of the school;
- Provide a means of communication with the school community;
- Review and discuss programs considering the administrative vision for the school;
- Develop and strengthen the financial functioning and viability of the school;
- Assist the administration in the implementation of the policies of the Diocese of Savannah;
- Assist in the development of school policies and help assess their effectiveness;
- Develop and assess the effectiveness of a long-term strategic plan.

The board is advisory, not a policymaking body; therefore, this council does not determine the school's approach to discipline, educational curriculum, or personnel. The Advisory Board and its subcommittees are charged with providing input to the administration in the following areas: Policy, Finance, Planning & Development, Marketing, Facilities, and Technology.

Home and School Association

The St. Francis Xavier Home and School Association (HSA) advances the school's mission through the active participation of its members, providing opportunities for volunteerism, communication, knowledge sharing, social interaction, and fundraising. HSA is a volunteer service organization designed to help connect life at home with life at school by providing support to the students, parents, administration, faculty, and staff of SFX. Along with administration, faculty, and staff, it is committed to expanding the educational programs offered to students through a variety of student activities, family activities, and fundraisers. All our families are members of the Home and School Association, and the many committed parent volunteers are the heart and soul of the organization.

Various fundraising activities conducted throughout the school year are vital to the success and enhancement of the school. All families are encouraged to support these activities. Incentives may be offered to the students to encourage participation. Some fundraisers are designed as family projects, while others are intended for parent participation only.

Tuesday Envelope

Graded papers and other important communications are distributed weekly in the Tuesday envelope. Parents are expected to review the documents contained in the folder then sign and date the line to indicate completion of this task. Envelopes are to be returned to school by the following day.

Crusader Communicator

The Crusader Communicator, is sent out every Friday through FACTS. It includes important updates, reminders, and upcoming events to keep families connected and informed.

FACTS Family Portal

The FACTS Family Portal is the primary online platform for parents at our school. Through the portal, families can access important documents such as the SFX Student-Parent Handbook, the yearly calendar, and other school-related forms. The portal also provides access to student grades, attendance records, behavior report, and classroom updates.

Parents are encouraged to keep their FACTS Family Portal account current by updating any changes in address, phone numbers, emergency contacts, or medical information.

Families new to the school will receive instructions for setting up their FACTS account at the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment. For added convenience, FACTS offers a mobile app that can be downloaded on your mobile device for a nominal annual fee. Simply search for the FACTS Family App in your app store.

Using the FACTS Family Portal ensures that families stay informed and connected throughout the school year.

Media Release

As part of its promotional and marketing efforts, SFXCS frequently shares original student work, news regarding student achievements/activities, and pictures about school events with local, regional, and national media outlets such as newspapers, magazines, and TV and radio stations. This information is also included in internal publications, such as the annual report and newsletter, as well as online outlets, including but not limited to, the school-sponsored website and social media sites. Parents are asked to complete a *Media Release Authorization* form annually. This form allows parents the choice to opt out of having their student's work and/or image published.

Extended Day Program (EDP)

The Extended Day Program (EDP) is available for SFXCS students in kindergarten through 8th grade. The afternoon program provides homework assistance, outdoor play, and a light snack. No transportation is provided, and the program does not take field trips. The program is in full compliance with all local, state, and diocesan policies and regulations.

Unless otherwise noted, the EDP is available in the morning from 7:00 A.M. until 7:30 A.M. and in the afternoon from dismissal until 5:30 P.M. on all days that SFXCS is in session except for the last day of school.

Lunch

Beginning September 1, St. Francis Xavier Catholic School will offer a lunch service for a fee. See FACTS for pricing and ordering.

Lunch orders and payment must be submitted through FACTS each week. Because FACTS does not support recurring or advance orders greater than one week, families must place and pay for orders by Friday at 12:00 p.m. for the following week. Late orders cannot be accepted.

Students may order the weekly salad bar, à la carte items, and/or milk. To help reduce food waste and ensure accurate purchasing, the salad bar must be ordered for the entire week. À la carte items and milk may be ordered for individual days, with or without the purchase of the weekly salad bar.

In the event of a school closure or a student absence, **no refunds will be issued** for missed lunch orders.

If a student forgets to bring lunch, a salad bar meal will be provided, and a **$8 fee** will be assessed through the family FACTS account.

Please note that **napkins, silverware, cups, drinks, and chips are not available for purchase** and will only be provided to students who have ordered the school lunch. **Soda and/or drinks in glass bottles or fast food of any kind in their original packaging are not permitted at school**, and **students may not share food** for health and safety reasons.

NO DELIVERY services of food or other items will be allowed or accepted.

*Use of the microwave is reserved as a **privilege for 8th grade students only**.*

Food Allergies

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School is committed to providing a safe environment for all our students. Recognizing that some of our students have food allergies, parents are asked to label items that are sent to school to be shared with a group of children (at a class party, for example) with a label clearly identifying the allergens contained in the food item (i.e., tree nuts, peanuts, etc.). Parents are asked to make sure that their child's medical information is up to date, especially if there are known allergies. Teachers are notified at the beginning of the year of any students in their class who have food allergies.

Birthdays

Students may celebrate their birthdays by sharing a treat during *recess, lunch, or just before dismissal*. Treats should be simple – cupcakes, cookies, donuts – and should be for the child's class only. Students should not bring goody bags or other party favors. Invitations to a party outside of school time may be distributed in class **only if the entire class is invited.** Students should not bring gifts to school for other students. *Flowers, balloons, and other related items may not be delivered to the student at school.*

Other Parties

PS3 through fifth-grade classes at SFXCS celebrate Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and end-of-year parties. Approved party dates will be noted on the school calendar and will begin at 2:15 P.M., except for the end-of-year, which starts at 11:15 A.M.

Middle School students celebrate with dances for Fall, Winter, and the end of the year. Attendance at the dances is a privilege. Students must maintain at least a 70/S in all subjects, including conduct and effort, and may not have any disciplinary office referrals.

Lost and Found

The permanent location for lost and found articles is in the front lobby credenza. Unclaimed clothing or usable objects are given periodically to the St. Vincent de Paul Society or placed in the uniform closet. Money or valuable objects that are found should be returned to the school office. The school cannot be responsible for lost articles or money. All labeled items can be returned to the student; therefore, **we strongly recommend labeling all students' clothing and possessions.**

Discipline

Disciplinary Philosophy

Positive behavior should always be promoted, and infractions must be handled with care. The Christian well-being of children is of utmost importance, and fair consequences will be administered. The discipline structure at St. Francis Xavier aims to encourage each student to grow as the unique individual God created them to be and to make decisions accordingly. Every decision regarding discipline is based on the Gospel message of love and the best interest of the student. St. Paul reminds us that "whatever other commandments there may be, are summed up in this saying, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" Romans 13:9 This example from scripture sums up the foundation of discipline at St. Francis Xavier.

Effective learning is dependent upon effective discipline. Students need and deserve a controlled and proper atmosphere to attain and develop academic skills. Parental support and cooperation is required in the handling of all discipline problems. Each individual teacher maintains discipline in the classroom. Discipline in the corridors, lavatories, play areas, assemblies, etc., is the responsibility of all faculty members. A rigid atmosphere in the school is not desired, but neither is an overly permissive one. The classroom teacher handles minor infractions of school regulations. Disrespect to any faculty or staff member won't be tolerated.

Discipline Policy (Pre-K to 8)

A program of character building achieves discipline. Through the clarification of values and the practice of self-reliance, self-control, initiative and honesty, the student will be acquiring Catholic social virtues. The school shares with the home and the Church the responsibility of preparing our young people for productive roles in society. Therefore, the school establishes and enforces appropriate standards of student behavior. Every action of the student that concerns his relationship to God and the Church, to his fellow man, and nature, involves his relationship to himself. The activities of the student must promote self-development in the home, school, and community. In meeting these situations, the student must learn to develop that proper regard for self which Christ indicated in His command *"Love your neighbor as yourself."*

Purpose of School Rules

Rules and expectations are designed to meet the following goals:

1. Maintain an orderly school operation.
2. Maintain optimal learning opportunities for students. School facilities and classrooms must be free of behaviors that interfere with teaching and learning.
3. Help students develop skills and behaviors necessary for healthy social interaction, both present and future.
4. Help students learn how their decisions affect the quality of their lives and the lives of

others.
5. Help students develop responsibility and character.
6. Offer an opportunity for all members of the school community to develop spiritually.
All discipline is administered at the discretion of the administration

Student Behavior Responsibilities

Faculty, Staff, and Families are expected to honor and support the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals regarding matters relating to student disciplinary issues and action.

- Students will follow all policies and regulations established by the school.
- Respect the rights, ideas, and property of students, staff, and the school in speech and behavior.
- Maintain regular attendance.
- Notify the playground supervisor immediately of any injury or unsafe behavior, equipment, or materials.
- Practice proper safety habits.
- Practice acceptable courtesy habits.
- Using disrespectful speech (insulting or profane language), defiance, rudeness, or interfering with the education process will not be tolerated.
- Dress in accordance with the uniform policy and observe proper hygiene for school.
- Avoid bringing nuisance items, toys, play weapons, water pistols, and electronic entertainment devices.
- **Photographs** may not be taken on school property or during school-sponsored off-campus activities without the permission of the supervising staff member.

The following discipline systems are used with students in the designated grade level placements:

Grades Pre-K3-2nd

Teachers handle infractions that occur in their classrooms in an appropriate manner maintaining school policy. A visual is used in each classroom as a physical reminder to the student of appropriate behavior. A note will go home to parents when an infraction occurs. More serious offenses will be handled by administration.

Grades 3-5

Teachers handle infractions that occur in an appropriate manner maintaining school policy. If a teacher should need to keep a student after school, the parent/guardian will be given 24 hours' notice. Discipline notices regarding student infractions will be communicated by teachers via email or phone call to parents. More serious offenses will be handled by administration. A more detailed description of classroom policies relating to discipline will be reviewed and sent home with students during the first week of school.

Grades 6-8

The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Savannah are committed to teaching the Gospel values, which help our students live their lives as a reflection of Christ. The philosophy of our schools calls us to recognize and respect the dignity of each individual and to offer a Christ-centered, safe learning environment based on the Social Teachings of the Catholic Church.
Discipline is a necessary element of the learning process. The purpose of discipline is to foster the growth of self-discipline enabling students to eventually assume responsibility for their own actions.
All members of the faculty and staff share the responsibility to model appropriate behaviors and to enforce the structure necessary for learning self-discipline, the ultimate goal of the discipline

program.
"At the time it is administered, all discipline seems a cause for grief and not for joy, but later it brings forth the joy of peace and justice to those who are trained in its school." -Hebrews 12:11

In middle school, the discipline policy is an offense system. Disciplinary actions are progressive and will be communicated to parents as needed.

Behavioral Consequences

The school reserves the right to move to higher-level consequences for repeated offenses or when actions warrant. The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rule for just cause at their discretion.

Before disciplinary consequences are assigned, students may be required to complete a written reflection to help them thoughtfully examine their actions, accept responsibility for their choices, consider the impact of their behavior on others, and identify more appropriate responses for the future. Reflection is intended to promote personal growth, strengthen character, and encourage students to make better decisions consistent with our Catholic values.

When appropriate, students will also be expected to make restitution by taking reasonable steps to repair any harm caused to individuals, the school community, or school property. Restitution may include a sincere apology, replacement or repair of damaged property, restore relationships, or completing school community service. School community service may be assigned as a disciplinary consequence and is intended to help students contribute positively to the school while reinforcing responsibility, accountability, and respect for others. The administration reserves the right to determine the appropriate restorative actions based on the nature and severity of the incident.

The following behaviors are considered **major disciplinary infractions** and are strictly prohibited at all grade levels. Engaging in any of these actions may result in **immediate suspension or expulsion**, and in some cases, may require **notification of law enforcement**:

- Weapons/Firearms
- Tobacco/Alcohol/Vapes/Cigarettes of any kind/Drugs or Substance Abuse
- Truancy
- Physical aggression towards faculty and/or staff.
- Harassment/Threatening other students or school personnel with violence, stalking.
- Repeated failure/refusal to follow any of the school rules.
- Making threats of violence in any form.

Pre-K to 8th Consequences for failure to adhere to responsibilities under the student section:

Students are expected to treat one another with kindness and respect at all times. When minor behavioral issues arise, responses may include verbal warning, missed recess, silent lunch, or a parent conference, depending on the situation and frequency of the behavior.

In cases where a student demonstrates purposeful aggression toward another student, the school will take a progressively supportive and corrective approach. Initial incidents will involve communication with parents and the opportunity for the student to reflect on their behavior. Continued aggression will result in counseling support focused on helping the student develop appropriate ways to express emotions and resolve conflicts. If the behavior persists, a formal parent meeting will be held to create a behavior plan that outlines clear expectations and support strategies.

Repeated or severe incidents may lead to suspension. In the most serious or unresponsive cases, expulsion may be considered. These measures are intended to ensure a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all students.

Restitution will be expected in the case of vandalism, damage, or loss of technology, textbooks and/or library books. Individual damages will be assessed, and appropriate charges in FACTS will be made.

Academic honesty is expected of all students in the performance of all academic work. Cheating, plagiarism (such as, but not limited to, copying, using AI, or sharing the work of another and submitting it as one's own), or doing another person's homework assignments are all forms of academic dishonesty.

Behavior listed in the LEVEL ONE category will normally warrant a silent lunch:

- In any unauthorized area either during school or after school
- Chewing gum
- Failure to deliver and/or return communication with parents
- Assignment/agenda notebook not with student (grades 1 – 6)
- Minor classroom disruptions (talking to classmates, out of seat, etc.)
- Dress code infractions

For repeated offenses, the school may assign a higher-level consequence such as detention, or In School Suspension.

Behavior listed in the LEVEL TWO category will normally warrant detention**.

The following acts are considered unacceptable and will warrant level two disciplinary action:

- The possession of or using cell phone or Smart devices during school hours (7:00 A.M.-5:30 P.M.)
- Vulgarity/profanity
- Disruptive behavior on school grounds
- Failure to attend detention session-original plus additional detention
- Inappropriate physical contact/horse playing
- Teasing, name-calling, and insults
- Inappropriate Mass behavior
- Disrespect toward faculty/staff
- Continuous dress code infraction
- Instigating disruptive behavior

For repeated offenses or when actions warrant, the school reserves the right to move to a higher-level consequence.

Behavior listed in the LEVEL THREE category will warrant an immediate conference with parents and two days detention**
OR
In-school suspension (Completion of classwork is required and will be graded);
Out of School Suspension (Completion of classwork is required and will be graded);
Expulsion.

- Cheating
- Insubordination toward school personnel
- Stealing
- Unsafe behavior or fighting
- Damaging or Defacing School Property
- Vandalism
- Forgery of parent/guardian signature
- Violation of personal property
- Physical fighting/inappropriate physical contact

Dress Code

All students are expected to be in the complete uniform for the dress code of the day every day.

Dress code infractions include:

- Call to parents to bring appropriate clothing to school.
- Used uniform store items will be used if clothes from home cannot be provided and exchanged for uniform in compliance.

For repeated offenses or when warranted by actions, the school reserves the right to escalate to a higher-level consequence.

Disruption of the Learning Environment

Any actions on the part of students or parents, whether in or out of school, which result in a significant disruption of the learning environment at the school, may result in withdrawal of the student(s).

Detention

Detention is held after school on Wednesdays for 45 minutes (depending upon infraction, detention may be assigned more than one day) or before school at 7 am as assigned by the principal. Detention is to be served on Wednesday or the morning assigned following the infraction. Written notification will be provided to all parents for infractions. Parental acknowledgment forms must be signed and turned into the homeroom teacher. Students must report to the detention room by 3:20 pm or 7 am as assigned. Parent or adult authorized by parent on form must pick up student from detention at 4:15 or indicate that they are to report to EDP.

*In cases where expulsion is being considered, the administrator, teacher, pastor, and Superintendent of Schools will make the final determination.

Athletics and Co-Curricular Activities

Athletics and co-curricular activities are a privilege, and athletes represent the school and are expected to

model school behavior. Students who fail to adhere to school policies including dress code may lose the privilege to participate or compete in outside school activities. Students who receive a detention will serve the following consequences:

First Detention: Students receive warning regarding loss of playing time or participation.
Second Detention: Athletes will miss the next scheduled game. Athletes must sit on the bench **in uniform** with the team but are ineligible to play. They are expected to attend practices prior to missing the game.

Attendance is expected for all athletes on game day. Student athletes who are absent on the day of a game or a competition (clubs, etc.) may not take part in the game or competition held that day.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

My Rights	My Responsibilities
I have the right to be treated with compassion at this school. This means no one will laugh at me or to purposefully hurt my feelings.	I have the responsibility to treat others with compassion. This means I will not laugh at others, tease others, or purposefully hurt others' feelings.
I have the right to be myself at this school. This means no one will treat me unfairly because of weight, gender, appearance, height, religion, race, ancestry, or disability.	I have the responsibility to respect others as individuals and not treat others unfairly because of weight, gender, appearance, height, religion, race, ancestry, disability, etc.
I have the right to be safe at this school. This means no one will hit me, kick me, push me, pinch me, threaten me, or hurt me in any way.	I have the responsibility to make the school safe by not hitting, kicking, pushing, pinching, hurting, or threatening anyone.
I have the right to expect my property to be safe at this school.	I have the responsibility not to steal or destroy the property of others.
I have the right to hear and be heard at this school. This means no one will yell, scream, shout, make loud noises or otherwise disturb me.	I have the responsibility to help maintain a calm and quiet school. This means I will not yell, scream, shout, make loud noises, or otherwise disturb others.
I have the right to have my own personal space at this school. This means no one will hug, kiss, or touch me in an unwanted way.	I have the responsibility to keep out of my classmates' personal space and not touch them in an unwanted way.
I have the right to show pride in my appearance.	I have the responsibility to wear the appropriate uniform.

Harassment

Maintaining an educational environment that encourages optimum human growth and development is imperative. Respect for the dignity of each person is essential to Catholic tradition. It is vital that each school and religious education program maintain a learning and working environment free of any form of harassment or intimidation toward students.

The Diocese of Savannah is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from harassment in any form. Harassment of any student by any other student, lay employee, religious, or priest is prohibited. The school will treat allegations of harassment seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential and thorough manner.

A charge of harassment shall not, in and of itself, create the presumption of wrongdoing. However, substantial acts of harassment will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Students found to have filed false or frivolous charges will also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment that is hostile or intimidating because of the individual's perceived differences including but not limited to race, creed, color, national origin, physical disability, or sex. Harassment can occur any time during school or during school related activities. It includes, but is not limited to, any or all the following:

- **Verbal Harassment**: Derogatory comments and jokes, threatening words spoken to another person.
- **Physical Harassment**: Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement.
- **Visual Harassment**: Derogatory, demeaning, or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, gestures.
- **Sexual Harassment**: Unwanted and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment when:
    - Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term of condition of a persons' educational development;
    - Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for education decisions affecting such individual;
    - Such conduct had the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

  Sexual harassment as defined above may include but is not limited to:
    - Sex-oriented verbal "kidding," abuse, or harassment;
    - Pressure for sexual activity;
    - Repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications;
    - Unwelcome touching such as patting, pinching, or constant brushing against another's body;
    - Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades or similar personal concerns.

Complaint Filing and Investigation Procedures

Students may file a formal grievance of harassment through use of the following grievance procedure: the grievance is submitted to the principal; if the alleged harasser is the principal, the student may file with the Pastor or Superintendent.

All matters involving harassment complaints shall remain confidential to the extent possible. Filing of a grievance or otherwise reporting harassment shall not reflect upon the individual's status or affect the individual's grades.

Grievance Procedure

The student must immediately report the harassment to Administration or a teacher who will report it to the principal, or to the Pastor or Superintendent if Administration is the subject of the allegation. Additionally, in the case of sexual harassment allegations, the student is free to raise the issue with another same sex administrator if he/she prefers to do so. The following procedure will be utilized:

- The parents of the student alleging harassment will be notified immediately, and the student will be asked to complete a formal, written complaint. The claim will be investigated thoroughly, involving only the necessary parties. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible;
- The investigation will include a meeting with the person alleged to have harassed, sharing with that person the nature of the allegation, as well as the name of the person bringing the allegation. The alleged harasser may be removed from the school setting during the course of the investigation. If appropriate, the alleged harasser will be placed on administrative leave during the course of the investigation;
- Once the facts of the investigation have been gathered, the principal, in consultation with the Pastor and Superintendent, will decide the nature, context, and seriousness of the harassment and appropriate disciplinary action.

Bullying

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School takes a strong stance against bullying behaviors and expressly prohibits the bullying of any person by any means or method. Bullying can take many forms including verbal, written, physical and relational.

- Verbal bullying occurs when oral communication is repeatedly used to intimidate, harass, or threaten another person with the intent of causing harm to that person or that person's reputation.
- Written bullying is when written communication of any kind (paper and pen, e-mail, text, etc.) is repeatedly used to intimidate, harass, or threaten another person with the intent of causing harm to that person or that person's reputation.
- Physical bullying occurs when physical contact or the threat of physical contact of any kind is repeatedly used to intimidate, harass, or threaten another person with the intent of causing harm to that person or creating an environment whereby the person feels threatened and intimidated.
- Relational bullying is when exclusion from, or conditional inclusion in, social groups is repeatedly used to intimidate, harass, or threaten another person with the intent of causing harm to that person or that person's reputation.

All incidents of bullying will be reported to a teacher, counselor, or administrator. Once reported, the incident will be investigated, and disciplinary procedures as stated in the school's disciplinary policy will be implemented if deemed appropriate.

Safe Environment Guidelines

All students at St. Francis Xavier Catholic School will receive instruction through the Safe Environment program. This program provides guidelines to the students on how to recognize and report problems or people that worry them to a trusted adult. The program is presented with a Christian perspective and is

approved by the Diocese of Savannah.

Uniforms/Dress Code Policy

Students are to be dressed in a manner consistent with accepted Catholic moral standards of good taste and decency. Students are to come to school neat and well-groomed. Anything immodest or designed to attract attention to the individual, or to disrupt the orderly conduct of the classroom will not be permitted. As a means of continuing our Catholic school identity, students are required to dress in uniform in Pre-K4 through 8th grades. PS3 students are not required to dress in school uniforms; instead, they are encouraged to wear comfortable, appropriate play clothes to school. Students should dress in a manner consistent with accepted Catholic moral standards of good taste and modesty. Students shall wear the uniform designated for the God given biological sex bestowed at birth.
On special "out-of-uniform" days, students will be allowed to wear alternate attire that is in keeping with our Catholic identity and our school uniform guidelines. These days will be announced in advance.

Note to Parents: *We respectfully ask for your help with your student's uniform. When it falls upon the teachers to "police" student uniform conformity, valuable class-time is wasted for all students. Therefore, as the primary and first authority to evaluate your children's attire as they leave for school each day, we ask that you do your best to reinforce these guidelines.*

Special Notes:

- Shoes and socks must be **black with black shoelaces** (white or gray trim/soles permitted)
- Black socks or tights – small white or grey logo only
- All shoes must be closed-toe and closed-heel, including tennis shoes.
- **No Crocs (or Crocs style), heels or boots allowed**.
- All school shirts **MUST** be always tucked in.
- Solid black belt required- (grades 3-8)
- Tennis shoes **MUST** be worn on PE days

Pre-K to 2nd:

Mass Uniform (Girls)

- Plaid jumper **-** no more than 3 inches above the knee with white Peter Pan collar or Oxford long or short-sleeved shirts
- (Optional) Black V-neck vest or black cardigan sweater with St. Francis Xavier logo

Mass Uniform (Boys)

- Khaki pants or shorts - (pull-on available for Pre-K and K)
- White short or long-sleeved Oxford with St. Francis Xavier logo with **Required** school plaid tie
- (Optional) Black V-neck vest or black cardigan sweater with St. Francis Xavier logo

Everyday uniform

- Plaid jumper or khaki skort - no more than 3 inches above the knee
- Blue dress with St. Francis Xavier logo (Pre-K-2 ONLY) - no more than 3 inches above the knee
- Safety shorts above hemline if not in skort or blue dress
- Black polos with St. Francis Xavier logo
- Blue polos with St. Francis Xavier logo (Blue polo may NOT be worn with plaid dress or skort)
- Khaki pants or shorts - (pull-on available for Pre-K and K)

- (Optional) Black crew neck cardigan sweater or vest with St. Francis Xavier logo OR SFXCS hoodie

3rd – 8th:

Mass Uniform (Girls)

- White short or long-sleeved Oxford with St. Francis Xavier logo with
- required plaid skirt - no more than 3 inches above the knee
- (Optional) Black V-neck vest or black cardigan sweater with St. Francis Xavier logo

Mass Uniform (Boys)

- White short or long-sleeved Oxford with St. Francis Xavier logo with **Required** school plaid tie
- Khaki pants or shorts - no more than 3 inches above the knee
- Black crew neck cardigan sweater or vest with St. Francis Xavier logo

Everyday Uniform (Girls)

- Plaid or khaki skirt/skort - no more than 3 inches above the knee
- Safety shorts above the hemline if not in skort
- Black polo with St. Francis Xavier logo
- Blue polo with St. Francis Xavier logo (Blue polo may NOT be worn with plaid skirt)
- Khaki pants or shorts - no more than 3 inches above the knee
- (Optional) Black V-neck vest or black cardigan sweater with St. Francis Xavier logo OR SFXCS hoodie

Everyday Uniform (Boys)

- Black polo with St. Francis Xavier logo
- Blue polo with St. Francis Xavier logo
- Khaki pants or shorts - no more than 3 inches above the knee
- Black crew neck cardigan sweater or vest with St. Francis Xavier logo OR SFXCS hoodie
- (Optional) Black V-neck vest or black cardigan sweater with St. Francis Xavier logo OR SFXCS hoodie

Outerwear:

Solid black outerwear or school cardigans and vests purchased from Global Outfitter (Tommy Hilfiger) or Xavier hooded sweatshirts sold by Sally's Cop Shop with the last name on the back may be worn in the classroom as approved outerwear. Non-uniform outerwear is not permitted to be worn in the school or classroom. **Hoodies are not permitted at Mass**.

Hair (Boys and Girls):

Hair is to be kept clean, combed, off ears, eyes and shoulders. Unusual haircuts and/or distracting haircuts are prohibited. *Hair color must look natural and complement the individual*. Girl's hair bows, headbands, and scrunchies must be solid color only without embellishments as follows; blue with blue polo or dress, white, black, or gold only with Mass or daily uniform).

Jewelry (Boys and Girls):

Boys are not permitted to wear earrings or studs anywhere on the body. Girls in K-5 grade are permitted to wear *one small stud earring* in each ear (no hoops or dangles). Boys and girls are permitted to wear **one** plain gold or silver chain necklace with a cross or religious medal. One simple watch is allowed (NO Smart devices). No other jewelry is permitted (**no rings or bracelets**). St. Francis Xavier Catholic School is not responsible for lost jewelry.

Middle School Girls (ONLY):
Middle School girls may wear only one simple gold or silver necklace with a cross, religious medal, or small approved charm and **ONE** gold or silver simple stretchy bracelet.

Makeup and Nail Polish:
Students may not wear makeup. No nail polish in grades preschool through 3rd grade. Girls may wear clear nail polish in grades 4 through 8. No colors, tints, or fake nails or tips are permitted.

P.E. Days:

K-1st students **DO NOT** have a PE uniform
2nd-8th grade students will wear their PE uniform all day ONLY on their assigned PE day. (See classroom teacher for your student's schedule).
Students must come to school prepared for Physical Education and will not change clothing for class, as the school does not have facilities to accommodate changing.

PE Uniform: Any SFXCS t-shirt and solid black athletic shorts with at least a 5" inseam, black socks and black athletic shoes/tennis shoes.

Free Dress Days:

- Shirts with sleeves that reach below the waistband (NO crop tops).
- Blue jeans without holes
- Pants, capris, dresses– no more than 3 inches above the top of the knees.
- NO political, offensive, or any print that is not mission aligned.
- Shorts and skirts - no more than 3 inches above the top of the knees.
- **No leggings or tight-fitting pants or clothing.**
- Any color socks, sneakers, or shoes - **no open-toe**, heels, or strapless back shoes.

The school dress code policy applies to free dress days.

The administration reserves the right to determine whether free dress attire complies with the school's dress code standards. Any attire deemed inappropriate or inconsistent with the spirit of the dress code may require the student to change into acceptable clothing by either a call home for a change of clothing or a uniform from the used uniform closet.

Handbook Policy
St. Francis Xavier Catholic School reserves the right to interpret, amend or change the contents of this handbook. Students, parents, guardians and staff will be informed of any changes made.