



Moral Values • Discovery • Achievement

August, 2026

Dear parents and partners in faith and education,

Welcome to the 2026-27 school year at Mater Dei Academy! We are pleased that you have chosen our school community for your child's education.

You, as parents, are the first educators for your children. We, as a school, assist you in the great task of educating them to live in a global society; to become caring, sharing, moral leaders in today's world. At the heart of our community are our core Catholic values, which guide how we interact with each other, our students, and the wider community. These values shape our behavior and, ultimately, the effectiveness of our mission to educate and form disciples of Christ. As St. James reminds us, *"Faith without works is dead" (James 2:17)*, so our success depends not just on strategy, but on living our faith daily through collaboration and service in an ever-changing world. Our culture unites us as a school community, centered around our shared Catholic beliefs and values, which ultimately shape how we prepare our students to lead lives of faith, service, and academic excellence.

This handbook outlines the behaviors and results that flow from our core beliefs as a learning community, helping us embody our values in every aspect of school life.

Our beliefs, grounded in the teachings of Christ, guide the specific behaviors we expect from all members of our school community. These behaviors—such as respect, compassion, service, and integrity—are essential to how we engage with students in the classroom, how we interact with each other, and how we operate as a school. Through these faith-informed actions, we aim to create an environment that reflects our shared commitment to living the Gospel. We are also a designated STEM school after fulfilling the rigorous requirements from the state of Ohio. We thus focus our Catholic and STEM identities into our culture and mission, our teaching and learning to allow voice and choice for our students, and help to grow our students into awareness of career pathways for the future.

The ideals and procedures in our handbook and throughout our school day help ensure that every member of our school community consistently acts in a way that upholds these values. The ultimate goal is to create an educational setting where these Christ-centered behaviors lead to exceptional outcomes: students who grow not only in academic knowledge but also importantly in

faith, character, and a sense of responsibility toward others. Through our daily actions, we seek to cultivate disciples who are prepared for lifelong success, both academically and spiritually.

This handbook contains information you will need to know as parents of a Mater Dei Academy student. It contains the answers to many of your questions. Please read it with care and discuss it with your children, so that all will know what is expected. Complete familiarity with our practices and procedures should inspire your confidence in what we, the faculty, are trying to accomplish. We care about you and your children and are here to help. In return, we ask for your cooperation and assistance.

We do our best to provide a quality education for our students. Since we are most conscientious about our accountability to God, to you as parents and students, and to one another in what we do and for the way in which we disperse our resources, we hope that we earn your trust. We ask that you show us your trust by communicating directly with us about any problems, rather than with others who may not be familiar with the situation. Please reach out directly to teachers, staff and to me when you have questions or concerns instead of airing them on social media. Early and direct action on everyone's part helps avoid bigger issues in the future.

The rules and regulations in this handbook are subject to change, and may not be all-inclusive. It is the right of the principal, after consultation with the president, the board and/or the pastors, to make the final decision about an issue or incident that may not be specifically stated in these pages.

The administration of Mater Dei Academy reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time. Please note that new additions this year include our cell phone policy and new attendance guidelines.

Thank you for your cooperation and all the help you offer us. We do appreciate you and are thrilled to have you as a part of our school community.

God bless,

Mrs. Karen Trunk
Ms. Karen Trunk M.Ed
Principal
Mater Dei Academy

Mrs. Ginger Hartman
Mrs. Ginger Hartman
Assistant Principal



Mater Dei Academy Family Handbook 2026-27

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MISSION STATEMENT

As a community of faithful servants, Mater Dei Academy is dedicated to fostering a vibrant Catholic education that inspires students to become compassionate leaders, courageous innovators, and faithful stewards of God's gifts. We strive to create a haven of spiritual growth, academic excellence, and mutual respect.

Beliefs	Behaviors	Outcomes
Pursue Excellence	- Accept Christ's challenges - Be curious and innovative - Actively engage to own your learning	Empowered Learners
Build Relationships with God and Others	- Work as a team and practice empathy - Communicate and listen to each other - Respect and serve each other	Faithful Stewards
Lead with Integrity	- Follow God's example - Own your choices - Be responsible, respectful and safe - Be kind to yourself and others	Compassionate Leaders & Global Citizens



Keeping the Faith

The purpose of the strategic plan is to strengthen the system of elementary Catholic education to keep irresistibly Catholic, academically excellent, operationally sound and geographically accessible schools where demand exists. It aims to build on the strong history and success of Catholic education by ensuring an approach of excellence and continuous improvement. It endeavors to create pathways to the future that encourage communities to collaborate and enable schools to innovate in order to sustain excellence in mission. The plan consists of 27 strategic goals in six critical areas of focus.



Please scan this QR code for additional information and the complete “Keeping the Faith” strategic plan initiatives for the Cleveland Diocese.

INTRODUCTION AND PHILOSOPHY

This handbook is your guide to the policies and regulations of Mater Dei Academy. Please refer to it frequently and keep it on hand for easy reference. After you have carefully read the contents of this handbook, please go over them with your children so that they will also have the information.

We ask your cooperation in upholding the policies set forth in this handbook, keeping in mind that they will be strictly enforced for the good of the total student body. It is requested that you do not seek exception from the regulations for your child.

We would like to emphasize the fact that the school is concerned with the complete education of your child. A spirit of trust, understanding, harmony, and cooperation must exist between home and school in order that all of us may be effective educators.

Through your cooperation in regard to these policies and regulations we will be better able to make our school the educational institution that can best serve your child.

Many of these policies and regulations are either mandated by the State or set forth by the Office of Catholic Education and its strategic plan outlined on the previous page. Rules and regulations in this handbook are subject to change. They are not all-inclusive.

SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Mater Dei Academy is staffed by a qualified faculty. All teachers are certified according to Ohio State standards. The school staff includes a principal, assistant principal, classroom teachers, physical education instructor, music teacher, computer/STEM teacher, art teacher, Spanish teacher, classroom aides, librarian, administrative assistants, a nurse, cafeteria manager, and maintenance personnel.

Professional competency and efficiency are stimulated through attendance at in-service workshops, continuing college education and religious education courses, and faculty meetings.

State auxiliary funding to non-public schools provides speech and language therapy, and support services and state Jon Peterson scholarships provide special education services for qualified students.

EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY

- to be your partner in educating your child
- to exemplify respect for each person
- to create a climate for learning
- to help each child develop his/her potential for learning and growing

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITY

- to facilitate the education of all the children of Mater Dei Academy through cooperation with the school and its policies
- to ensure attendance and proper preparation for engaging in school academics
- to encourage your child to grow in his/her ability to meet the challenges of life in a global society

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

- to always act in accordance with school and classroom rules and policies
- to be responsible for his/her actions inside and outside of school
- to complete his/her school work with effort and intent to learn
- to be open to learning
- to be cooperative with classmates

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Mater Dei Academy Non-Discrimination Policy

The governing board of Mater Dei Academy School located at 29840 Euclid Avenue in Wickliffe Ohio 44092 has adopted the following racial nondiscriminatory policies.

The Mater Dei Academy school recruits and admits students of any race, color or ethnic origin to all its rights, privileges, programs and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, employment, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs..

The Mater Dei Academy school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or ethnic origin in the hiring of its certified or non-certified personnel.

ADMISSION PRIORITY AND PROCEDURES

Mater Dei Academy is deeply interested in promoting equal educational opportunities for all children and providing a Catholic environment in which religious truths and values are integrated with every aspect of human life. Religious formation is one of the primary purposes of Catholic education. Parents of students admitted to Mater Dei Academy must subscribe to this concept.

Admission to Mater Dei Academy is gained through a formal enrollment process. Admission is based on the following order:

1. Presently enrolled students in good standing (preschool through seventh grade)
2. Siblings of families presently enrolled and in good standing
3. New families that are registered, active parishioners at OLMC, IC, SJM, SMM, SJV
4. Catholic families from other parishes
5. Non-Catholic families

Presently enrolled families renewing after March 1st will be accepted based on availability.

A student may be refused admittance if the class size has been reached and space will not permit added enrollment, or if the school cannot provide for the continued social, physical, or intellectual growth of the student.

New student registrations will be considered after the student has completed a shadow day at our school, has taken a grade level assessment, the school has received a copy of the student's scholastic records, and parents have scheduled a conference with the principal.

Any child entering Kindergarten must be five years of age on or before September 30th of that school year. Any child who is six years of age by September 30th of that school year must enter school. Preschool students must be 3 or 4 on or before September 30th of that school year for the appropriately aged class.

WITHDRAWAL

When students are transferred to a new school for any reason either during the school year or at the end of the year, the following steps must be taken.

1. Send a letter or email to the school office stating your intentions, the name and address of the new school, as well as the last date on which the students will be attending Mater Dei Academy.
2. Sign a release of information form before any records can be sent to the new school. Records may be withheld until outstanding bills are paid.

The new school must send the signed release of information form as this is our official notification that a child is attending school (or a verified home school setting) per state law. If the school office does not receive this notification, we may verify well-being via law enforcement if need be.

OFFICE HOURS

The school office is open daily from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Summer hours may vary.

SCHOOL HOURS GRADES K-8

7:10	Students may be dropped off at the gym doors/busses arrive
7:30	Announcements/school begins/students will be marked as tardy
7:40	First scheduled class begins (specials/jr high)
10:55-11:30	<i>PreK, Grades 6,7,8, Lunch & recess period</i>
11:15-11:55	<i>Grades K,1,2 Lunch & recess period</i>
11:40 – 12:15	<i>Grades 3,4,5 Lunch period & recess period</i>
2:00	Dismissal begins

Snack time is scheduled by individual grade levels if desired

***Students are not permitted to have nut products in the classrooms for morning snack or any other event; nuts and peanut butter products are only allowed in the cafeteria.**

*There are 1,054 hours of scheduled instructional time for the Mater Dei Academy 2026-2027 school year. This is above the state mandated time which allows for calamity days. Should the state minimum number of hours be exceeded due to calamity events such as weather, days may be added to the calendar, removed from breaks or other means through which to recoup instructional time.

COMPRESSED DAYS/EARLY DISMISSAL

Early dismissal days are rare and only occur on such special occasions as Grandparents' Day, when so many children leave with their guests. There may be bussing on that day, however Aftercare is generally not available.

TARDINESS

A student is considered tardy if he/she enters homeroom at or after the 7:30 a.m. bell, unless he/she was tardy because their bus was late. Parents are responsible for their child's arrival on time. Students must stop in the office to receive a tardy slip noting their arrival before being admitted to class. All instances of tardiness are recorded on the child's permanent record card. Tardiness on a

regular basis is not acceptable and will be called to the attention of the parents through letters and principal conference. We understand that sometimes being tardy is unavoidable due to various circumstances, however habitual tardiness is very disruptive to a child's education since they are missing the valuable time needed to settle in each morning and be prepared for instruction. Tardiness and absence that continue despite an attendance plan will result in future consequences, including parent conferences, student detentions or failure to be invited to re-enroll. Parents should note that poor attendance can impact future EdChoice or other scholarship renewals.

ATTENDANCE/REPORTING ABSENCES

The State of Ohio requires that we keep a record of parents notifying the school of children's absences and the reason for their absence. The parent/guardian **must call the school office (440-585-0800) or email the new attendance line before 8:00 a.m. to report an absence or to report a late arrival** due to a doctor's appointment, etc. The parent must give the student's name, grade and reason for absence. The office is required to contact you if no phone call was received by 8:00am. The office phone line is open 24 hours a day therefore, you can leave a message at any time.

*** New this year: Absences can also be reported via our new attendance email: attendancemda@materdeiacademy.us.** You may also send an email to the teacher in addition to the main attendance email. **Please note that if a student is absent from school during the day, he/she shall not participate in afterschool or extracurricular activities without principal permission.**

To prevent the spread of contagious diseases and for a student's own physical well-being, any student should remain at home if he/she has such symptoms as sore throat, runny nose, rash or skin eruptions, nausea and vomiting, abdominal pain, fever and/or inflamed eyes. Students should be free from fever, vomiting, or diarrhea without the use of medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

Absences due to contagious disease must have a note of admission from a physician. Readmission to school following an exposure, quarantine, or confirmed case of COVID will be handled on a case by case basis, per state and local health department guidelines. Contact the school clinic for specific instructions.

TRUANCY

Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, all Ohio School Districts must measure absences in hours, rather than days, and must adhere to new laws regarding student discipline, as a result of House Bill 410. The new law eliminates the concept of "*chronic truancy*" and instead categorizes students into two distinct categories; "*habitually truant students*" and/or "*excessively absent students*".

Ohio House Bill 410 considers truancy to be either habitual truant and excessively absent:

The definition of "*habitually truant*" will be changed from days to hours. The new definition is:

Absent 30 or more consecutive hours *without a legitimate excuse*
Absent 42 or more hours in one school month *without a legitimate excuse*
Absent 72 or more hours in one school year *without a legitimate excuse*

The definition of “***excessive absences***” is

Absent 38 or more hours in one school month ***with or without a legitimate excuse***
Absent 65 or more hours in one school year ***with or without a legitimate excuse***

Beginning with the 2026-27 school year, families will be directly notified once a student has missed 5% of the instructional hours, and an attendance conference may be scheduled with a member of the administrative team should a child miss 10% of instructional hours without justifiable cause.

As a scholarship receiving school, we are required to enter monthly attendance for all EdChoice and Cleveland scholarship recipients and poor attendance may impact future renewal. Repeated tardy minutes accumulate to time absent and may also be reported.

APPOINTMENTS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

If your child is to be excused from school during any part of the regular school session, a written note stating the reason is required. Please avoid doctor and dental appointments during school hours unless absolutely necessary. We attempt to notify parents well in advance of standardized testing (MAP) so that students do not have to utilize a makeup session, which often impacts performance. *When appointments are necessary, parents must come to the front circle drive/main entrance and sign the student out of school.*

1. A child may be released from school only to his/her parents or to other authorized persons.
2. In case of family difficulties (lawsuit, divorce, etc.), the child may be released only to the parent who is the legal guardian.

VISITS TO SCHOOL DURING CLASS/EMERGENCY MESSAGES

Should you have the need to drop something off for your child, you must come to the front circle/main entrance for admittance to the office.

Any person entering the school building should report immediately to the school office.

Teachers are not permitted to leave classrooms while classes are in session, either to answer the phone or to confer with parents. Accordingly, no one is permitted to go to a classroom without the permission of the principal.

The school secretary is not permitted to deliver messages to children during school hours except in an extreme emergency. Give necessary instruction to your child in writing before he/she leaves for school, including changes in transportation as students do not have access to their cell phones from the moment they enter until the time they leave the premises. School staff are responsible for

children during this entire time—please do not send dismissal instruction directly to your students via text or email but only to the school office.

****Please note that NO dismissal changes will be accepted after 1:30 pm. for your child's safety. This ensures that there is adequate time to process the information, notify the teacher and subsequently the student of the change.****

DISMISSAL DUE TO ILLNESS

If a child becomes ill at school, he/she will go to the clinic, and parents or emergency contacts will be notified by the school nurse. Please make arrangements to pick up your child within 30 minutes for your child's comfort and supervision. In the event that a child is seriously ill and neither the parents nor emergency contacts can be reached, the family doctor may be notified.

Emergency contact forms **should always** have current phone numbers and emergency references. **PLEASE NOTIFY THE SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY OF ANY CHANGE IN ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER.** It is very stressful for a child when we cannot reach a parent or acceptable adult with permission to pick them up.

The school cannot assume responsibility for those who fail to comply with the preceding directions.

MAKE-UP WORK DUE TO ABSENCE

When your child is absent due to illness, please allow him/her the opportunity to recuperate without doing schoolwork. Students will be given extra time to make up missed assignments. Your child will not receive credit for homework not completed within this extra given time allotment. The usual allotment is one (1) day for every day absent. This holds true for all classes including specials. Example: If your child is absent for Spanish, his/her homework is due within the preceding allotted time frame, not a week later. This holds true for exams as well. If a student is absent on the day of an exam, he/she will take the exam upon returning to school the next day. If the student was absent for an extended period of time, he/she will take the exam after completion of all assignments that were missed during the absence. Unusual circumstances may necessitate a different make-up schedule.

When a student has missed classes, it is the responsibility of the student to find out which assignments need to be made up and when they are due. A teacher may choose not to accept late makeup work, or to eliminate certain assignments due to absence.

VACATION

Regular school attendance is imperative to the student's progress. Assignments may be made-up, however, class discussion, interaction, and teacher instruction cannot be recouped, and makeup testing is often stressful to students resulting in lower performance. Parents are strongly encouraged not to interrupt their child's academic schedule for vacations. If at all possible, vacations should be planned so they will not interfere with the school calendar, which is published well in advance.

Independent study programs cannot be created in advance by teachers to accommodate students who miss class time in order to go on vacation. ***NO ADVANCE WORK WILL BE GIVEN so please do not ask teachers for it.*** Students can work on regularly scheduled assignments such as spelling words or those posted into an online classroom regularly by the teacher. *The work missed will be completed by the student upon returning to school within a time specified by the teacher in order to receive credit.*

Families opting to go on vacation during the school year are expected to inform the school office in advance, however vacations are not considered excused absences. Notification ensures that the office has a record of absence.

EMERGENCY CLOSING PROCEDURE

If it should be necessary to close Mater Dei Academy because of weather conditions, illness, local or state health mandate, or an emergency, an announcement of the school closing will be made **through Digital Academy**, text and or e-mail message, Facebook and on local TV stations.

It is not necessary to call the rectory or school or email the principal. The announcement will be made via the above communications and the following broadcast stations

TELEVISION:	CHANNEL 3 (WKYC)
	FOX8

In the rare event that your local school district is closed, but Mater Dei Academy is open, school sponsored transportation does not run and thus it becomes your responsibility to transport your child/children to and from school. This happens only in rare circumstances.

MINIMUM HOURS REQUIREMENT POLICY

The state of Ohio no longer recognizes “calamity days” or the use of “blizzard bags” to replace days off due to inclement weather or other emergencies. Instead, we follow state guidelines for minimum hours of instruction. When the Mater Dei Academy calendar is created for each year, we build in additional hours of instruction above the minimum to account for emergency closure of school. The number of additional hours we include is equal to approximately 5 school days, based on the junior high (grade 7-8) required hours (1,001), which is higher than required elementary grade hours (910). Should emergency school closings go over these minimum hours, the plan at Mater Dei to recoup this learning time is the following:

1. Non-instructional time, such as recess, will be eliminated and applied to instructional hours. Class periods will be adjusted accordingly to incorporate the additional time. Recess will be reinstated if and when hours have been accounted for.
2. Should the adjustment above not provide enough replacement hours, the following system of remote learning will be instituted, **up to an additional three days.**
 - a. Teachers will create a plan in their classroom for issuing the day’s assignments to students, whether through Digital Academy, Google Classroom, email or other avenue and notify parents at the beginning of the school year. (junior high student assignments will be entirely online as the junior high students at Mater Dei are

issued devices to take home nightly) Teacher plans will incorporate the school guidelines below.

- b. All assignments will be visible or issued by 9 am on the missed school day. Teachers will set specific hours as part of their plan that they will be available for office hours and/or direct instruction and will publish those to parents. Teachers will send a link for these synchronous learning opportunities to students as part of their assignments each day, and will be available online for a minimum of 1 hour before noon and 1 hour after noon.
 - c. Student attendance will be measured for these days by completion of assignments **on that day**. Assignments that must be printed or completed by paper/pencil are due to the assigning teacher the following school day, and assignments designed to be turned in virtually must be submitted by 11:59 pm on the same day. Students who do not submit assignments in this timely manner will be marked absent for the day.
 - d. Elementary grades may receive assignments via paper/pencil should inclement weather be forecast and/or teachers will use parent contacts as elementary students do not have school-issued devices at home nightly.
3. Should there be a need for additional school closing days, the lost instructional hours will be made up by adding instructional days back into to the school calendar. This could include any or all of the following: cancelling planned professional development days, cancelling planned days off during the school year, including the shortening of winter or spring break, and finally by the addition of instructional days at the end of the academic year. The calendar will be extended for all students K-8 should this situation arise. Because we strive for excellence, we will replace extensive lost instructional time for all students.

REGULAR DISMISSAL GUIDELINES

Students are dismissed beginning at 2:00 pm under staff supervision in a variety of ways: walkers, aftercare, car-riders, bike riders or bus riders. For your child's safety, it is extremely important that their teacher is aware of how he or she will get home from school each day. Please do your best to keep transportation methods as consistent as possible to eliminate confusion. If there are changes, please share them **in writing with your child's teacher or call the school office**. To avoid miscommunication, and allow time for all parties to be notified **NO TRANSPORTATION CHANGES WILL BE PROCESSED AFTER 1:30 PM FOR THAT DAY**.

We dismiss car-riders from the community center doors through a numbered tag system. Each family will receive 2 numbered signs that can be shared for their car window and each child in the family will receive a matching numbered backpack tag. Pick up cars line up in the parking lot and pull up 5 at a time and students are called to board from classroom groups in the gym. This is a very efficient process and is completed within 10 minutes. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, if students are not picked up by 2:10, they will be sent to Aftercare where parents will be charged for the time used until pick up. Parents will need to go to the Aftercare door (#5) on the east side of the building, be buzzed in and give a signature for pickup.

BUSES /THIRD PARTY TRANSPORTATION

Local districts transport many MDA students to and from school daily. Children using this method of transportation are to follow the rules that are explained to them by the driver. Failure to do so may result in a written report by the driver and forwarded to the school for possible disciplinary action. Incidents occurring on the bus should be reported to the driver and/or bus garage, not the school.

*All transportation changes should be sent in writing to the office in the morning. For emergency changes, please call the school office by 1:30pm.

BICYCLES

Children who ride bicycles should have and use locks for them. Bicycles are not permitted in the building. Bicycle racks are provided by the Community Center entrance. No e-bikes or mopeds are permitted on the premises.

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

As partners in the education of each student, open communication is vital. Teachers frequently write notes, send e-mails and/or make telephone calls if a problem arises, but most school information will be e-mailed weekly from the principal's office or posted on Digital Academy. Please check sites frequently and read any information sent home. Please allow at least 24 hours for an e-mail response and as much as two days if the e-mail is sent over the weekend. **Do not send same day transportation changes or absence notation through email to a teacher.** The teacher's primary responsibility during the day is with students and these emails are often not able to be seen in a timely manner. E-mails sent during vacations and holidays will be answered when school resumes. Students should only communicate with their teachers via school email accounts.

PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES

Grievances and problems are solved much better when there is mutual understanding between parent and school. This cannot occur without communication. If/when there is a legitimate complaint/grievance, the following procedure should be followed:

1. Speak to the teacher first if it is a classroom issue.
2. If the problem/situation is not resolved, then please contact the principal for follow up and an appointment if needed.

CHANGE OF FAMILY INFORMATION

Our information system, Digital Academy, allows you to make instant updates to your family information such as address and phone number. Please do so if you have a change by opening your Digital Academy home page, using the drop-down arrow next to your name in the upper right-hand corner and clicking on “My info.” This will also give you the option to change the information for your entire household group. It is important to have updated information in case of an emergency.

FAMILY/CUSTODIAL SITUATION RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SCHOOL

An increasing number of families are experiencing transitions in parental custodial relationships. In two-parent families, it is assumed that both parents are living at the same address unless we have been notified otherwise. Mater Dei Academy personnel will, therefore, send home notices, communications, etc. with the child. It is assumed that both parents are communicating regarding the child and that all information is shared by and between the parents. This information includes but is not limited to conference appointments, report cards, mid-quarters, discussions with school personnel, and tuition statements. It is also assumed that both parents have access to and are using Digital Academy regularly.

In families experiencing separation of parents, or pending divorce, the above information will be sent home with the child to whichever parent currently has care of the child. It is assumed that this information is shared **by** the parents and **between** the parents. Since this situation frequently impacts a child’s achievement and interactions at school, parents are asked to inform **both** the principal and teacher of this fact so that appropriate support can be given to the child. Mater Dei Academy personnel cannot proceed on hearsay, rumors, or demands of a parent, but only with the appropriate documentation detailed below.

In cases of an actual divorce decree involving **clear custody by one parent**, the principal is to be informed by the custodial parent of this fact. A copy of the entire decree is to be submitted to the principal. Unless the decree indicates otherwise, school communications will be sent home to the **custodial parent**. Custodial parents should understand, however, that unless the divorce decree specifically limits the non-custodial parent’s right to access records, the non-custodial parent has the same right to access student records, under the FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974 (FERPA) as custodial parents do. We will, unless instructed by a Court Order, release such records upon request to the non-custodial parent. “Records” includes official transcripts, report cards, health records, and referrals for special services. “Records” does not include daily class work and papers, or routine communications sent through the children to the home of residence. In these cases, the custodial parent is asked to cooperate with the school and share this information directly with the non-custodial parent. This avoids time-consuming duplication.

Further, parents should understand that unless restricted by Court Order, a non-custodial parent has the right to attend any of his/her child’s school activities, which include sports activities and class programs. Parents should keep each other informed as to these activities to avoid duplication of communications and to allow the school to better attend to the duty of teaching your children.

In case of ‘joint custody’ (shared parenting agreements) entitling both parents access to school personnel and activities, it is assumed that one copy of communications and information will be sent home with the child and that this will be shared **by** and **between** the parents.

Regarding parent conferences in all custody situations: it is preferred and will be the general procedure that **one** conference appointment be scheduled “jointly” if both parents wish to be present. It is assumed that parents are able to set aside differences and come together on behalf of their child for this time. A joint conference further insures that both parents are given the same information at the same time, thereby avoiding misunderstanding and or misinterpretations.

In cases where joint conferences are **clearly** neither possible nor desirable by all parties’ involved, alternate arrangements may be discussed with the principal, subject to the approval of both parents, and further reviewed by Mater Dei Academy’s legal counsel. Every effort will be made to keep communications open with both parents while at the same time avoid duplication of services and excessive demands on the teacher’s time.

Visitation should generally begin at the home of one of the parents and not at school. It is hoped that visitation arrangements would reflect the sensitivity of both parents to the consistency and routines that foster security in a child and allow for school responsibilities and homework to be taken care of during the school week.

If there are questions concerning this re-statement of procedures or circumstances you feel necessitate other arrangements, please contact the principal personally.

FINANCES

FUNDING

Mater Dei Academy is supported through parish grants, tuition, education fees, donations, fund-raising events, and government subsidies.

TUITION

Tuition and student education fees at Mater Dei Academy are determined yearly. Tuition rates are issued with the renewal packets in January. The Lake County Catholic Schools board will determine tuition for the coming school year and tuition payment guidelines will be issued with registration packet.

***All school fees, as well as tuition, must be paid in full or under a payment plan approved by the LCCSN business office before re-enrollment will occur for the following year. Please contact the school principal should financial difficulties occur and she/he will communicate with the business office regarding next steps.**

SCHOOL FEES

Each student is required to pay a non-refundable Educational Fee of \$250 at the time of registration. This fee is used to purchase books not permitted through state funding such as religion books, to pay the Diocesan Assessment Fee, to provide art and duplicating materials, and to pay administrative and student services costs. There is a 3 student (\$750) cap on this fee per family.

EDUCATIONAL GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Financial assistance from the Diocese of Cleveland and Angel Scholarship funding is available to parents who qualify. FACTS and other applications are handed out with renewal/registration packets. Applications are to be completed online, in full with all necessary information, by the deadline in order to be considered for additional tuition support.

FUNDRAISING

Mater Dei Academy sponsors fund raising projects in order to maintain a reasonable tuition rate while continually improving the school's curriculum and facilities. Tuition does not fully cover the cost of educating a student. In order to achieve the quality education we want to see in our school, parents of Preschool and K-8 students **are asked to participate** in school fundraisers, such as a gala or walkathon to the best of their ability. All funds raised by the school are used for the school.

Other activities, which may result in additional funds, are designed primarily for the service or enrichment of the students (such as those from PTU).

CURRICULUM

A Christian atmosphere underlines the academic program at Mater Dei Academy. In order to achieve quality education and stimulate intellectual curiosity, the school promotes a diversified program of learning, uses a variety of learning materials, and adapts the curriculum to meet students' needs.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND FORMATION

The academic, physical, social, and spiritual development of the child is rooted in religious formation. This begins early in the child's life under the supervision of the parent and is nurtured by the school. To foster this growth, Mater Dei Academy offers a planned religious education program with full participation in liturgical and para-liturgical celebrations.

Mater Dei Academy provides its students with the unique experience of learning and growing in the midst of a Catholic Christian Community. The students are urged to be people of faith and

prayer, reflecting their Christian values. Our mission statement is focused on building a spirit of excellence and a relationship with God.

Diocesan Policy requires qualified and certified teachers of religion.

The most recent textbook edition published since Vatican II, which bears an imprimatur and is approved as the basic text for teaching of religion by the Diocesan Education Office is used. The Loyola Series, *Finding God*, is presently being used with additional supplemental materials.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Formal religious education is offered daily. The total program includes:

- Instruction in sacramental/liturgical expression
- Study of Scripture
- Experience in prayer
- Christian values clarification and formation
- History, theology and doctrine of the Catholic religion with an application to daily life

LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS

Celebrating Mass as a school community is a central part of our Catholic school. All students participate in the Liturgy of the Eucharist weekly as a whole school community. They also attend Mass on other occasions such as Holy Days of Obligation. Masses are generally on Fridays at 12:45 pm. Families are always welcome to join us and we do our best to notify parents if special recognition of students will take place following the liturgy, such as installment of student council officers or honors award announcements.

In order to maintain the safety of our students by being aware of any additional adults in the church during Mass, we ask that parents pre-register to attend Mass [using this link](#). If parents wish to sign their students out after Mass instead of following regular dismissal procedures, this link contains the opportunity to do so in advance. We ask that parents not come to the office after Mass for this purpose, as staff are generally already engaged in the dismissal procedure for the remainder of the school.

In the Catholic church, obtaining a Mass intention is a deeply meaningful and spiritual way to honor someone, whether they are living, deceased, or celebrating a special occasion. Obtaining a Mass intention is an act of love, faith, and hope. It is a way of offering the highest prayer of the Church for someone in need, whether they are living, deceased, or celebrating a special occasion. It brings the person closer to the heart of the Church's prayer life and invites God's grace to touch them in a profound and life-changing way. It also reminds us that we are never alone, and that the Church, in its communion, prays for and with us, bringing us closer to God. Parents are able to obtain Mass intentions for our school Masses [using this link](#).

Students will be offered the Sacrament of Reconciliation twice per year-during Advent and Lent-during the school day.

Sacramental preparation consists of religious instruction and parental involvement in pre-sacramental programs before children share in the sacraments of Penance, First Communion, and Confirmation. The pre-Sacramental programs are mandatory for parents who are bringing their child for participation in these sacraments. **Sacramental preparation programs are conducted through the student's home parish per the Diocese of Cleveland.** Please be sure to register your child for receipt of their Sacraments at the church you attend.

Parents are urged to instill within their child an appreciation for spiritual values and encourage him/her to be present for the entire Sacrifice of the Mass. Growth in Christian charity depends upon how fully your child actively participates in the Eucharistic celebration.

PARA-LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS

Classroom para-liturgies are woven into the religious instructional program according to the topics being studied. With the help of their teachers, students also plan and participate in the following: Rosary devotions, Advent/Lenten prayer services, Stations of the Cross, May Crowning ceremony, retreats, and Penance services.

MINIMUM STANDARDS

Mater Dei Academy is fully accredited and chartered by the state of Ohio and approved by the Office of Catholic Education regarding:

1. the length of the school year
2. administrative procedures for the school year as they relate to the opening, closing, and emergency closing of schools
3. admission, assignment, and withdrawal of pupils
4. vaccination and immunization of pupils

COURSES OF STUDY AND MATERIALS

To fulfill the state minimum standards academic standards for grades K-12 are published by the Office of Catholic Education. State and Diocesan guidelines are implemented in the schools through the development of instructional programs which meet the needs of the students. Curriculums in all major subjects are revised periodically and are implemented in our school accordingly.

In accordance with the state of Ohio, an official suggested textbook list is published by the Office of Catholic Education for the schools with the Diocese.

Sufficient updated textbooks, supplementary materials, and reference materials are provided on all grade levels in appropriate kinds and amounts to facilitate quality instruction and to meet individual needs in all areas of curriculum.

TEXTBOOKS & ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Textbooks & electronic devices purchased with state funds are inventoried and the school must account for them to the Lake County Catholic Schools Network, which is the fiscal agent for the state of Ohio.

Students in grades 6-7-8 must sign a waiver before being allowed to take their Chromebook home. (Please see the separate Chromebook policy given to junior high students) Students in all other grades will be provided a device (ipad or Chromebook) for use only at school.

Students may not deface their Chromebook, case, charger, or related part in any way. This includes stickers and graffiti. Chromebooks must remain in their cases at all times. The cases are designed to protect the device. **Students must let their teacher know of damaged or broken Chromebooks immediately so that they can be sent out for repair.**

Do not tape or paste anything on the covers of any textbooks or on electronic devices. Provide a specific, safe place at home for school items. **Any lost or damaged book or electronic device must be reimbursed for the following estimated costs at the time of printing. Fees for lost or damaged devices, chargers or textbooks are not billable to any scholarships.**

Chromebook- \$350

Charger- \$20

Case- \$25

Textbooks- Vary

HOMEWORK

Homework is meant to provide practice/reinforcement of skills learned in class, to give the child an opportunity to develop research strategies, independent study skills, and to enrich learning.

Homework is not always written; some is to be studied or read. Written assignments can be in two categories—daily or long range. An assignment may be given by the teacher for the following day or a project may be assigned well in advance. The length of homework assignments depends on the initiative and ability of the students and also the type of assignment given.

Parents can help by ensuring that the child is responsible in doing his/her daily assignments and by providing a good atmosphere for work. Help your child if necessary but **NEVER DO THE WORK** for him/her. Please check your child's Homework Planner or Digital Academy, both provided by the school and encourage your child to read on a daily basis.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Student achievement is monitored on the basis of objectives stated in the Graded Course of Study and incorporated into the teacher's plan for daily instruction. Procedures for evaluating student achievement include the following: teacher's observation of student responses, directed activities, quizzes, tests, participation in discussions, experiments, projects, oral and written reports, assignments, and written class work, as well as other appropriate means to measure achievement in a particular subject on a given grade level. Student grades and progress are reported in the online gradebook of Digital Academy and parents are responsible for checking this on a regular basis, as teachers regularly post reports of student progress.

GRADING SCALE

**The grading scale is as follows for grades 3-8:
All Major Subjects and Spanish in these grades**

A+	98-100	C+	82-84
A	95-97	C	79-81
A-	93-94	C-	77-78
B+	90-92	D+	75-76
B	87-89	D	72-74
B-	85-86	D-	70-71
N	Needs Improvement	F	Failing (69 and below)
Inc.	Incomplete work caused by extended absences. Must be converted to standard grade within a specified time.		

Academic progress in Language Arts and math for students in grades K-3 is reported via standards-based grading to allow for mastery of state and diocesan standards by the end of the school year. Report card marks for these subjects will be reported by

Standard Grade Scale	
3	Mastered: Students meets or exceeds the demonstrations or knowledge of target content for grade-level learning with consistent success, accuracy, and independence.
2.5	No major errors or omissions regarding 2.0 content and partial knowledge of the 3.0 content.
2	Developing: Student illustrates base knowledge of prerequisite content, knowledge, or skills necessary for mastery of target content.
1.5	Partial knowledge of the 2.0 content, but major errors or omissions regarding the 3.0 content.
1	Assistance needed to demonstrate partial understanding of a score of 2.0 or 3.0.
Blank	Was not assessed in the grading period

The system used for **Kindergarten and in First and Second Grade for science, social studies and specials for grades K-5** is as follows:

O Outstanding

S- Poor

S+ Excellent

N Unsatisfactory/Failing/Needs
Improvement

S Satisfactory

REPORT CARDS

Report cards provide parents with tangible evidence of pupil growth and development and promote mutual understanding between home and school. They indicate the over-all academic and social achievement a student has made during a specific time.

Report cards are issued four times a year, and a notification appears in Digital Academy within two weeks following the end of the quarter. (*See school calendar for dates*). Please let the office know if you have difficulty accessing Digital Academy.

*If there are excessive tuition and outstanding fees at the end of the school year, your child may not receive his/her final report card.

ACADEMIC HONORS FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES 4-8

MDA Award: Quarterly a student must have a G.P.A. of 4.0 (A's in all subjects)

First Honors: Quarterly a student must have a G.P.A. of 3.75-3.99

Second Honors: Quarterly a student must have a G.P.A. of 3.50-3.74

***A 'D', 'F' OR 'U' GRADE IN ANY SUBJECT DISQUALIFIES A STUDENT FROM ATTAINING HONORS**

GPA's are calculated on a straight 4 point scale- an A is equal to 4 points ; B is 3 points; C is 2 points and D is worth 1 point for a full credit class. Fs are worth 0. Plus (+) or minus (-) grades are not weighted. A B+ is still 3 points. Specials classes are worth half credit.

The following is an example of GPA calculation:

One credit classes include the core classes-

Religion **A+** (4)

Reading **B** (3)

English **B+** (3)

Spelling **B+** (3)

Mathematics **B+** (3)

Social Studies **B** (3)

Science/Health **B** (3)

Half credit classes are the Specials

Art **A** (2)

Computer **B+** (1.5)
Music **B** (1.5)
Phys. Ed **A+** (2)
Spanish **A-** (2)

The full credit classes total up to 22 points. The half credit classes equal 9 points for a total of 31 points. Depending on the grade level, your child may have a different number of classes. In this scenario, the total possible points (31) are divided by the number of possible credits (9.5) which results in a GPA of 3.2631. The GPA is rounded to the nearest hundredth, and in this case would show up on the report card as a 3.26.

PROGRESS REPORT MONITORING FOR STUDENTS with IEPs

Students with IEPs (Individualized Education Plans) will receive quarterly Progress Reports indicating mastery towards their IEP goals/objectives. Reports will be generated based on the method(s) for measuring the child's progress towards annual goal(s) indicated on their IEPs. Copies of the report will be sent to home districts as well as parents.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Our goal is for all students to reach their personal academic best, and we offer support, encouragement and partnership for students to do so. Parents are also expected to review grades, make academics a priority and support school assignments. Students who have a quarter GPA of 1.75 or lower will be placed on academic probation and a conference with parents will be scheduled in order to review a plan for future success.

Students are given the next quarter to return to good standing. If good standing is not achieved, parents may be asked to withdraw their child from Mater Dei Academy. Students in grades 7-8 may be placed in Directed Study Hall instead of a supplemental academic class to receive additional support for improvement. Repeated academic probation cycles may result in suspension from extracurricular activities, including sports, clubs and musical performances.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

The testing program is designed to serve the needs of all students and strives to improve the quality of instruction in a school. Both basic skills tests and aptitude tests are administered. The basic skills tests measure the student's mastery of skills, while the aptitude test seeks to measure the student's capacity to acquire knowledge and skills. The following testing program is administered:

Grade	Test	When Given
PreSchool	Brigance Screening	Fall & Spring
Grades K-8	MAP Testing	Fall, Winter, Spring
Grades 5 and 8	ACRE test of Catechetical Religious Education	Spring
Grades K-5	DIBELS (Basic reading skills)	Fall, Winter, Spring

Results for all of these assessments are sent home to parents quarterly or when assessed.

PROVIDING FOR INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

Class grouping and flexible grouping of students is one way to provide for individual differences. In some content areas, this is used to better meet individual needs and to offer re-development and reinforcement for students who can benefit from such assistance. Students who require additional help and have qualified for an individualized education plans (IEP) are given support, both individually and in a small group setting, from our intervention department. Students who qualify for an IEP are eligible to apply for a Jon Peterson scholarship, which provides additional funding through the state of Ohio for those specialized services. Remedial help is offered to students who require shorter term additional assistance and accommodations through our auxiliary funding.

Ohio's **Third Grade Reading Guarantee** is a required program to identify students from kindergarten through **grade 3** that are not on-track to meet reading achievement benchmarks by the end of the school year. Schools must provide help and support to make sure students are on track for reading success by the end of third grade. Students who do not meet the minimum required reading MAP score by the end of grade 3 are subject to retention. Mater Dei Academy will work with students and parents to create a plan for progress as well as provide multiple opportunities to meet the benchmark requirements.

RETENTION

A child may be retained if it is presumed that he/she will profit by it. Retention is rare but can be considered for the following reasons:

1. Failure in three or more of the major subjects. Primary grades require only two subject areas. Major subjects are: Reading, Mathematics, English, Social Studies, and Science. Failure in an individual subject is defined as receiving a grade of F for more than two quarters.
2. Failure to master fundamental skills of reading and or math in primary grades.
3. It is expected that any child who has a failing grade in any major subject area be tutored during the summer and/ or throughout the school year. Failure to do so may result in a denial of admittance for the following school year.

Parents will be notified at the beginning of the third quarter if retention is a possibility.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled during the first quarter and scheduled through an online sign-up sent to parents. We ask that parents **make every effort to attend their child's conference during the first quarter, but teacher or parent may request a conference at any other time during the school year.** At conferences, parents may discuss any problems relating to their child and have any questions answered.

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

AUXILIARY/GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

Students at Mater Dei Academy benefit from the following professional services of state funded personnel if they are not receiving the same services under a Jon Peterson scholarship:

Speech/Hearing and Language Therapist

Reading and Math Tutor—Title I Program under Federal funds provide these services for eligible students in Grade K-4, as well as an Auxiliary program.

Intervention Specialist/Aides

Government Clerk

A child may be referred for services by his/her teacher, parents, or guardians through the principal's office. Once it has been determined that a student qualifies for services, a consent form must be signed.

Textbooks and consumable workbooks are also funded by the state as long as funds are available.

LIBRARY

All students can check out books from the library each week and are responsible for book care and returning books on the due date. Charges will be incurred for a lost or damaged book. Library privileges are forfeited until the fee for the lost or damaged book has been paid.

FIELD TRIPS

Educational field trips are pre-planned and are a worthwhile learning experience outside of the classroom. A signed standardized permission slip from the parent and payment of the fee for the trip is necessary before the child may accompany his/her class on the field trip. No verbal permission will be honored. Field trips are planned by the teachers with the principal's permission.

Students may be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavior requirements.

A reasonable number of adult chaperones may accompany the teacher and class if needed. On the rare occasion that parents may be asked to drive, they will be required to fill out an insurance form that **must be** cleared through the Diocesan Insurance Office and on file in the school office before the trip. Cars must be equipped with seat belts. **All parents must be VIRTUS trained and fingerprinted.**

In order to volunteer in the school or parish in any capacity with children, you will need to take a Virtus class. Please register at [Virtus.org](https://www.virtus.org) and sign up for a class that fits your schedule. Please make sure that you choose Mater Dei Academy as your primary location.

*Once you have taken the Virtus class, you will need to connect your training record with Mater Dei Academy on the Virtus website and complete additional training and paperwork via the monthly emailed bulletins.

You will also need to be fingerprinted for a background check with the state of Ohio before or after the class. One suggested location is below:

Please have BCI Reports sent to:

Mater Dei Academy
c/o Principal
29840 Euclid Avenue
Wickliffe, OH 44092

Willowick License Bureau

31517 Vine Street

Willowick, OH 44095

Hours of operation: 8:00am – 5:00pm Monday thru Friday

* No Appointment Necessary (prints can only be done 30 minutes prior to closing)

* Cash only and driver's license required

BCI: (Volunteers) \$32.00 code: **3319 39B1**

In order to protect our children, the following policy is in place through the Diocese of Cleveland:

**Policy for the Safety of Children in
Matters of Sexual Abuse, Revised 2016
Diocese of Cleveland
Acknowledgement Form**

I have received and carefully read a copy of this Diocesan Policy.

I understand that I am responsible for complying with the policy as stated.

I further understand that any questions regarding this Policy should be referred to the Diocesan Legal Office.

I also understand that the Diocese of Cleveland reserves the right to change, modify and/or revise any part of this policy at any time.

I participated in the mandatory in-service on the 2016 Revised Policy for the Safety of Children in Matters of Sexual Abuse and the standards of Conduct on (date) _____.

Signature _____

Name (Please print clearly) _____

Parish/Assignment _____

Position (or volunteer activity) _____

Date _____

Please return this acknowledgement form to the parish/agency/organization in which you are working or volunteering.

Standards of Conduct for Ministry, Revised 2016

Diocese of Cleveland Acknowledgement Form Employees and Volunteers

I have received a printed or electronic copy of the *Standards of Conduct for Ministry (Revised, 2016)*. I have read and understand these *Standards of Conduct* and I agree to abide by them. I understand that a violation of these standards can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination as an employee or volunteer and/or removal from ministry.

I participated in the mandatory in-service on the 2016 Revised Policy for the Safety of Children in Matters of Sexual Abuse and the standards of Conduct on (date) _____.

Signature _____

Name (Please print clearly) _____

Parish/Assignment _____

Position (or volunteer activity) _____

Date _____

The signed Standard of Conduct for Ministry Acknowledgment Form shall be kept in employee personnel files at the agency/parish/school or in a general volunteer file at the agency/parish/school.



Code of Conduct Diocese of Cleveland

For Priests, Deacons, Pastoral Ministers,
Administrators, Staff, and Volunteers

Our children are the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. As a volunteer, I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this Volunteer's Code of Conduct as a condition of my providing services to the children and youth of our (Parish, School, Facility, Diocese).

I will:

- *Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration
- *Avoid situations where I am alone with children and/or youth at Church activities
- *Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth
- *Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children and/or youth without prior written approval from the pastor or administrator
- *Refrain from giving expensive gifts to children and/or youth without prior written approval from the parents or guardian and the pastor or administrator
- *Report suspected abuse to the pastor, administrator, or appropriate supervisor and (the local Child Protection Services agency). I understand that failure to report suspected abuse to civil authorities is, according to the law, a misdemeanor.
- *Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth

I will not:

- *Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children and/or youth
- *Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering
- *Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time
- *Pose any health risk to children and/or youth (ie. No fevers or other contagious situations)
- *Strike, spank, shake, or slap children and/or youth
- *Humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade children or youth
- *Touch a child/and or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner
- *Use any discipline that frightens or humiliates children and/or youth
- *Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth

I understand that as a volunteer working with children and/or youth, I am subject to a thorough background check including criminal history. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in my removal as a volunteer with children and/or youth.

Printed Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

HIGH SCHOOL VISITATION AND ADMISSIONS

Eighth grade students are encouraged to visit prospective high schools to assist in making the best choice for their future education. **Mater Dei Academy will schedule one day during the school year for a high school visit to a Catholic high school for eighth graders, however parents must make individual registrations at the high school of their choice for this day.** Eighth grade students are permitted one additional Catholic high school visitation day.

In addition, all high schools provide open houses annually, usually on the weekends or in the evenings. A letter with all the information regarding open houses is sent home with the sixth, seventh and eighth grade students early in the fall. Students are responsible for registering for high school admissions testing, visitation and follow-up. The actual admissions process for Catholic high schools is now completely online through Digital Academy and the forms are generally released in early January. Mater Dei Academy staff are asked to complete recommendation forms as part of the admissions process as well.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS

AFTERCARE PROGRAM

Mater Dei Academy has an afterschool care program designed especially for working parents who wish to have quality, supervised care in a safe setting. It is directed and supervised by school staff and other certified personnel. Parents must register their child and submit the \$50 registration fee before their student can attend aftercare. Hours are from 2:00-6:00 PM and billing is at \$7 per hour, broken down into 15-minute increments. Students consistently picked up after 6:00 pm may be billed an additional fee. Account balances can be viewed and paid through Digital Academy and payments must remain current. Unpaid balances could result in suspension of aftercare privileges.

During aftercare time, students are expected to follow school rules and directions from aftercare staff. Repeated conduct issues will result in warnings and parent notifications, followed by referral to the school principal. This may result in a parent conference or suspension from aftercare based on principal discretion.

ALTAR SERVER PROGRAM

Boys and girls from grades 4 through 8 may participate in the server program. Interested students may contact the Rectory at their respective parishes for further information, or respond to the call for volunteers at Mater Dei Academy.

SPECIAL STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The following special activities are examples of what is available to students:

Band	MDA Drama Club
Choir	Religious Retreats
CYO sports	Science Fair
Field Trips	Service Projects
Fine Arts Evening	Spelling Bees
Geography Bee	Student Ambassadors
Grade Level Performances	Student Council

***For a small fee, students can also participate in a variety of afterschool activities.**

ATHLETICS

In conjunction with CYO, a sports program is offered for all seasons to students in grades 3 through 8. Some sports are offered to students in grades K-2.

The primary purpose for the existence of our school is to provide an atmosphere wherein children are given the best possible opportunities to grow into the fullness of who they are as God created them. We look to the formation of the whole person, body and soul. We feel that academics are of primary importance and that an excellent sports program should work hand-in-hand complementing our academic standards. Thus, students who remain on academic probation may be suspended from participating in athletics following conferences with parents and teachers. Every effort will be made to ensure the student has the school support to be successful prior to suspension, however it is the ultimate responsibility of students and parents to place academics as the first priority.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR CODE

This section outlines the expectations for student conduct and the importance of a positive and respectful learning environment at Mater Dei Academy. Discipline in schools is crucial for achieving academic success and creating a safe and supportive space where students can thrive and is a key part of our mission and beliefs.

The approach to discipline emphasizes guidance, teaching students about acceptable behaviors, and helping them understand the consequences of their actions. The aim is to foster self-discipline, encourage students to take responsibility, and enable thoughtful decision-making.

Key aspects of our approach

- **Setting Clear Expectations:** Behavioral expectations will be clearly communicated to students and families at the beginning of the school year. This is done using strategies like clearly defined classroom rules and school-wide standard operating procedures.

- **Promoting Positive Behavior:** Positive behavior is encouraged through recognizing and rewarding desired actions and creating a positive school culture where students feel valued and empowered to take responsibility for their actions as they learn to become disciples of Christ.
- **Consistent and Fair Enforcement:** Rules will be enforced consistently and fairly. Consequences are age-appropriate and focused on promoting student growth and understanding.
- **Building Strong Relationships:** Positive discipline relies on building strong teacher-student relationships, fostering open communication, and creating a supportive environment where students feel safe to express themselves and seek guidance.
- **Partnering with Parents:** Parents are crucial partners in supporting student discipline, both at home and at school. Open communication and collaboration are encouraged to ensure a consistent approach to student behavior.

By working together – students, teachers, and parents – a positive and productive learning environment can be created where all students can achieve their full potential as empowered leaders, faithful stewards and compassionate leaders.

Teachers will have specific classroom rules patterned after the general school rules. A Conduct Referral may be sent home or via email as notification of the infraction of specific rule(s). If you are notified that your child has misbehaved in the classroom or anywhere in the school, we would hope for support at home and discussion and follow up that aligns with our mission here at school.

Examples of MINOR INFRACTIONS (these do not encompass all possible infractions)

1. Disorderly conduct in the classroom
2. Lack of courtesy in speech or action
3. Chronic tardiness
4. Disturbances in the hallways, lavatory, and library
5. Leaving the classroom without permission
6. Failure to be prepared for class
7. Gum chewing anywhere on school premises
8. Damage to books and other school property
9. Littering
10. Unwanted teasing, being rude or unkind
11. Failure to observe and respect cafeteria rules and supervisors
12. Failure to observe and respect playground rules and supervisors
13. Dress code violations
14. Cell phone or device policy violations

Disciplinary options range from a verbal reprimand, teacher–student conference, parent conference, conduct referral to administration, up through and including recess or afterschool detention, suspension or request to exit the school. Our discipline system is incorporated through a point system in Digital Academy and you will receive notifications of infractions via email. Please respond, which indicates that you have seen and understand the infraction and consequence. For severe or repeated infractions, you may receive written or phone notification as well.

Because out-of-town field trips such as those to Washington DC or Pittsburgh in junior high, require demonstration of student responsibility, a student will not be permitted to attend if they accumulate 100 discipline points prior to the trip, and if a suspension is part of this accumulation, the student will need to demonstrate improved behavior to attend even if 100 points are not accumulated. This shows an extreme lack of responsibility and self-control, and parent conference is a part of the process prior to that number being reached. There will be no refunds of payments applied should this occur.

MAJOR INFRACTIONS

Actions considered serious violations of the discipline policies include, but are not limited to the following:

- Smoking or carrying smoking materials, including vaping materials, illegal substances, fireworks or weapons.
- Leaving the school grounds without permission during the school hours, including the lunch period.
- Malicious destruction, vandalism, or misuse of
 - Parish, school, teacher, or student properties
 - Other properties, such as automobiles parked on school property.
- Repeated violation of discipline and classroom rules.
- Possession of illegal drugs, unauthorized use of stimulants, depressants, medications (over the counter or prescriptions) or alcoholic beverages. This includes the selling of or passing of these to other individuals.
- Defiance, profanity, fighting, physical assault, or any inappropriate behavior
- Possession of questionable materials; written or printed
- Plagiarism, cheating, or forgery
- Repeated bullying, taunting, harassment
- Unauthorized use of cell phones and other electronic devices
- Misuse of internet privileges

A major infraction requires immediate communication between the principal or principal designee, and parents. Depending on the severity, the consequence of the infraction will be either a detention or a suspension. A conference with student, parents, teachers, principal, and parish administrator may be required. The police department may be notified in certain situations. Detentions are served after school from 2:00pm-3:00pm on the assigned day and supervised by assigned school staff.

SUSPENSION

The principal has the right to suspend a student from school for any major infraction of school regulations at the school, at a school function, or on any Church property.

Suspension is the exclusion of a student from the school day for a specified time, lasting from one to ten days. The act of suspension would also exclude the student from extracurricular activities such as athletics or extra-curriculars for a period of not less than one week. Missed student work is expected to be made up, but a percentage off (1% of final grade per day of suspension per academic class) will be incurred as a result.

Parents will be called when a child is to be suspended. A student will not be re-admitted to class until the parents of the suspended student meet with the teacher and principal.

A second suspension will merit a conference with the parent, principal and parish administrator to discuss whether the student should continue at Mater Dei Academy.

In-school suspension or restriction may also occur. This entails a student being present in the school building, but not permitted to interact with others or attend class during the suspension. Work will be provided and a supervised space to complete it will be arranged.

EXPULSION

There is a difference between public and private school when it comes to expulsion. **Private schools are a privilege and not a right.**

Expulsion of a student from school is a serious matter and will only be used when absolutely necessary. In some cases, the principal, president and/or pastor may deem an action by a student so severe that it would result in immediate expulsion from school. Repeated infractions may result in loss of permission to return for the following year. This decision is the right and responsibility of the principal and/or president.

BUS/ THIRD PARTY TRANSPORTATION INCIDENTS

Should an issue occur on the bus, students should immediately notify the bus driver or the parents should call the district bus garage. Mater Dei personnel will only become involved if the school receives a written incident report from the bus garage, and appropriate discipline consequences will ensue.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

If there is a question or concern with a decision, the person who made the decision should be contacted first. If a parent cannot accept the explanation given, they should take the matter to the principal. If the matter is still unresolved, it can be brought to the attention of Mrs. Barbara Mancari, President of the Lake County Catholic School Network. Meetings with teachers, the principal, or the parish administrator must be scheduled in advance, as the administrator's schedule is not always conducive to an on-the-spot meeting.

SCHOOL DRESS CODE

Students should be in uniform from the moment they enter the school building as it establishes a sense of the excellence and standards we believe in at Mater Dei Academy. It is hoped that students wear the uniform with pride. The dress code is offered with the following considerations in mind:

1. We request a standard from our students which will assist in establishing an atmosphere for each student individually, and in the school as a whole, which is conducive to good conduct, study habits and personal respect for all.
2. We assist parents in the purpose and selection of clothing which will not encourage an atmosphere of competition in student dress.
3. We help students develop a good sense of tasteful and attractive dress based on the Catholic values of Mater Dei Academy.
4. We offer clear directives which can be easily interpreted by parents in purchasing clothing by following the dress code and by the faculty in enforcing the dress code.
5. The dress code is in effect from the first day until the last day of school.

We believe that there is a direct relationship between being well-groomed and properly dressed and productive work habits for school. We take into consideration personal hygiene, development of good habits of grooming and property, or that which is correct and in good taste for a particular situation. We stress that:

1. Uniforms should be worn proudly and students should enter and leave the building attired in proper uniform, and students should strive for a neat and clean appearance at all times.
2. A parent or doctor's note is required if it is necessary for a child to be out of proper uniform.

DRESS CODE DETAILS

Uniform is worn daily in grades K-8 -- **Please label all of your child's clothing and ensure that clothing fits appropriately and is not over- or under-sized.**

***Failure to follow the dress code will result in a dress code violation notification. This may also result in a phone call home to parents for correct uniform pieces or the school may provide an acceptable alternative if parent is not available.**

Girls Grades K-3

- Jumper: Plaid# 847 V-neck or Drop waist, length to top of knee. Must be purchased from Schoolbelles or at the MDA used uniform sale. Dark shorts may be worn under jumpers.
- Pants: Khaki or black twill or corduroy. No stretch, cargo style or painter style pants. No cuffed or elasticized ankles.
- Tops: Blouse, knit polo with collar, or turtleneck in solid white or maroon, short or long sleeve, with no logos.
- Sweater: Cardigan, pullover, or vest in gray or maroon with school logo. Must be purchased from Schoolbelles or at the MDA used uniform sale. Sweaters must be worn to Mass from October 1st until May crowning, and on designated dress uniform events.
- Socks: Cuffed, knee highs, leggings or tights in solid white, maroon, black or gray. White, maroon, black, or gray crew socks may be worn over tights. No designs are permitted on socks or tights. Feet must be covered by tights or socks. Socks may have one, small, brand logo, no more than 1"x1". Socks must be above the ankle bone.
- Shoes: Sturdy "traditional" school shoes with heels no higher than 1" in solid colors of black, brown, gray, or tan with closed toe and heel. No platforms. (Imitation or real leather Sperrys are OK. **Canvas or fabric shoes such as "Hey Dudes" or "Vans" are not**) Tennis shoes may only be worn on gym days or with summer uniform shorts.
- Sweatshirts: MDA crew neck sweatshirts or hoodies may be worn in the classroom over the regular school uniform, but may not be worn for Mass.

Girls Grades 4-5

- Skirt: Plaid# 847 Classic pleated, kilt, or skort styles. Must be purchased from Schoolbelles or the MDA used uniform sale. **Skirts should be no shorter than 3" above the knee and should not be rolled at the waist.**

- Pants: Traditional khaki, black twill or corduroy. No stretch, leggings, cargo style or painter style pants. No cuffed or elasticized ankles and pants should fall to the top of the shoe.
- Tops: Knit polo or blouse with a collar in solid white or maroon in short or long sleeve, with no logos. If the polo does not have a banded bottom, it must be tucked in. **Plain white tee shirt or camisole must be worn under polos.**
- Sweater: Cardigan, pullover, or vest in gray or maroon with school logo. Must be purchased from Schoolbelles or the MDA used uniform sale. Sweaters must be worn to Mass from October 1st through May crowning, and on designated dress uniform events.
- Socks: **Solid color tights or leggings in white, maroon, black or gray must be worn under skirts.** White, maroon, black, or gray crew socks may be worn over tights. No designs are permitted on socks or tights. Feet must be covered by tights or socks. Socks may have one, small, brand logo, no more than 1"x1". Socks must be above the ankle bone.
- Shoes: Sturdy "traditional" school shoes with heels no higher than 1" in solid colors of black, brown, gray, or tan with closed toe and heel. No platforms. **(Imitation or real leather Sperrys are OK. Canvas or fabric shoes such as "Hey Dudes" or "Vans" are not)** Tennis shoes may only be worn on gym days or with summer uniform shorts.
- Sweatshirts: MDA crew neck sweatshirts or hoodies may be worn in the classroom over the regular school uniform, but may not be worn for Mass.

Girls Grades 6-8

- Skirt: Plaid# 847 Classic pleated, kilt, or skort styles. Must be purchased from Schoolbelles or the MDA used uniform sale. Solid color tights or leggings in white, maroon, black or gray must be worn under skirts. **Skirts should be no shorter than 3" above the knee and should not be rolled at the waist.**
- Pants: Khaki or black twill or corduroy. No stretch, cargo style or painter style pants. No cuffed or elasticized ankles.
- Tops: Knit polo or blouse with a collar in solid white or maroon in short or long sleeve, with no logos. If the polo does not have a banded bottom, it must be tucked in. **Plain white tee shirt or camisole must be worn under polos.**
- Sweater: Cardigan, pullover, or vest in gray or maroon with school logo. Must be purchased from Schoolbelles or the MDA used uniform sale. Sweaters must be worn to Mass from October 1st through May crowning, and on designated dress uniform events.
- Socks: **Solid color tights or leggings in white, maroon, black or gray must be worn under skirts.** White, maroon, black, or gray crew socks may be worn over tights. No designs are permitted on socks or tights. Feet must be covered by tights or

- socks. Socks may have one, small, brand logo, no more than 1"x1". Socks must be above the ankle bone.
- Shoes: Sturdy "traditional" school shoes with heels no higher than 1" in solid colors of black, brown, gray, or tan with closed toe and heel. No platforms. **(Imitation or real leather Sperrys are OK. Canvas or fabric shoes such as "Hey Dudes" or "Vans" are not)** Tennis shoes may only be worn on gym days or with summer uniform shorts.
- Sweatshirts: MDA crew neck sweatshirts or hoodies **may only be worn on gym days in junior high**, over the regular gym uniform. 8th grade students may wear their class T-shirt or CYO varsity jacket with uniform bottoms on the designated day. (Tuesday for 2026-27)

Boys Grades K-5

- Pants: Khaki or black twill or corduroy. No cargo style or painter style pants. No cuffed or elasticized ankles. Pants must be worn at the waist with a black or brown belt if there are belt loops. Grades K-2 are not required to wear a belt.
- Shirts: Solid white or maroon knit polos with no logos in long or short sleeve. Shirts must be worn tucked inside pants. Plain white tee shirt may be worn underneath.
- Sweater: Cardigan, pullover, or vest in gray or maroon with school logo. Must be purchased from Schoolbelles or the MDA used uniform sale. Sweaters must be worn to Mass from October 1st through May crowning, and on designated dress uniform events.
- Socks: Crew socks in solid white or black must always be worn with pants or shorts. Socks must be above the ankle bone. Socks may have one, small, brand logo, no more than 1"x1".
- Shoes: Sturdy "traditional" school shoes with heels no higher than 1" in solid colors of black, brown, gray, or tan with closed toe and heel. No platforms. **(Imitation or real leather Sperrys are OK. Canvas or fabric shoes such as "Hey Dudes" or "Vans" are not)** Tennis shoes may only be worn on gym days or with summer uniform shorts.
- Sweatshirts: MDA crew neck sweatshirts or hoodies may be worn in the classroom over the regular school uniform, but may not be worn for Mass.

Boys Grades 6-8

- Pants: Khaki or black twill or corduroy. No cargo style or painter style pants. No cuffed or elasticized ankles. Pants must be worn at the waist and if designed with loops must be worn with a black or brown belt.
- Shirt: Dress shirts in solid white, with no logos, in long or short sleeve. Shirts should be reasonably wrinkle-free and must be worn tucked inside pants. Plain white tee shirt may be worn underneath.

- Ties: Ties are to be worn with dress shirts and tied correctly . Any solid color or appropriate print worn daily. Bow ties may be worn.
- Sweater: Cardigan, pullover, or vest in gray or maroon with school logo. Must be purchased from Schoolbelles or the MDA used uniform sale. Sweaters must be worn to Mass from October 1st-May crowning, and on designated dress uniform events.
- Socks: Crew socks in solid white or black must always be worn with pants or shorts. Socks must be above the ankle bone. Socks may have one, small, brand logo, no more than 1"x1".
- Shoes: Sturdy "traditional" school shoes with heels no higher than 1" in solid colors of black, brown, gray, or tan with closed toe and heel. No platforms. (Leather Sperrys are OK. Canvas or fabric shoes such as "Hey Dudes" or "Vans" are not) **Tennis shoes may only be worn on gym days.**
- Sweatshirts: MDA crew neck sweatshirts or hoodies **may only be worn on gym days**, over the regular gym uniform. 8th grade students may wear their class T-shirt or CYO varsity jacket with uniform bottoms on the designated day. (Wednesday for 2026-27)

All Students K-8

- Sweater: All students must purchase a uniform sweater with school logo from Schoolbelles or the MDA used uniform sale. Sweater will be mandatory at Mass from October 1st through May crowning, and on designated dress uniform events. Students are also permitted to wear their sweaters on any other day that they choose.

Jewelry and Accessories:

Students are permitted to wear **one traditional** watch and **one** bracelet, **one** ring, and **one** religious necklace tucked into blouse or shirt. No hats, bandannas, or headscarves. No animal ear headbands are permitted. Students may not mark, write, draw, color or have stickers or tattoos on their skin.

Girls: may wear **one pair** of small post earrings on **ear lobe only**. No dangling earrings are allowed. A small hoop earring is permissible ("pinky" finger should not fit in earring as a general guideline) "Drop" earrings should be small and discrete (ex use pinky fingernail as a measuring device. Larger than that is not discrete)

Boys: May not wear earrings to school or school functions.
No other visible body piercings are permitted on boys or girls.

- Hair: Must be neatly groomed with no extreme hairstyles or unnatural coloring (pink, purple, etc). Hair may not be worn covering eyes and face. **Hairstyles should not distract a student themselves or others from learning.**

Boys: Hair must be of a reasonable length that is out of the eyes and no longer than the top of the shirt collar. Front of hair may be no longer than the eyebrows. Hair may not be past the bottom of the ear lobe. Overall length or color should not make a student stand out from others.

Make-up: K-5: No make-up is allowed. Light pastel or clear nail polish is permitted.

Gr 6-8: Girls may wear a small amount of natural looking make-up limited to a light coat of mascara and clear lip gloss. No colored patches or stickers should be visible on the face or body. Nails may be painted in a light pastel or clear nail polish and must be rounded and mid-length. No artificial or brightly colored nails are permitted. Principal, teachers, and staff have the right to decide what is natural looking make-up and a suitable manicure.

Boys: No makeup or nail polish is permitted.

Non-traditional Uniform: Worn during designated times

Optional: (“Summer” uniform) **Worn in August, September, May, and June**
Khaki or black walking shorts. Refer to Schoolbelles buying guide.

*Tennis shoes may only be worn with walking shorts.

*Crew socks in solid white or black must always be worn with pants or shorts. Socks must be above the ankle bone. Socks may have one, small, brand logo, no more than 1”x1”.

**6-8 grade boys who choose to wear walking shorts may wear a solid white or maroon polo shirt tucked in instead of a dress shirt with tie. Boys may also wear a solid color polo shirt*

Phys-Ed: Students must wear the gray Mater Dei gym shirt with solid micro mesh maroon gym shorts; white, maroon, black, or gray socks above the ankle bone; and tennis shoes. The gym uniform is available to purchase at the PTU sponsored spirit wear website (<https://mdaspiritwear.com/>) or you can find the link under the parent resource tab on our website. It can also be purchased at the MDA used uniform sale.

*All students in K-8 will wear their gym uniform to school on their designated gym day. Gym shorts will be worn during August, September, May, and June. Solid gray, maroon, or black sweatpants may be worn over the gym shorts at this and all other times. (MDA sweatpants are OK) **Please ensure that shorts and shirt are sized appropriately and replace as necessary. Shorts should not be noticeably too tight or too short, which interferes with physical activity and defeats the purpose of a comfortable and modest outfit for ease of movement.***

Sweatshirts: MDA crew neck sweatshirts or hoodies may be worn in the classroom over the regular school uniform in grades K-5. Sweatshirts are not to be worn to Mass. Grades 6-8 may only wear an MDA sweatshirt or hoodie on gym days. *8th grade students only may wear their class T-shirt or CYO varsity jacket on designated day (Wednesday for 2026-27)

Out of Uniform Days, including field trips and birthdays

When students are permitted to be out of uniform, these rules must be followed.

Students may dress down on their birthday (or Monday or Thursday if it falls on a weekend. No dress downs will occur on a Mass day)

- Jeans, khaki style pants, sweatpants, or joggers with no rips or holes, are to be worn
- No tank, sleeveless, or thin strapped tops.
- No tops that are revealing, have low cut necklines, or expose bare midriffs when sitting, stretching, bending over, or stooping.
- No pajama pants, pants with rips or holes or any pants with writing on them.
- Pants may not be worn low or sagging.
- No skirts or dresses shorter than top of knee.
- Yoga pants are not permitted.
- Leggings are not considered “pants”. Leggings may only be worn under a skirt or dress. Leggings may not be worn with just a blouse or sweater top.
- No shorts may be worn unless they are **knee length, such as Bermuda shorts.**
- Capri style pants may be worn.
- No inappropriate words, designs, or pictures on any clothing.
- On spirit days or other special celebrations, school spirit wear may be worn.
- Students who do not have spirit wear may wear shirts with school colors.
- Shoes may be tennis, school, or dress shoes.
- No flip-flops, slides, sandals of any kind, no work boots, or shoes with heels.

“Add-on Days”

- On occasions where students may add-on to the uniform, the following must be observed:
 - Students will wear their usual lower half of the uniform, including skirts or pants.
 - Depending on the theme of the day, students may add an appropriate tee shirt or hoodie.

On special occasions and performances students will have the option to dress up or wear their dress uniform. For choral performances, the music teacher may request specific colors or outfits. For band concerts, students are expected to dress as performers for an audience, which means no jeans, sweatshirts, tennis shoes etc.

Parents understand that once they enroll at Mater Dei Academy a school uniform is mandatory and is to be worn properly as a sign of school pride and membership in the community. Parents are not required to purchase all items from Schoolbelles, but are responsible to purchase items that are the same as the ones sold at Schoolbelles. The MDA PTU also has used uniform sales throughout the school year for your convenience. When students wear clothing that does not meet the dress code or uniform regulations, parents

will be contacted by phone or in writing, and they may be required to provide regulation clothing immediately by bringing it up to the school. School may also provide loaned clothing for the day to replace the inappropriate clothing, especially if multiple warnings and consequences have been given. It is the responsibility of the parents to make sure their children are wearing the uniform and wearing it properly. Principal's decision is final.

Water Bottles-While water bottles are not an official part of the school uniform, many families choose to send them to school with students despite the presence of water fountains. Due to multiple incidents and disruptions to classroom learning, beginning in the 2026-27 school year, **all water bottles brought to school must be 16 ounces or less. While they may be metal, plastic or enclosed glass, only water should be brought to school for consumption during the day. No other liquids or liquid additives should be sent to school for students. Water bottle fillers are installed on all fountains, therefore students can refill bottles during the day if needed.**

LUNCH AND RECESS

LUNCH PROGRAM

Mater Dei Academy sponsors a hot lunch program through the Federal government and the Diocese of Cleveland. Menus are sent home monthly for advance purchasing for children in grades PreK to 8, and the menus are available in advance as well. **The lunch ordering portal on Digital Academy will close on the 20th of the month for the next one. All orders must be entered by that date. No daily lunch orders will be accepted.** Milk is always included in the price of a hot lunch. Students who carry their lunch may order milk. The price of the lunch and milk is determined by the Federal government on a yearly basis. All issues and concerns with charges or balances in a child's lunch account are addressed first to Mrs. Jozefina Duvnak, our lunchroom supervisor, and then by the Diocese.

All families may apply for free or reduced lunch, which is based on financial need. Forms for this purpose are available in the school office. There is no difference in the meals provided for paid, reduced or free lunch, and this status is confidential. Applications for free or reduced lunch must be made each school year.

LUNCH RULES

Lunch will be conducted in the cafeteria. In order to maintain a safe, respectful and calm atmosphere, students are expected to...

1. Remain in their seats, raising hands for assistance or to use the restroom.
2. Keep noise at an indoor conversation level
3. Refrain from sharing food
4. Refrain from throwing food
5. Respect all adults in the cafeteria
6. Clean up their area and dispose of their garbage

OUTDOOR TIME

Each child in grades K-8 will participate in outdoor time for approximately 15-20 minutes each day. The children have the chance for fresh air and exercise each day unless the temperature or wind chill is **below 25 degrees**. Proper outdoor clothing is required.

Students are to be respectful and follow the directions of the teacher or adult taking the student outside. Rough play is never acceptable. Snowballs may never be thrown on school property.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

We recognize students' birthdays individually each morning on the announcements, but they can also celebrate their birthday by dressing out of uniform on the day determined by the teacher. Please follow the Out of Uniform policy.

As a continued school practice, we are not allowing edible treats to be distributed for birthday celebrations. Students may pass out non-edible treats, such as pencils, erasers, etc.

June, July, or August birthdays may be celebrated as un-birthdays during the school year.

Students may not dress down on a Mass day. If their birthday falls on a Mass day, students can choose another day for their dress down.

We ask that parents do not bring in a special lunch, flowers, balloons, etc. for their child's birthday, as it interrupts the learning process for all students.

Party invitations that do not include the entire class may not be passed out in school and will be returned home by the teacher. Families can use the directory option in Digital Academy to access contact information for those who have opted into this choice and send invitations outside of school hours.

HEALTH AND ACCIDENT PROCEDURES

ILLNESS/MEDICATION GUIDELINES

Please be sure your child is not ill when he/she leaves for school in the morning. Students should report to the nurse only after notifying the teacher and all dismissals due to illness will be processed through the nurse's office. Parents will be called to take the child home. We ask that you make every effort to be picked up within 30 minutes (for their comfort, safety, and awareness of passing the illness to others.)

If your children contracts a communicable disease, please notify the school office. The school must make a report to the county Board of Health. The school requires a release from the doctor before re-admission. **Children should be free of fever, diarrhea, and/or vomiting for 24 hours in order to return to school.**

State law prohibits us from administering any medication to any student without the signed directive from physician and parent(s). First-aid may be given.

ALL MEDICATIONS MUST BE KEPT IN THE CLINIC ONLY. No child can self-medicate!

Following are the laws pertaining to the administration of **any** medication to a student.

1. MEDICATION prescribed by physician or over the counter medication for a student SHALL NOT be administered to that student unless the designated person HAS ON FILE the official written forms:
 - a. Physician's statement for child to take medication at school.
 - b. Parent statement granting permission for child to take medication at school.
2. All drugs must be received by the person authorized to administer the medication in the container in which they were dispensed by the prescribing physician or licensed pharmacist. Over the counter medication must be in the original packaging.

If a child becomes ill at school, he/she will go to the clinic, and parents or emergency contacts will be notified to make arrangements for transportation. In the event that a child is seriously ill and neither the parents nor emergency contacts can be reached, the family doctor may be notified.

**Should a child exhibit symptoms of COVID-related illness, appropriate precautions will be taken and parents will be given further directions from the clinic.*

Emergency Contact information housed in Digital Academy is used to call parents, guardians, etc. PLEASE make sure your information in Digital Academy is up to date.

The school cannot assume responsibility for those who fail to comply with the preceding directions.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND IMMUNIZATIONS

The Department of Public Health and the Ohio Schools Code require a physical examination of all pupils prior to or upon their entrance into first grade (*unless this was done for Kindergarten*). Children must have the immunization shots required by the State; this information must be recorded in your child's health card. Students entering seventh grade are required to have a second MMR.

Failure to complete the proper immunization is basis for exclusion of children from school unless parents contact the school nurse directly in order to complete a state-required "Immunization Exception" form, which is the alternative to immunizations required to attend school.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL FORMS

Required by the Ohio Revised Code, Section 3313.712, the purpose of this form is to enable parents and guardians to authorize the provision of emergency medical treatment for all children who become ill or injured while under school authority when parents or guardians cannot be reached.

SCHOOL POLICIES

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Personal electronic devices such as cell phones, personal game systems, iPads or other electronic devices are not permitted for use in school unless directed by a teacher. Cell phones, smart watches or other wearable electronic devices, and other hand-held devices must be turned in to the homeroom teacher each morning and can be picked up at dismissal. Use of these devices during the school day without direct permission from the teacher or principal may result in disciplinary action.

Since school staff are ultimately responsible for the safety of all children **please do not attempt to communicate transportation changes or other information via electronic media to your child during the school day. Call the school office, who will relay the message personally to the teacher and ultimately the child.** Junior high parents, please see the appendix at the end of this handbook which contains the yearly parent signature form related to the presence of cell phones in school each day.

No wireless "earbuds" are to be used in school. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen electronic devices. Mater Dei Academy will supply technology and or electronic devices to be used in classrooms.

All parents of students who are issued an electronic device will be asked to sign a user agreement and to purchase insurance for the device.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Mater Dei Academy makes a variety of communications and information technologies available to students through computer/network/Internet access. These technologies, when properly used, promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. Illegal, unethical or inappropriate use of these technologies can have dramatic consequences, harming the school, its students and its employees. The Acceptable Use Policy is intended to minimize the likelihood of such harm by educating Mater Dei Academy students and setting standards which will serve to protect the school. We firmly believe that digital resources, information and interaction available on the computer, network or Internet far outweigh any disadvantages. Students will be required to sign a separate acceptable use policy before being assigned a Chromebook.

Definition of school technology system: The school systems and networks (system) are any configuration of hardware and software. The system includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- telephones, cellular telephones, and voicemail technologies;
- email accounts;
- servers;
- computer hardware and peripherals;
- software including operating system software and application software;
- digitized information including stored text, data files, email, digital images, and video and audio files;
- internally or externally accessed databases, applications, or tools (Internet- or District-server based);
- school provided Internet access;
- school filtered public Wi-Fi; and
- new technologies as they become available.

Acceptable Use: Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network just as they are in a classroom or on a school playground. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will comply with school standards and the specific rules set forth below as interpreted from this policy. The use of the network is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the school's computer resources in accordance with Student Code of Conduct.

Privilege: Access to the School's computer/network/Internet is a privilege, not a right, and there should be no expectation of privacy by the student.

Access to communication system: Access to the school's electronic communications system, including the Internet, shall be made available to students for instructional purposes. Each school computer/device and Wi-Fi (available for students who bring in their own personal telecommunication devices) has filtering software that block access to visual deceptions that are obscene, pornographic, inappropriate for students, or harmful to minors as defined by the Federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Filtered Internet access is provided to students as defined by CIPA.

Inappropriate Use: Inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to, those uses that are

specifically named as violations in this document; that violate the rules of network etiquette; or that hamper the integrity or security of this computer/network/Internet system or any components that are connected to it.

Transmission of any material in violation of any federal or state law is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to:

- cyber bullying;
- threatening, pornographic, harassing, defamatory or obscene material;
- other inappropriate use of technology such as e-mail, social networking, web pages, blog posts, web posts, or discussion forum/replies posted to the Internet;
- copyrighted material, plagiarized material or materials protected by trade;
- the use of hardware and/or software which disrupts or interferes with the safety and welfare of the school community (even if such uses take place after school hours or off school property).

Vandalism or Mischief: Tampering with or theft of components from school systems may be regarded as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. Any attempt to break the law through the use of a school computer/network/Internet account may result in prosecution against the offender by the proper authorities. If such an event should occur, the school will fully comply with the authorities to provide any information necessary for legal action.

Modification of Computer: Modifying or changing computer/device settings and/or internal or external configurations without appropriate permission is prohibited.

Students Access: Computer/Network/Internet access is provided to all students unless parents or guardian request in writing to the school principal that access is denied. Students' Internet access will be under the direction and guidance of a school staff member. Students must adhere to the following:

1. Respect and protect the privacy of others.
 - a. Use only assigned accounts.
 - b. Decline to view, use, or copy passwords, data, or networks to which they are not authorized.
 - c. Avoid distribution of private information about others or themselves.
2. Respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources.
 - a. Observe all network security practices as posted.
 - b. Report security risks or violations to a school administrator, teacher or network administrator.
 - c. Refrain from destroying or damaging data, networks, or other resources that do not belong to them without clear permission of the owner.
 - d. Conserve, protect, and share these resources with other students and Internet users.
 - e. Get appropriate approval before accessing the network with personal devices.
 - f. Abstain from overriding the Internet content filtering system.
3. Respect and protect the intellectual property of others.
 - a. Refrain from copyright infringement (making illegal copies of music, games, or movies).
 - b. Avoid plagiarism.
4. Respect and practice the principles of parish and school community.
 - a. Communicate only in ways that are kind and respectful.

- b. Report threatening or discomforting materials (cyber bullying) to a school administrator, teacher or network administrator.
- c. Refuse to access, transmit, copy, or create material that violates the school's code of conduct (such as messages that are pornographic, threatening, rude, discriminatory, or meant to harass).
- d. Avoid accessing, transmitting, copying, or creating material that is illegal (such as obscenity, stolen materials, or illegal copies of copyrighted works).
- e. Abstain from using the resources to further other acts that are criminal or violate the school's code of conduct.
- f. Avoid sending spam, chain letters, or other mass unsolicited mailings.
- g. Refrain from buying, selling, advertising, or otherwise conducting business, unless approved as a school project.
- h. Avoid posting or disseminating any harassing, demeaning, threatening or immoral comment or visual injurious to the reputation of the school, the parish, the Church or an individual, whether the action occurs on school property or off grounds.

School email and Communication tools: email and other digital tools such as, but not limited to, blogs and wikis are tools used to communicate. The use of these communication tools should be limited to instructional, school related activities, or administrative needs. All communications within these tools should adhere to the above mentioned rules.

The following guidelines must be adhered to by students using a personally-owned telecommunication device at school:

- a. Internet access is filtered by Mater Dei Academy on personal telecommunication devices in the same manner as Mater Dei Academy owned equipment. If network access is needed, connection to the filtered, wireless network provided by the school is required. Use of 3G or 4G service bypasses the security filter and is considered a violation of the Acceptable Use Policy.
- b. These devices are the sole responsibility of the student owner. The school assumes no responsibility for personal telecommunication devices if they are lost, loaned, damaged or stolen and only limited time or resources will be spent trying to locate stolen or lost items.
- c. These devices have educational and monetary value. Students are prohibited from trading or selling these items to other students on school property, including school buses.
- d. Each student is responsible for his/her own device: set-up, maintenance, charging, and security. Staff members will not diagnose, repair, or work on a student's personal telecommunication device.
- e. Telecommunication devices are only to be used for educational purposes at the direction of a classroom teacher.
- f. School administrators and staff members have the right to prohibit use of devices at certain times or during designated activities (i.e. campus presentations, theatrical performances, guest speakers, Mass, or test sessions) that occur during the school day.
- g. An appropriately-trained administrator may examine a student's personal telecommunication device and search its contents, in accordance with disciplinary guidelines.

Subject to Monitoring: All Mater Dei Academy network/Internet usage shall not be considered confidential and is subject to monitoring by designated staff at any time to ensure appropriate use. All electronic files, including email messages, transmitted through or stored in the computer system, will be treated no differently than any other electronic file. Mater Dei Academy reserves the right to access, review, copy, modify, delete or disclose such files for any purpose. Students should treat the computer system like a shared or common file system with the expectation that electronic files, sent, received or stored anywhere in the computer system, will be available for review by any authorized representative of Mater Dei Academy for any purpose. Personal telecommunication devices are subject to examination in accordance with disciplinary reason to believe that the Acceptable Use Policy has been violated.

Consequences for Violation: Violations of these rules may result in disciplinary action which may include the loss of a student's privileges to use the school's information technology resources. Users have the responsibility to use technology resources in an appropriate manner. Consequences of misuse or abuse of these resources will be disciplined depending on the severity of the situation. In addition to school disciplinary action appropriate legal action may be taken.

Supervision and Monitoring: School and network administrators and their authorized employees periodically monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that users are secure and in conformity with this policy. Students have no expectation of privacy with respect to the use of technology resources. Administrators reserve the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on the school's information networks in order to further the health, safety, discipline, or security of any student or other person, or to protect property. The school administration has the right of access to any electronic devices brought onto school property. They may also use this information in disciplinary actions and will furnish evidence of crime to law enforcement should one be committed.

Agreement Form: In order to ensure the proper use of technology resources, it is necessary that each user and parent/guardian *annually* sign the Student Acceptable Use Policy – User Agreement Form. The signed form must be on file at Mater Dei Academy before Internet and other technology access is permitted. Signing the form indicates that the user will abide by the rules governing Internet and other technology access as stated in this policy.

The school reserves the right to issue additional or more detailed rules for the use of technology resources, and violations of such rules may be a cause for imposition of any of the penalties delineated above. The school reserves the right to seek financial restitution for any damage caused by a student.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Purpose

Mater Dei Academy is firmly committed to providing a safe, positive learning and working environment for everyone in the school. For this reason and in keeping with the goals and objectives of Catholic education, Mater Dei Academy expressly prohibits sexual harassment and sexual violence in the school environment. This policy re-emphasizes the personal dignity of the individual and fosters positive sexual attitudes and respect for others. **The full copy of the Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Policy is on file in the principal's office.**

BULLYING/HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION

The parish administrator, administration, and staff of Mater Dei Academy believe that all employees and students are entitled to work and study in school-related environments that are Christ-centered and free of bullying, harassment or threats. Mater Dei Academy will not tolerate this type of behavior.

Mater Dei Academy teaches belief in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person. We believe that all students, school employees and volunteers have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. All members of the school community, in turn, have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance.

Mater Dei Academy will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student, school employee, or volunteer. A student, school employee or volunteer shall not intimidate or harass another student, school employee or volunteer through words or actions whether in the classroom, on school property, to and from school or at school sponsored events, or from any computer not on school property.

Definition

“Harassment, intimidation or bullying” means any intentional written, verbal, graphic, or physical act that a student or group of students, school employee or volunteer exhibits toward another student, school employee or volunteer more than once and the behavior:

1. Causes mental or physical harm to the other; and
2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other.

Examples of conduct that could constitute prohibited behaviors include:

1. Physical violence and/or attacks.
2. Threats, taunts and intimidation through words and/or gestures.
3. Extortion, damage or stealing of money and/or possessions.

4. Spreading rumors.
5. Offensive jokes, stories, pictures, cartoons, drawings, and objects that intend to alarm, annoy, abuse, or demean an individual or group.
6. Posting slurs online, through text, email, or on any digital media platform; Sending abusive or threatening instant messages; Using phones, ipads, or Chromebooks to take unauthorized photographs of students and posting or sharing them online; and using websites or apps to circulate gossip and rumors to other students.

Disciplinary Action

Harassment, intimidation or bullying constitutes a major infraction under the student behavior code. A major infraction requires immediate communication between the principal or principal designee, and parents. Depending on the severity, the consequence of the infraction may be detention or a suspension. A conference with student, parents, teachers, principal, and parish administrator may be required. The police department may be notified in certain situations. Detentions are served at recess or after school from 2:00-3:00 on designated days.

Procedure for the Alleged Victim

1. Communicate to the harasser that the individual expects the behavior to stop, if the individual is comfortable doing so. If the individual wants assistance communicating with the harasser, the individual should ask a teacher, counselor, or principal to help.
2. If the harassment does not stop, or the individual does not feel comfortable confronting the harasser, the individual should:
 - Tell a teacher, counselor or principal; and
 - Write down exactly what happened, keep a copy and give another copy to the teacher, counselor or principal including:
 - What, when and where it happened;
 - Who was involved;
 - Exactly what was said or what the harasser did;
 - Witnesses to the harassment;
 - What the student said or did, either at the time or later;
 - How the student felt; and
 - How the harasser responded.

Mater Dei Academy prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant, witness or any participant in the complaint process. Upon receiving a complaint, the principal will notify the parents or guardians of the involved parties. Any person who engages in bullying may be subject to disciplinary action as stated in the school handbook, up to and including expulsion.

FOOD ALLERGY GUIDELINES

The purpose of these guidelines is to:

- Provide a safe and healthy learning environment
- Reduce the likelihood of a severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reaction
- Ensure a rapid and effective response in the case of an allergic reaction

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

- Provide the school with up to date information regarding their child's allergy and specific accommodations they require as soon as possible and communicate concerns with the school as soon as they arise
- Provide written medical documentation, instructions and medications as directed by a physician. Medication permission forms and Allergy Action Plans can be obtained through the school clinic
- Educate the child in the self-management of their food allergy including: safe and unsafe foods, avoiding exposure, symptoms of a reaction, how and when to tell an adult they may be having a problem, how to read food labels (age appropriate)
- No parent is to send nut products into the classrooms for morning snack or any other event; nuts and peanut butter products are allowed in the cafeteria
- Provide the school with "safe snacks" that the allergic child can have in the classroom during class parties
- Communicate and coordinate appropriate measures with the school district providing the transportation to school when a child has medical concerns or allergies
- Be prepared to pick up your child from school if they ingest an allergen or they have even a mild reaction, as symptoms can become worse with time or each given exposure

Student Responsibilities

- Take as much responsibility as possible for avoiding food allergens
- Will not trade or share food
- Will not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain any allergen
- Wash hands before and after eating
- Learn about your allergies and learn to recognize symptoms of a reaction
- Will notify an adult immediately if they eat something they believe may contain the food to which they are allergic

School Responsibilities

- Make medication forms and care plans available to parents and review health records submitted by parents and healthcare providers
- Training and practice in the use of an Epi-pen and education in symptoms of an allergic reaction will be provided for all school personnel who may be involved in managing an allergic reaction during the school day; training will take place annually and reviewed when needed
- Students will be allowed to carry their Epi-pen if they have the appropriate parent and healthcare provider documentation

- Inform parent/guardian if any student experiences a reaction for the first time at school as well as any subsequent reactions
- Clinic will inform staff of serious medical issues and allergies that may affect a child during the school day
- Teachers will inform classroom students about safe eating procedures within the classroom when appropriate
- Teachers will communicate with classroom parents/room parents to inform them of a specific allergy in that class while maintaining the confidentiality of the student
- Staff will communicate any questions/ concerns regarding allergies and food being brought into the classroom with the clinic
- Teachers will not allow nuts or nut products to be eaten in the classroom; foods that do not contain nuts, but are processed in factories that also produce nut products (therefore inadvertently may contain traces of nuts) are allowed
- An allergy “safe” table will be provided in the cafeteria upon need and by request of a parent in consultation with principal and clinic staff
- All classrooms are nut-free. Snacks may not contain any items that may contain nuts; this includes Nutella. Snacks that are processed in a factory where cross contamination could occur, but is not made with nut products, are not banned.
- A school-wide snack that has been evaluated by the nurse will be served for classroom parties. **NO OTHER FOOD ITEMS MAY BE SENT TO SCHOOL FOR PARTIES OR BIRTHDAYS.** This includes Valentine cards with treats attached. Should they come into school, they will be sent home.
- Any threats or bullying of a student with food allergies will be taken seriously

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The Cleveland Catholic Diocesan School Board recognizes that alcohol and drug abuse is a serious societal problem which does not respect any group or age and that the dependency state of alcohol and drug abuse is a treatable illness. Health and social problems of youth are primarily the responsibility of the family.

As educators in the Church, we in an effort to provide a drug-free environment, call ourselves to charity and compassion for the sick and concern for each student. We also recognize that we have an obligation to the common, as well as the individual, welfare of our pupils. Continuing educational programs for parents, teachers, and students convey the message that drug and alcohol abuse is harmful and usage is not permitted. Prevention programs are implemented at all grade levels. Appropriate sanctions are to be imposed on those who violate any of the provisions of this policy or any local law or statute concerning illegal substances.

Students cannot bring alcohol on the premises for a school activity or school sponsored activity. Any use, attempted use, sale, attempted sale, transmission, attempted transmission, possession, or attempted possession of drugs or alcohol will be considered a serious infraction and will be disciplined accordingly.

WEAPONS

In accordance with overall philosophy, goals and objectives of the Catholic educational experience, the policy adopted by Mater Dei Academy expressly prohibits the use, possession, sale, or discharge of any weapons, dangerous objects, dangerous ordinances and instruments or explosive devices in the school, on school grounds, or at school/parish sponsored activities. **This policy shall apply to all students, participants in parish programs, teachers, administrators, volunteers and other personnel in the school or parish.**

This policy includes, but is not limited to, any firearm, knife, dangerous object, object used as a weapon, deadly weapon, or an object that is indistinguishable from a deadly weapon, or explosive or incendiary device. An object that is indistinguishable from a deadly weapon is prohibited if a person indicates that he or she possesses the object and further indicates that it is a deadly weapon or the person brandishes or displays the object and indicates that it is a deadly weapon. A deadly weapon is “any instrument, device, or thing capable of inflicting death, and designed or specifically adapted for use as a weapon, or possessed and used as a weapon” (O.R.C. 2923.211A). Firearms shall include any loaded or unloaded gun of any caliber or type. This prohibition also includes any pistol, rifle or other device that uses air or gas propelled projectiles.

Violations of this policy usually warrant notification of the police, immediate suspension, and possible expulsion. If possession of a weapon is suspected, the principal or designee will immediately contact the police department and the area assistant superintendent before confronting the individual. If it is determined that this policy has been violated, the parents of the offender will be immediately contacted and must cooperate with the disciplinary process.

YOUTH GANGS

YOUTH GANGS AND GANG-RELATED ACTIVITY ARE PROHIBITED. A gang is defined as any non-school sponsored group, usually secret and/or exclusive in membership, whose purpose or practices include unlawful or anti-social behavior or any action that threatens the welfare of others.

AIDS

Children with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) enrolled or seeking enrollment in grade K through 12 shall be permitted to attend school or parish religious education programs in a regular classroom setting with specific provisions.

PREVENTION

In order to assist students in the development of positive self-esteem, decision-making skills, and social values, appropriate educational programs and activities will be provided. These may include but are not limited to guidance programs, parent education programs, social activities that foster positive group identification and behavior, CYO and parish-based youth ministry activities, etc.

TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY

SAFETY PLAN

Mater Dei Academy has a safety plan that is available in the school office and in every classroom. This plan covers scenarios including building security, potentially dangerous school incidents, bomb threat, active shooter, and suspicious package and/or substance, serious crime/illness/injury, tornado, fire, lockdown, utility emergency, and evacuation procedures. In case of a crisis, a crisis management team is activated under the direction of the diocese/city school district, which works with local and state law enforcement and emergency personnel. In the event of an act of terrorism or bioterrorism, the school would follow the orders of emergency management organizations and local EMS/fire departments.

COMMUNICATIONS

Parents will be notified of any emergency that necessitates early release, evacuation, or any variance from typical dismissal time through Digital Academy, email and text messaging.

ALERTS

A severe Threat Level Red declared before school hours by the US Department of Homeland Security or local authorities, may necessitate the cancellation of school and school activities. In the event that a Threat Level Red is declared during school hours, school will remain open until regular dismissal times unless otherwise directed by state and local emergency management organizations.

ADDITIONAL SAFETY NOTES

To build good safety habits, parent cooperation is needed. Please discuss with your children the following:

1. Children who ride bikes to school should be instructed concerning safe and proper use of such a vehicle. All bikes are to be locked. The school does not assume responsibility for bikes.
2. Children who have parental permission to walk to or from school must have a written note for the office and should be instructed concerning safety when alone or in small groups. Further directions will be communicated to these students regarding which doors to use for safest entrance and exit.
3. In an effort to prevent accidents, students should not engage in body-contact games or roughness of any kind. Students may not grab or drag other students or make any gesture imitating a weapon. Games, such as tackle football or keep away are not to be played. “Fun-fighting” is not an acceptable form of play.
4. According to state law, a fire drill must be conducted during each month that school is in session. The first drill must be conducted within the first ten (10) days of school. Children must leave the building orderly and quickly in absolute silence and remain so in ranks outside until the “all clear” signal is given.
5. Tornado, evacuation, and lockdown drills are also practiced as required by state law. These are serious drills and must be handled as such.

APPENDIX

Library Book Selection Policy

Our school library as well as the collections of books and other resources in individual classrooms serve Mater Dei Academy's mission to provide an irresistibly Catholic and academically excellent education for our students. Reading empowers our students and enhances their lives as they discover the wonders of the universe, explore the joys and struggles of human relationships, pursue their personal interests and passions, and connect their experiences and the experiences of others with the teachings of Jesus, who came that we "may have life and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

As the bishops of the United States have so eloquently stated, "Education remains critically important in the formation of the human person by teaching how to live well now so as to be able to live with God for all eternity." It is impossible to overestimate the role of reading in expanding the minds, inspiring the hearts, and nourishing the souls of our students. Therefore, we carefully curate our collections of books and other resources to provide materials that are pedagogically and spiritually appropriate for our students' intellectual, socioemotional, and moral development. By providing a wide variety of suitable reading materials, we encourage our students to harmonize faith, culture, and life by engaging, inquiring, exploring, collaborating, critiquing, and creating. As we do with all other aspects of our educational mission, teachers and other educators provide guidance and direction to the selection and use of reading materials. As Catholic educators, we evaluate books and other resources holistically in the context of our curricular aims. For example, students may read historical fiction and non-fiction books that include unsettling stories of war, but these stories are not intended to glorify violence or to celebrate the taking of human life. Depending, of course, on the developmental level of the students and the specific nature of the text, these stories can provide powerful context for exploring important Catholic social justice principles such as the dignity of the human person, the rights and responsibilities of citizens, and the promotion of peace.

We evaluate other genres and topics similarly. We will not knowingly select and recommend books and other materials that recklessly confuse students by promoting and advocating actions or values that lead them away from a fuller, freer life, both now and in eternity. Accordingly, books and other materials that highlight and promote graphic violence, explicit sexual activity, gratuitous profanity, and hostility to the teachings and practice of Christianity in the Roman Catholic tradition are not suitable in our school setting.

Note that our approach to reading materials does not seek to insulate our students from the realities of the world. To do so would do them a disservice that is inconsistent with the mission of Catholic education. Reading provides a powerful but measured means to introduce our students to a world they are called to transform and enrich through the Gospel message of Jesus. In our selection of books and other resources, we take great care to share that world with them through the lens of faith and the prudence of sound pedagogical judgment.

We hope parents will encourage and share in the reading process with their children. We also welcome discussion about any of the titles included in our school or classroom libraries. Parents who have observations, questions, or concerns about any reading selection should contact our principal. Ultimately, our president, in consultation with our principal is responsible for determining the appropriateness of any book or resource

CELL PHONE POLICY

As of July 1, 2025, the state of Ohio requires all schools to have a cell phone policy according to (3313.753)

Even prior to that, at Mater Dei Academy we want all students to be engaged and feel safe every day. Student cell phones lead to educational disruptions, distractions, and significant social conflict. For this reason, we do not allow students to use cell phones during the school day.

Please review our current policy from the family handbook, as included below, that includes the expectations of student use of cell phones and other devices, consequences of inappropriate use, and the communication plan to families in the event of an emergency:

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Personal electronic devices such as cell phones, personal game systems, iPads or other electronic devices are not permitted for use in school unless directed by a teacher. Cell phones, **smart watches** or other wearable electronic devices, and other hand-held devices must be turned in to the homeroom teacher each morning and can be picked up at dismissal. **No wireless “earbuds” are to be used in school.** The school is not responsible for lost or stolen electronic devices. Mater Dei Academy will supply technology and or electronic devices to be used in classrooms.

Family support is essential to the success of Mater Dei’s phone policy. Be sure to review the phone policy as a family. Consider:

- Proactively talking with your student about after school plans, lunch planning, appointments, or activities in advance of arrival to school. A student cell phone is not an acceptable or safe way of communicating afterschool arrangements with your student as the responsible adults at school will be unaware of the arrangements
- Remind your student(s) how they can reach family during school hours, and how you can reach them in case of an emergency through the school office. Ensure that your student KNOWS your contact numbers and that all numbers on file in Digital Academy are accurate and up-to-date.
- Visiting <http://education.ohio.gov/cellphones> for more information and resources about cell phone use for your family.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation in facilitating a safe and supportive learning environment.



FACULTY & STAFF FOR 2026-2027

Lake County Catholic Schools President	Mrs. Barbara Mancari
Principal	Ms. Karen Trunk
Assistant Principal	Mrs. Ginger Hartman
Administrative Assistant	Mrs. Kay Vrbanc Mrs. Jennifer Skalicki
LCCSN Finance Director	Mrs. Sue Lagoni
School Nurse	Mrs. Sonya McKeown
After Care Director	Mrs. Sue Kiss
Pre-Kindergarten Pre-K Aide	Mrs. Sherry Kurpiewski Miss Jordan Stanoch
Pre-3/4 Teacher Pre-3/4 Aide	Mrs. Maureen Cross Mrs. Becky Brazie
Kindergarten	Mrs. Bridget Hosey Miss Alexis Sexton
Kindergarten Aide	Mrs. Darlene Telzerow Sr. Marie Paule
Grade 1	Miss Mary Mularo Miss Kayley Kelly
Grade 2	Mrs. Debby Shure
Grade 3	Miss Audrey Kostelac Miss Alexa Smotek
Grade 4	Mr. Nick Somich Ms. Brittany Whelchel
Grade 5	Mrs. Rochelle Campbell Miss Kirstin Mayock

Junior High Language Arts Grade 6 Homeroom	Mrs. Kathleen Battaglia
Junior High Religion Grade 6 Homeroom	Mr. Kwami Adoboe-Herrera
Junior High Social Studies Grade 7 Homeroom	Mr. Sam Stollar
Junior High Science Grade 7 Homeroom	Mrs. Angela Mullins
Junior High Mathematics Grade 8 Homeroom	Mr. Gary Minadeo
Art	Mrs. Katie Shininger
Music	Mrs. Heather Liuzzo
Spanish	Miss Maria DeWine
STEM coordinator	Mr. Greg Goth
Physical Education	Mrs. Sophia Harrington
Band	Mr. David Littman
Auxiliary Services	
Intervention	Mrs. Theresa Sill
Intervention	Mrs. Lynn Foor
Speech Therapist	Ms. Deborah Robie
Title I/Remedial Teacher	Mrs. Susan Goth
Clerk/Secretary	Mrs. Janet Strukel
School Counselor	Mrs. Sue Maiese
Aides	Mrs. Jeanie Bittance
	Mrs. Kelly Hoose
	Mrs. Melissa Morton
Cafeteria Manager	Mrs. Jozefina Duvjnak
Maintenance	Mr. Frank Mielnik, Manager
	Mr. Toby Pernoja