

# Holy Ghost Catholic School

Holy Ghost Catholic School, founded in 1912, is accredited by the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA), the State of Louisiana Department of Education, and AdvancED

## Parent-Student Handbook 2024-25

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Holy Ghost Catholic School is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

## STATEMENT OF POLICY

Holy Ghost Catholic School in Hammond, Louisiana, admits students of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at its schools. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

Additionally, in compliance with Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, no person in the school shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity, except as permitted under said Title IX.

Finally, Holy Ghost Catholic School has adopted and will implement the imperatives of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act as amended and will inform parents and students of their rights under this amendment to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

## DISCLAIMERS

1. Although we have attempted to cover every phase of school life, we know there are areas that may not be covered by this handbook. Therefore, any decisions regarding matters not specifically written in this handbook will be left to the discretion of the school administration.
2. After reading the handbook and reviewing it with your child, you will be asked to sign and return the "Parent/Student Handbook Acknowledgement *Form*."
3. Excerpted from "*The Rights and Responsibilities of Catholic School Parents*," published by the National Catholic Education Association:

"Catholic School students and parents, as well as the Catholic school and its employees, have rights conferred by contract law. In enrolling a child in a Catholic school, a parent agrees to follow the rules of that school. It is impossible to identify every situation that can arise in a handbook; thus wording {is used} such as 'other appropriate conduct' or 'conduct whether inside or outside of school that is detrimental to the reputation of the school...' Your child is representative of the Catholic school twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and is responsible for acting in way that brings credit to Church and School. You will be required to sign a form stating that you have read the handbook and agree to be governed by it. Your signature serves as evidence that you entered into [this] contract and that you understand the provision of the contract."

4. Revisions made after this printing will be posted on the Holy Ghost Catholic School website. Failure to abide by the regulations and policies of the school handbook by either the student or his/her parent or guardian may result in the student's removal from the school.
5. If you want to use our name and/or logo, you MUST have administrative approval.

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# 1.0 MISSION STATEMENT

Holy Ghost Catholic School offers a challenging academic program, with well complemented extracurricular activities. The continuum of academics from pre-kindergarten through the eighth grade provides a quality of excellence, which spans a child's entire education. The school's size encourages the formation of healthy, respectful relationships among members of the school community, and the richness and power of the Holy Ghost Catholic School tradition nurtures the growth of each student's mind, body, and spirit.

## 1.1 Mission Statement

To promote a Catholic environment of loving, learning, and living in Christ, through academic excellence, Gospel values, and a nurturing community

## 1.2 Philosophy/History

Holy Ghost Catholic School, founded in 1912, was opened by five Dominican sisters as St. Thomas Aquinas School. The thirty students who enrolled that year were taught in the convent. Funds solicited from the church in 1913 helped to build a frame building with four rooms which serviced the parish for thirty-seven years with eight grades. In 1949, a new school was dedicated and named Holy Ghost School. The enrollment was 274 students and consisted of eight rooms, library, office, waiting room, first aid room, two janitor closets, auditorium, kitchen and the Sister's private quarters.

Holy Ghost School continued to grow and expand over the years adding two more classroom buildings, a computer lab, gym, cafeteria, Early Learning Center, and administrative offices. Presently, our enrollment is more than 700 students in grades PreK2 - 8th with over 90 faculty and staff members.

Holy Ghost Catholic School inherits a tradition of high-quality Catholic education from the founders, the Dominican priests and sisters. This tradition is rooted in the Dominican heritage of preaching and teaching truth to deepen the child's relationship with God and the ever-changing world in which he/she lives. The Dominican tradition continues through the religious commitment, personal dedication, and professional competence of religious and lay people who have devoted themselves to education.

The primary purpose of Holy Ghost Catholic School's educational program is to prepare our children for life in a contemporary society by fostering each child's maximum potential in spiritual, emotional, intellectual, social, and physical development. We are committed to provide an environment where the Catholic Christian ideals can flourish. Our school's focus is on building self-esteem and preparing students to live with compassion, justice, responsibility, respect by example, and through service. Our school's mission is fulfilled through a strong system of discipline, a challenging academic curriculum, which strives to meet individual needs, and varied co-curricular activities. The religious emphasis of Holy Ghost Catholic School is focused on providing spiritual formation in a community of love and faith in which students can experience the presence of God in their lives and grow in strength in their personal faith. Our school bases its philosophy on a belief that the total education program nurtures and challenges students, each of whom has unique talents and gifts. The focus of our program at Holy Ghost Catholic School is the development of a harmonious blending of our students' spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional, and physical strengths.

## 1.3 Dominican Motto

*VERITAS*

The Latin word "VERITAS" which means truth, has always been the Dominican motto. Since Holy Ghost Catholic School has always been a Dominican school, "VERITAS" has come to mean more than just truth. It means honesty with oneself and with others. Honesty brings us closer together to build trust-worthy relationships. Seeking truth means to seek the way Jesus wants us to live.

#### **1.4 Vision Statement**

The vision of Holy Ghost Catholic School is to be a school of excellence with a strong focus on its Catholic identity and academic distinction.

Holy Ghost Catholic School strives for the development of the whole child through participation in the sacramental life of the Catholic Church. Holy Ghost Catholic School is committed to fostering respect of faith, respect for others, and self-reflection of Christ's presence in daily thoughts, words, and actions.

A dedicated and caring faculty will be the hallmark of its academic excellence. Holy Ghost Catholic School will provide superior academic preparation through a challenging curriculum incorporating the use of current technology in real-world application while promoting and fostering the ongoing formation and spiritual growth of the next generation of Catholic leaders to live the Gospel and to meet their full potential in preparation for a life of service in society.

#### **1.5 Goals/Objectives**

1. To assist each student in reaching their full potential spiritually and academically
2. To assist each student in developing a knowledge of and a deeper relationship with Christ and the Church
3. To maintain the standards of a state accredited institution
4. To maintain the standards of a nationally accredited institution
5. To continue to correlate the curriculum to State and National educational standards
6. To assist each student in acquiring a sense of responsibility for his/her education and instill a desire for becoming a life-long learner
7. To assist each student in acquiring a sense of responsibility for the community in which he/she lives and for the world community

#### **1.6 Service**

The purpose of the stewardship program for students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 is to provide students with the opportunity to make a difference in our Church and surrounding communities through various service and support programs. In addition, the Service Projects provide students with the opportunity to learn about Catholic Social Teaching.

In 1972, the American Catholic Bishops published their pastoral letter on Catholic education. In the publication, *To Teach as Jesus Did*, the bishops identified three characteristics of quality Catholic education: message, community, and service.

“An effective Catholic educational program proclaims to students the message of the Gospel. Students so internalize this message that they live in harmony with each other; they have community with one another. This shared life impels students to serve others.”

In keeping with the Gospel message, Holy Ghost Catholic School seeks to involve students at all grade levels to participate in service programs. If your child chooses to participate in the Service Project, he/she must contribute to the cause. If not, they are required to wear their uniform on that day. Student organizations through the program of co-curricular activities provide service hours to the school and community as well.

#### **1.7 Holy Ghost Catholic School as a Faith Community**

A community of faith is a group of people who believe that Christ is present and working among His people today. With that truth, the faith community by word, example, love, and concern strives to make this a reality among those with whom they live and work. It is our belief that in order to grow as a community of believers, prayer must play an important part in our everyday lives.

## **1.8 Parent Cooperation Statement**

We, at Holy Ghost Catholic School, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life--- physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of Holy Ghost Catholic School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life. While Holy Ghost Catholic School realizes that there may be legitimate disputes concerning educational matters, Holy Ghost Catholic School is ultimately responsible for the orderly operation of the school in the best interest of all of its students. Therefore, the school reserves the right to terminate its relationship with a student if the parents of the student fail to provide the support, assistance, and example necessary to accomplish the school's role of assisting the parent in providing the religious and secular education to which the child is entitled. Please remember, speaking negatively about a child's teacher at home, in public or on social media, will only create an attitude of distrust toward the teacher, the school, and the parent. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. Failure to abide by the regulations and policies of the school handbook by either the student or his/her parent/guardian may result in the student's removal from the school.

### **(From the Diocesan Administration Manual, pg. 4-13.)**

“Parental cooperation is necessary to ensure the orderly functioning of the school, as well as the furtherance of the child's education. If parental cooperation is not forthcoming, the child's continued enrollment must be reviewed in order to ascertain if the child's presence in the school serves the best interest of the school and the child. After opportunities have been provided for reasonable and fair dialogue among parents, administrator, and pastor, and the pastor and administrator deem the parents no longer honor the expectations found in the school's contractual agreement, the parents shall be directed to withdraw their child/children from the school. The parents may appeal to the Appeals Committee within three days of written notification of the decision. The Appeals Committee must meet within five days of the withdrawal decision. The child is suspended until the appeals process is finalized.”

## **2.0 SCHOOL ENROLLMENT**

### **2.1 Admission Requirements**

Holy Ghost Catholic School will comply in every way with the diocesan guidelines for admission of students as stated in the *Handbook and Book of Policies for the Schools of the Diocese of Baton Rouge*.

Holy Ghost Catholic School is open to all qualified students regardless of race, color, sex, or national origin. Parents are expected to show an interest in the education of their children by cooperating with the administration and faculty in all school matters. Students will be expected to comply with all school regulations and conduct themselves at all times in a manner which is conducive to good learning and good conduct.

Criteria used by the school's Admissions Committee for all new students includes a careful review of academic, attendance, and conduct records. Students who meet the criteria but cannot be accepted due to class size will be placed on a wait list. Vacancies will be filled as they become available. For all new students and current students, attendance will be reviewed by the Admissions Committee to determine re-enrollment. Attendance includes excessive absences and/or tardiness.

### **2.2 Age Requirements**

All children entering Pre-K2 must be two years of age by September 30th. All children entering Pre-K3 must be three years of age by September 30th and be able to use the restroom independently. All children entering Pre-K4 must be four years of age by September 30th and be able to use the restroom independently. Children must be five years of age by September 30th to register for kindergarten and six years of age by September 30th to register for first grade. All children entering Pre-K3, Pre-K4, or Kindergarten must be potty trained prior to entering school. If this becomes an issue, your child may be dropped from HGCS. Unless enrolled in the HGS Special Education class, all students entering Pre-K3 or above must be able to communicate their needs.



### 2.3 Registration for Students Presently Enrolled

Registration for students presently enrolled is held in the month of January. Registration is available online through our website. All pre-paid tuition loans must be current (the January payment must be paid) in order to register. A registration fee must be paid **online** at the time of registration. If the registration fee has been paid, but tuition has not been paid in full by the due date, or a loan with Gulf Bank has not been secured and/or has not made the July payment before the first day of school, the school will assume your child is not returning and his or her name will be deleted from the school roster.

### 2.4 Registration for New Students

Registration for new students is held in the month of January. The student's birth certificate and social security card are required. A copy of these documents and an up-to-date immunization card is required. The record may be obtained from your pediatrician or the Health Unit. **A copy of a Catholic baptismal certificate is required to receive Catholic tuition rates.** Children who have attended school elsewhere must present their latest report card demonstrating promotion from within that system. Any student that is transferring from a non-diocesan school, or any student that administration deems necessary, will be required to take an end-of-course/year test prior to acceptance. The parent will be responsible for paying a \$50 testing fee. If a student is working one grade level below level, he may be asked to repeat the grade from which he came. If a student is working two or more grade levels below, he may be asked to repeat his previous grade or be placed into the grade level in which he is functioning.

### 2.5 Policy for Acceptance

The order in which consideration is given for acceptance into Holy Ghost Catholic School is as follows:

1. Current students
2. **In-parish\*** practicing Catholic siblings of currently enrolled students
3. **In-parish\*** practicing Catholics
4. Out-of-parish practicing Catholic siblings of currently enrolled students
5. Out-of-parish practicing Catholics
6. Other Faith siblings
7. Other Faiths

All current students and siblings pre-register in February and are placed on a list according to the following criteria:

1. Current Pre-K2 through 7<sup>th</sup> grade students are placed on a list, and a place is reserved for those students in the next grade.
2. New **in-parish\*** practicing Catholic students entering grades Pre-K through 8th grade are placed on a list.
3. All Pre-K students are grouped according to the following: **in-parish\*** Catholic siblings, **in-parish\*** Catholics, out-of-parish Catholic siblings, out-of-parish Catholics, and students of other faiths.

Open registration for all other students takes place in February after currently enrolled students have registered. Students registering at this time are placed on one of the lists mentioned above and are placed behind presently enrolled students and grouped according to the following criteria:

1. **In-parish\*** practicing Catholics who did not register in February
2. Out-of-parish practicing Catholic siblings
3. Out-of-parish practicing Catholics
4. Siblings of other faiths
5. New students of other faiths

**\*Parents must show proof that they have tithed to Holy Ghost Catholic Church a minimum of \$350 in the year preceding registration to be considered in-parish practicing Catholic.**

After all the lists are created, all current students will be placed followed by new practicing Catholic students. Students of other faiths will be held on the wait list until June 1st in order to ensure that there are no new Catholic students moving into the area.

## **2.6 Custody Concerns**

To preserve the educational environment, any custody issues must be solved amicably and not involve the school. In the event that parents have a custody agreement through the court system, it is assumed by the school that those parents will in good faith adhere to the custody agreement. The school assumes no responsibility for compliance with such agreement.

**Should a custody issue occur at school, the child will travel home according to their normal routine.**

**All custody paperwork must be signed and sealed by the court. The parent must present the original signed and sealed document to the school. A copy will be made of the order and kept on file at the school. The most recent document on file will be followed.**

Custodial parents must agree on who may pick up and who may have lunch with the child. Additionally, if a parent has “supervised visitation” as a stipulation, said parent cannot eat lunch at school with their child(ren), and any parent/teacher conference must be done with an administrator. School personnel will not be used as a court ordered supervisor of a parent.

Holy Ghost Catholic School abides by the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, we will provide the non-custodial parent with access to academic records and other school information requested regarding his/her child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the custodial parent’s responsibility to provide the school with a court-certified copy of the court order. If any change occurs, the custodial parent must supply the school with a current copy. It is assumed by the school that parents will abide by the court order. Be advised that if a teacher, staff member, or principal is subpoenaed to testify in a child custody case, the parent will need to pay the cost of a substitute teacher and any other costs associated with the testimony (mileage, parking, food, etc.).

Failure to abide by the regulations and policies of the school handbook by either the student or his/her parent/guardian or the custody issue becomes a burden to the school, the student may be asked to leave Holy Ghost Catholic School.

## **2.7 Withdrawal**

In the event that a student should withdraw, transcripts and other records will be withheld until all financial obligations have been cleared. Parents are requested to come to the school office and complete a Student Withdrawal Form at least three school days prior to the child’s last day of school. If all financial obligations are met, the records will be sent to the new school once a request is sent from the new school.

## **2.8 Records Requests**

Special requests for student records or other information are to be directed in writing to the principal. The administration has the right to not release anecdotal notes to the parent or legal guardian. The administration has the right to include expulsion or withdrawal letters in the student’s cumulative folder when transferring to another school. Students’ records are confidential and can be released only to parents, legal guardians, or the custodial parent.

All registration and school documents are property of Holy Ghost Catholic School. If a document is needed, a fee of \$5 will be charged with a 24-48 hours turnaround time. No records will be provided if there is an outstanding family balance.

With the growing number of divorced families, multiple copies of records are oftentimes requested. While we want to accommodate each family’s needs, we cannot take the place of an open line of communication between parents. Holy Ghost Catholic School will issue records (weekly test folders, progress reports, report cards, parent newsletters, etc.) to the parent with domicile custody. If both parents have joint custody with time equally distributed, the parent who bears the burden of tuition receives the records. No records will be sent to transferring schools of students whose financial commitment is in arrears.

## 3.0 SCHOOL FINANCES

### 3.1 Offertory Giving

Families of students to be enrolled in Holy Ghost Catholic School are required to assume the responsibility of the school's operational cost by timely payments of tuition and fees. All Catholic students to be enrolled in Holy Ghost Catholic School are expected to be active members of a Catholic faith community. An active member of a Catholic faith community is defined by the following: families who regularly attend mass and receive the sacraments and families who participate in service to the parish community. Regular mass attendance is evidenced by the use of a church envelope. A church envelope is to be placed in the collection on a weekly basis. It may or may not include a contribution.

All families registered in Holy Ghost Parish with students attending or planning to attend Holy Ghost Catholic School are expected to be Identified Offertory Givers. All families must contribute a minimum of \$350.00 to Holy Ghost Church per family for the current school year.

### 3.2 Registration, Campus Improvement Fee, and Technology Fee

In February, online registration occurs for all who are in good standing (behavior/financial) with the school. Registration is \$300 per student and is non-refundable. Late registration (after 2/28) is \$450 per student.

A \$300 Campus Improvement Fee is assessed per family to support and maintain the growth of our campus. The fee is due in May and is non-refundable.

A \$250 Technology Fee is assessed per child. This fee is due in May and is non-refundable. Please refer to section 10.4 for more information.

### 3.3 Tuition

The School Board Finance Committee, the School Board, the Principal, and the Pastor establish tuition rates and fees for Holy Ghost Catholic School annually. The first tuition rate is for registered and supporting members (at least one PARENT) of Holy Ghost Parish as identified by the Pastor. Please be aware that you must have tithed to HGC for at least ONE YEAR, prior to registration, in order to be considered a "Registered Tithing Member". You must also have proof that your child was baptized, in a Catholic church, by December of their Kindergarten year in order to qualify for this rate. The second rate is for all others. Three payment options are offered. First, tuition may be paid in its entirety in the school office by the last Friday in May upon receipt of acceptance. Second, a loan for the full amount is available with Gulf Bank and Trust. Third, a loan may be made for a portion of the tuition amount. **The amount not being financed is due in the school office by the last Friday in May.** There is no background check. Penalties and fees do not apply for early pay off. Before Labor Day entrance, tuition is not prorated.

### 3.4 Parental Volunteer Requirements

All families are required to volunteer a total of four (4) hours. It is preferred that parents do this at the fair. ***Each family will be assessed \$320*** if these hours are not met. Half of these hours **MUST** be satisfied by the end of the first semester, or you will be assessed \$160.00 at that point (December 31). If the hours are not completed by April 15, the remainder of the charge will be billed on May 1. The annual Holy Ghost Parish Fair, held in the fall, is a high point in the school year. This event offers all members of our Holy Ghost Catholic School family the opportunity to come together in Christian fellowship. Participation in some phase of the fair by all families is strongly encouraged.

**Chaperoning field trips, attending class parties and other classroom events/activities, do not satisfy these volunteer requirements.**

### **3.5 Bank Financing, Loan Signing, and Loan Cancellation**

An 11-month tuition loan plan is available from Gulf Coast Bank and Trust if application is made by May 1st. After May 1st, there is a 10-month loan plan available.

Loans are to be paid by the 1st of each month. A loan will be cancelled if a payment is not received by noon on the last day of the month that the payment is due. The loan will not be carried for 60 days.

The parent has five days to pay the school the full amount of the cancelled loan or have the student dropped from the class roll. When a loan has been cancelled due to non-payment, the school will not approve another tuition loan.

### **3.6 Tuition Assistance**

Applications are available online from the Holy Ghost Catholic Church website. Active members of Holy Ghost Church Parish may apply. See section 2.1 for the definition of an “active member.”

Tuition assistance is funded through the Sunday offerings and private donations. A private school aid service determines eligibility. A completed application, a copy of a current tax return, and a set fee is required. Applications can be found on the HG Church website. The private school aid service notifies the Pastor of families who qualify for assistance. The Pastor notifies the registrar. The registrar notifies the parent and the bank. Tuition assistance reduces the loan amount when granted before May 1st. Tuition assistance is applied to the principal amount when granted on or after May 1<sup>st</sup> reducing the number of monthly payments, but not the amount of the monthly payment. If tuition assistance is granted, the family is asked to perform service hours for the school. The number of hours is determined by the amount of financial help. Tuition assistance is only given to students entering K-8<sup>th</sup> grades.

### **3.7 Returned Checks**

There will be a \$35 NSF check charge on each NSF check written to the school. However, if there is a recurring problem with NSF checks, you will be asked to pay in cash or money order. The school will accept cash only two weeks prior to a big event (i.e. Parish Fair, Washington DC, closing ceremonies, etc.)

### **3.8 Aftercare and Extra Curricular Payments**

Payments are due by the 15th of each month. **Students will be denied access to Aftercare and Extra Curricular activities at the end of the month if no payment has been received.** The past due amount plus the next month’s charge must be paid before the student can return to the program. In the case of Aftercare, where a student is charged at the end of each month for the days used during the previous month, twice the amount due must be paid before a student can return to Aftercare. If a student is habitually picked up after 6:00 pm from Aftercare, this service will no longer be available to you.

### **3.9 Delinquent Accounts for the Current Year**

No student will be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activity if the student’s financial account is more than 30 days past due. These accounts include but are not limited to Tuition, Fees, Aftercare, Cafeteria, Extracurricular Activities, and Field Trips/Experiences. The student will not be able to participate in a game or attend practice until the financial account becomes current. As always, the family is encouraged to contact the principal to make financial arrangements should financial difficulties arise.

### **3.10 Delinquent Accounts for the Previous Years**

Students will not be allowed to return to HGCS due to unresolved delinquent accounts. These accounts include, but are not limited to Tuition, Fees, Aftercare, Cafeteria, Extra Curricular, and Field Trip/Experiences. Records will not be forwarded to another school until all accounts have been cleared.

## 4.0 STUDENT HEALTH

### 4.1 Medication Policy

Students are not allowed to have medications in their possession on the school grounds. The teachers and administrative staff will confiscate the medication and contact the parent.

Medication, such as antibiotics, short-term medications, as well as non-prescription drugs (aspirin, Tylenol, eye drops, contacts solution, cough drops, etc.) are not given to students by the school staff. If a student requires such medication, the parent/guardian must come to school during lunch or enrichment to administer the medication.

Long-term medications that can be administered by the school staff include:

1. Medication for behavior modification (e.g., Ritalin)
2. Insect sting allergy
3. Anticonvulsive medication (e.g., Dilantin, Phenobarbital)
4. Medication for asthmatic conditions
5. Epi-pens for severe allergies

If your child must take one of the above-mentioned long-term medications at school, please follow these procedures:

1. Clearly label the medication. Unlabeled medicine cannot be dispensed.
2. The parent or guardian must bring the medication to the school office in the container in which it was originally packaged. The label should have the name of the student, name of the medication, dosage, and the specific time it is to be given at school.
3. A signed note from the parent must accompany the medication. The note must include: the child's name, prescription number, name of medication, and specific time and dosage to be administered. It must be stated that the parent gives the school permission to administer the medication.
4. To circumvent potential abuse, the medications will be kept in the school under lock and key in a secure, central location.
5. All necessary paperwork must be obtained, completed, and returned to the school office before this service is provided.

**\*\*If your child is taking short or long term medication at home, that could possibly affect their behavior at school, this information needs to be shared with school personnel.\*\***

### 4.2 Illness/Communicable Diseases

Students who are ill should be kept home. Students with communicable health problems, such as head lice, will be sent home. If a student is excluded from classes because of head lice, a note from a doctor or the health unit must be presented to the school office before the child may enter class.

It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school in the event that the student has contracted a communicable disease. This includes notification if the child has lice. Holy Ghost Catholic School has a “**no nit**” policy. If nits are discovered before or after a child has been treated, they will be sent home and must return with a doctor's note and be nit free.

If your child has fever and/or has vomited, you must pick up your child from school. In order for your child to return to school, **he/she must be fever free and not have vomited in a 24-hour period.**

While teachers are very compassionate and sensitive to students' needs, it is the responsibility of the child to inform the teacher if he/she feels ill.

All medical excuses for student absences, as well as all statements from doctors about restrictions on activities or diets, must be referred to the office. A doctor's note is required after illnesses caused by a communicable disease. All doctors' notes must be submitted within three days of the absence for the absence to be excused. Doctors' notes must be written on original letterhead.

**No copies will be accepted.**

### **4.3 State or City Ordered School Closures for an Extended Period**

If school is closed due a public health concern, parents/guardians will still be responsible for payment of tuition. The education of each student will continue with virtual/remote/e-learning. Teachers will continue to plan standards-based lessons and evaluate student work. Report cards will be distributed at the end of each grading period.

### **4.4 Immunizations**

All immunizations must be kept up-to-date in accordance with Louisiana Department of Public Health. All schools are required to have a minimum of 95% of their students immunized and a yearly audit is conducted by the Louisiana Immunization Program to verify compliance. If there is a medical reason why the child cannot be immunized, proof must be provided. As a Catholic School, we reserve the right to exclude unvaccinated students from school.

### **4.5 Water Bottles**

HGS realizes the importance of hydration. We have working water fountains throughout the campus, but students are also allowed to bring a water bottle to school. ONLY CLEAR water bottles will be allowed. If anything other than a clear bottle is brought, it will be confiscated and a parent will need to retrieve it.

### **4.6 Emergency Information**

If there is an emergency in school or if your child is ill or injured, we must be able to contact you or your designee. Parents are responsible to keep this information current at all times. In the event that phone numbers, email addresses, addresses, places of employment, or family information changes, please make the necessary changes on RenWeb or notify the office if you do not have internet access.

### **4.7 Child Abuse Laws**

Holy Ghost Catholic School abides by section 14:403 of the Louisiana Child Abuse Laws that mandates all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect, be reported to Child Protective Services.

## **5.0 VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS**

### **5.1 Visitor Parking**

The Holy Ghost Church parking lot has been designated for visitor parking during school hours. Volunteers and visitors to the school are asked to use this parking facility. Due to our close proximity to Southeastern, HGCS has issued hang tags to our families. Additional hang tags can be purchased for \$5.

To cross North Oak Street, you must use the crosswalk located on the corner by the church.

### **5.2 Visitors to the School**

The administration and staff welcome and encourage parents and other school patrons to visit the school at appropriate times. In fact, special programs and visiting days are planned throughout each school year to provide opportunity for such visits.

For the safety of our students, all visitors shall report to the school office stating the purpose of their visit. Please sign in to receive a visitor's pass and sign out upon departure. In the event of a special grade-level program, you may be given different instructions from the teacher for entering.

**Visitors should not enter classrooms without permission.**

**Visitors should not detain teachers.**

Observations MUST be scheduled through the office. Visits are limited to 30 minutes in the classroom, and visitors cannot interrupt instructional time.

Visitors are not allowed on campus during Standardized Testing week.

No visitors are allowed on the school playgrounds during recess times. The administration is authorized to take the necessary steps in dealing with unauthorized visitors.

### **5.3 Visitors to the Cafeteria**

Parents or immediate family are welcome to have lunch with their child or a relative on occasion. It is important that you call the cafeteria by 9:00 a.m. to order a meal (985-345-1302). Please remember to sign in at the school office before going to the cafeteria. Parents must refrain from going to the playground to allow their child the opportunity to be physically active and socialize. Also, please be aware that there are certain days when special programs may change the lunch schedule. To be safe, please contact the office or the teacher before coming.

Food/drinks may be brought in from an outside source, but it must be placed in a generic paper/plastic bag or cup. Bags/cups advertising restaurants may not be used.

Parents/immediate family members may sit with **immediate family ONLY**. **Choosing certain “friends” to eat with only causes hurt feelings.**

### **5.4 Visitors to Mass**

All School Masses – Parents are important members of our school community. Parents are welcome to join their child’s class for Mass. We do ask parents to observe a few guidelines for attendance.

Please arrive at church by 7:50 so you can join in with your child’s class as they enter church. For the protection of your child, the church doors are locked when mass begins. If you have younger children that are not yet in our school, the teachers and assistants will help you find seating at the end of the row in case you need to go to the quieting room.

For safety reasons, it is important that you inform your child’s teacher if you are sitting away from their class with the student. Please check the school calendar to make sure that Mass will be taking place that week.

### **5.5 Volunteerism and Safe Environment Requirements**

A directive from the Bishop mandates that all volunteers whose position or duties place them in ongoing, unsupervised contact with minors have complied with the Safe Environment requirements. It is the responsibility of all volunteers, whose work in the school or church involves ongoing, unsupervised contact with minors, **including field trips/experiences**, to comply fully with the Safe Environment requirements. All volunteers will be required to:

1. Complete the EAPPS application.
2. Complete the Acknowledgement of the Code of Ethics and Behavior for Adults who Minister with Children in the Diocese of Baton Rouge.
3. Complete a background check and fingerprints.
4. Complete the Safe in Place training module for adults.
5. The annual Holy Ghost Parish Fair, held in the fall, is a high point in the school year. This event offers all members of our Holy Ghost family the opportunity to come together in Christian fellowship. Participation in some phase of the fair by all families is strongly encouraged. Students are encouraged to participate in the special activities of the fair. All families are required to volunteer a total of four (4) hours. It is preferred that parents do this at the fair. Each family will be assessed \$320 by April 15<sup>th</sup> if these hours are not met. Please be aware that chaperoning field trips, attending class parties and other classroom events/activities, does not satisfy these volunteer requirements.

## **6.0 COMMUNICATION**

### **6.1 RenWeb/FACTS Family**

RenWeb is a software program used by the administration, faculty, and staff. ParentsWeb is a module of this program that allows parents to access students’ grades online. The parent will be issued a password for protection. Teachers will attempt to post grades in a timely manner. However, some tests (essay answers, reports, papers, projects, etc.) are very time consuming to grade.

### **6.2 Teacher’s Individual Website**

Parents can visit our website at [www.hgschool.org](http://www.hgschool.org) and click on the “Academics” link. This will take the parent to the links for students. Please make use of this helpful home and school connection.

### **6.3 Parent-Teacher Conferences /Communication**

**All conferences are scheduled during the teacher's planning period.** Parents may request one parent-teacher conference per nine weeks. Teachers may request conferences as needed. Appointments may be scheduled through the school office at least one day in advance or in a written request to the teacher in a sealed envelope or by email. You must first schedule a parent/teacher conference to discuss concerns. Should it become necessary, the administration is available for scheduled appointments for further discussion (Refer to Item 6.10 for the Grievance Procedure.). The teachers definitely want to be in communication with parents regarding their concerns. Teachers are encouraged to check their email during their planning period (different times for different teachers). In order to protect their family life, the teachers are **not** required to check their email in the evening.

**However, if you do not get a response in 48 hours, you are welcome to contact the office.**

Because confidentiality is a **MUST**, Holy Ghost Catholic School is in charge of the conference and who is allowed to attend. Conference attendees, other than parents, must be approved by administration.

### **6.4 Class Interruptions**

Classes are not to be disturbed at any time during the school day. Classrooms will not be interrupted to deliver forgotten items, **NO** exceptions. Unless an emergency situation exists, children may not be called to the phone during school hours. Children will not be permitted to use the office phone unless there is an emergency, such as sickness, injury, or transportation problems. Students must receive permission from a staff member to use the phone. Change of transportation should be put in writing and sent to the homeroom teacher the morning of the change. Please do not interrupt the classrooms for change of transportation (see section 6.8). Administration and staff will strictly enforce this policy.

### **6.5 Messages**

With a large enrollment, it is quite difficult to receive and deliver messages without disrupting classes. Please discuss with your child in advance the procedure you expect him/her to follow on rainy days or on days that he/she would have to stay after school for such things as meetings, extracurricular activities, etc. Careful planning and cooperation on the part of parents and students can prevent severe disruption to the instructional program. We will not call your child out of the classroom to receive a message.

### **6.6 Celebrations/Snacks**

The teachers, in coordination with the classroom chairperson, may plan seasonal/curriculum related celebrations. Invitations to birthday or private parties may be brought to school and given out during homeroom period to all the students in the class or in the grade level. If they are not given to all students in the homeroom, they may not be brought to school unless the party is gender specific.

Birthdays are very special, and they will be acknowledged during homeroom with a bookmark, pencil, singing, etc. Gifts are not to be exchanged at school, and no birthday celebrations will be held at school. Only students in PK2 – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade may bring a birthday snack/cupcakes (**no cakes allowed**). Everything must be individual.

Only students in Pre-K2 – 2nd grades are allowed to bring snacks from home.

Students in ALL grades are allowed to bring one CLEAR water bottle of water to school each day. No sport drinks or drink flavorings are allowed. During Mardi Gras season, King Cakes may **ONLY** be brought on Fridays. Homeroom celebrations are held at Christmas and end of year.

### **6.7 Forgotten Items**

If a student forgets an item at home and a parent brings the item to school, (i.e. binder, homework) the item will be placed in the homeroom teacher's mailbox. There is no guarantee that the student will receive the item before the end of the day. iPads will be accepted, but the student will receive an infraction for not being prepared for class.

### **6.8 Special Deliveries**

Flowers, balloons, gift baskets, etc. may not be delivered to a child at school. If a delivery arrives at school, a parent will be called to pick it up.



## **6.9 Limousines**

No limousines or party buses are allowed on school property before or after school events or in the carpool line.

## **6.10 Conflict Resolution/Grievance Procedure**

When a disagreement occurs in academic, behavior, or policy decisions between the school and home, the following steps for the Conflict Resolution/Grievance Procedure should be followed:

1. Conference with the teacher/staff member FIRST.
2. If no resolution occurs, contact an administrator.
3. The administrator will then investigate the situation.
4. If no resolution is determined, a conference with all parties will then be scheduled.
5. If no resolution occurs during step 4, the matter can be referred to the Pastor of Holy Ghost Church Parish.
6. The Pastor will then investigate the situation.
7. If necessary, after step 6, a conference will be scheduled with the Pastor and all parties involved.

***\*\*Please understand that the best way to resolve an issue is through open communication and dialogue. A problem cannot be solved if the party is not aware that there is one. Additionally, if there is a conflict with a teacher, moving your child to a different class is not an option. Your child will encounter MANY teachers and personalities throughout their educational career. Helping them to understand that everyone is different, is an invaluable lesson. Keep in mind, once your child gets to third grade, they will have all three teachers.\*\****

*In the event that there is a public display against the school through verbal or written expression, the student may be removed from Holy Ghost Catholic School. In the case of an appeal, the administration reserves the right to decide who will be present throughout the due process hearings.*

# **7.0 ACADEMICS**

## **7.1 Academic Requirements**

Holy Ghost Catholic School is committed to academic excellence. Our curriculum is aimed at developing the potential of all our children. The focus of our program at Holy Ghost Catholic School is the development of a harmonious blending of our students' spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional, and physical strengths; therefore, honesty is an integral component of the overall development and all students will be held to this standard of excellence. ALL students are required to take standardized tests. If a student fails twice, they will not be readmitted to HGCS.

## **7.2 Distance Learning**

In an e-learning environment, the daily support of a parent/guardian is critical to providing students with continued quality education through e-learning. Specific guidelines will be provided to parents/guardians with detailed information regarding the e-learning schedule in the event that we are mandated to close the school for an extended period of time.

## **7.3 Books and Supplies**

Textbooks and materials issued to a student are the responsibility of that student. Students should not write, mark, or draw in textbooks. The student must purchase damaged or lost textbooks. After the initial purchase of school supplies, students are expected to keep supplies replenished throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to check with their children periodically to see if supplies need to be replenished.

## 7.4 Grading

Grades are averaged quarterly and are based on daily work, homework assignments, and tests which can include 9-weeks tests and unit tests, extra work, notebooks, oral reports, projects, neatness, promptness of work, and initiative. Student grades are weighted as follows for each subject:

60%	Summative Assessments (major tests)
30%	Formative Assessments (minor tests, quizzes, class assignments)
10%	Homework

The following scale is used to assign grades:

A = 93-100      B = 85-92      C = 75-84      D = 67-74      F = 66-0

If homework is not given, the overall grade is divided by 9 instead of 10 to get the correct weights. The child's grade is not penalized if no homework is given.

Subjects that count toward the GPA are Reading, English, Religion/Catholic Doctrine, Math, Science, and Social Studies for 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Conduct is not included in a student's GPA.

The following scale is used to assign grades for enrichment and elective classes in 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades:

E = Excellent    S = Satisfactory    N = Needs Improvement    I = Incomplete

Enrichment and elective courses will not be included in determining GPA/Honor Roll.

## 7.5 Progress Reports, Report Cards, and Graded Assessments

K-4<sup>th</sup> Grade teachers typically send home and/or post the graded tests within a week. However, there will be times in which the educational process has been interrupted, thereby extending that timeframe. 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade student scores may take longer to grade/post due to the fact that these teachers have approximately 100 student papers to grade. Progress reports and report cards are available online. If there are any unpaid fees, RenWeb will be blocked until all past due fees are current. You will have 48 hours in which to dispute/address an issue from when the grade has been sent. It is the parents and students' responsibility to review their grades and inform the teacher if they have a concern.

## 7.6 Promotional Policy

### PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Progress through the grades is a matter of achievement in the basic skills as well as of age, maturation, social, and civic development. It is expected that the majority of students will be well adjusted and will move through the adopted course of study at the rate of one grade per year. However, some students may experience difficulty in mastering the academic phases of the school program and will profit more from school if retained one grade. Special consultation with the parents will be arranged in sufficient time in each case. The final decision regarding a student's promotion and/or class placement within a grade rests with the school for PK through 8th grade. In order for a student to pass, the student must earn at least **four quality points for the year, with two of those quality points received in the second semester**. A student cannot pass a subject with an F in the fourth nine weeks regardless of the previous quality points earned in that subject. The "Final Average" category in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter does not count towards the quality points. (The Grade Point Average (GPA) in RenWeb, is based on percentage points.)

A = 4 points

B = 3 points

C = 2 points

D = 1 point

F = 0 points

The following are the promotional policies for Holy Ghost Catholic School:

Grade:	Subjects	Condition:
1 <sup>st</sup> – 4 <sup>th</sup>	Religion, Reading, Math, English, Science, Social Studies	If a student fails reading or math, he/she will be retained. If a student fails any two subjects (other than reading and math), he/she will be retained. If a student fails only one subject (other than reading and math), he/she must attend 40 hours of tutoring by a certified teacher who is not a family member and pass a Holy Ghost Catholic School cumulative assessment with at least a letter grade that will earn them the required quality points in order to be promoted.
5 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>	Religion, Reading, Math, English, Science, Social Studies	If a student fails any two subjects, he/she will be retained. A student with zero quality points in Reading or Math will automatically be retained. If a student fails only one subject, he/she must attend 40 hours of tutoring by a certified teacher who is not a family member and pass a Holy Ghost Catholic School cumulative assessment with at least a letter grade that will earn them the required quality points in order to be promoted.

Regardless of grade level, students who fail for the second time are not eligible to submit summer school tutoring hours and take an exit test for possible readiness.

**\*\*There are some cases in which a student has passing grades but will ONLY be allowed to pass if he/she receives summer tutoring and possibly takes a placement test to move on to the next grade. This determination will be made jointly by the teacher and administration.\*\***

## 7.7 Maintaining Enrollment Status

All students currently enrolled in Holy Ghost Catholic School, including those receiving minor accommodations under their Educational Accommodation Plan, who are academically successful, behaviorally appropriate, and abide by the school's attendance policies during their current grade level will be placed in the next grade level for the subsequent year. If a student fails twice in grades 1-8, he/she will not be readmitted to Holy Ghost Catholic School. This requirement for re-admittance is not limited to consecutive years. Standardized testing is mandatory. Students who fail to complete required testing will not be allowed to continue enrollment at Holy Ghost Catholic School and will not be allowed to return to the school the subsequent year.

## 7.8 Honor Roll

Each nine-week period, students who have earned outstanding grades shall have their names placed on the Holy Ghost Catholic School Honor Roll. Students may attain recognition for their good grades by meriting placement on either the A Honor Roll or the A-B Honor Roll. Students who are assessed below their grade level will not be eligible for honor roll, academic honor awards, or membership into National Junior Honor Society.

Criteria for the A Honor Roll: student must earn A's or S's in all subjects and conduct

Criteria for the A-B Honor Roll: student must earn A's, B's, and S's in all subjects and conduct

## 7.9 Courses for High School Credit (Carnegie units)

Holy Ghost Catholic School provides four high school course offerings. These courses are NOT honors courses; they are basic high school courses. As such, the Holy Ghost Catholic School grading scale will apply.

### Environmental Science:

**All 8th grade students** at Holy Ghost Catholic School will have the opportunity to earn a high school credit in science. Environmental Science will be taught to all 8th grade students to better prepare them for high school science courses and the ACT. In order for a student to receive a Carnegie unit, the student must earn at least a 2.5 for the final average.

*Environmental science brings together the fields of ecology, biology, zoology, oceanography, atmospheric science, soil science, geology and more in an interdisciplinary study of how natural and man-made processes and actions interact and affect one another and ultimately affect the various biomes of Earth. Environmental science is not a required course for high school graduation.*

### World Geography:

The opportunity to enroll in World Geography is based on a student's report card grades (minimum of a 3.0 GPA in Social Studies), a basic geography assessment, and a teacher rubric based on classroom work ethic. Discipline records and tardiness/absenteeism will also be considered to determine a student's opportunity to enroll. **This does not guarantee enrollment;** this only qualifies a student for consideration. The combination of scores will determine enrollment. In order for a student to receive a Carnegie unit, the student must earn at least a 2.5 for the final average in that subject.

*World Geography, focusing on the human and physical world, is a course offering students an opportunity to make connections between geography, people, and the world in which we live. Students study introductory elements and themes of geography and examine the impact of cultural and physical geographic factors on major historic events and issues. Traditional historical points of reference in world history are identified as students analyze important events and issues impacting opportunities and challenges facing people around the world today. Students analyze the connections between major developments in science and technology and changes in society. They use case studies and the process of historical inquiry to research, interpret, and use multiple sources of evidence.*

### English I:

The opportunity to enroll in English I is based on a student's standardized test score, report card grades (3.5 GPA in ELA and Reading with no letter grade below a B), and a teacher rubric based on classroom work ethic. Discipline records and tardiness/absenteeism will also be considered to determine a student's opportunity to enroll. **This does not guarantee enrollment;** this only qualifies a student for consideration. Students who qualify for consideration are then required to turn in a writing sample to be scored. The combination of scores (including the writing sample) will determine enrollment.

*This first Carnegie unit high school course in the English curriculum emphasizes critical reading, skill in the use of conventions and mechanics of written English, the appropriate and effective application of English grammar, the study of various genres of literature, and the effective use of vocabulary. Students are expected to understand and utilize the writing process and to be able to evaluate their own and others' writing. English I students read extensively in multiple genres including selections from the Bible. Students will read at least one major literary selection each nine weeks in addition to other, shorter selections. There will be readings students must do outside of the class requirements.*

### Algebra I:

The opportunity to enroll in Algebra I is based on a student's standardized test score, report card grades (3.5 GPA in Math with no letter grade below a B), and a teacher rubric based on classroom work ethic. **This does not guarantee enrollment**; this only qualifies a student for consideration. Discipline records and tardiness/absenteeism will also be evaluated and analyzed to determine a student's opportunity to enroll. In order for the student to receive a Carnegie unit, the student must earn at least a 2.5 for the final average in that subject.

*The primary focus for students in this course is developing logical reasoning by making and justifying generalizations based on their experiences with fundamental algebraic concepts, especially functional relationships and problem solving in real situations. Linear and quadratic functional relationships are examined in a variety of problem situations, and these functions form the basis for the study of equations and the development of algebraic skills. Students use a variety of representations (concrete, numerical, algorithmic, graphic) and tools as well as having regular access to technology that allows function plotting, coordinate graphing, algebraic analysis, and computation.*

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Advanced Math:

If a teacher is available, Advanced Math will be offered to students that qualify. The opportunity to enroll in Advanced Math is based on a student's standardized test score, report card grades (4.0 GPA in Math), and a teacher rubric based on classroom work ethic. **This does not guarantee enrollment**; this only qualifies a student for consideration. Discipline records and tardiness/absenteeism will also be evaluated and analyzed to determine a student's opportunity to enroll.

### **7.10 Homework**

If homework is given, it is part of the student's overall grade. Homework is posted on RenWeb weekly, but students are expected to independently document changes in assignments when necessary. Upcoming summative assessments will be posted in a timely manner, but it is up to the student to check for changes regarding this as well. Parents and students should NOT solely rely on RenWeb for all assignment information. It is our goal to prepare our students to become responsible, independent learners. If homework is not given, the overall grade is divided by 9 instead of 10 to get the correct weights. The child's grade is not penalized if no homework is given. Each grade level and/or teacher will inform parents of their specific policy regarding the penalty for turning things in late.

### **7.11 Special Education**

Tangipahoa Parish School System provides Holy Ghost Catholic School with Speech/Language and Academic services for students that have been determined by the school system to have a learning disability and, therefore, have an active service plan. Information concerning students' academic needs will be released to this agency while interventions and evaluations are being conducted.

### **7.12 Title I**

Holy Ghost Catholic School receives Title I funding. Students are deemed eligible for Title I services through curriculum-based assessment and standardized test scores in reading and math. Students are eligible for Title I services if they score at or below the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile in reading and/or math. These services are provided during their enrichment time. Information concerning students' academic needs will be released to this agency.

### **7.13 Educational Accommodations**

Holy Ghost Catholic School accepts requests from parents of current students for educational accommodations based on medical diagnosis and/or educational evaluations from licensed professionals. Educational accommodations are considered within requirements of Section 504 of the 1974 Rehabilitation Act as it applies to private schools. The school counselor will coordinate parent requests for educational accommodations and will serve as the chair of the Educational Accommodations Committee, which is charged with review of parent requests for such accommodations. Parents will complete an Educational Accommodation Request Form, available at the front office, and attach all medical and/or educational evaluation documentation for review by the committee before any accommodations will be made.

After an Educational Accommodations Request Form is received from a parent, the counselor will review the request with the committee within 30 days and communicate the Accommodation Plan with parents before disseminating such to the child's teachers. Updates to the plan will be considered each school year and communicated to parents and teachers by the counselor.

### **7.14 Student of the Year**

The opportunity to apply for *Student of the Year* is based on several steps. In Step 1, a student's standardized test score, report card grades (minimum 3.5 GPA in every content area with no letter grade below a B), teacher rubric (based on classroom work ethic), discipline record, and record of tardiness/absenteeism are scored. **Successful scoring based on the rubric in Part 1 qualifies a student to continue to Step 2.** In Step 2, students must submit a writing sample for scoring. **Successful scoring in Part 2 qualifies a student to continue to Step 3.** In Step 3, students will be interviewed before a panel of judges and scored. **Successful scoring in Part 3 qualifies a student to continue to Step 4.** In Step 4, students who qualify will then turn in a portfolio (based on a Diocesan rubric). The *Student of The Year* will be selected based on a combination of all scores.

### **7.15 Quiz Bowl**

Students in grades 5-8 may try out for Quiz Bowl. Each team will consist of three students per grade level. Students who are interested may sign up to take a test for eligibility. The team members are chosen according to their test score (75%) and teacher rubric (25%) which will be based on classroom work ethic, discipline record, and record of tardiness/absenteeism.

### **7.16 SADD**

SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) is a self-esteem and drug education program sponsored and governed by Tangipahoa Parish for all 5<sup>th</sup> graders. This program consists of eight lessons and a closing/graduation ceremony in the Fall or the Spring.

## **8.0 ATTENDANCE**

### **8.1 Tardiness and Absenteeism**

The mission of Holy Ghost Catholic School is to instill a desire of lifelong learning. Incumbent upon this expectation, students are expected to follow the Holy Ghost Catholic School Policy on school tardiness and absenteeism:

1. A student entering school after 7:35 a.m. is considered tardy.
2. A student entering school after 9:30 a.m. is marked as a half-day absent.
3. A student checked out for less than 3.5 hours is considered a half-day absent.
4. A student checked out for more than 3.5 hours is considered absent for the day.

Tardiness:

1. The only excused tardy is for bereavement or medical appointment.
2. A note explaining the tardiness must be presented to the receptionist upon check in on the day of the tardy.

Absences:

1. The only excused absences are for illness of the student, bereavement, illness in the family, or an exceptional condition approved by the administration.
2. A note explaining the absence must be presented to the homeroom teacher on the day the student returns. A written parent excuse will only be accepted for two or less days.

3. A limit of two written parent excuses will be accepted per semester. If your child exceeds this amount (per semester), he/she will be required to provide a doctor's excuse regardless of the number of days.
4. If a child is absent more than two consecutive days, a note from a physician on original letterhead must be presented to the teacher upon the child's return to school.
5. Families are highly encouraged to take vacations during school holidays so as not to disrupt the instructional environment. Any school days missed due to vacations will be unexcused.
6. **Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations. No assignment will be given in anticipation of the vacation.**

The number of tardies and absences will be **cumulative for the year**.

1. Three unexcused tardies are equal to one unexcused absence.
2. After the ninth tardy in a semester, a notification will be sent home to inform parents that the student is in jeopardy of being dropped from the roll due to interruption of instruction. The notification must be signed and returned to the administration.
3. Ten or more unexcused absences in a school year could result in retention and/or the inability of the student to return to Holy Ghost Catholic School.
4. An accumulation of 15 or more excused or unexcused absences could result in retention and/or the inability of the student to return to Holy Ghost Catholic School.

## **8.2 Calling In**

Whenever a student is absent for any reason, the student's parents are required to call the school office between 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. to leave a message on the Holy Ghost Catholic School absentee line. Please call the school (985) 345-0977, select option 2, leave a message with the child's name, homeroom teacher, and reason for absence.

## **8.3 Makeup Work for Absent Students**

**\*\* Parents are required to send a note with the child on the day the student returns to school. If a note does not accompany the student upon his/her return, the student will receive a zero for assignments, excluding summative assessments.**

The student is responsible for making up all schoolwork missed during any absence, including suspension. It is the responsibility of the parent or student to initiate contact with his/her teachers regarding requirements to make up work. This contact shall be made the day the student returns to class after an absence.

If a student is ill, parents should email the teacher after calling the absentee line to request books and assignments. Assignments may be picked up in the school office at 2:35 p.m. Students are given the amount of time that they were absent, due to an excused illness, to complete all missed work.

If a student is on a school-sponsored scheduled trip, the student is expected to complete all assignments given before the student leaves. Due dates stand unless another arrangement is made with the teacher, such as, "due the first day upon return."

Vacations should be planned for times when school is not in session. Vacations are considered an unexcused absence.

Teachers are only required to administer summative tests for students that have been absent. If a student is absent in the last few days of a quarter, it is likely that they would not be able to make up any missed work due to deadlines for grades being entered into the system.

Students with unexcused absences are expected to make up work/tests immediately upon return.

Each grade level and/or teacher will inform parents of their specific policy regarding the penalty for turning things in late.

#### **8.4 Checkout Procedures**

When it is necessary for a child to be checked out during the day before the official end of the day, this procedure shall be followed:

1. Parents must write a note to the office. This note must specify the time the parent intends to pick up the child. It is the parents' responsibility to arrive at the school in enough time to allow the child to gather his/her belongings and get to the office on time.
2. The student must give the note to the teacher during the morning homeroom period. The teacher will send the note to the office at the end of homeroom.
3. The office will grant permission for early dismissal. Please do not abuse this privilege.
4. Parents must come to the office and sign their child out before a student may leave the campus. **STUDENTS WILL BE DISMISSED ONLY FROM THE OFFICE.**
5. Students will not be called to the office until the parent arrives.

**Students may not be checked out after 2:00 p.m.** This is a safety concern with buses and cars and causes undue confusion at the end of the day in the carpool areas, office area, and in the classroom of the student concerned. If a parent arrives after 2:00 p.m., they must get into the carpool line.

Any student checked out of school between 9:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. is considered half-day absent. Any student checked out of school before 9:30 a.m. is considered a full day absent.

If a student checks in and then checks out for any length of time, the student is marked half-day excused absent with a note or half day unexcused absent without a note.

#### **8.5 Checking out for Activities**

We ask that students not be checked out to attend a sibling's play, performance, or celebration. If parents do choose to check out their other children to attend a performance, it is considered an unexcused absence. Makeup work will be addressed according to policy. The student must be checked out and checked back in through the office.

#### **8.6 Attendance and Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities**

A full day or half-day absence from school will render a student ineligible for any school activity that day unless a non-illness medical excuse is provided or in case of bereavement. A student entering the school between 7:35-9:30 a.m. is considered tardy, not absent.

#### **8.7 Shadowing at High Schools**

Students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade only will be excused for one day only to shadow one of the following schools:

1. St Thomas Aquinas Regional Catholic High School, coed, Hammond, LA
2. St Paul's Catholic School, all boys, Covington, LA
3. St Scholastica Academy, all girls, Covington, LA

## **9.0 STUDENT SERVICES**

### **9.1 Counseling**

The mission of the Guidance Counselor is to support the academic learning of the students. There are three types of services offered to HGCS students:

1. Small group
2. Full group counseling
3. Individual conversation

**All information discussed is confidential to the extent permitted by law.**

The Counselor is available to students whether they ask for help and present on their own, or they are referred by a teacher, coach, member of staff or administration, or the child's parent. The HGCS Counselor, along with the administration of the school, will talk with students when necessary if risk factors such as emotional issues, drug use, suicidal ideation, or other issues that pose a threat to the emotional, physical, or psychological well-being of the student are present. Parental signing of the HGCS Student/Parent Handbook Home/School Contract associated with this handbook gives permission for the counselor or staff to meet, talk with, question, or evaluate and refer students experiencing troubling issues in or out of the school setting.



If we suspect a child is at risk for self-harm or a harm to others, the school reserves the right to require a psychological evaluation by a school-approved psychologist/psychiatrist prior to a student's re-admittance into the classroom after a suspension. However, the school does not have to go on the recommendation of an outside professional to admit child back into school. A copy of the evaluation must be provided to the school along with the right to contact the psychologist/psychiatrist.

## **9.2 Lost and Found**

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen property. Personal items likely to be lost, such as book sacks, gloves, jackets, sweatshirts, and pencil boxes, should be clearly marked with the student's name. Articles that have been found anywhere on the campus will be kept in the "Lost and Found" box for a limited time. Unclaimed items will be donated to the needy. Lost and found items will be brought to the main school office each day. There will be no lost and found items held in the cafeteria. We ask that you make sure your child has his/her name on each article of clothing. This will ensure that your child gets a lost item returned to him/her in a timely manner.

## **9.3 Library**

The library is for the use of the faculty and the students. Students visit the library regularly to check out books. They are taught how the library is organized, how to use the online card catalogue system, and use of reference materials. The library instructional program promotes appreciation of children's literature through storytelling and media. Students also learn about authors and illustrators. Each student is requested to abide by the schedule provided during the school day. Fines are charged at an established rate for lost or damaged books. Parents are not allowed in the library during AR testing.

## **9.4 Student Insurance**

The Diocese of Baton Rouge and Holy Ghost Catholic School will provide student accident insurance coverage for the school year for each student. A brochure explaining the program in full will be provided to each family at the beginning of the school year.

## **9.5 Afterschool Care**

An afterschool care program is available to all students until 6:00 p.m. Students attending Aftercare are responsible for following all school rules and procedures. Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students are separated from all other grades. Children are served a healthy snack and dinner prepared by the Holy Ghost Catholic School cafeteria staff upon arrival to Aftercare. Police details are provided for your child's safety during Aftercare hours. While students are encouraged to do their homework during this time, it is not the responsibility of the Aftercare employees to ensure that it is done or done correctly. The primary job of the employees is to monitor the children.

**Once a student has left campus (from school or aftercare), they cannot return to aftercare.**

Costs for Aftercare are as follows:

From 2:35 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. – \$7.50

From 4:31 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. – \$7.50

**Aftercare services will not be provided on half days.**

After 6:00 p.m., there is a \$1.00 per minute per child charge until the child is picked up.

All persons picking up a child from Aftercare must present identification. Anyone other than the child's parents must be an authorized adult listed on the child's information sheet.

Aftercare is an extension of the school day. Rules and regulations will remain the same.

The Aftercare staff can be reached from 2:35 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at 985-542-9676. The checkout area for Aftercare is located in the cafeteria.

## 9.6 Cafeteria

Students are encouraged to participate in the lunch program. However, if the daily lunch meal is something they do not like, they may bring their lunch from home. All lunches brought from home must be nutritious. Holy Ghost is a nut-free campus. The following items are not allowed in bag lunches: nuts, candy, soft drinks, power drinks, Kool-Aid (sugary drinks). Please remember that items from a restaurant or recognizable containers are not allowed.

Please visit the Child Nutrition link located on the BR Diocesan website for more details regarding the lunch program.

**Volunteers are always needed. You may call the cafeteria to make arrangements or just show up (985-345-1302). The cafeteria starts serving at 9:56 a.m.**

Breakfast is available for K-8<sup>th</sup> grade each morning from 7:05 a.m. -7:25 a.m. If a PK3 or PK4 student wants to participate in breakfast, he/she must be accompanied by a parent. The parent must check-in through the office after 7:05, bring their child to breakfast, then after eating, drop them off at the door of the ELC. Students who do not arrive to campus by 7:25 will not be able to eat breakfast at school. Students who receive free or reduced-price lunch are also eligible for free or reduced-price breakfast. **There will be no charging of meals or extras. Students must maintain a balance in their account at all times.**

Families may qualify for the Federal Meal Assistance Program. To apply, fill out the application for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch meals and return it to the cafeteria manager as soon as possible. If you are a new applicant, you are responsible for all fees until your application has been approved.

Students with special dietary needs who wish to substitute a food item, such as juice for milk, must obtain a State approved form from the cafeteria manager or the Holy Ghost Catholic School website ([www.hgschool.org](http://www.hgschool.org)) for your doctor to fill out and sign. Students who prefer not to drink milk simply because of dietary preference may purchase juice or water.

Students who bring lunch from home who wish to purchase juice, water, or milk must have money in their account before making a purchase. If a student forgets their lunch, he/she must eat a plate lunch provided by the cafeteria at the lunch rate. **ALL STUDENTS MUST HAVE A MEAL.**

Parents are encouraged to pay lunch fees for the year. However, nine monthly installments are due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. Failure to pay will result in a conference with the Principal to discuss non-payment. The cafeteria is funded solely by lunch payments. Please refer to Section 2.0 for the policy on Financial Obligations.

## 10.0 SAFETY PLAN

### 10.1 Emergency Dismissal

Holy Ghost Catholic School will follow the same directive in regard to inclement weather or other emergencies as Tangipahoa Parish Public Schools. Therefore, adhere to email blasts and parent broadcasts concerning school closings. In case of emergency dismissal (ex. inclement weather), parents or authorized persons are requested to come to the school to pick up their children. If buses are running, students that normally ride the bus home will be released to their assigned bus. Students will be held in designated areas until a parent or authorized person arrives.

### 10.2 Crisis Plan

In the event of a school crisis, Holy Ghost Catholic School will cooperate with civil authorities. **Parents will be contacted. For the safety of everyone, do not come to the school. Wait for the school to contact you.**

### 10.3 Surveillance Cameras

Holy Ghost Catholic School recognizes that attempting to maintain the safety and security of students, staff, and visitors to our school is implemented with a multifaceted approach. To the extent that modern technology provides tools to maintain safety and security, the use of video surveillance cameras may be in place in the school and on school property.

#### **10.4 Asbestos Notification**

In compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency's Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) and Louisiana Administrative Code Volume II, Air Quality Division Title 33, Chapter 27, Asbestos Containing Materials in School and Public Buildings Regulation, Holy Ghost Catholic School wishes to notify you of the following:

*This article represents the annual notification regarding asbestos containing materials in schools. Asbestos abatement projects that have taken place have been done in strict compliance with the above-mentioned regulations. Periodic surveillance and other preventive measures are on-going. These actions have been documented and have been placed in the Asbestos Management Plan. We get inspected twice a year for asbestos. Go to DEQ website for regulations.*

You may review a copy of the Management Plan by calling Holy Ghost Catholic School.

#### **10.5 Pest Control**

The pest control plan is current. The plan is filed annually at the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry.

### **11.0 TRANSPORTATION**

#### **11.1 Daily Hours of Operation**

Children should not arrive at school earlier than 7:05 a.m. or be dropped off unless a faculty member is on duty. The school day begins at 7:35 a.m. Bus and carpool students are dismissed at 2:35 p.m. Afternoon carpool students should be picked up between 2:35 and 3:00 p.m. The duty teacher will bring any students not picked up by 3:00 p.m. to the Aftercare program. Aftercare checkout located in the ELC building's side door on Magnolia St. No student will be allowed to check out after 2 p.m. Parents will be charged the Aftercare fee. Students involved in afterschool activities who are not picked up at the end of that activity will be sent to the Aftercare program and will be assessed the Aftercare fee.

#### **11.2 Half-Day Dismissal**

Half-day dismissal time is 11:30 a.m. Students must be picked up by 12:00 p.m. on half days. Aftercare is not available on Half-day dismissal days.

#### **11.3 Bus Transportation**

All students who use the bus service that is provided by Tangipahoa Parish must observe parish and school regulations. Bus drop-off and pick-up are on North Oak Street. For your safety, the bus drivers expect the following:

1. All students must be seated and may not stand until the bus comes to a stop.
2. Students are not allowed to get off the bus other than their regular stop, unless they have a note from their parents or guardian and signed by the office.
3. Students are forbidden to stick their head, arms, or hands out of the bus. Spitting and throwing objects out of the window will not be tolerated.
4. Eating and drinking are forbidden while on the bus. This includes candy, chewing gum, snacks, soft drinks, etc.
5. Students are not allowed to throw any objects at each other, including paper, and they are expected to leave the bus as clean as it was found in the morning.
6. Talking is permitted only in a regular and conversational tone. Any shouting, singing, or screaming is completely forbidden as it impairs the hearing of the bus driver to the sound of traffic.
7. Students transported in a school bus shall be under the authority of and responsible directly to the driver of the bus. Continued disorderly conduct or persistent refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be sufficient reason for a student to be referred to the discipline office.
8. Discipline procedures set up by Tangipahoa Parish and/or Holy Ghost School will be the plan of action followed.
9. TPSS has additional requirements for Pre-K 4 students. Please see the Pre-K 4 handbook bus rider section.

## 11.4 Carpool Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

**\*CARPOOL HANG TAGS AND COLORED DESIGNATED SIGNS (Pre-K2 – K) SHOULD BE VISIBLE FOR BOTH MORNING AND AFTERNOON CARPOOL.**

READ IF YOUR YOUNGEST CHILD IS A PREK-2 or PREK-3 STUDENT: All PreK-2 and their siblings (no matter what grade their siblings are in) will be dropped off/picked up on Magnolia carpool. Parents will line up on Michigan Street and turn LEFT onto Magnolia Street for drop off and pick up. All students must unload/load from the passenger's side of the vehicle for safety purposes.

READ IF YOUR YOUNGEST CHILD IS A PREK-4 STUDENT: All PreK-4 students and their siblings will be dropped off/picked up on Colorado carpool. Parents will line up on Colorado Street and turn onto the driveway on the school grounds that runs between the middle school/junior high buildings and the church rectory. Duty teachers (not necessarily a PreK-4 teacher) will be present to help unload/load your child. Please have your child unbuckled and ready to exit. All students must unload/load from the passenger's side of the vehicle for safety purposes. In afternoon carpool, please pull your car up next to the Parish Hall (old church) to buckle your child into the carseat.

READ IF YOUR YOUNGEST CHILD IS A KINDERGARTEN OR 1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE STUDENT: All Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade students and their siblings will be dropped off/picked up on Magnolia carpool. Parents will line up on Michigan Street and turn RIGHT onto Magnolia Street for drop off and pick up. All students must unload/load from driver's side for safety purposes. Duty teachers will be present to help unload/load your child.

OTHER MAGNOLIA STREET CARPOOL: Your child and their siblings will be dropped off/picked up on Magnolia carpool. Parents will line up on Michigan Street and turn RIGHT onto Magnolia Street for drop off and pick up. All students must unload/load from the driver's side for safety purposes. This carpool is for:

- Your child is an ONLY child at HGCS in 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.
- Your child is a 2<sup>nd</sup> grader with a sibling in K, 1<sup>st</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> grades.
- Your child is a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader with a sibling in K, 1<sup>st</sup>, or 2<sup>nd</sup> grades.

OTHER COLORADO STREET CARPOOL: Your child and their siblings will be dropped off/picked up on Colorado carpool. Parents will line up on Colorado Street and turn onto the driveway on the school grounds that runs between the middle school/junior high buildings and the church rectory. All students must unload/load from the passenger's side of the vehicle for safety purposes. This carpool is for:

- Your child is an ONLY child at HGCS in 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades.
- Your child is a 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grader with siblings in 2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades.

**\*No golf carts or motorcycles are allowed in the carpool line.**

**\*No one is allowed to park their car and physically get their child from the carpool line.**

## 11.5 Walkers

Students will be dismissed after gathering at a common point (by cafeteria door facing Magnolia Street) and meeting with a duty teacher. They must leave campus immediately upon dismissal by the teacher. If a child leaves campus without being a registered walker, he/she will be suspended. 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders may walk home alone if they live within the 4-block radius.

If you would like for your child to walk home, you must complete the "Walker" form in the school office and receive a walker badge. If the parent or grandparent's address is within four (4) blocks of school, your child may be a "Walker". If your child is going home to/with a babysitter, that lives within four (4) blocks of the school, the parent must provide the office with a notarized document (with both the parent and the babysitter's signature), stating that the party they are going with is the babysitter. Parents, of all students below 5<sup>th</sup> grade, must walk and pick up your child from Magnolia Street.

\*\*\*For safety reasons, students are only allowed to walk home AFTER school. They are not allowed to walk to school in the morning.\*\*\*

### **11.6 Rainy Day Dismissal for Walkers**

On **heavy** rainy days, walkers will be dismissed from carpool lines according to one of the scenarios listed above in afternoon carpool.

### **11.7 Bike Riders**

When arriving on campus, students are to walk their bikes to a parking place and lock them. Bicycle riding is not allowed on campus during the school day or at dismissal. They will be dismissed after gathering at a common point on campus and meeting with a duty teacher. They must leave campus immediately upon dismissal by the teacher. At dismissal, students are to walk their bikes on the Magnolia/Michigan Street corner and cross the streets with permission from the teacher on duty, then mount and ride their bicycles once they are off campus. Only 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade students can ride bikes to /from campus.

### **11.8 Release of Responsibility for Walkers and/or Bike Riders**

All students are required to sign a waiver on the emergency information card releasing the school from any responsibility if the student walks or bikes to and from school.

### **11.9 Change of Transportation**

Students will not be allowed to change means of transportation at any time without a note from a parent or guardian. An administrator must then sign the note before a student leaves in the afternoon. If there is an emergency during the school day, please contact the school office. If the emergency merits a transportation change, the parent must contact the school from a phone number that is on file. Classrooms will not be interrupted for transportation change unless there is an emergency. Administration and staff will strictly enforce this policy.

## **12.0 DRESS CODE**

### **12.1 Statement**

Holy Ghost Catholic School requires that school uniforms be worn throughout the year. The uniform is a crucial part of the environment of Holy Ghost Catholic School and every student and parent is expected to abide by the regulations at all times. The school reserves the right to call a parent if the student is not in proper uniform. The complete uniform must be worn daily. Homeroom teachers will check all uniforms in assembly. They will check for hemlines, jackets, sweatshirts, sweaters, bows, socks, shoes, belts, jewelry, nail polish, hair, and shorts. Please label each piece of clothing with your child's name. No other writing on any articles of clothing or on shoes is allowed. Specific uniform information is published below. The school reserves the right to determine what is or what is not appropriate dress and/or hairstyle. Please see Section 8.0 for uniform violation consequences.

### **12.2 Boys Uniform**

**Belt:** Navy, brown, or black belt is required for all boys in grades 2-8. Pre-K, K, and 1<sup>st</sup> do not have to wear a belt.

**Shirt:** White jersey knit uniform shirt with school logo (short sleeve or long sleeve). The shirt must be tucked in at all times. White long sleeve Oxford shirt with the school logo may be worn on Mass days.

**Shoes:** Mostly white, gray, or navy tennis shoes are required in grades Pre-K2 – 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Students may not write on shoes. No heeled shoes (shoes with wheels). No high tops. Shoelaces must be white or the shoe color.

**Shoes for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders:** As a privilege, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls may wear any color tennis shoes (no neon colors). The tennis shoe restrictions are canvas or leather material, no heeled shoes, shoes must tie, no high heeled tennis shoes, no open toe or open heeled shoes. Students must be able to participate fully and safely in all physical education activities.

**Shorts or Slacks:** Navy uniform shorts or long pants (no name brand labels, e.g., Dockers, Nautica, Duckhead, Polo, Hilfiger) are required. Pk2 – 1<sup>st</sup> grade may wear elastic waistband uniform shorts.

No holes in pants. Pants must be worn at the waist. In cold weather, boys may wear their navy-blue long uniform pants.

Sweatpants: Patriot Sweatpants (purchased from our Spirit Store only) may be worn to school **from November-March regardless of the temperature**. If the temperature is 40 degrees or below as indicated by accuweather.com at 6:00 a.m. in any other month, the students may wear sweatpants at that time as well. Once the sweatpants are worn to school, the student will not be allowed to remove the sweatpants. This includes P.E. and recess. The sweatpants must be worn with the school uniform shirt and a school regulation sweatshirt. The students do not have to wear the sweatpants over their shorts or pants. The regulation uniform shirt must be tucked inside the sweatpants at all times.

Socks for Pk-6<sup>th</sup> graders: White or navy crew socks or knee-highs. No logo on socks. No ankle socks.

Socks for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders: As a privilege, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls may wear white ankle socks. No show socks are not permitted.

Indoor wear: Solid navy blue or white cardigan sweater, solid navy-blue sweatshirt, or solid navy-blue fleece may be worn. Hoods are allowed on sweatshirts. No cord allowed. Students may wear the school approved sweatshirt with the large Holy Ghost Catholic School logo in the center of the sweatshirt, which can be purchased through the school office. Sweatshirts may not be appliqued. No athletic/spirit team/organization sweatshirts/t-shirts may be worn except on certain days. Sweatshirts and sweaters are not considered as outerwear; therefore, no other sweatshirts or sweaters may be worn to school other than what is described above.

Outerwear: Coats that are not navy blue may be worn from the vehicle to the building and from building to building only.

T-shirt/Undergarments: A solid white or nude short sleeve t-shirt only may be worn under the uniform shirt; no logo or insignia on the t-shirt is allowed. No turtlenecks are to be worn under the uniform shirt.

### **12.3 Girls Uniform**

Smocked Dress: **Students in Pre-K2, Pre-K3 and Pre-K4** may wear the uniform plaid smocked dress. Pull-on solid navy, black, gray knit, or uniform plaid bloomers are required under the smocked dress; no logo or insignia on shorts.

Jumper: **Students in grades Pre-K3 – 4<sup>th</sup> grade** may wear the jumper (plaid with logo) ; it must be to the knee. It is recommended for the younger students to wear jumpers for ease of going to the restroom. A solid white blouse (no puff sleeves) must be worn at all times under the jumper. Pull-on solid navy, black, gray knit, or uniform plaid shorts are required under jumper; no logo or insignia on shorts.

Walking Shorts/Skorts/Skirts: **Students in Pre-K4 – 4<sup>th</sup> grade** may wear uniform plaid shorts, skorts, skirts, or jumper. Shorts, skorts, and skirts must be worn with white uniform shirt with emblem on pocket; length must be to the knee; it must be worn on the waist. (If jumper is worn, the shirt does not require an emblem.)

**Students in grades 5<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> only must only wear the uniform plaid skirt (to the knee); it must be worn on the waist not the hips. Skirts may not be rolled.**

Shirt: White oxford for 5-8<sup>th</sup> grade, short sleeve or long sleeve (no puff sleeve). Shirt must have logo when worn with the skirt or skort; girls in grades Pre-K3/Pre-K4 - 4<sup>th</sup> grades may wear the Peter Pan or pointed collar broadcloth shirts; collars may be monogrammed in navy blue stitching only; shirt must be tucked in at all times. ***If needed, appropriate white or nude undergarments must be worn under girls' shirts.***

Shorts: Pull-on solid navy, black, gray, or uniform plaid is required under jumper, skirt, and smocked dress; no logo or insignia on shorts.

Shoes: **Mostly white, gray, or navy tennis shoes are required** in grades PK2 – 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

PK2 –1<sup>st</sup> grade may wear solid navy or white Mary Jane style shoes as long as they have a rubber sole. Students may not write on shoes. No heellies (shoes with wheels). No high tops. Shoelaces must be white or the shoe color.

Shoes for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders: As a privilege, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls may wear any color tennis shoes (**no neon colors**). The tennis shoe restrictions are: canvas or leather material, no heellies, shoes must tie, no high heeled tennis shoes, no open toe or open heeled shoes. Students must be able to participate fully and safely in all physical education activities.

Indoor wear: Solid navy blue or white cardigan sweater, solid navy-blue sweatshirt, or solid navy-blue fleece may be worn. Hoods are allowed on sweatshirts. No cord is allowed. Students may wear the school approved sweatshirts which can be purchased through Elite (link on HG website). Sweatshirts may not be appliqued. No athletic/spirit team/organization sweatshirts may be worn. Sweatshirts and sweaters are not considered as outerwear; therefore, no other sweatshirts or sweaters may be worn to school other than what is described above.

Outerwear: Coats that are not navy blue may be worn from the vehicle to the building and from building to building only.

Sweatpants: Patriot Sweatpants (purchased from our Elite Spirit Store only) may be worn to school **from November-March regardless of the temperature**. If the temperature is 40 degrees or below as indicated by [accuweather.com](http://accuweather.com) at 6:00 a.m. **in any other month**, the students may wear sweatpants at that time as well. Once the sweatpants are worn to school, the student will not be allowed to remove the sweatpants. This includes P.E. and recess. The sweatpants must be worn with the school uniform shirt and a school regulation sweatshirt. The students do not have to wear the sweatpants over their shorts or pants or under skirts. The regulation uniform shirt must be tucked inside the sweatpants at all times.

Socks for Pk-6<sup>th</sup> graders: White or navy crew socks or knee socks must be worn with no logo on socks. **No ankle socks**. No lace on socks.

Socks for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders: As a privilege, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls may wear white ankle socks. No show socks are not permitted.

Tights and Leggings: Solid navy or white tights or leggings may be worn under the jumper or skirt; socks must be worn over the tights. If tights are worn to school, they may not be removed. No pantyhose or slacks are to be worn under the uniform.

Slacks: Navy blue long pants must be purchased from the school uniform stores. Slacks must be worn with a belt; no name brand labels are allowed.

Belt: Navy, brown, or black only

T-shirt/Undergarments: A solid white or nude short sleeve t-shirt only may be worn under the uniform shirt; no undergarments should be visible at any time. No logo or insignia on t-shirt is allowed.

#### **12.4 Jewelry**

Analog watches, religious medals, silver or gold crosses on thin leather or thin metal chains, religious pins, and scapulars are permitted. Girls may wear only one pair of small stud earrings in the lower lobe. Earrings must be the same in both ears. Boys may not wear earrings. One bracelet may be worn but limited to religious in nature. No rings (girls or boys) are allowed. No electronic jewelry, fitbits, or smart watches of any kind will be allowed. No bracelets supporting a cause are allowed. If the jewelry is a distraction to the educational process, the teacher can require the student not to wear it. As a privilege, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls may wear one necklace and/or one bracelet of any type.

#### **12.5 Makeup**

Clear fingernail polish may be worn. Artificial nails are not allowed. Students may not wear any form of make-up. As a privilege, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls may wear clear lip gloss, lightly applied mascara, concealer, and/or colored acne medicine. Girls in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade may also have reasonable length rounded or squared (not pointed) nails in pastel, neutral colors, or French tipped.

## 12.6 Hair

Hair must be of conservative length and thickness in front, back, top, and sides. It must be clean and neat. Boys' hair must be above the eyebrows, above the ears, and above the nape of the neck. Hair must be out of the eyes for boys and girls. Hair will be checked periodically. A form will be sent home stating the child's hair must be cut. Students will have one week. If hair has not been cut, the student will be issued an infraction and be sent home until the student's hair meets specifications. After the student's third hair warning, he/she will receive an infraction every time they receive a warning.

Shaved heads/partially shaved, mohawks (or mohawk like hairdos), mullets, high hairdos, carving into the natural hairline, dyed, bleached, or tinted hair, and the like, is not acceptable. A clean, evenly distributed haircut must be worn. As a privilege, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls may have natural-colored highlights.

Hair should always have a dry appearance.

## 12.7 Hair Accessories

**Girls may wear hair accessories that are uniform plaid, solid navy, red, white, or a combination of these solid colors. No dots, stripes, printed designs or lace can be used in the bow. Bows may be monogrammed with HGS or with students' initials in red, white, or navy. No feathers, flowers, or sparkles of any kind will be allowed. Scrunches are allowed in these same colors; elastic bands may also be these colors or a neutral color. Headbands may also be worn in navy, red, uniform plaid, or white. Headbands with attached fabric hanging in the back are not permitted. Holiday bows may be worn on the last school day before the holiday or the day of the holiday if school is in session.**

Hair accessories that do not fall within these guidelines will be removed and placed in the student's book sack.

## 12.8 Mass Dress Guidelines

Students must wear the Holy Ghost Catholic School uniform. All students are encouraged to look their best for our weekly attendance at Mass. Boys and girls may wear long sleeve Oxford shirts (optional). School approved outerwear may be worn while walking to and from mass.

## 12.9 Holy Ghost Catholic School Special Dress Guidelines

Students are expected to follow uniform guidelines and instructions for special dress days. Special dress days will be permitted only with the expressed permission of the principal, and specific directives will be sent home in a parent email.

## 12.10 Spirit Day Dress Guidelines

### Approved Bottoms:

1. Long blue jeans (Jeans may not have holes. Jeans may not have writing on them.)
2. School uniform bottoms (Shorts/slacks for boys, skirts/skorts/uniform plaid shorts for girls)

### Approved Tops: Tops must have a sleeve and cover the waistline or be tucked in.

1. HGCS Spirit t-shirt/sweatshirt/current year fair t-shirt/current year crawfish cookoff shirt
2. 8<sup>th</sup> graders may wear their 8<sup>th</sup> grade class shirt.
3. Current HG clubs or team shirts may also be worn.

\*Please refer to school emails for more information.\*

Shoes/Socks: School approved tennis shoes and socks must be worn.

Hair accessories: Remain the same as a normal school day

Outerwear/indoor wear: Remains the same as a normal school day

If a student does not have the appropriate Spirit Day attire, the school uniform must be worn.

The school reserves the right to determine what is or what is not appropriate dress and/or hairstyle.



### Consequences:

1. The first offense in failing to comply with special dress guidelines will result in calling home for a school uniform and an infraction will be issued.
2. On the second offense, students will call home for a uniform and a double infraction will be issued.
3. On the third offense, students will call home for a uniform, a detention will be issued, and they will lose spirit dress privileges for the next Spirit Day.
4. On the fourth offense, students will call home for a uniform, a detention will be issued, and they will lose spirit dress privilege for the rest of the year.

### **12.11 Scout Uniforms**

Scout uniforms must be approved by the administration.

## **13.0 CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR (DISCIPLINE)**

### **13.1 Discipline Philosophy**

Discipline is the basis to good conduct and respecting the rights of others, and it is essential to learning. As a condition of initial and continued enrollment as a student in the diocesan schools, a student's conduct must be consistent with Catholic faith and morals. Conduct which is inconsistent with Catholic faith and morals, which is a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of other students, impairs or threatens to impair the reputation of the Church and its schools, is grounds for disciplinary sanctions up to and including immediate dismissal/expulsion.

It is the student's responsibility to comply with the diocesan and school rules/regulations. It is the administration's responsibility to hold every student accountable for misbehavior inside of school, outside of school (as it affects the culture of the school), on the playground, and on the bus to and from school. School personnel act on the legal doctrine of "in loco parentis" and maintain the right to interview students **without** their parents being present. A determination will be made by school personnel if a parent must be notified of that discussion.

***\*\*In the event that there is a public display against the school through verbal or written expression, the student may be removed from Holy Ghost Catholic School. In the case of an appeal, the administration reserves the right to decide who will be present throughout the due process hearings.***

### **13.2 Discipline Goal**

The goal of discipline is a development of inner self-control and understanding of self, as well as, Christian responsibilities to others. Outward controlled behavior is designed to develop within the students, responsibility for his/her actions, and at the same time maintain the desired degree of order in the classroom, on the school grounds, and at school-sponsored events.

### **13.3 General Student Expectations**

1. Always address faculty and staff members with appropriate respect, using titles proper to their positions (Father, Coach, Mr., Miss, Mrs., or Dr.)
2. The teacher's desk and computer are considered private. A student should not read, remove, or make use of any papers, books, supplies and the like without the explicit permission of the teacher.
3. "Thank you" is the expected expression of gratitude when assistance is given by adults or fellow students.
4. Say "Yes, Sir or Yes, Ma'am" and "No, Sir or No, Ma'am" to answer a question. Do not say "Yep" or "Nope."
5. Say "Excuse me" when you don't understand and want an adult to repeat something for you. Do not say "What?" or "Huh?"
6. Excuse yourself when you want to interrupt an adult who is busy. Wait your turn when the adult is talking to someone else.
7. Classroom decorum ordinarily requires a student to raise his/her hand and wait to be recognized before speaking.
8. Common respect for adults requires you to allow adults to pass before you when entering a building or room, and that you hold the door open for persons coming behind you into a

- building or room.
9. When an adult corrects you for some fault:
    - a. Be quiet and listen until the adult is finished talking.
    - b. Answer all questions politely.
    - c. Do what you are told to do right away.
    - d. If you have something to say, wait until the adult is finished and ask permission to speak.
    - e. Accept the adult's decision. Don't argue, make faces, or walk away from the adult.
    - f. If you feel the adult has been unfair, seek advice from your Counselor, Assistant Principal, or Principal.
  10. Courtesy demands a respect for school property. Holy Ghost Catholic School is housed on a campus which few schools can match for its serenity and beauty. Students are asked to help maintain the appearance of the campus by keeping the campus free of litter, and by treating the trees, plants, grassy areas, and prayer garden with respect. In addition, the buildings and school furniture must be respected and not marred with scratches and graffiti.

### **13.4 Parent Responsibility**

Holy Ghost Catholic School anticipates that parents are concerned, cooperative, and supportive in dealing with any behavioral problems that may arise, and it expects that this cooperation is made apparent to the student. Students/parents/guardians are to respect authority, which includes adherence to school rules, regulations, procedures, and Christian principles.

These principles include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Parents/guardians are expected to work courteously and cooperatively with the school to assist the student in meeting the academic, moral, and behavioral expectations of Holy Ghost Catholic School.
2. Parents/guardians may respectfully express their concerns about the school operation and its personnel. However, they may not do so in a manner that is discourteous, scandalous, rumor driven, disruptive, threatening, hostile, or divisive. **This pertains to social media as well, GroupMe, and any other group platform.** Parents who continually behave in this manner will be asked to withdraw their child/children from the school.
3. Holy Ghost Catholic School respects the confidentiality of parents and students. In accordance, information can only be given to the parent of the student receiving the consequence.

### **13.5 Discipline Procedures**

It is the classroom teacher's duty to design and implement routines, procedures, and plans that are most favorable to the teaching/learning environment of a specific grade level. Students are responsible for upholding the school's rules and accepting the consequences for failure to do so.

Consequences consist of, but are not limited to:

1. Infractions/deduction of points on conduct grade
2. Detentions
3. Suspensions
4. Probationary Status
5. Expulsion

\*The administration has the right to review and modify consequences for any offense.

Interventions could include, but are not limited to:

1. Parent-Teacher Conferences
2. Sessions with the Counselor
3. Individual Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

The above policies apply to all students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade. It is the student's responsibility to tell or show infractions to their parents.

\*The teacher has the right to confiscate any items that may be a distraction to the educational process.

## **13.6 Discipline Guidelines**

### Uniform Violations

Uniform violations for 3<sup>rd</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> grade will result in an infraction and points deducted from conduct grade. Uniform violations for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade will result in 1-point off conduct grade. The parent will be notified for uniform violations in Pre-K – 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Writing on clothes or shoes will not be allowed. Writing on hands, legs and other body parts will not be allowed.

### Cell Phones NO CELL PHONE ZONE

Students are NOT allowed to bring a cell phone to school. However, if caught with a cell phone, under LA statute # 17:416.3, administration reserves the right to search the contents of the confiscated phone if inappropriate use is suspected.

**1st offense**—phone will be confiscated, parent must come to school office to pick it up, detention will be issued to the student, and parents will be assessed an extra \$10 for the detention.

**2nd offense**—phone will be confiscated, parent must come to the school office to pick it up, the student will be issued a detention, and parents will be assessed an extra \$25 for the detention.

**3rd offense**—phone will be confiscated, parent must come to the school office to pick it up, the student will be issued a suspension, and parents will be assessed an extra \$50 for the suspension.

After the third offense, the student may be expelled.

### Cell Phones at Extracurricular Events

If a student is suspected of using a cell phone inappropriately at a school sponsored event, administration and/or sponsor reserves the right to search the contents of the confiscated phone.

### Public Display of Affection (PDA)

At no time is any public display of affection between students allowed. If PDA is reported, a consequence will be given at the discretion of the administration.

### **Pre-K – 2nd Grade Students**

Each grade-level will send home a discipline letter that explains expectations for student behavior. It will also outline the rules and consequences. All parents will be required to sign the letter signifying that they will support the expectations, rules, and consequences. The administration reserves the right to intervene as necessary, including the issuance of Detention, Suspension, or Expulsion.

### **3rd – 4th Grade Students**

#### Infractions

Infractions will be issued for violation of the discipline rules. Each violation is worth a set amount of points. Students will start each 9-week period with 100 points for his/her conduct grade. As an infraction is administered, points will be deducted from his/her conduct grade. The teacher will update the student's conduct report on RenWeb regularly. It is the parent's responsibility to monitor conduct and to contact teachers if a concern arises.

Examples of discipline rule violations include, but are not limited to:

1. Hands, feet, objects, remarks not to self (2 points)
2. Misuse of iPad (2 points)
3. Uniform violation (1 point)
4. Disruption during transition (1 point)
5. Inappropriate behavior during Mass (1 point)
6. Late signed test folder (1 point)
7. Repeatedly not prepared for class (1 point)
8. Classroom disruptions – talking/outbursts (2 points)
9. Not working well with others or getting along (2 points)
10. Off task / not following classroom directions/rules (2 points)
11. Horseplay, shoving, pushing, or tripping (4 points)
12. Teasing/name calling/inappropriate remarks (5 points)
13. Disrespect to teachers/adults; defiant (6 points)

Conduct record keeping:

Infractions: (cumulative per nine weeks)

93-100 = A      85-92 = B      75-84 = C      67-74 = D      66 or below = F

## **5th-8th Grade Students**

### Infractions

Infractions will be issued for violation of the discipline rules. Each violation is worth a set amount of points. Students will start each 9-week period with 100 points for his/her conduct grade. As an infraction is administered, points will be deducted from his/her conduct grade. The teacher will update the student's conduct report on RenWeb regularly. It is the student's responsibility to tell parents of misbehaviors that result in infractions or detentions. It is the parent's responsibility to monitor conduct and to contact teachers if a concern arises.

Examples of discipline rule violations include, but are not limited to:

1. Uniform violation (2 points)
2. iPad missing/not charged (2 points)
3. Inappropriate cafeteria behavior (3 points)
4. Verbally arguing with students (3 points)
5. Not following classroom directions/rules (3 points)
6. Classroom disruption (4 points)
7. Inappropriate use of the iPad (4 points)
8. Teasing/name calling/saying or writing hurtful comments (5 points)
9. Horseplay, shoving, pushing, tripping, throwing objects (5 points)
10. Disrespect to teachers/adults (7 points)
11. Inappropriate behavior during Mass (3 points)

Conduct Record Keeping:

Infractions: (cumulative per nine weeks)

93-100 = A      85-92 = B      75-84 = C      67-74 = D      66 or below = F

Upon receiving 10 infraction points within a 9-week grading period, the student will receive a detention.

### Detention

Detentions will be held on Saturday mornings from 7:30-9:00 a.m. Students must wear their complete school uniform. Students will be dropped off and picked up on Magnolia St. in front of the first-grade building. Detention forms will be sent home for parent signatures. Please return them immediately. Students will be assessed a \$35.00 detention fee to compensate the detention monitor. The \$35 fee is payable in cash or check written to Holy Ghost Catholic School the morning of the assigned detention.

If a student fails to attend detention and parents have not communicated with administration prior to the detention date, the student will receive a suspension. If illness is the cause of a missed detention, a doctor's note must be given to administration before the student can return to class and a new detention date will be issued. A student who is issued a detention will receive 10 infraction points unless the detention is a result of an accumulation of infraction points. Three detentions within a school year will result in a suspension.

Examples of behavior that results in detention include, but are not limited to:

1. Ten infraction points accumulated within one grading period (0 points)
2. Untruthfulness (10 points)
3. Using a hall pass for an unintended purpose (10 points)
4. Horseplay, shoving, pushing, tripping, throwing objects in anger, or any action that could cause harm (10 points)
5. Offensive, inappropriate behavior, attitude, gesture, or materials (10 points)
6. Offensive language (including slurs, acronyms, or inventive or rhyming offensive language) (10 points)
7. Possession of electronic devices without permission from faculty/staff (10 points)
8. Spitting/biting (10 points)
9. Accessing inappropriate website/internet (10 points)
10. Instigating a fight (10 points)
11. Leaving class or not reporting to class (10 points)
12. Stealing (10 points)
13. Cheating (this will also result in a "0" on the test/assignment) (10 points)

14. Pulling the fire alarm or any emergency pulls (10 points)
15. Cell phone policy violation (first and second offense) (10 points)
16. Public display of affection (10 points)
17. Plagiarism (10 points and will result in a 0 on the assignment)
18. Teasing in the name of humor (roasting, burning, etc.) (10 points)
19. Repeated infractions for the same offense (10 points)
20. Leaving school property (10 points)

### Suspension/Expulsion

Whether a student is issued a suspension or expulsion is decided by a school discipline committee and based primarily on intent. When a suspension is issued, a parent conference is required. A student will not be allowed to return to school until the conference occurs.

The conduct grade will be lowered 25 points for each suspension. All suspensions will be held on campus. Parents are responsible for paying a fee of \$50.00 per day to cover the cost of the in-school suspension monitor.

If we suspect the child is at risk for self-harm or a harm to others, the school reserves the right to require a psychological evaluation by a school-approved psychologist/psychiatrist prior to a student's re-admittance into the classroom after a suspension. However, the school does not have to go on the recommendation of an outside professional to admit child back into school. A copy of the evaluation must be provided to the school along with the right to contact the psychologist/psychiatrist. A student who is issued a suspension will receive 25 infraction points.

Three suspensions in a school year will result in expulsion.

Examples of behavior that may result in either a suspension or expulsion (decided by a school discipline committee and based primarily on intent) include, but are not limited to:

1. Three detentions result in a suspension. Upon receiving your 3<sup>rd</sup> detention, a suspension will be issued in lieu of a detention.
2. Possession of pornographic material
3. Cell phone policy violation (third offense)
4. Failure to serve an assigned detention without prior approval of the administration
5. Arson
6. Bodily harm of a staff member or student
7. Disgracing school off-campus
8. Disrespect of authority
9. Possession of a gun, weapon, anything that can be used as a weapon, or anything that can cause harm
10. Destroying school property or vandalism
11. Actions that cause grave danger
12. Stealing or theft (severe occurrences)
13. Threatening students or staff members with harm
14. Removal of articles of clothing from another person
15. Possession of any type of drug (including vitamins), alcohol, tobacco products, or prophylactics
16. Extreme or persistent teasing
17. Inappropriate behavior at the Parish Fair or any other Holy Ghost Catholic School event
18. Leaving a chaperone during a field trip/experience or not following field trip/experience rules and regulations
19. Inappropriate behavior/use of restrooms
20. Extreme or persistent spreading or repeating of stories that sheds a negative light on the school, a staff member, an individual or a group.
21. Bullying
22. Harassment/Sexual Harassment
23. Hazing
24. ANY inappropriate posting on social media or Internet
25. Leaving campus without permission or before they have been dismissed to leave by a faculty member
26. Fighting/Instigating a fight
27. Girls and boys going into the same bathroom at the same time.

### Harassment

Harassment - the act or an instance of disturbing, pestering or troubling repeatedly; persecution. Harassment is unwelcome, offensive, on-going conduct, whether physical or verbal, by a knowing or willing participant that is directed toward another person or group with the intent to cause harm, including anxiety or emotional stress. Offensive conduct may include, but is not limited to, offensive jokes, slurs, objects, or pictures that substantially interfere with school performance whether the interference is direct or indirect, unwarranted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference.

### Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Any of the above stated forms of harassment that are of a sexual nature are considered sexual harassment when they are unwelcome and create an environment or causes an atmosphere that affects a student's school performance in any way or affects a student's ability to take advantage of the school's programs.

### Bullying

Bullying is **REPEATED** physical, psychological, emotional, and/or sexual attacks committed by a student or group of students against a target or target group of students regardless of gender. Attacks may occur face to face, publicly or privately, or through the use of technology (i.e., including but not limited to text messaging, emailing, Facebook, etc.) We believe that everyone should enjoy our school equally, and feel safe, secure, and accepted regardless of color, race, gender, popularity, athletic ability, intelligence, religion, and nationality. Bullying can be pushing, shoving, hitting, and spitting, as well as name calling, picking on, making fun of, laughing at, excluding someone, or making demands of another person against their will. Bullying causes pain and stress to victims and is never justified or excusable as "kids being kids," "just teasing" or any other rationalization. The victim is never responsible for being a target of bullying.

### Hazing

Hazing is a form of harassment that involves intentional, knowing or reckless acts that induce pain, embarrassment, humiliation, deprivation of rights, physical pain or mental discomfort. It is directed against a student for the purposes of being initiated into, affiliated with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization, club, athletic team, or other group. Culpability includes hazing practices mandated or voluntarily entered into by any party.

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act or instance of using or closely imitating the language and thoughts of another author without authorization and the representation of that author's work as one's own, as by not crediting the original author.

### Electronic Devices

Electronic devices are not permitted on campus unless the teacher gives permission. These items are subject to confiscation. The items will be kept in the school office until parents report to the office and sign for them (See Acceptable Use Policy and Technology Guidelines for Parents.) The school is not responsible for lost or damaged electronic devices.

### Communication Through Social Media

Conduct through social media should reflect Christian principles and values for which the school stands. Anyone, including parents, who brings disgrace upon the school, whether it be school or community related, will be subject to immediate disciplinary action which can include detention, suspension, probation, or expulsion.

The Counselor is available to students whether they ask for help and present on their own, or they are referred by a teacher, coach, member of staff or administration, or the child's parent. The HGCS Counselor, along with the administration of the school, will talk with students when necessary if risk factors such as emotional issues, drug use, suicidal ideation, or other issues that pose a threat to the emotional, physical, or psychological well-being of the student are present. Parental signing of the HGCS Student/Parent Handbook Home/School Contract associated with this handbook gives

permission for the counselor or staff to meet, talk with, question, or evaluate and refer students experiencing troubling issues in or out of the school setting.

### **13.7 Right to Search**

School and/or parish property does not belong to the student. The school/parish is co-tenant of lockers and desks and reserves the right to search them at any time without notice. School officials may also search student's belongings, including but not limited to purses, book bags, and electronic devices.

### **13.8 Off-Campus Conduct**

A student's conduct off-campus must be in a manner consistent with his or her status as a member of this Catholic school community and with the philosophy, policies, goals, and commitments of this school as set forth in our handbook. The Baton Rouge Diocese has two policies regarding the expected code of behavior from our students when they are away from the school grounds:

The standards of a school are often judged by the behavior of students outside the school, therefore:

1. When traveling to and from school, a student must conduct himself/herself according to the guidelines stated in the school handbook. Failure to act accordingly will result in appropriate disciplinary action.
2. Conduct in public, on buses, at school-related functions, through social media, etc. should reflect Christian principles and values for which the school stands. Anyone who brings disgrace upon the school will be subject to immediate disciplinary action.

### **13.9 Property Damage**

A student guilty of defacing or injuring school property, loss of property given to the pupil on loan, or any other offense against building, school property, or personal property, shall pay for the damages and shall be subject to the rules governing such offenses. Additionally, the school is NOT responsible for the damage of a student's personal belongings.

### **13.10 Aftercare Rules and Consequences**

To ensure student safety, all students shall respect and obey orders given by their group leaders. Students will remain with their groups at all times and avoid walking around campus unattended. All students should be signed out with the time and the name of the person authorized to pick up their child from Aftercare. To avoid theft or broken items, leave all prized possessions at home. Students will continue to follow all Holy Ghost Catholic School rules and regulations during Aftercare. Once a child has violated an Aftercare rule, a warning will be issued to the child. Failure to abide by the rules a second time will result in the child being placed in time-out for a specified period of time. After a child has been repeatedly reprimanded and a discipline form filled out and the improper behavior continues, parents will then be contacted for a meeting to discuss the child's behavior during Aftercare. If the child continues to display improper behavior after the prior steps have been followed, the child will be issued an Aftercare suspension for one day. Multiple offenses will result in the child being ineligible for Aftercare services.

### **13.11 Discipline and Extracurricular Activities**

The student needs to maintain and be in good standing with behavior in order to remain in and represent Holy Ghost Catholic School in extracurricular activities.

### **13.12 Discretionary Clause**

Although the rules set forth in our handbook address the frequent rule violations of students today, the school reserves the right to vary the discipline procedures depending on individual circumstances. The school also has the right to pass judgment on behaviors, not specified in our handbook, which are clear violations of the values on which we are established as a Catholic Christian school and/or interfere with the learning of others.

## **14.0 FIELD TRIPS/EXPERIENCES**

### **14.1 Philosophy**

Field trips/experiences are a privilege. Your child's participation on a field trip/experience is at the discretion of the administration and may be impacted by their disciplinary history.

A field trip is considered an educational experience and an extension to the classroom. Should a child not attend a field trip, they will be given an alternate assignment to complete at school, in the boardroom.

#### **14.2 Parent Responsibility**

Most field trips do not require parent chaperones. However, in the event that it does, the chaperone must have the appropriate child protection documentation on file.

Volunteers, who would like to be considered as chaperones, must have the appropriate security documentation on file in the school office in advance of the field trip/experience (fingerprinting, child protection papers, etc.).

\*Volunteers without the proper documentation are not allowed to meet the class at the field trip. If a parent shows up at a field trip that is not compliant with the Diocese of Baton Rouge Child Protection requirements, the child will no longer be able to attend a Holy Ghost field trip.

Updated child protection documentation will only be accepted between August and January 15. As some field trips/experiences/activities occur early in the Fall, it is suggested that parents fulfill these requirements as early as possible.

Anyone who travels with a child on an overnight trip and uses the Holy Ghost Catholic School “group rate,” must have appropriate security documentation and be fingerprinted.

A chaperone’s full attention needs to be on the children being chaperoned.

A chaperone may not arrive late or leave early from an event.

A parent must accompany students who routinely take medication or take medication for SEVERE allergies, asthma, or diabetes.

\*Chaperoning a field trip does not satisfy the parent volunteer requirements (see section 3.4).

#### **14.3 Student Eligibility**

Students with a D or F in conduct on his/her report card prior to a Field Trip/Experience/School Activity will not be permitted to attend or participate. It is up to the teacher’s discretion whether a child needs a chaperone.

A parent must accompany students who routinely take medication or take medication for severe allergies, asthma, or diabetes.

#### **14.4 Procedures and Guidelines**

Field trips/experiences will not be planned during the week of standardized testing.

There will be no refunds.

**Siblings, of any age, are not allowed on field trips--whether on or off campus.**

## **15.0 EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### **15.1 Statement**

We have many opportunities for boys and girls to participate in school activities. We ask parents to take some time to discuss these possibilities with their children. It is important that students honor their commitment to a team or club. Practices and meetings shall not be missed without a written excuse from a parent and/or physician. Parents are requested to reaffirm to children the importance of commitment. Sponsors to all participants distribute specific guidelines. A full day or half day absence from school will render a student ineligible for any school activity, practice, scheduled game, or any other athletic event on that day. A student entering the school between 7:35 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. is considered tardy and is eligible to participate. If a child checks out early or is absent on a game, practice, or special function day, they will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities without a medical excuse or in case of bereavement. The excuse should be given to the sponsor/coach



at the time of the after-school activity that day. No money will be refunded if your child is removed, dismissed, or quits an extracurricular activity. Please note that HG on-campus extracurriculars take precedence over non-HG extracurriculars. Your commitment needs to be with HG first. Also, each group has a specific fee that is associated with it. Please refer to the guidelines for that group for more details.

### **15.2 Altar Servers**

Altar servers are open to all Catholic boys and girls in the parish. Training begins in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **15.3 National Junior Honor Society**

Junior high students who excel in scholarship, leadership, character, and service may be invited to become members of this organization if they meet the following criteria:

- G.P.A. – Must have a grade point average of 3.5 or higher for the 7th grade school year. \*Please note, this average does not include Religion.
- Conduct – Must be a grade of “B” or higher each nine weeks of the 7th grade school year.
- New members will be selected and installed in the 1st quarter of their 8th grade year.

### **15.4 Student Council**

The Holy Ghost Catholic School middle school students (5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades) are eligible to run for a position on the Student Council. The organization is established to provide students with an opportunity for experiences for leadership.

### **15.5 Types of Extracurricular Activities and Grades**

The school offers athletic activities in the following areas: football, basketball, volleyball, track, cross-country track, baseball, soccer, softball, and golf. Cheer, Dance, Drama, Choir, and other activities/clubs are also offered. Please be aware that most of these extracurriculars expect students to maintain a 2.0 GPA or a 75% cumulative average in their six main subjects, with no grade below a “D” on their report card. They must also maintain a “C” or above in Conduct in order to participate. Please refer to each group’s particular Guidelines for more information.

NOTE: During standardized testing, all practices and/or games must end before 7:00 p.m. There will be no tryouts during standardized testing.

### **15.6 Student Spectators at Extracurricular Functions**

We encourage students to attend athletic events as spectators in the audience. The same code of conduct is expected from our students at such events on or off campus as we expect during the regular school day. Students are to be accompanied by a responsible adult.

### **15.7 Piano**

If a teacher is available, piano lessons are offered during enrichment for a fee.

### **15.8 Home and School Association**

The purpose of the Home and School Association is to provide service to the school and support school programs. This association provides support to the teachers and staff. They also oversee the room mothers for each teacher.

### **15.9 The Dads’ Club and Moms’ Club**

The Dads’ Club and Moms’ Club are parent organizations open to all moms and dads, grandparents, and other family members of the Holy Ghost Catholic School community.

## 16.0 TECHNOLOGY

### 16.1 Technology Statement

Technology provides students with access to people and material from all over the world. We believe that information and interaction promote educational excellence and is consistent with the goals of the school and the Diocese of Baton Rouge. The Internet does include some material that is not appropriate for students. Efforts are taken to protect students from inappropriate materials, but it is impossible to completely protect students from material that is not consistent with diocesan goals. Students will use the Internet within an educational activity, such as performing research, developing projects, and disseminating information.

The following rules and consequences will maximize the educational opportunities available to your child, while minimizing the risk of inappropriate use. The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. This privilege may be withdrawn if it is not used responsibly. Please discuss the following rules with your child. These rules will also be discussed in your child's classroom. **When you believe your child understands these rules, you and your child may sign and return this form. Your child will then have access to the Internet.**

### 16.2 Social Media and Holy Ghost Catholic School

Keep comments calm and polite. If things do get heated online, consider logging out and taking time to relax

Before you post something online about HGCS or any of its employees or affiliated organizations, ask yourself:

1. Am I being a good role model for my child?
2. Will this information reflect badly on me?
3. Does the school community or individual really need to know this information?
4. Is this information relevant, helpful and positive?
5. Will this information upset or embarrass the school community or an individual?
6. Am I making the situation worse?

Accept and acknowledge that inappropriate behaviors on social media **at any time**, yours or your child's, may lead to penalties including the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, including expulsion, and/or legal action.

### 16.3 Rules of Responsible Technology Behavior

1. Respect the rights of others. Do not interfere with anyone's use of technology. Do not access anyone's files without their permission.
2. Use appropriate language.
3. Use technology for educational purposes only. The use of school technology for commercial, profit-making activities is prohibited. Recreational games are also prohibited. Technology will be used to promote learning of school related subjects and support activities.
4. Be a responsible Internet citizen and use good judgment. You are not allowed to send or collect obscene, abusive, or threatening material or activities supporting racism or sexism.
5. Help others be responsible citizens. If you see anything or anyone that does not follow these rules, immediately tell the teacher or other adult who is supervising you.
6. Always use the Internet under the supervision of a teacher, parent, or other school staff person.
7. NEVER give the address, phone number, or last name of yourself or other students or staff.
8. Keep your password secure. Do not share your password with others. Do not allow others to use your account. Do not use other people's passwords or accounts.
9. Follow the rules of the school.
10. Be kind online. Harassment or "cyber bullying" will not be tolerated. "Cyber bullying" includes but is not limited to the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening or terrorizing another person by sending or posting inappropriate and

hurtful email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings including blogs.

11. Do not participate in the transfer of inappropriate or illegal materials through the school's Internet connection or engage in the posting of such regardless of the origination of the post.
12. Never use the Internet for making threats of violence or slanderous or derogatory remarks. Understand that posting information or photographs in any format related to school, faculty/staff members, and/or students within the Diocese of Baton Rouge on any social media, website, chat room, email, or other messaging system that is deemed threatening, harassing, or spreading false, defamatory or morally inappropriate material is strictly prohibitive.
13. Accept and acknowledge that inappropriate behaviors may lead to penalties including the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, including expulsion, and/or legal action.

#### **16.4 Technology Guidelines for Parents**

By taking responsibility for children's online computer use, parents can work to minimize any potential risks of being online. Make it a family rule to:

1. Never give out identifying information—home address, school name, or telephone number—in a public message such as social media, chat rooms, or bulletin boards. If a minor is allowed to “chat” on a home computer, parents should monitor that use. Be sure you are dealing with someone that both you and your child know and trust before giving out information. Think carefully before revealing any personal information such as age, marital status, or financial information. Consider using a pseudonym or un-listing your child's name if your service allows it.
2. Get to know the services your child uses. If you don't know how to log on, get your child to show you. Find out what types of information the service offers and whether there are ways for parents to block out objectionable material.
3. Never allow a child to arrange a face-to-face meeting with another computer user unknown to you without your permission. If a meeting is arranged, make the first one in a public spot, and be sure to accompany your child.
4. Communicate with your child about Internet dangers.
5. Never respond to a social media message or bulletin board items that are suggestive, obscene, belligerent, threatening, or make you feel uncomfortable. Encourage your child to tell you if they encounter such messages. If you and/or your child receive a message that is harassing, of a sexual nature, or threatening, forward a copy of the message to your service provider and ask for assistance.
6. Report child pornography immediately. If you become aware of the transmission, use, or viewing of child pornography while online, immediately report this information to your local law enforcement agency, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (1-800-843-5678), and your local service provider.
7. Remember that people online may not be who they seem. Because you can't see or hear the person, it would be easy to misrepresent him or herself. Someone indicating that “she” is a “12-year-old girl” could in reality be a 40-year-old man.
8. Remember that not everything you read online is true. Sources should be checked and evaluated before the information is assumed to be true.
9. Understand that offer that is “too good to be true” probably is. Be careful about offers that involve coming to a meeting, someone visiting your house, or requesting banking information, passwords, etc.
10. Set reasonable rules and guidelines for technology use by your children, including the amount of time they spend on technology, time of day they access online services, and the areas of online services they visit. Parents should spend time “surfing” the Internet with their children and should monitor its use by children.
11. Discuss these rules and post them near the computer as a reminder. Remember to monitor compliance with the rules, especially when it comes to the amount of time your children spend on the computer. Your child's excessive use of online services, social media, and bulletin boards, especially late at night, may be a clue there is a potential problem. Remember that technology and online services should not be used as babysitters.
12. Make online explorations a family activity. Consider keeping the computer or tablet in a family room rather than in the child's bedroom. Get to know your child's online friends just as you get to know all of his/her friends.
13. Filter the information that flows into your home. Learn to block access to specific websites. There is software available and ISP-based services that attempt to filter undesirable information on the Internet. This software sets limits and defines restrictions. You can contact

your online provider for more information as to what software or service is recommended for this purpose.

14. Use Social Media responsibly and in a mature fashion. You are your child's best role model. Children learn from their parents' actions. Refrain from airing grievances or posting extremely personal information on social media sites.

### **16.5 Technology Fee**

A technology fee is assessed per student to support the technology infrastructure of the school. This infrastructure provides Network, both wired and wireless, Internet, Servers, Cloud Services, and Applications for the iPads and Computers on campus.

## **HGCS Internet, iPad, and Technology Contractual Agreement**

### **Technology Policy**

Part of the mission of HGCS is to provide a full range of technology tools, services, and experiences to further opportunities for faith development, academic excellence, and personal growth. Each HGCS student should possess skill in using a wide variety of technology; he/she also should have developed habits that ensure his/her use of technology is efficient, respectful, legal, and safe.

The technology policy contains standards that foster our mission and goals. Each year, all HGCS students must read and agree to abide by these standards.

### **Communications**

Students using HGCS Internet access and devices are representatives of the school and are expected to act in a manner consistent with the school's goals and values. Communications on the Internet and via email reflect on the school and must not damage the reputation of HGCS.

Students must not participate in social media during the school day unless this activity is directly related to the class and included in the lesson plan or approved by administration. Student communication using social networking websites is a reflection on HGCS no matter where or when it is made on the Internet.

### **Social Media and Holy Ghost Catholic School**

Inappropriate behaviors through the use of technology **at any time**, yours or your child's, may lead to penalties including the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, including expulsion, and/or legal action.

### **Network IDs, Passwords and Security**

Students will be issued password-protected network and, where applicable, application accounts.

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure the confidentiality of his or her password. Users should not select passwords that might be obvious to a potential intruder, such as family members' or a friend's name. Students will be held responsible for the information stored or transmitted via their account or equipment even if it resulted from someone else who was given access.

The student has no reasonable expectation of privacy while using any technology provided by HGCS. All storage, network communication, equipment, and software provided by HGCS remains the property of HGCS. The school seeks, where possible, to honor the privacy of the student; however, HGCS reserves the right to access any file, email, network transmission, or other information stored on or communicated through its property and will do so if a compelling reason arises. HGCS retains the right to monitor network activity in any manner it sees fit.

### **Prohibited Behaviors**

Students may not engage in any of the following:

1. Conducting or participating in any actions that are illegal according to city, state, or federal law
2. Advocating racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, or gender-based slurs
3. Violating software, movie, music, or other patented materials copyright or licensing agreements
4. Purposely viewing, displaying, storing, or transmitting any obscene or discriminatory material or material of terrorists, gangs, hate groups, etc.
5. Conducting commercial or private/personal business enterprises

6. Conducting any form of political lobbying
7. Sending unauthorized bulk or random messages (e.g., junk mail, ads, etc.)
8. Soliciting for organizations that are unrelated to HGCS's mission or purpose
9. Destroying the integrity of computer-based information
10. Downloading games, apps, or explicit images
11. Communicating via the Internet or email in a manner which reflects negatively on HGCS
12. Posting/sending personal photos or videos that are inappropriate.
13. Posting/sending "chain" emails
14. Using or attempting to obtain others' passwords
15. Installing any software, including iPad apps, on any school owned technology, modify system settings or operating systems
16. Recording audio or video content of any kind

#### **iPad Specific Policies\***

1. Every student will be issued an iPad for academic use only. The iPad, the apps installed by the school, and the case are all property of HGCS and should be treated as such.
2. Every iPad is property of the school. Students will be charged the full price of repair or replacement for any damage to the iPad.
3. Students will be charged from \$50 to \$350 for accidental damage to the iPad depending on the damage.
4. Items **NOT** covered by the tech fee include: charging block (\$20), charging cable (\$20), iPad Case (\$65), and lost or stolen iPad (\$500).
5. In the even an iPad is damaged beyond repair, the student will be responsible for the full cost of repair or replacement. Keep iPads in its case and protective cover.
6. When the iPad is not in use, it should be secured in a locked location. Students are responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged property.
7. Do not subject iPads to extreme temperatures such as those in a parked car.
8. When a student has a broken iPad, he/she will be given a loaner until the iPad is fixed. Once the iPad is fixed, the loaner will be returned to the school.

## **Acceptable Use of Technology Contractual Agreement Summary**

#### **PARENT OR GUARDIAN:**

1. I have read all of the information above.
2. I understand the use of technology is for educational purposes.
3. I understand it is impossible for Holy Ghost Catholic School to restrict every access to controversial or inappropriate materials. Some images may pass through our filter system through no fault of our own.
4. I will not hold Holy Ghost Catholic School responsible for material acquired on the Internet.
5. I give my permission for my child to have supervised access to the Internet.
6. I understand that if my child does not follow the rules, school and/or legal action may be taken.
7. I understand that "inappropriate use" is defined as using the Internet in any way that is contrary to school policy, local, state and federal law.

If your child violates any rules, he/she may be subject to any or all of the following consequences:

1. Suspension from class
2. Loss of computer privileges
3. Suspension from school
4. Recommendation for expulsion

**Each family must sign and return the  
HGCS PARENT/STUDENT CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT signature  
page below.**

**This form is due on or before August 16, 2024.**

**HGCS PARENT/STUDENT CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT**

I have read the 2024-2025 Holy Ghost Catholic School Parent/Student Handbook in its entirety. I am aware of the policies and expectations of the school and agree to be governed by the policies stated herein. Discretionary Clause: Although the rules set forth in our handbook address the frequent rule violations of students today, the school reserves the right to vary the discipline procedures depending on individual circumstances. The school also has the right to pass judgment on behaviors, not specified in our Handbook, which are clear violations to the values on which we are established as a Catholic Christian school.

Holy Ghost Catholic School will share demographic information to area high schools and possible Diocesan Catholic high schools. By signing the Parent Contractual Agreement Form, you are giving Holy Ghost Catholic School permission to provide this information to area schools.

**No handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question that may arise during a school year. For this reason, Holy Ghost Catholic School will apply and interpret its policies and rules in a manner to act in the best interest of our School, our students, and members of the community.**

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\_\_\_ I certify that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by all the rules and regulations of the HGCS Parent/Student Handbook Contractual Agreement.

\_\_\_ I understand the rules of using technology at school. I agree to the Holy Ghost Catholic School rules and consequences of technology use. If I feel uncomfortable with any information I see, I will immediately tell the teacher or the adult who is in charge.

\_\_\_ I certify that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by all the rules and regulations of the HGCS Internet, iPad, and Technology Contractual Agreement. I also certify that I have received the 1:1 iPad program brochure.

\_\_\_ I **GIVE** Holy Ghost Catholic School permission to use my child's photograph on the school/church website or submit the photograph for publication OR in the manner stated above.

\_\_\_ I **DO NOT** give permission to use my child's photograph.

Student Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print)

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print)

Date \_\_\_\_\_