



PALMER
CATHOLIC ACADEMY
— OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA —

*Every Child Known. Every Gift Nurtured.
Every Day Rooted in Christ.*

2026-2027
PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK
UPDATED JULY 2026

PALMER CATHOLIC ACADEMY
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INTRODUCTION: WHO WE ARE

Welcome to Palmer Catholic Academy! We are honored to partner with your family in the faith-filled education of your child. This handbook is designed to help you navigate school life while reflecting the values, traditions, and expectations that make our community a place where students grow spiritually, academically, and personally.

*"Let all that you do be done in love."
1 Corinthians 16:14*

Included in this section:

- ✓ Our History
- ✓ School Information
- ✓ School Leadership
- ✓ School's Right to Amend
- ✓ Our Mission Statement
- ✓ Our Beliefs
- ✓ Our Blue Angel Pledge



OUR HISTORY

Faith. Family. Tradition. Future.

Palmer Catholic Academy has been blessed by faith, dedicated leaders, generous parishioners, and a strong community. Together, we continue to build on our legacy of Catholic education and service.



1992–1997

THE BEGINNING

Mrs. Linda M. Earp began as the director of Little Stars Preschool in 1992.

With the request of Pastor, Monsignor T. Leo Danaher, she helped create Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic School in 1997 with one kindergarten class.



1999

A NEW HOME

Palmer Catholic Academy opened its current facility in 1999 with double classes for Kindergarten through 3rd grades and individual classes for grades 4th – 6th.

Monsignor Danaher renamed the school Palmer Catholic Academy of Our Lady Star of the Sea in honor of parishioner Mr. Val Palmer and his generous capital gift.

Monsignor Daniel B. Logan became pastor of the parish and school in 1999 upon Monsignor Danaher's retirement.



2001–2005

GROWING & RECOGNIZED

In 2001, a new wing was dedicated by Bishop Victor Galeone and Monsignor Logan. It included a modern, fully equipped library, computer lab, music, art, and TV production rooms.

In 2003, Palmer received its first accreditation from the Florida Catholic Conference, re-accredited in 2010.

In 2005, Palmer earned the prestigious **National Blue Ribbon Award**, placing the school in the top 10% nationally and making it the first school in the Diocese of St. Augustine to receive this honor.



2012

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Thanks to a strong, steady enrollment and the support of PCA parents and OLSS parishioners, the final phase of the school—a gymnasium and cafeteria complex—was completed.



2013–2025

NEW LEADERSHIP, CONTINUED MISSION

On July 1, 2013, Monsignor Daniel B. Logan retired. In appreciation for his work on the new Parish Community Center and Gymnasium, the School Board unanimously named the building the “Reverend Monsignor Daniel B. Logan Gymnasium” and Community Center.

Monsignor Keith Brennan was appointed pastor. After 12 faithful years of service, he retired on June 30, 2025.

After 30 years of dedicated service as the founding principal, Linda Earp retired and Daniela DosSantos was named principal for the 2024–2025 school year.

Rev. Andy Blaszkowski was named the new pastor of Our Lady Star of the Sea effective July 1, 2025.



TODAY & BEYOND

OUR PROMISE

We are proud of our rich history and deeply grateful to the past and present pastors, principals, teachers, staff, families, and parishioners who have built and sustained Palmer Catholic Academy.

Together, we remain committed to forming faith-filled disciples, excellent learners, and compassionate leaders who will shine Christ's light in the world.



ROOTED IN FAITH.



COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE.



CALLED TO SERVE.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Address: 4889 Palm Valley Road, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082

Telephone: 904-543-8515

Fax: 904-543-8750

Website: www.pcapvb.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/p/Palmer-Catholic-Academy-100063710057326/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/palmer_catholic_academy/

School Colors:
Blue and White

School Mascot:
Blue Angels

FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

NCEA
National Catholic Educational Association

Palmer Catholic Academy is accredited by the Florida Catholic Conference (FCC) and is a member of the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA).

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

THE PASTOR

The Pastor is the head of the parish school.

THE PRINCIPAL

The principal administers, supervises, and coordinates all activities in the school in accordance with the policies of the Diocese of St. Augustine and in collaboration with the pastor.

THE SCHOOL BOARD

The School Board is an advisory board appointed to advise and assist the pastor and principal in developing and executing school policy, financial planning, capital improvements, fundraising, and other strategic initiatives.

School's Right to Amend: The Principal, Pastor, and/or the school retains the right to amend this handbook for just cause, and the parents will be promptly notified of changes by written notice. Please be sure to read and understand all policies as set forth in this handbook prior to signing the Handbook Acceptance Form.

The administration also reserves the right to interpret, apply, and make decisions regarding situations not specifically addressed in this handbook in accordance with diocesan policy, school philosophy, and the best interests of the school community.

Because every situation is unique, school administration reserves the right to make decisions on a case-by-case basis consistent with Catholic values, diocesan policy, student safety, and the best interests of the school community.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Palmer Catholic Academy of Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church provides a Catholic and Christ-centered educational environment that inspires all students to reach their full spiritual and academic potential and become responsible, respectful, and reverent disciples of Christ.

OUR BELIEFS

Palmer Catholic Academy recognizes the history of education in the Diocese of St. Augustine and is committed to the **Palmer Catholic Academy Belief Statements:**

1. **Faith is not simply taught. It is lived.** Christ is at the center of every school day through prayer, worship, the sacramental life of the Church, service, and daily interactions, forming disciples who live the Gospel with joy and purpose.
2. **Every child is uniquely created by God and deserves to be known, valued, challenged, and loved.** We build meaningful relationships, so every student is seen, supported, and encouraged to reach his or her God-given potential.
3. **Every child can grow.** We challenge students academically, spiritually, socially, and emotionally while providing the support, encouragement, and opportunities each child needs to reach his or her full potential.
4. **Education is a shared journey.** Families, faculty, the parish, and the community work together to create a supportive environment where every child is known, every family belongs, and learning is rooted in faith.
5. **Every gift has a purpose.** God has entrusted every child with unique gifts and talents. Whether in the classroom, on the stage, on the athletic field, or in service to others, students are encouraged to discover, develop, and use those gifts to make a difference.
6. **Learning prepares students for life.** We prepare students not only for success in high school, but for lives of faith, leadership, service, and lifelong learning.

OUR BLUE ANGEL PLEDGE

Always respectful

Never give up

Grow from mistakes

Encourage others

Live like Jesus

Show kindness



FAITH & CATHOLIC IDENTITY

At Palmer Catholic Academy, faith is the foundation of everything we do. Our Catholic identity shapes our teaching, our relationships, our traditions, and our decisions as we work together to form disciples of Christ who serve others with compassion, integrity, and joy.

"Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father." - Matthew 5:16

Included in this section:

- ✓ Chapel
- ✓ Mass
- ✓ Religion Curriculum
- ✓ Prayer
- ✓ Sacraments
- ✓ Outreach & Service Learning

CHAPEL

The Palmer Catholic Academy Chapel is located at the entrance of the school and serves as a sacred space for prayer, reflection, and worship. Teachers, staff, students, and parents with DOSA background clearance are welcome to spend quiet time in prayer or participate in scheduled chapel activities.

Classes may reserve the chapel for prayer services, religious instruction, or opportunities to deepen students' understanding of the Catholic faith and the reverence due to the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Weekly Eucharistic Adoration is offered for students, faculty, staff, and volunteer-cleared parents.

As Catholics, we believe that Jesus Christ is truly present—Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity—in the Holy Eucharist reserved in the tabernacle. Everyone entering the chapel is expected to maintain a respectful, prayerful atmosphere in honor of His Real Presence.

MASS

Weekly School Mass

The celebration of the Holy Mass is the heart of our Catholic school community. Students participate in Mass each Thursday and on Holy Days of Obligation as part of their Religion curriculum. Attendance is mandatory, and participation contributes to each student's Religion grade.

Parents who have DOSA background clearance are warmly invited to join us for school Mass. To maintain the integrity of the student worship experience, parents are asked to sit in the designated parent seating area rather than with student classes.

Food and beverages are not permitted in the gymnasium during Mass.

Receiving the Eucharist

Students in Grades 3–8 who have received the Sacrament of First Holy Communion and whose sacramental records are on file with the school are invited to receive the Eucharist during Mass. Second-grade students begin receiving the Eucharist following their First Holy Communion in the spring.

When in line to receive the Eucharist, students should bow their heads as a sign of reverence before receiving Holy Communion. Students who are not receiving Holy Communion, including non-Catholic students, should process with their class by crossing their arms over their chest to receive a blessing. After receiving the Eucharist or returning from a blessing, students should remain prayerful and respectful, using this time for silent prayer and reflection.

If a student requires a low-gluten host, parents should notify the school office in advance.

Please Note: Preschool students begin attending school Masses in September.

RELIGION CURRICULUM

Religion Curriculum & Faith Formation

Faith formation is woven throughout every aspect of life at Palmer Catholic Academy. All students participate in daily Religion classes using a curriculum approved by the Diocese of St. Augustine and attend weekly school Mass.

Students use a Catholic Bible during Religion instruction while deepening their understanding of Scripture, Catholic doctrine, prayer, morality, and the traditions of the Church.

Throughout the school year, students also participate in:

- Schoolwide and grade-level retreats
- Weekly Mass and Eucharistic Adoration
- Circle of Grace Safe Environment Program
- Virtues in Practice Program
- Disciple of the Month recognition
- Service learning and Catholic Social Teaching

Created for Greatness

Students in seventh grade participate in *Created for Greatness*, the Diocese of St. Augustine's family life and morality curriculum developed by Ascension Press and rooted in Saint John Paul II's Theology of the Body. The program is taught by trained faculty during the school day. Parents receive materials to continue conversations at home about human dignity, relationships, love, sexuality, respect for life, and God's plan for each person.

PRAYER

Prayer is an essential part of each school day at Palmer Catholic Academy. Together, our school community begins and ends each day in prayer while seeking God's guidance in all that we do.

Daily prayer includes:

- Morning Prayers (Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Prayer to St. Joseph)
- The Pledge of Allegiance
- Palmer Catholic Academy Mission Statement
- Prayer before and after lunch
- The Act of Contrition at the close of the school day

Students also pray throughout the day within their classrooms, before special events, and during moments of thanksgiving or need. Teachers intentionally incorporate prayer and Catholic teachings across the curriculum to help students recognize that faith is lived throughout the day—not only during Religion class or Sunday Mass.

Students are expected to participate respectfully during all prayers, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the recitation of the school mission.

SACRAMENTS

Sacramental Preparation

Parents are the primary educators of their children in the Catholic faith. Palmer Catholic Academy partners with families and Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish to prepare students for the reception of the Sacraments. Immediate sacramental preparation and celebration take place through Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish in accordance with the Diocese of St. Augustine's sacramental guidelines.

First Reconciliation & First Eucharist

Students prepare for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion during first and second grade. Preparation includes parish-sponsored retreats, parent meetings, faith formation classes through the parish, and formation experiences.

Confirmation

Students begin preparation for Confirmation in seventh grade and continue throughout eighth grade. Candidates participate in diocesan-required retreats, parent meetings, and community service before receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Important: Families registered with another Catholic parish who wish to celebrate a sacrament at Our Lady Star of the Sea must obtain written permission from their home pastor.

Additional sacramental guidelines are available on the Diocese of St. Augustine website and on the Our Lady Star of the Sea website. Families with questions regarding sacramental preparation or becoming Catholic are encouraged to contact the Director of Religious Education at the parish: familyfaith@olss.org.

OUTREACH & SERVICE LEARNING

Living our Catholic faith means serving others with compassion, generosity, and love. At Palmer Catholic Academy, service is more than a project—it is an essential part of who we are. Guided by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, students learn that every person is created in the image of God and deserves love, dignity, and respect. Through meaningful service experiences, students grow as disciples of Christ while developing a lifelong commitment to serving others.

Ethiopia Outreach Partnership

One of Palmer Catholic Academy's signature outreach ministries is our partnership with an orphanage in Ethiopia founded and operated by a Palmer Catholic Academy alumna. Each grade level sponsors a child of the same age, allowing students to build a meaningful relationship through prayers, letters, and virtual visits while helping provide housing, food, clothing, education, and medical care.

To support this ministry, each family is asked to contribute a one-time donation of **\$30 per child**, which provides approximately one year of care for a sponsored child—about **\$3 per month**. Families are encouraged to involve their children by allowing them to earn the donation through age-appropriate chores or acts of service, reinforcing the values of generosity, responsibility, and stewardship. The donation will be automatically deducted from your family's FACTS account on **August 22**. Families who prefer not to participate should notify rdevenny@pcapvb.org by **August 20**.

Service Throughout the Year

Service opportunities extend well beyond our Ethiopia partnership. Throughout the school year: Every school-sponsored dress-down day benefits a charitable organization, ministry, or outreach effort through monetary or item donations.

Every classroom celebration includes a service project that encourages students to share Christ's love while celebrating together. Students participate in additional schoolwide outreach efforts that respond to the needs of our parish, local community, and those around the world.

Service is also an important expectation of student leadership at Palmer Catholic Academy. Community service hours are required as part of preparation for:

- Induction into the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) and National Elementary Honor Society (NEHS)
- Reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation
- Graduation from Palmer Catholic Academy

Please refer to the **Service Hours – Middle School Students** section of this handbook for detailed service requirements.



DAILY ROUTINES & PROCEDURES

A successful school day begins with clear routines and shared expectations. The procedures in this chapter are designed to create a safe, organized, and welcoming environment where students can learn, grow, and thrive each day.

*"Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed."
Proverbs 16:3*

Included in this section:

- ✓ School Hours & Daily Schedule
- ✓ Carpool
- ✓ Angels After Hours
- ✓ Lunch and Recess
- ✓ Field Trips
- ✓ Birthdays
- ✓ Class Celebrations
- ✓ Lockers
- ✓ Lost and Found
- ✓ Inclement Weather/School Closing
- ✓ Student Communication during the Day

SCHOOL HOURS AND DAILY SCHEDULE

A consistent daily routine helps create a safe, organized, and successful learning environment. Families are expected to arrive on time, follow established arrival and dismissal procedures, and help students develop habits of responsibility and punctuality.

School Hours

Grade	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday	Wednesdays	Holiday Early Release Days
VPK Only	8:30-11:30 AM	8:30-11:30 AM	8:30-11:30 AM
Preschool + Enrichment	8:00 AM-2:15 PM	8:00 AM – 1:10 PM	8:00 AM – 12:30 PM
Kindergarten–Grade 2	8:00 AM - 2:50 PM	8:00 AM – 1:10 PM	8:00 AM – 12:30 PM
Grades 3–5	8:00 AM -2:55 PM	8:00 AM – 1:20 PM	8:00 AM – 12:40 PM
Grades 6–8	8:00 AM - 3:05 PM	8:00 AM – 1:30 PM	8:00 AM – 12:50 PM

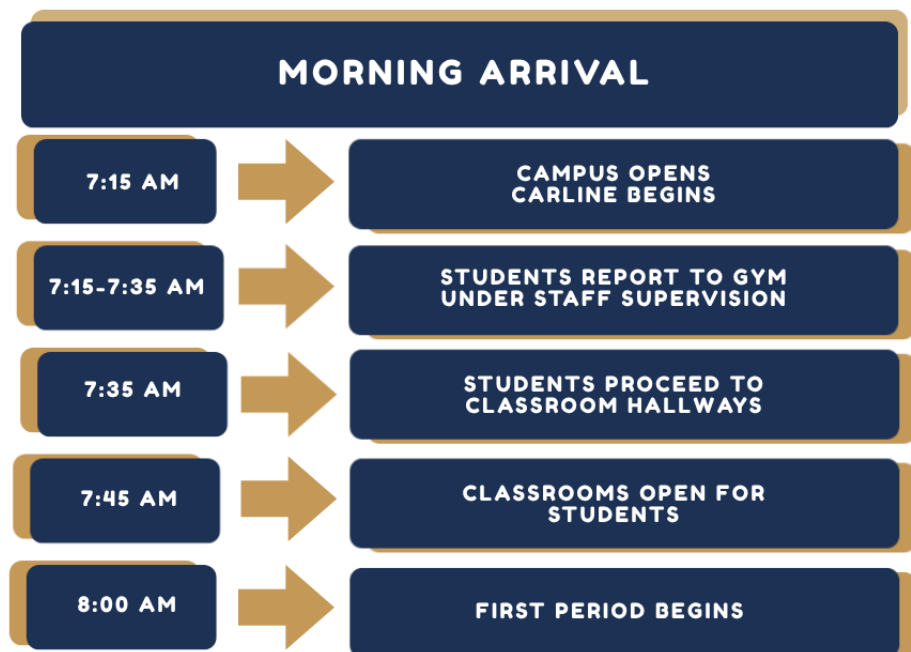
**** Please note:** Family pick-up time is based on the **oldest child's release time**. Families should only come through the carpool line when it is their **oldest child's release time** to avoid excess congestion.

Why Early Release on Wednesdays?

Palmer Catholic Academy is committed to providing the highest quality Catholic education for every student. Early dismissal on Wednesdays provides dedicated time for our faculty to engage in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), curriculum planning, professional development, student data analysis, parent conferences, and collaborative meetings.

During this time, teachers work together to review student progress, plan engaging instruction, strengthen curriculum, share best practices, and ensure that every child receives the support and challenge needed to succeed. This collaboration is an essential part of our commitment to continuous improvement and academic excellence.

Arrival



For the safety of all students:

- Parents should remain in their cars during carpool.
- Please do **not** park and walk students into the building during morning arrival.
- School personnel will safely assist students from their vehicles.

Although first period begins at 8:00 AM, **students should arrive by 7:50 AM in order to unpack and get prepared for the day.**

Tardy

All students are considered tardy if they are not **in their seats by 8:00 AM**. Parents must walk tardy students into the building and sign them in at the front desk. (See the section titled “Attendance” for more information about the Tardy Policy”).

Dismissal

Family pick-up time is based on the **oldest child’s release time**. **Families should only come through the carpool line when it is their oldest child’s release time to avoid excess congestion.**

Students not picked up by the conclusion of dismissal will be escorted to **Angels After Hours**, and applicable fees will be charged to the family's FACTS account. Please see information below in the section about **Angels After Hours**.

CARPOOL

The safety of our students is our highest priority. Each day, Palmer Catholic Academy safely dismisses hundreds of students through an organized carpool system. We ask every family to follow these procedures with patience, courtesy, and respect so that dismissal remains safe and efficient for everyone.

Palmer Catholic Academy utilizes **PikMyKid** to manage afternoon dismissal and transportation changes. Students will only be released to adults authorized through the PikMyKid app.

Authorized Pick-Up & PikMyKid

Students may only be released to individuals authorized by a parent through the **PikMyKid** app.

- Parents are responsible for keeping authorized pick-up information current in PikMyKid.
- Transportation changes should be submitted through PikMyKid by the published daily deadline.
- Authorized adults should announce their arrival through the PikMyKid app upon entering the school parking lot.
- Students will be released when their vehicle reaches the designated loading area.
- If a student will be leaving school with someone other than the individual designated through **PikMyKid**, parents must notify the school **in writing or by email** prior to dismissal. For the safety of our students, **phone calls will not be accepted** to authorize a change in dismissal arrangements except in emergency situations approved by school administration.
- Groups of students may only be dismissed early together for **Palmer Catholic Academy-sponsored activities or events**.

If an unauthorized adult arrives to pick up a student, he or she will be directed to the holding area while school personnel contact a parent or guardian for authorization. This process is necessary for student safety and may delay dismissal.

As a backup, parents should also maintain an updated list of authorized adults in the FACTS Family Portal.

For additional information and instructions, visit: www.pcapvb.org/pikmykid

Carpool Procedures

To help dismissal run safely and efficiently, please observe the following procedures:

- Use only the designated carpool lane. The **pond lane** is reserved for emergencies and authorized staff only.
- **AS YOU ENTER THE CAMPUS**, be sure to **announce your arrival on the PikMyKid app AND display your carpool tag** from your rearview mirror. Please keep the carpool tag visible until your child(ren) is(are) safely in your vehicle.
- Follow all directions given by school staff and law enforcement officers.
- Maintain a speed of **5 mph** while on campus.
- Place your vehicle in **park** before students enter or exit.
- Keep trunks and rear cargo doors closed while in the carpool lane. If loading is necessary, staff may direct you to park.
- If your vehicle is not yet full, staff may direct you to the holding area to keep traffic flowing.
- Families should arrive according to the dismissal time of their **oldest child**. If you arrive early, please circle through the carpool route rather than waiting in the holding area.
- When exiting campus, all vehicles must turn **right onto Palm Valley Road (CR 210)**. U-turns in neighboring communities are not permitted.

Student Safety

The following procedures help ensure the safety of every child during dismissal:

- Students may enter or exit vehicles only with the assistance of carpool staff.
- Students should never walk through the parking lot unless accompanied by an adult.
- Every student must have an available seat belt. Students will not be released into a vehicle that cannot safely seat all passengers.
- Only middle school students may ride in the front passenger seat due to airbag safety recommendations.

Parent Expectations

Parents play an important role in helping dismissal run smoothly. Please:

- Please **PULL FORWARD** as close to the car in front of you as you can to allow as many cars to get on campus as possible.
- Follow all directions from carpool staff promptly.
- Refrain from using cell phones while driving through the carpool line, except briefly to announce your arrival through PikMyKid.
- Remain in the designated carpool line rather than parking and waiting near the front entrance.
- Be patient and courteous to school personnel, volunteers, and other families.

Your cooperation allows us to dismiss students safely, efficiently, and with the care every child deserves.

ANGELS AFTER HOURS

Angels After Hours provides after-school supervision for families who need care beyond the regular school day. The program offers students a safe, structured, and caring environment while parents complete their workday or other responsibilities. Angels After Hours is designed to support families who require after-school supervision for their children. To ensure space remains available for families with this need, we ask that the program not be used as a playdate or social activity, since space is limited. Enrollment is limited to 20 students per staff member to maintain appropriate supervision.

School rules and expectations remain in effect during Angels After Hours. Students are expected to demonstrate the same respectful behavior and responsibility expected during the regular school day. Our goal is to provide students with a safe, welcoming environment where they can continue their day under the supervision of caring Palmer Catholic Academy staff until they are picked up by a parent or authorized adult.

Hours

Day	Hours
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday	3:00 PM – 6:00 PM
Wednesday	1:30 PM – 6:00 PM

Please note that Angels After Hours is **not** available on:

- School holidays
- School breaks
- Days when school is not in session
- Scheduled holiday early release days (12:30 dismissal days)

Registration & Fees

For complete registration information, program policies, and current fee schedules, please refer to the Angels After Hours Handbook, available on the Palmer Catholic Academy website under Parents > Angels After Hours.

Please note:

- All program fees are billed through the family's FACTS account.
- Students picked up after 6:00 PM will incur a \$15 late fee for every 15-minute interval, which will be charged through FACTS.

Program Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Follow all Palmer Catholic Academy rules and expectations.
- Treat staff and fellow students with kindness and respect.
- Follow directions promptly.
- Care for school property.

Students who repeatedly fail to meet behavioral expectations may be removed from the program at the discretion of school administration.

LUNCH AND RECESS

Sharing meals and enjoying time outdoors are important parts of the school day. Palmer Catholic Academy encourages students to make healthy choices, demonstrate good manners, build positive friendships, and treat others with kindness and respect during lunch and recess. Lunch and recess provide valuable opportunities for students to practice the virtues they learn each day by demonstrating kindness, inclusion, good sportsmanship, gratitude, and respect for others.

Parent Volunteers

Parent volunteers are welcome to assist with lunch and recess supervision throughout the school year. While volunteering for lunch and recess duty is not required, families who are able to serve are greatly appreciated, as their support helps us provide a safe and positive environment for our students. Sign-up for lunch and recess duty can be found on the school website. All volunteers must have DOSA background

clearance and follow these guidelines:

- Arrive on time for your scheduled shift.
- Supervise students at all times.
- Cell phones, laptops, and other electronic devices may not be used while supervising students.
- Siblings and non-PCA children may not accompany volunteers during lunch or recess duty.
- Follow all school safety procedures and directions provided by faculty and staff.

Water Bottles

Students should bring a reusable water bottle to school each day. Parents may be contacted if students repeatedly arrive without a water bottle. To help maintain a safe and clean environment:

- Water bottles must have a secure, twist-on lid.
- Bottles with exposed straws are not permitted.
- Water bottles may not exceed **32 ounces**.
- Refill stations are available throughout campus.

Catered Lunch Program

Palmer Catholic Academy offers an optional catered lunch program for families.

- Lunch orders and cancellations must be submitted by **5:00 PM** on the day prior to service.
- Program information, menus, and ordering instructions are available on the Palmer Catholic Academy website: <https://www.pcapvb.org/lunch-program>

Lunch Expectations

Students should either bring a nutritious lunch from home or pre-order a catered meal. Students who arrive without a lunch will be provided an **"Oops Lunch"**, and the cost will be billed through the family's FACTS account.

To ensure a safe and respectful lunch environment:

- Students should bring their own utensils and water bottle.
- Sharing food or drinks is not permitted.
- Only water, juice, or other approved beverages may be brought to school.
- **Colored beverages (including red, orange, and blue drinks) are not permitted to help prevent spills and stains on school uniforms, furniture, and flooring.**
- Carbonated drinks, caffeinated beverages, and glass containers are not permitted.
- Students should remain seated unless given permission to leave their table.
- Students should use appropriate indoor voices.
- Students are responsible for cleaning their eating area and disposing of trash properly.
- Students are expected to treat classmates, faculty, staff, volunteers, and cafeteria personnel with courtesy and respect.

Birthday Treats

To comply with St. Johns County Health Department requirements and to help protect students with food allergies:

- Birthday treats must be **store-bought** and remain in their original packaging.
- Frosted treats are not permitted.
- Treats may only be distributed during the student's scheduled lunch period.
- Classroom teachers must approve treats in advance.
- Parents should bring in enough treats for the whole grade since treats will be shared at lunch.

Please refer to the **Student Health & Safety – Allergy Policy** section for additional information.

Recess Expectations

Recess provides students with an opportunity for physical activity, social interaction, and unstructured play while developing cooperation, sportsmanship, and respect for others.

Students are expected to:

- Follow directions from faculty, staff, and volunteers.
- Use playground equipment safely and appropriately.
- Show respect for classmates and adults.
- Share playground equipment.
- Remain within designated playground boundaries.
- Never climb on playground roofs or climb up slides.
- Stay out of wooded areas unless participating in a supervised school activity.

Students may not use the playground without adult supervision.

Indoor Recess

When weather conditions prevent outdoor recess, students will remain indoors under teacher supervision. Teachers may provide organized games, quiet activities, or other age-appropriate classroom activities at their discretion. ***Parent volunteers are not assigned to classrooms during indoor recess.***

FIELD TRIPS (K-8)

Field trips are an important extension of the classroom, providing students with meaningful opportunities to enrich learning through hands-on experiences, exploration, and discovery. Field trips provide opportunities for students to extend classroom learning while demonstrating the values of respect, responsibility, gratitude, and Christian citizenship in the community. Each field trip is carefully selected to support grade-level curriculum and enhance the educational experience.

Participation in field trips is a privilege, and students are expected to demonstrate the same respectful behavior and responsible citizenship expected on campus. Students who have accumulated 20 or more demerits or who have been suspended may lose the privilege of participating in field trips at the discretion of school administration.

Permission & Transportation

A completed **Diocese of St. Augustine Field Trip Permission Form** signed by a parent or guardian is required for every field trip.

Field trip fees will be billed through the family's **FACTS** account.

All students **must travel to the field trip with their class** using school-provided transportation.

For long-distance field trips **ONLY** (approximately **1½ hours or more**), parents wishing to transport their child home directly from the field trip must:

- Complete the required dismissal/liability waiver form **no later than 3:30 PM on the school day before the trip.**
- Sign their child out with the teacher at the field trip site.

Forms will **not** be accepted on the day of the field trip.

Students who do not participate in a scheduled field trip may either:

- Attend school and be assigned to another classroom for the day, or
- Remain at home and be marked absent.

Student Expectations

Unless otherwise communicated, students should wear the **mandatory school uniform** on all field trips. Students should not wear school ID badges on field trips unless specifically directed otherwise. If the nature

of the trip requires alternate attire, parents will receive advance notification from the teacher.

Students are expected to:

- Represent Palmer Catholic Academy with courtesy and respect.
- Follow all school rules and directions from teachers and chaperones.
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior throughout the trip.

Note: Students who do not demonstrate appropriate behavior on a field trip risk losing the privilege of attending future trips at the discretion of administration.

Parent Chaperones

We greatly appreciate parents who volunteer their time to help make field trips safe and successful.

To serve as a field trip chaperone, parents must:

- Meet all diocesan background clearance requirements.
- Be selected by the classroom teacher based on the supervision needs of the trip.
- Attend any required pre-field trip meeting or orientation.
- Remain with their assigned student group for the entire field trip.

Because space is often limited, the number of chaperones is determined by the nature of the trip and the supervision needs of the students. Teachers, with the approval of the principal, will select chaperones using a rotating system whenever possible to provide interested families with an opportunity to participate throughout the school year.

Parents who are not selected as official chaperones may not accompany the class on the field trip.

For the safety and supervision of all students:

- Siblings may not attend field trips.
- Chaperones should provide their own transportation unless otherwise directed by the school.

Chaperone Guidelines

The number of chaperones varies depending on the destination, age of students, and specific needs of the class. The number of chaperones may be assigned as follows: Indoor field trips: 2-4 chaperones, outdoor field trips: 4-6 chaperones, and long-distance field trips: 6-8 chaperones.

Chaperones may be more in number based on the needs of the students, the type of field trip, and the preference of the teacher in order to provide maximum safety for the students.

Field trip chaperones receive **five (5) volunteer points**.

BIRTHDAYS

We enjoy celebrating birthdays at Palmer Catholic Academy and helping each child feel recognized on their special day. Birthday celebrations are intentionally simple so that the focus remains on the student and the school day. Birthday balloons, decorations, party favors, and other celebration items are not permitted at school.

Birthday Treats

Families wishing to provide a birthday treat should make arrangements with the classroom teacher in advance.

To help ensure the safety of all students:

- Treats must be **store-bought, prepackaged**, and remain in their original packaging.
- Frosted treats are not permitted.
- Treats will be shared during the student's scheduled lunch period in the cafeteria.
- Please provide enough treats for the entire grade level, as treats are distributed during grade-level lunch.
- The classroom teacher must approve all treats in advance to accommodate students with food allergies.

Birthday Party Invitations

To avoid unintentionally excluding classmates, invitations to private birthday parties may only be distributed at school if **every student in the homeroom is invited**.

When invitations are distributed at school:

- Invitations should not be individually addressed.
- Invitations should be given to the classroom teacher for distribution.

Families who wish to invite only selected classmates are encouraged to use the **FACTS Family Directory** or make arrangements outside of school.

CLASS CELEBRATIONS

Throughout the school year, classrooms may celebrate holidays and other special occasions at the discretion of the classroom teacher. These celebrations help build classroom community while supporting our mission of fostering joyful, faith-filled learning experiences.

In keeping with Palmer Catholic Academy's commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, **every classroom celebration includes a service-learning component** that encourages students to share Christ's love by serving others. Whether collecting food for a local pantry, writing cards to nursing home residents, supporting a charitable organization, or participating in another age-appropriate service project, students are encouraged to celebrate by giving back to others and living out the Gospel message of service.

Classroom Celebration Guidelines

- Classroom teachers determine the date, schedule, activities, and refreshments for each celebration.
- Snacks must be **store-bought, prepackaged**, and remain in their original packaging.
- Frosted treats are not permitted.
- All food items must be approved by the classroom teacher in advance to help protect students with food allergies.
- Soda, carbonated beverages, caffeinated beverages, and **red, orange, or blue drinks** are not permitted.
- Only volunteer-cleared adults may attend classroom celebrations or special classroom events.
- Siblings and non-PCA children may not attend classroom celebrations.
- Photography during classroom celebrations is permitted only with the approval of the classroom teacher or school administration.

LOCKERS

Students in grades 4–8 are assigned a locker for the school year. Lockers are intended to help students stay organized, reduce the weight of backpacks, and promote safe, efficient movement throughout the school day.

To encourage students to use their lockers regularly, all backpacks must be **emptied each morning** and stored in the student's assigned locker for the school day. Textbooks will remain in classrooms, allowing students to carry only the notebooks, binders, and materials needed for each class.

Locker Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Store backpacks in their assigned locker throughout the school day.
- Keep lockers neat, clean, and free of trash or food at the end of the day.
- Use scheduled locker breaks to exchange notebooks, binders, and other classroom materials.
- Report any locker damage or maintenance concerns to their teacher or the school office.
- Respect school property and the lockers assigned to other students.

Locker Decorations

To maximize locker space and maintain a neat appearance, locker decorations are limited to:

- One magnetic mirror
- One small magnetic dry-erase board
- Decorative magnets for the INSIDE of the door

The following items are **not permitted**:

- Stickers (inside or outside of lockers)
- Wallpaper or contact paper
- Shelves or organizers that interfere with locker use
- Pictures, signs, or decorations on the outside of lockers
- Any decoration deemed distracting, inappropriate, or that limits locker functionality

Locker Access

- Lockers will remain **unlocked** during the school day to allow students quick and efficient access during scheduled locker breaks.
- Students may use only the locker assigned to them and may not change lockers or access another student's locker without permission from school administration.
- Students are responsible for the contents and condition of the locker assigned to them throughout the school year.

LOST AND FOUND

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their personal belongings. To help ensure lost items are returned promptly, **all clothing, lunch boxes, water bottles, and school supplies should be clearly labeled with the student's name.**

Students are expected to demonstrate respect for both their own belongings and the property of others by promptly turning in any items they find on campus. Items found on campus should be brought to the **Lost & Found**, located in the cafeteria.

The school is not responsible for lost, misplaced, or unattended personal belongings; however, every reasonable effort will be made to return labeled items to their owners.

Items not claimed within **30 days** or by the end of the school year will be donated to a charitable organization or placed in the **Palmer Catholic Academy Uniform Closet** for use by other families.

INCLEMENT WEATHER – SCHOOL CLOSINGS

The safety of our students, families, and employees is our highest priority. Decisions regarding school closures due to hurricanes, tropical storms, severe weather, or other emergencies are made by the **Diocese of St. Augustine** after carefully evaluating local conditions, the safety of travel, and the operational readiness of diocesan schools.

School Closure Notifications

Palmer Catholic Academy communicates school closings and other emergency information through our parent notification system. Families are responsible for ensuring that all emergency contact information, phone numbers, and email addresses remain current in **FACTS** so that important notifications can be delivered promptly.

School closure information may also be posted on the Diocese of St. Augustine website and the school's official communication channels.

Reopening After a Storm or Emergency

Following a weather event or other emergency, Palmer Catholic Academy may not reopen on the same schedule as the local public school district.

The decision to reopen is made in consultation with the Diocese of St. Augustine and is based on several factors, including:

- The safety and accessibility of roadways
- Availability of electricity, water, and other essential utilities
- The condition of school facilities
- Adequate staffing to safely operate the school

Our priority is ensuring that the campus is safe and ready to welcome students and staff before classes resume.

STUDENT COMMUNICATION DURING THE DAY

Students are expected to arrive at school prepared for the day. Whenever possible, arrangements for transportation, after-school activities, and visits with friends should be made before arriving at school.

The school office telephone is reserved for student emergencies or other situations approved by school personnel. Forgotten homework, lunches, athletic equipment, musical instruments, Physical Education uniforms, and similar items generally do not constitute emergencies.

Parents who need to communicate an urgent message to their child should contact the school office, and school personnel will ensure the message is delivered.



ACADEMICS

At Palmer Catholic Academy, academic excellence is rooted in curiosity, perseverance, and a commitment to developing the unique gifts God has given every child. We challenge students to think critically, work diligently, and pursue excellence while recognizing that true wisdom begins with faith.

*"Apply your heart to instruction, and your ears to words of knowledge."
Proverbs 23:12*

Included in this section:

- ✓ Curriculum and Instruction
- ✓ HALO
- ✓ Student Support/Learning Resource
- ✓ Homework & Projects
- ✓ Assessments & Demonstrations of Learning
- ✓ Report Cards & Grading Scale
- ✓ Standardized Assessments
- ✓ Middle School Academic Placement
- ✓ High School Transition
- ✓ National Honor Societies
- ✓ Promotion & Retention
- ✓ Student Library
- ✓ Summer Learning

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

At Palmer Catholic Academy, we believe every child is uniquely created by God with gifts, talents, and the ability to grow. Our curriculum is designed to challenge students academically while nurturing their spiritual, social, emotional, and physical development in a Christ-centered learning environment.

Instruction is based on the academic standards established by the Diocese of St. Augustine and incorporates research-based teaching practices that prepare students for success in high school and beyond. Teachers regularly collaborate through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to analyze student progress, strengthen instruction, and ensure that every student receives the support and challenge needed to reach his or her God-given potential.

Academic Program

Students receive instruction in the following core academic areas:

- Religion
- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies

In addition, students participate in enrichment classes that foster creativity, innovation, physical wellness, and global awareness, including:

- Art
- Music
- Spanish
- Physical Education
- Technology (Tech Lab)
- STREAM (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics)

Catholic Education

Faith is woven throughout every aspect of the curriculum. In addition to daily Religion instruction, students participate in weekly school Mass, prayer, retreats, service learning, and opportunities to grow in virtue and discipleship.

Palmer Catholic Academy uses a Religion curriculum approved by the Diocese of St. Augustine and integrates Catholic teachings across all subject areas. Students also participate in the Diocese's **Circle of Grace** Safe Environment Program and the **Virtues in Practice** program, which focuses on developing Christian character through a monthly virtue.

Students in seventh grade participate in **Created for Greatness**, the Diocese of St. Augustine's family life and morality curriculum based on Saint John Paul II's Theology of the Body and developed by Ascension Press. Families receive materials to encourage continued conversations at home.

*For additional information regarding our Religion curriculum, sacramental preparation, retreats, and Catholic faith formation, please refer to the **Faith & Catholic Identity** chapter of this handbook.*

Partnering with Families

Each fall, Palmer Catholic Academy hosts **Open House**, providing families with an opportunity to meet teachers, learn about grade-level curriculum, classroom expectations, instructional programs, and ways to support learning at home.

Parents are strongly encouraged to attend this important event as we work together to support each student's academic and spiritual growth.

The Palmer Difference

At Palmer Catholic Academy, learning extends beyond textbooks. Students are encouraged to think critically, solve problems creatively, collaborate with others, communicate effectively, and apply their learning in meaningful ways.

Instruction includes:

- Differentiated instruction to meet individual student needs
- Small-group instruction and flexible grouping
- Project-based and hands-on learning experiences
- Technology integration across the curriculum
- Data-informed instruction through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Cross-curricular connections that reinforce learning
- Opportunities for leadership, collaboration, and service

HALO (Helping All Learners Optimize)

At Palmer Catholic Academy, we believe every child can grow and succeed when instruction is tailored to meet individual needs. The **HALO (Helping All Learners Optimize)** program provides targeted small-group instruction designed to support, enrich, and challenge students based on ongoing assessment and classroom performance.

Using data from classroom assessments, STAR, DIBELS, teacher observations, and other academic measures, students are placed into flexible groups that focus on specific learning goals. Groups change throughout the year as students grow and demonstrate mastery.

HALO instruction takes place during the regular school day and is provided by classroom teachers, Learning Resource teachers, and instructional support staff.

Students may receive instruction in areas such as:

- Reading fluency
- Reading comprehension
- Phonics and foundational literacy skills
- Writing
- Mathematics
- Enrichment and advanced learning opportunities

Because student needs continually change, participation in HALO groups is flexible and may vary throughout the school year.

STUDENT SUPPORT & LEARNING RESOURCE TEAMS

The Student Support Team consisting of the Principal, Assistant Principal, Guidance Counselor and the Learning Resource Team assist teachers accordingly. The Student Support Team meets monthly, as the calendar permits, to review student assessment data and progress. The Team makes decision about next steps in student learning, and determines if any students may need more interventions.

Palmer Catholic Academy's Learning Resource Team partners with classroom teachers to identify student

needs, monitor progress, and provide additional instructional support when appropriate. The team collaborates with teachers and families to help students reach their full academic potential through targeted interventions, progress monitoring, and individualized instructional strategies.

HOMework AND PROJECTS

Homework provides students with opportunities to practice new skills, reinforce classroom learning, develop responsibility, and build independent study habits. Meaningful homework helps students strengthen academic skills while encouraging good organization, time management, and personal responsibility. Teachers strive to assign meaningful homework that reinforces classroom learning while recognizing the importance of family time, extracurricular activities, prayer, and adequate rest. Homework assignments are designed to support student learning without replacing the value of time spent together as a family.

Reading and mathematics homework may be assigned regularly, along with independent reading, studying for assessments, long-term projects, or other assignments that support classroom instruction. Parents are encouraged to provide guidance and encouragement while allowing students to complete assignments as independently as possible. When students experience difficulty with an assignment, parents are encouraged to communicate with the teacher so that additional instruction or clarification can be provided.

Homework completion is reflected as part of a student's overall academic performance. As students progress through the grades, increasing responsibility for recording assignments, managing long-term projects, and meeting deadlines is expected in preparation for high school and beyond.

Student Projects

Projects are designed to allow students to demonstrate their understanding, creativity, and individual learning.

Unless otherwise directed by the teacher, projects are expected to represent the student's own work. Parents are encouraged to support and guide their child throughout the process; however, the planning, creation, and completion of the project should remain the responsibility of the student.

Projects that do not represent the student's own work may not receive credit.

Late Work

Developing responsibility and meeting deadlines are important life skills. Students are expected to submit assignments in class on or before the due date.

The following late work policy applies unless otherwise communicated by the classroom teacher:

Grade Level	Late Work Policy
Kindergarten – Grade 3	Late assignments are addressed individually. Teachers will work with students to develop responsibility and organizational habits. Repeated late assignments may result in appropriate consequences.
Grades 4–5	Assignments submitted one school day late receive a maximum score of 50% . Assignments more than one day late receive a 0 .
Grades 6–8	Homework not submitted at the beginning of the class period receives a 0 . Long-term projects submitted by 3:05 PM on the due date receive a 20% deduction . Projects submitted after that time receive a 0 , unless prior arrangements have been approved by the teacher or administration.

ASSESSMENTS & DEMONSTRATIONS OF LEARNING

Assessment is an important part of the learning process. At Palmer Catholic Academy, teachers use a variety of assessments to monitor student progress, guide instruction, and evaluate each student's understanding of grade-level standards. Assessment is used not only to measure learning, but also to identify areas where additional support, enrichment, or instruction may be needed.

Students are provided with appropriate notice of quizzes, tests, projects, and other major assessments whenever possible. Teachers use a variety of assessment methods throughout the school year to provide students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

Assessments may include, but are not limited to:

- Quizzes and tests including fill-in the blank, matching column, multiple choice and short answer questions
- Projects and presentations
- Essays and written responses
- Classroom participation
- Performance tasks and demonstrations
- Labs and hands-on activities
- Independent and collaborative assignments

Beginning in the intermediate/middle grades, students are increasingly expected to apply critical thinking, problem-solving, analysis, and written communication skills through higher-order thinking questions and extended responses.

Preparing for Success

Developing effective study habits is an important part of academic success. Families can support students by encouraging consistent study routines and organizational skills.

Students are encouraged to:

- Review class notes **regularly** rather than waiting until the night before a test.
- Read assigned materials and complete study guides carefully.
- Create flashcards, Quizlet sets, or other study tools.
- Study in a quiet, distraction-free environment.
- Ask questions when concepts are unclear.

Study Guides

Study guides are provided **for major tests** to help students focus their preparation on the concepts and skills being assessed.

Study guides are intended to identify the material students should review; however, they are **not** copies of the assessment and do not contain the exact questions that will appear on the test.

Students are expected to complete study guides independently and actively participate in the classroom review conducted by the teacher.

Assessment Philosophy

At Palmer Catholic Academy, assessment is intended to measure each student's understanding at the time the assessment is administered. For this reason, **assessment grades are not replaced through retakes or grade-recovery opportunities.**

When a student experiences difficulty on an assessment, teachers will review the concepts, provide additional instruction or remediation, and may reassess the student's understanding to monitor academic growth. ***The original assessment grade, however, will remain in the gradebook.*** This approach encourages students to develop consistent study habits, prepare thoroughly for assessments, and take ownership of their learning while ensuring teachers continue to support student growth.

REPORT CARDS & GRADING SCALES

Report cards provide families with a summary of each student's academic progress, work habits, and achievement during each grading period. They are intended to communicate growth, celebrate accomplishments, and identify areas where additional support or improvement may be needed. ***Parents are encouraged to monitor student progress throughout each quarter using the FACTS Family Portal rather than waiting until report cards are issued. Teachers welcome communication regarding student progress and are committed to partnering with families throughout the school year.***

Report cards are issued electronically at the conclusion of each academic quarter and are available through the **FACTS Family Portal**.

Report Card Access

To ensure the timely release of report cards and continued access to the FACTS Family Portal, families are expected to maintain current financial accounts with the school.

In accordance with school policy, report cards and Family Portal access may be withheld if tuition or other outstanding financial obligations remain unpaid and no payment arrangements have been established. Families with questions regarding their account should contact the school office.

The grading scale for the report cards is as follows:

Grades PK-1	Grade 2	Grades 3-8
S = 80% - 100%	S+ = 95%-100%	A = 90-100.00
N = 60%- 79.99%	S = 85%-94%	B = 80-89.99
U = 0% – 59.99%	S- = 78%-84%	C = 70-79.99
	N = 63%-77%	D = 60-69.99
	U = 0%-62%	F = 0.00 – 59.99

Academic Progress

Parents are encouraged to review report cards carefully each quarter and discuss academic progress with their child. Families with questions or concerns about grades should contact the classroom teacher promptly so that home and school can work together to support student success.

STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS

Standardized assessments are one of many tools used to measure student growth, monitor academic progress, and guide instructional planning. At Palmer Catholic Academy, assessment data helps teachers identify each student's strengths, provide additional support where needed, and ensure appropriate academic challenge. Assessment is used to improve teaching and learning, not simply to measure student performance.

Students in **Grades 2–8** participate in annual standardized testing during the spring. Palmer Catholic Academy administers assessment programs approved by the Diocese of St. Augustine, including:

- **TerraNova NEXT®** – Measures student achievement in core academic subjects.
- **InView™ Cognitive Skills Assessment** – Measures cognitive abilities and provides insight into each student's learning potential.
- **ARK (Assessment of Religious Knowledge)** – Assesses students' understanding of Catholic teachings and religious education.
- **PSAT 8/9** – Administered to students in **Grade 8** as preparation for future college and career readiness assessments.

Using Assessment Data

Standardized assessment results are carefully reviewed by teachers, school administration, and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to:

- Monitor individual student growth and achievement.
- Identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Guide instructional planning and curriculum decisions.
- Support flexible grouping and intervention through the **HALO** program.
- Assist with academic placement and enrichment opportunities.
- Evaluate schoolwide instructional programs and continuous improvement efforts.

Assessment results are one component of a student's overall academic profile and are considered alongside classroom performance, teacher observations, and other academic measures.

Partnering with Families

Families receive standardized assessment reports and are encouraged to review the results with their child's teacher. These reports provide valuable information about student progress and help strengthen the partnership between home and school in supporting each child's academic success.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMIC PLACEMENT

Palmer Catholic Academy is committed to placing each student in the learning environment where he or she will experience both appropriate challenge and academic success. Middle School placement is based on multiple measures of student performance to ensure that each student receives instruction that best meets his or her individual needs. Our goal is not simply to place students into classes; it is to place them where they will be appropriately challenged, supported, and positioned for long-term success in high school and beyond.

Placement in **English Language Arts** and **Mathematics** is determined using a comprehensive review of:

- Standardized assessment results
- Universal screening data
- Classroom performance and report card grades
- Teacher recommendations
- Overall academic progress

Because placement decisions are based on multiple sources of objective academic data, **parent requests or waivers for placement in a different level cannot be accommodated.**

At the conclusion of the first quarter, teachers and administration review student performance to determine whether any placement adjustments are appropriate based on current academic data. After this review period, class placements generally remain unchanged for the remainder of the school year.

For additional information regarding Middle School expectations and procedures, please refer to the **Resources and References** section for **Middle School Expectations**.

Algebra I & Algebra I Honors

Qualified eighth-grade students may have the opportunity to enroll in Algebra I or Algebra I Honors, depending on their academic performance and placement data.

These courses are **high school credit-bearing courses**. For students who attend a St. Johns County public high school, the final course grade will **become part of the student's official high school transcript**.

Students enrolled in Algebra I or Algebra I Honors are expected to maintain strong academic performance, complete assignments on time, and seek additional assistance whenever needed.

Students enrolled in Algebra I will also take the Florida Algebra I End-of-Course (EOC) Assessment during the spring. A passing score on the Algebra I EOC is one of the graduation requirements for Florida public high school students. Students who do not earn a passing score in eighth grade will have additional opportunities to retake the assessment during high school.

HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITION

As students prepare for the transition to high school, Palmer Catholic Academy is committed to supporting families throughout the admissions process.

Many high schools require teacher recommendations, transcripts, standardized assessment results, and other supporting documentation as part of the application process. Recommendation forms should be submitted to the student's homeroom teacher, who will coordinate the completion of all required recommendations.

Once completed, recommendations will be reviewed and approved by the principal before being submitted directly to the receiving high school. In order to maintain the confidentiality and integrity of the recommendation process, completed recommendation forms are not returned to students or families.

Palmer Catholic Academy will also submit official transcripts, standardized assessment results, report cards, and other required school records directly to the receiving high school in accordance with each school's admissions requirements.

Families are encouraged to submit all recommendation forms and records requests well in advance of application deadlines to allow adequate time for processing.

Teachers, administrators, and the School Counselor are available throughout the eighth-grade year to answer questions regarding high school admissions, academic placement, and the transition to high school.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETIES

Palmer Catholic Academy is proud to sponsor both the **National Elementary Honor Society (NEHS)** and the **National Junior Honor Society (NJHS)**. These nationally recognized organizations honor students who demonstrate excellence in scholarship, leadership, service, character, and citizenship.

Membership is both an honor and a responsibility. Students selected for induction are expected to model the values and expectations of Palmer Catholic Academy while serving as positive role models within the school community.

Eligibility Requirements

Each January, eligible students are invited to apply for membership.

- **NEHS:** Grades **5–6**
- **NJHS:** Grades **7–8**

To be eligible for consideration, students must:

- Maintain a minimum cumulative **93.5% GPA** in core academic subjects for the preceding **six academic quarters**.
- Demonstrate consistent Christian character and positive conduct.
- Have **no more than six (6) demerits** during the current school year.
- Meet all additional eligibility requirements established by the school's Honor Society sponsors.
- Students seeking membership in NEHS or NJHS must also fulfill the required community service expectations established by the organization. Service hours completed through school, parish, and community activities should reflect the spirit of Christian service and leadership.

Meeting the minimum eligibility requirements does **not** guarantee membership.

Selection Process

Students who meet the eligibility requirements will receive an invitation to apply from the Honor Society sponsors.

The application process includes:

- A student-written essay
- Evaluation of scholarship
- Evaluation of leadership
- Evaluation of service
- Evaluation of responsibility and character

Completed applications are reviewed by a faculty selection committee, including school administration.

Applications must be submitted by the published deadline. **Late or incomplete applications cannot be accepted.**

Students selected for membership are recognized during a formal induction ceremony celebrating their commitment to scholarship, leadership, service, character, and citizenship.

Membership Expectations

Membership in NEHS and NJHS is an ongoing privilege that carries significant responsibility.

Members are expected to:

- Demonstrate exemplary conduct both inside and outside the classroom.
- Continue to maintain the academic standards required for membership.
- Participate in required meetings, activities, and service opportunities.
- Model the values of scholarship, leadership, service, character, and citizenship.

Students whose behavior or academic performance no longer reflects the standards of the Honor Society may be placed on probation or have their membership revoked in accordance with the organization's bylaws and school Code of Conduct.

PROMOTION & RETENTION

At Palmer Catholic Academy, every effort is made to help students achieve academic success and progress confidently from one grade level to the next. Promotion is based on each student's demonstrated mastery of grade-level standards, academic performance, and overall readiness for the next grade.

When academic concerns arise, teachers, parents, and school administration work together to provide interventions, support, and strategies designed to help students be successful. Retention is considered only after careful review of the student's individual circumstances and when it is determined to be in the student's best educational interest.

Promotion Criteria

Student promotion is based on a combination of factors, including:

- Achievement of grade-level academic standards
- Classroom performance and report card grades
- Assessment results
- Work habits and study skills
- Social, emotional, and developmental readiness
- Teacher recommendations

Criteria for Retention

When necessary, the following diocesan guidelines are used when considering retention:

Grade Level	Retention May Be Considered When:
Kindergarten	The student has not demonstrated readiness in reading, mathematics, and communication skills. Social, emotional, developmental, and chronological age are also carefully considered.
Grades 1–3	The student fails Reading/Language Arts or Mathematics.
Grades 4–8	The student does not earn passing grades in one or more core academic subjects (Religion, Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, or Social Studies).

Parent Communication

If a student's academic progress indicates that retention may become necessary, parents will be informed as early as possible. Conferences with parents will be held to discuss academic concerns, interventions, and possible outcomes. Although teachers and parents play an important role in the decision-making process, ***the final decision regarding promotion or retention rests with the principal.***

Summer Academic Requirements

Students who fail a required subject may be required to successfully complete a principal-approved summer program before being promoted.

Approved options may include:

- Summer school
- Tutoring with a certified teacher
- Another principal-approved academic program

In accordance with diocesan policy:

- **Grades 1–3:** One failed subject may be completed through an approved summer program.
- **Grades 4–8:** A maximum of **two failed subjects** may be completed through an approved summer program.

The principal reserves the right to assess a student's readiness prior to the beginning of the next school year.

Students who fail **Religion** must complete the required coursework before returning to Palmer Catholic Academy or enrolling in another Catholic school within the Diocese of St. Augustine.

Our goal is always to provide students with the academic foundation, confidence, and readiness needed to be successful at the next grade level. Every promotion and retention decision is made thoughtfully, prayerfully, and with the individual student's long-term success in mind.

STUDENT LIBRARY

Palmer Catholic Academy is committed to fostering a lifelong love of reading and learning. Students have access to a curated collection of fiction, nonfiction, biographies, reference materials, and age-appropriate literature through the school's library room and classroom libraries.

To support classroom instruction and increase student access to high-interest reading materials, many library resources have been thoughtfully integrated into classroom libraries throughout the school. This allows teachers to place frequently used books and instructional resources directly into the hands of students while maintaining a central student library collection for additional checkout and research.

Students visit the library room and utilize classroom library resources under the direction of their teachers. All borrowed materials should be handled with care and returned by the established due date.

Students are responsible for:

- Returning library materials on time.
- Caring for all borrowed books and resources.
- Reporting lost or damaged materials promptly.

Families are responsible for the replacement cost of lost or damaged library materials. Multiple reminders will be provided before replacement charges are assessed through the family's FACTS account. Report cards, transcripts, and student records may be withheld until outstanding library obligations have been satisfied.

SUMMER LEARNING

At Palmer Catholic Academy, we believe learning continues beyond the classroom. Summer assignments are designed to help students maintain academic skills, encourage a love of reading, and prepare them for a successful start to the new school year.

To help prevent the "summer slide" and reinforce important concepts, students entering **Grades 1–8** are required to complete both a **summer reading assignment** and a **mathematics assignment**. Rising Kindergarten students also have a readiness assignment to complete.

Summer assignments are:

- Required for all rising students in **Grades K–8**.
- Posted on the Palmer Catholic Academy website during the final week of school.
- Due at the beginning of the new school year by the date established by the classroom teacher.
- Counted as part of the student's **first-quarter grade**.

Students and families are encouraged to complete assignments throughout the summer rather than waiting until the final weeks before school begins. Consistent reading and regular practice of academic skills help students return to school confident, prepared, and ready to learn.

We also encourage families to continue nurturing their child's spiritual growth throughout the summer by attending Mass regularly, praying together as a family, and looking for opportunities to serve others in their community.



STUDENT UNIFORM & APPEARANCE

While our uniform creates a consistent and respectful appearance, it is the virtues we wear each day that truly define who we are. Palmer Catholic Academy students are expected to dress neatly, wear the approved school uniform with pride, and reflect Christ through their actions, attitudes, and respect for themselves and others.

*"As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience."
— Colossians 3:12*

Included in this section:

- ✓ Uniform Policy
- ✓ Student Appearance
- ✓ Optional Uniforms
- ✓ Outerwear
- ✓ Physical Education Uniform
- ✓ Dress Down/Up Days

UNIFORM POLICY

At Palmer Catholic Academy, our school uniform is more than a dress code; it is a visible expression of our Catholic identity and school community. Wearing a uniform reminds us that each student is uniquely created by God and valued for who they are, rather than what they wear. It fosters a sense of belonging, encourages modesty and respect, promotes school pride, and allows students to focus on learning, faith, and building positive relationships.

Our uniform policy is designed to:

- Foster unity and a sense of belonging within our school community.
- Encourage modesty, dignity, and respect in personal appearance.
- Promote responsibility, self-discipline, and readiness to learn.
- Strengthen school pride and Palmer Catholic Academy's identity.
- Minimize distractions, peer pressure, and competition based on clothing.
- Support a safe and secure campus by making students easily identifiable.

Families are asked to partner with the school by ensuring students arrive each day in the appropriate uniform. Consistent adherence to the uniform policy helps create an environment where every student can learn, grow, and thrive.

Palmer Catholic Academy has both **mandatory uniform requirements** and **approved optional uniform choices**. To help make getting ready for school simple, please refer to the "**What Do I Wear Today?**" guide below, followed by the **Uniform Quick Reference Cards** on the following pages. These visual guides provide an easy-to-follow overview of the uniform requirements for each grade level and school day. Students who do not meet the dress code expectations may be required to change clothing or may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the **Code of Conduct**.



Uniform Quick Reference Cards

BOYS' MANDATORY UNIFORM - KINDERGARTEN
(ALSO SUGGESTED FOR PRE-K)
(For Mass, Picture Day, Field Trips and other designated days)



White Oxford shirt



RC Uniform navy trousers or walking shorts (elastic waist recommended)



PCA plaid tie



athletic or crew socks in solid white or navy (small brand logo is acceptable)



dress shoes, loafers or Sperry-style shoes in SOLID black, brown, tan or navy; SOLID white OR solid black or solid navy sneakers (small brand logo in blue/white is permitted)

OPTIONAL UNIFORM ITEMS



PCA navy or green polo

BOYS' MANDATORY UNIFORM - GRADES 1-8
(For Mass, Picture Day, Field Trips and other designated days)



White Oxford shirt



RC Uniform navy trousers



PCA plaid tie



dress shoes, loafers or Sperry-style shoes in SOLID black, brown, tan or navy



athletic or crew socks in solid white or navy (small brand logo is acceptable)



SOLID black, brown or navy belt

OPTIONAL UNIFORM ITEMS



RC uniform navy walking shorts with SOLID brown, black or navy belt



PCA navy or green polo



GRADES 1 AND 2 ONLY
SOLID white or solid black or solid navy sneakers (small brand logo in blue/white is permitted)

****Note: Ties can be removed after Mass or photos.**

GIRLS' MANDATORY UNIFORM - KINDERGARTEN (ALSO SUGGESTED FOR PRE-K)

(For Mass, Picture Day, Field Trips and other designated days)



OR



PCA plaid jumper with white Peter Pan collared blouse

PCA navy blue polo dress



ankle, knee or crew socks in white or navy
(small brand logo is acceptable)



dress, loafer, or Sperry-style shoes in SOLID black, navy, tan or brown OR saddle shoes in black/white or navy/white;
SOLID white OR solid black or solid navy sneakers
(small brand logo in blue/white is permitted)

OPTIONAL UNIFORM



PCA navy or green polo



PCA plaid skort

GIRLS' MANDATORY UNIFORM - GRADES 1-4

(For Mass, Picture Day, Field Trips and other designated days)



PCA plaid jumper



White Peter Pan collared blouse



Navy bike shorts worn under the jumper, but not showing



dress, loafer, or Sperry-style shoes in SOLID black, navy, tan or brown OR saddle shoes in black/white or navy/white



ankle, knee or crew socks in white or navy
(small brand logo is acceptable)

OPTIONAL UNIFORM ITEMS



PCA navy or green polo



PCA plaid skort



GRADES 1 AND 2 ONLY
SOLID white or solid black or solid navy sneakers
(small brand logo in blue/white is permitted)

GIRLS' MANDATORY UNIFORM - GRADES 5-8

(For Mass, Picture Day, Field Trips and other designated days)



White Oxford blouse



PCA plaid pleated skirt - skirt length must be at the top of the knee



Navy bike shorts worn under the skirt, but not showing



dress, loafer, or Sperry-style shoes in SOLID black, navy, tan or brown OR saddle shoes in black/white or navy/white



knee or crew socks in solid white or navy (small brand logo is acceptable)

OPTIONAL UNIFORM ITEMS



PCA navy or green polo



BOYS' AND GIRLS' SWEATERS THAT ARE PERMITTED ON MANDATORY UNIFORM DAYS



PCA quarter zip or full zip jackets OR PCA v-neck pull-over sweater



SOLID white or navy cardigan

PCA CREWNECK SPIRITWEAR SWEATSHIRTS
CAN BE WORN ON NON-MANDATORY UNIFORM DAYS

NO SWEATSHIRTS
ON MASS OR PHOTO DAYS

HOODIES NOT PERMITTED



STUDENT APPEARANCE

PCA Logo on Clothing

The Palmer Catholic Academy logo is the property of Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish and Palmer Catholic Academy. To ensure consistency and quality, the PCA logo may only be applied to uniforms and school-approved items by **RC Uniforms** or another vendor specifically authorized in writing by the pastor and principal.

Uniform Reminders

- All skirt and jumper hemlines must reach the top of the knee. Skirts cannot be rolled.
- Pants must be sized appropriately. They must not be skin-tight, excessively baggy, or end higher than the top of the shoe.
- All shirts must be tucked in at all times.
- Uniforms must be laundered regularly, wrinkle-free, and maintained to their original brightness without discoloration

Hair Styles and Accessories

Students are expected to maintain a neat, well-groomed appearance that reflects the dignity of the school uniform.

- Hair must be a natural color.
- Bleached, dyed, dipped, or unnaturally colored hair is not permitted.
- Students arriving at school with hair that does not meet these expectations may be required to return home to correct it before returning to school.

Girls

- Hair should be neat and well maintained.
- Hair accessories must be school colors: **black, white, navy, or hunter green.**

Boys

- Hair must not extend below the top of the collar in the back, over the ears on the sides, or below the eyebrows.

Jewelry

Students may wear:

- A simple religious necklace and/or bracelet
- A watch (smart watches or any watch capable of calling, texting, taking photos, accessing the internet, or similar communication features are not permitted)
- Girls may wear small earrings (**Boys may not wear earrings**)
 - Dangle earrings may not exceed ½ inch
 - Hoop earrings may not exceed ½ inch in diameter

Make-Up and Nails

To promote a neat, age-appropriate appearance:

- Makeup and false eyelashes are not permitted.
- Clear lip gloss is permitted.
- Only clear nail polish is permitted.
- Gel polish, SNS, acrylic nails, fake nails, or similar nail enhancements are not permitted.
- Students may be required to remove non-compliant nail polish in the Health Room or be sent home if necessary.
- Writing on skin, uniforms, or another student's clothing is not permitted.

Shoes and Socks

Please refer to the **Uniform Quick Reference Cards** for approved shoes and socks for each grade level.

The following footwear is **not permitted**:

- Boots
- Hey Dude®-style shoes
- Vans®-style shoes
- Crocs®
- Backless shoes
- Sandals
- Light-up shoes
- High-top sneakers
- No-show ("footie") socks

Badges

Students are required to wear their school-issued ID badge **above the waist** at all times while on campus, except during field trips. Each student receives one badge at the beginning of the school year. Replacement badges are **\$10** and will be billed through the family's FACTS account.

OPTIONAL UNIFORMS

Optional uniform items may be worn on regular school days but **may not** be worn on:

- School Mass days
- Picture Days
- Field Trips (unless special permission is given by administration)
- Any other day designated as a Mandatory Uniform Day

Please refer to the **Uniform Quick Reference Cards** for approved optional uniform items by grade level.

OUTERWEAR

During cooler weather, students may wear only approved Palmer Catholic Academy outerwear or a plain white or navy cardigan or sweater without logos or designs while in the school building.

Hoodies are not permitted in school.

Please refer to the Uniform Quick Reference Cards for approved outerwear.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION UNIFORM

Grades PK–4

Students do not wear a separate PE uniform. On Physical Education days, students should wear their regular school uniform with **approved athletic shoes**. Please refer to the Uniform Quick Reference Cards

Grades 5–8

Students wear the Palmer Catholic Academy PE uniform on scheduled PE days, **EXCEPT** on Mass days.

On PE Mass days,

- Students must wear the **mandatory school uniform** to Mass.
- Students may wear their PE uniform shirt underneath their mandatory white uniform shirt if they choose.
- Girls may wear PE shorts underneath their uniform skirt.
- Following Mass, students will change into their PE uniform before class.

Please refer to the Uniform Quick Reference Cards for complete PE uniform requirements.

DRESS DOWN DAYS & DRESS UP DAYS

Throughout the school year, Palmer Catholic Academy may designate special **Dress Down Days** or **Dress Up Days** to celebrate school events, recognize student achievements, or support charitable causes. In keeping with our Catholic mission, Dress Down Days are connected to service opportunities and encourage students to support local, national, or global organizations through donations of money or needed items. Unless otherwise announced, the following dress code applies on all non-uniform days.

Clothing

Students may wear:

- Jeans or pants without rips, tears, holes, or frayed edges
- Shorts no more than **3 inches above the middle of the knee** (Bermuda, athletic, or basketball-style)
- Dresses and skirts that reach the **top of the knee**
- Shirts that completely cover the shoulders, back, and midriff

The following are **not permitted**:

- Tank tops or spaghetti straps
- Crop tops or clothing with cut-outs
- Pajama pants or sleepwear
- Clothing with inappropriate language, graphics, advertisements, or messages inconsistent with the values of a Catholic school
- Hats, unless specifically permitted for a designated event

Shoes

Students must wear safe, school-appropriate footwear. Please see above for shoe regulations.

Student Appearance

Hair, jewelry, makeup, and nail policies remain the same as outlined in the **Student Appearance** section of this handbook.

Students are expected to dress modestly, appropriately, and in a manner that reflects the values and expectations of Palmer Catholic Academy.

Students who do not meet the dress code expectations may be required to change clothing or may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the **Code of Conduct**.



STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES & EXPECTATIONS

Students at Palmer Catholic Academy are expected to demonstrate responsibility, integrity, respect, and good citizenship both in and out of the classroom. These expectations help create a safe, orderly, Christ-centered learning environment where every student can thrive academically, spiritually, and socially.

*"Conduct yourselves in a way worthy of the gospel of Christ."
Philippians 1:27*

Included in this section:

- ✓ Code of Conduct
- ✓ Academic Integrity
- ✓ Technology & Device Policy
- ✓ Service Hours – Middle School Students
- ✓ School Property- Searches/Inspections
- ✓ Textbooks

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Student Code of Conduct is a companion document to this handbook and outlines the school's expectations for student behavior, discipline, and restorative practices. All students and parents are expected to review and sign the Code of Conduct each year. The Student Code of Conduct can be found on the website under Parents.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Honesty and integrity are fundamental values at Palmer Catholic Academy. Students are expected to complete all academic work honestly and independently while demonstrating respect for the work of others.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- Cheating
- Copying another student's work
- Plagiarism
- Unauthorized collaboration
- Submitting work created wholly or substantially by artificial intelligence (AI) as one's own

Students found responsible for academic dishonesty may receive a zero on the assignment, disciplinary consequences, and notification of parents. Additional consequences apply for students serving in leadership positions such as Student Council, National Elementary Honor Society (NEHS), National Junior Honor Society (NJHS), or school athletics.

TECHNOLOGY & DEVICE POLICY

Technology is an important part of learning at Palmer Catholic Academy. School-issued devices are provided to enhance instruction, encourage creativity and collaboration, and prepare students for success in an increasingly digital world. Technology is a privilege, and students are expected to use all school technology responsibly, ethically, and in accordance with school policies.

Technology resources are provided solely for educational purposes and must always be used in a manner consistent with the mission and values of Palmer Catholic Academy.

Student iPads

Students in **Grades 4–8** are assigned a school-issued iPad for instructional use.

Grade	iPad Use
Grades 4–5	Assigned individual iPad that remains at school
Grades 6–8	Assigned individual iPad that travels between home and school

School-issued iPads remain the property of Palmer Catholic Academy and are provided exclusively for educational purposes.

Cell Phones

Only **Middle School students (Grades 6–8)** may bring a cell phone to school.

Students bringing a phone to campus must:

- Have a completed **Cell Phone Contract** on file.
- Turn the phone **off** upon arrival.
- Turn the phone in to their homeroom teacher at the beginning of the school day.
- Retrieve the phone at dismissal.

Cell phones may not be used during the school day without permission from school administration.

A cell phone that is seen, heard, or used during the school day will be confiscated and sent to the school office. A parent or guardian must retrieve the device. Repeated violations may result in confiscation for an extended period as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

Personal Electronic Devices

To maintain a safe, focused learning environment, students may **not** bring personal electronic devices to school unless specifically approved by the teacher and principal for an educational purpose.

Prohibited devices include, but are not limited to:

- Smart watches (including Apple Watches)
- Fitness trackers or wearable technology
- Meta or smart glasses
- Gaming devices
- Cameras
- Laser pointers
- Bluetooth-enabled devices
- Devices capable of taking photographs or videos
- Devices capable of texting, messaging, or accessing the internet

Any prohibited device brought to school may be confiscated and disciplinary consequences may apply.

Caring for School-Issued iPads

Students are responsible for the care of their assigned iPad.

Students are expected to:

- Keep the iPad in its protective case at all times.
- Handle the device carefully.
- Keep the iPad free of stickers, writing, or markings.
- Report damage or technical issues immediately.
- Never leave the iPad unattended.

To protect the screen:

- Do not place heavy objects on the iPad.
- Do not lean on the device.
- Clean the screen only with an approved soft cloth when directed.
- Avoid dropping or bumping the device.

Students may be financially responsible for damage resulting from misuse, neglect, or abuse. Palmer Catholic Academy reserves the right to determine whether damage is accidental or non-accidental. Additional information regarding repairs and replacement costs is outlined in the **iPad Agreement**.

School Management of Devices

Palmer Catholic Academy manages all school-issued iPads and may install, remove, or update software at any time.

The school reserves the right to:

- Monitor device usage.
- Synchronize devices with school systems.

- Restrict or remove applications.
- Restore software.
- Inspect school-issued devices when necessary.
- Assume possession of any school-issued device at any time.

Students should have no expectation of privacy when using school-owned technology.

Student Email & Digital Communication

Students are provided with a Palmer Catholic Academy email account for educational purposes only.

School email accounts may be used only to:

- Communicate with teachers.
- Access approved educational platforms.
- Complete school assignments.

Students may not use their school email address to create personal online accounts or access non-school-related services.

Responsible Technology Use

Students are expected to use all school-issued technology responsibly and ethically in accordance with school policies.

Students **must**:

- Use iPads only for educational purposes.
- Follow teacher directions regarding the use of technology.
- Protect passwords and never share login credentials with others.
- Use only school-approved software, applications, and educational websites.
- Keep the assigned school screensaver and background. Screensavers and wallpapers may not be changed without school permission.
- Save school-related photos and projects to the student's OneDrive account.
- Supply a simple pair of earbuds or headphones for instructional activities that require audio.

Students **may not**:

- Install, remove, or modify apps or software.
- Attempt to bypass school security, filtering systems, or management software.
- Log into personal accounts or use personal Apple IDs or other online accounts on school-issued devices.
- Download or stream music, videos, games, or other non-educational content.
- Play internet games or use devices for recreational purposes.
- Change system settings, passwords, screensavers, or backgrounds without permission.
- Photograph, video record, or audio record others without teacher approval and the consent of those being recorded.
- Use artificial intelligence or technology in any manner that violates the school's Academic Integrity Policy.

Sound on iPads must remain **muted** unless a teacher has given permission for instructional use.

Camera access is enabled only at the teacher's discretion and may be used solely for school-related assignments and projects.

Failure to follow these expectations may result in disciplinary action and/or the loss of technology privileges.

Digital Citizenship

Technology provides wonderful opportunities for learning, creativity, and communication. As digital citizens, Palmer Catholic Academy students are expected to use technology in a manner that reflects Christian values and demonstrates respect for others.

Students are expected to:

- Communicate respectfully and appropriately in all digital environments.
- Protect their own privacy and the privacy of others.
- Use school technology only for educational purposes.
- Report inappropriate online behavior, cyberbullying, or unsafe content to a trusted adult.
- Respect copyright laws and properly credit the work of others.
- Think carefully before posting, sharing, or creating digital content, recognizing that online actions leave a lasting digital footprint.
- Represent Palmer Catholic Academy with integrity whenever using school-issued devices, school accounts, or participating in school-related online activities.

Cyberbullying, harassment, misuse of social media, or other inappropriate online behavior that disrupts the school environment may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

SERVICE HOURS – MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Service to others is an essential part of a Catholic education. At Palmer Catholic Academy, students are encouraged to live the Gospel by sharing their God-given gifts through meaningful acts of service. Rather than simply completing required hours, students are challenged to develop a lifelong habit of serving others with compassion, generosity, and humility.

Students are encouraged to participate in service opportunities through their parish, school, and community. While donations and collection drives are valuable ways to help those in need, our goal is for students to experience **hands-on service** by giving their time and talents directly to others.

Examples of meaningful service opportunities include:

- Serving as an altar server, usher, or choir member at church
- Assisting with Vacation Bible School or parish events
- Serving as a lector or usher at school Masses
- Helping with school events or Safety Patrol
- Volunteering at nursing homes, food pantries, Habitat for Humanity, BEAM, or other community organizations
- Participating in other approved service opportunities that directly benefit others

Middle School Service Hour Requirements

Beginning in **Grade 6**, students complete service hours for both **Palmer Catholic Academy graduation** and **Our Lady Star of the Sea Confirmation preparation**.

Grade	Graduation Requirement	Confirmation Requirement
6	10 hours	5 hours
7	10 hours	10 hours
8	10 hours	15 hours

*note – these hours do not overlap.

Graduation Requirement

Middle School students are required to complete **10 service hours each school year** for a total of **30 graduation service hours** by the end of eighth grade.

Confirmation Requirement

Students preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation through **Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish** will also complete the parish's **30-hour Confirmation service requirement**.

Confirmation service hours are completed over three years:

- Grade 6 – 5 hours
- Grade 7 – 10 hours
- Grade 8 – 15 hours

All Confirmation service hours must be completed before attending the parish Confirmation Retreat.

Important Information

- Service hours are **completed annually** and do not carry over from one grade level to the next.
- Students must complete the required hours for their current grade regardless of any additional hours completed in previous years.
- The deadline for submitting service hours is **May 15** each school year.

Students are encouraged to make service a regular part of their lives rather than waiting until the end of the school year to complete their requirements. Christian service is not simply a graduation requirement; it is an opportunity for students to live their faith, discover their gifts, and become disciples who make a positive difference in the lives of others.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Care of School Property

Students are expected to respect and care for all school buildings, classrooms, furniture, technology, instructional materials, athletic equipment, and outdoor areas. Intentional damage, vandalism, or misuse of school property may result in disciplinary action and financial responsibility for repair or replacement costs.

Palmer Catholic Academy provides students with school property, including lockers, desks, textbooks, technology, and other instructional materials, to support learning and maintain a safe, organized environment. Students are expected to use all school property responsibly and return it in good condition. Students are financially responsible for the loss of or damage to school-issued property resulting from misuse, neglect, or vandalism. Replacement or repair costs may be charged to the family's FACTS account.

Personal Property

Students are responsible for their personal belongings while at school and during school-sponsored activities. Palmer Catholic Academy is not responsible for personal items that are lost, stolen, or damaged. Families are encouraged to clearly label personal belongings with the student's name and leave valuable items at home.

Inspections

To help maintain a safe, orderly, and secure learning environment, Palmer Catholic Academy reserves the right to inspect school property and student belongings when necessary. Inspections will be conducted in a manner that respects the dignity of students while ensuring the safety and security of the school community.

Lockers, desks, and other school-issued property remain the property of Palmer Catholic Academy. Students should have **no expectation of privacy** regarding school-issued property.

School administration may conduct reasonable, nondiscriminatory inspections of lockers, desks, backpacks, and other personal belongings:

- To protect the health, safety, and welfare of the school community.
- To investigate suspected violations of school policy, the Student Code of Conduct, or federal, state, or local law.
- As part of schoolwide or grade-level safety inspections when deemed appropriate by administration.

Items considered **contraband** include, but are not limited to:

- Weapons or weapon-like objects
- Illegal drugs or controlled substances
- Alcohol
- Tobacco or nicotine products
- Unauthorized medications
- Fireworks or explosive materials
- Flammable materials
- Stolen property
- Any item prohibited by school policy or law

Students found in possession of prohibited items are subject to disciplinary action and, when appropriate, law enforcement may be notified.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are valuable instructional resources and should be treated with care. Teachers conduct periodic textbook inspections throughout the year.

Students are expected to:

- Keep all hardback textbooks covered with **paper book covers**.
- Do not use contact paper, adhesive coverings, or tape directly on textbooks.
- Return textbooks in good condition at the end of the school year.

Lost or damaged textbooks will incur replacement charges, which will be billed through the family's FACTS account.



STUDENT HEALTH & SAFETY

The safety and well-being of every student is a shared responsibility. Through thoughtful procedures, strong partnerships with families, and a commitment to providing a secure and caring environment, we strive to ensure that every child is safe, supported, and ready to learn.

*"God is our refuge and our strength, an ever-present help in distress."
Psalm 46:2*

Included in this section:

- ✓ Health Services
- ✓ Student Illness/Accidents at School
- ✓ Emergency Contact Information
- ✓ Medical Needs/Temporary Restrictions
- ✓ Medications at School
- ✓ Allergy Policy
- ✓ Immunization Policy
- ✓ Student Safety
- ✓ Campus Security
- ✓ Emergency Preparedness and Safety Drills
- ✓ Campus Visitors and Volunteers
- ✓ Child Abuse Reporting
- ✓ Child Protective Investigations
- ✓ Safety In Safe Spaces
- ✓ Harassment, Bullying & Discrimination
- ✓ School Counselor

HEALTH SERVICES

At Palmer Catholic Academy, the health, safety, and well-being of our students are a shared priority. We work closely with families to provide a safe, healthy, and nurturing learning environment while supporting students' medical needs during the school day. Our Health Room is staffed by trained school personnel who provide basic first aid, administer authorized medications, and care for students who become ill or injured until a parent or emergency contact can be reached. The Health Room is intended to provide temporary care during the school day and is not a substitute for ongoing medical care provided by a healthcare professional. Parents are asked to keep the school informed of any medical conditions or changes that may affect their child's health or safety.

STUDENT ILLNESS AND ACCIDENTS AT SCHOOL

If a student becomes ill or is injured during the school day, he or she will be evaluated by school personnel and cared for in the Health Room.

Parents or emergency contacts will be notified when a student is too ill to remain in school, experiences a significant injury, or requires medical attention beyond basic first aid.

Students who become ill at school are expected to be picked up as soon as reasonably possible by a parent or authorized emergency contact.

Palmer Catholic Academy provides secondary student accident insurance for injuries that occur while students are participating in school-sponsored activities.

In the event of a medical emergency, school personnel will administer reasonable first aid, contact emergency medical services (911) when necessary, and notify parents as quickly as possible.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Parents are responsible for maintaining current emergency contact information in **FACTS** throughout the school year.

Emergency information should include:

- Parent/guardian names and current contact information
- Home, work, and mobile telephone numbers
- At least **two** additional emergency contacts authorized to assume responsibility for the child if parents cannot be reached
- Family physician information
- Current medical conditions, allergies, and other important health information

It is the responsibility of parents to promptly update FACTS whenever contact information or emergency information changes.

MEDICAL NEEDS & TEMPORARY PHYSICAL RESTRICTIONS

Parents should notify the school of any medical condition, injury, or temporary physical limitation that may affect their child's participation in school activities.

Students who arrive at school using crutches, orthopedic boots, wheelchairs, slings, braces, casts, or other medical supports must provide a physician's note outlining any restrictions or accommodations.

Unless otherwise indicated by a physician, students with temporary medical restrictions will not participate in Physical Education classes, recess, athletics, or other physical activities until written medical clearance is received.

If a student's medical needs change during the school year, parents should notify the school as soon as possible so appropriate accommodations can be made.

MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL

Whenever possible, medications should be administered at home. When medication must be given during the school day, the following requirements apply:

- A completed diocesan **Medical Authorization Form**, including the physician's signature, must be on file.
- Both prescription and over-the-counter medications require authorization.
- Medications must be provided in their original, properly labeled container indicating the student's name, medication, dosage, and administration instructions.
- All medications are stored and administered through the Health Room.

Students may not carry medication (including cough drops or medical creams) at school unless specifically authorized by school policy.

Students who require a prescription inhaler may carry and self-administer the inhaler after the required authorization forms have been completed. Additional authorization forms are also available for students with severe medical conditions requiring emergency medications, such as epinephrine.

Any medication not picked up by the end of the school year will be properly discarded.

ALLERGY POLICY

The safety of students with food allergies is a shared responsibility of families, students, and school personnel.

For classrooms designated as allergy-aware classrooms, all classroom treats and special event snacks must:

- Be commercially prepared (homemade items are not permitted).
- Remain in their original packaging with ingredient labels.
- Be approved by the classroom teacher before distribution.

To protect the privacy of students, allergy information is shared only with school personnel who have a legitimate educational or safety need to know.

Please note that both Preschool classrooms are designated **peanut-free** classrooms. Additional Preschool allergy procedures are outlined in the Preschool Addendum.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

In accordance with the requirements of the **State of Florida** and the **Diocese of St. Augustine**, all students must have current health and immunization records on file before attending school.

Required documentation includes:

- Florida School Entry Health Examination (DH 3040)
- Florida Certificate of Immunization (DH 680), or other approved documentation as permitted by Florida law

Families with questions regarding immunization requirements or medical circumstances should contact the school office. Additional information may be found in the Diocese of St. Augustine Immunization Policy in the **References and Resources** section at the end of this handbook.

STUDENT SAFETY

The safety and security of every student entrusted to our care is one of Palmer Catholic Academy's highest priorities. Through proactive planning, emergency preparedness, secure campus procedures, and partnerships with families and local authorities, we strive to provide a safe environment where students can learn, grow, and thrive each day.

Students are expected to follow all safety procedures and directions from school personnel promptly during emergencies, drills, and other situations requiring immediate attention.

CAMPUS SECURITY

The safety of our students and staff is enhanced through a comprehensive campus security program, which includes secure entrances, visitor screening procedures, surveillance systems, emergency communication systems, and partnerships with local law enforcement.

A St. Johns County Sheriff's Office Deputy is regularly assigned to campus to assist in maintaining a safe learning environment.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND SAFETY DRILLS

Palmer Catholic Academy conducts regular emergency drills throughout the school year to help students and staff respond safely and confidently in the event of an emergency.

Emergency drills include, but are not limited to:

- Fire drills as required by Florida law
- Severe weather/tornado drills
- Lockdown, secure campus, and other school safety drills required by state guidelines

Students are expected to participate seriously in all drills, follow staff directions immediately, and remain quiet and attentive throughout each exercise.

CAMPUS VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

To help maintain a safe and secure campus, all visitors and volunteers must check in through the school office upon arrival.

All individuals entering campus during the school day must:

- Present a valid government-issued photo ID when requested.
- Sign in through the school's visitor management system.
- Wear a visitor badge while on campus.
- Sign out before leaving campus.

Parents and visitors are not permitted to enter classrooms, lunch periods, or other student areas without prior approval.

Individuals volunteering in classrooms, on field trips, or in other activities involving students must complete all Diocese of St. Augustine volunteer clearance requirements, including background screening and Safe Environment (Protecting God's Children) training.

For the safety of all students:

- Siblings may not accompany volunteers during volunteer assignments.
- Photography of students is permitted only by authorized school personnel or approved volunteers acting in an official school capacity.

Additional volunteer opportunities and expectations are outlined in the **Family Partnership** chapter.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

The safety and well-being of children is a shared responsibility.

Florida law requires teachers, administrators, and other school personnel who know of or have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to report those concerns immediately to the appropriate authorities.

Palmer Catholic Academy fully complies with all mandatory reporting requirements established by the State of Florida.

CHILD PROTECTIVE INVESTIGATIONS

Palmer Catholic Academy cooperates fully with child protective investigations conducted by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) and local law enforcement agencies.

State law permits authorized investigators to interview students on school property when conducting an official investigation. When permitted by law and the investigating agency, the school will request notification of parents and the presence of an appropriate school representative during the interview. However, the school will comply with all legal directives provided by investigating authorities.

SAFETY IN SAFE SPACES

Palmer Catholic Academy complies with all applicable provisions of **Florida Statute 553.865 (Safety in Private Spaces Act)**.

Except where facilities are specifically designated as unisex, school restrooms, locker rooms, and changing facilities are designated for use by biological females or biological males as provided by Florida law. Students are expected to use the facilities designated for their sex as defined by applicable law. Any

student who willfully enters a school restroom or locker room/changing facility designated for the opposite sex and refuses to depart when asked to do so by any school personnel will be subject to disciplinary consequences consistent with the school's Code of Conduct policy and applicable law.

HARASSMENT, BULLYING & DISCRIMINATION

Palmer Catholic Academy is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and Christ-centered environment where every student is treated with dignity and compassion. Harassment, bullying, discrimination, intimidation, hazing, or retaliation of any kind is inconsistent with our Catholic values and will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to treat one another with kindness, respect, and Christian charity in all interactions, whether in person, online, or during school-sponsored activities.

Any student who experiences or witnesses bullying, harassment, or discriminatory behavior should report the concern promptly to a teacher, counselor, or administrator. An online anonymous bullying reporting form is available on the school website under the Parents tab. (If, however, the principal is the individual who is believed to have engaged in the inappropriate conduct, the student should notify the Superintendent of Schools of the Diocese of St. Augustine.)

Reports will be investigated promptly and addressed in accordance with the Palmer Catholic Academy Student Code of Conduct and applicable diocesan policies. Retaliation against any individual who reports a concern or participates in an investigation is strictly prohibited.

Additional information regarding reporting procedures, investigations, and disciplinary consequences is outlined in the **Student Code of Conduct**.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Palmer Catholic Academy's School Counselor supports the academic, social, emotional, and personal development of students while partnering with families and teachers to promote student success.

The School Counselor may:

- Meet individually or in small groups with students, as appropriate.
- Consult with teachers and parents regarding student needs.
- Assist with transitions and student support planning.
- Coordinate standardized testing.
- Support eighth-grade students and families with high school planning.
- Provide referrals to outside resources when additional support is needed.

The School Counselor is available by appointment. Parents who have concerns regarding their child's academic, social, or emotional well-being are encouraged to contact the school to discuss available support services.



ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential to a child's academic, social, and spiritual growth. Every school day provides meaningful opportunities for instruction, collaboration, prayer, worship, service, and community that cannot always be recreated through make-up work. By making attendance a priority, families and the school work together to help every student reach his or her God-given potential.

*"Teach us to count our days aright, that we may gain wisdom of heart."
Psalm 90:12*

Included in this section:

- ✓ Absence of Parents/Guardians
- ✓ Attendance Policy
- ✓ Absence Policy
- ✓ Excused Absences
- ✓ Pre-Planned Absences
- ✓ Unexcused Absences
- ✓ Tardy Policy
- ✓ Early Dismissals

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND EXPECTATIONS

We ask families to partner with us by making school attendance a priority and scheduling vacations, appointments, and other non-essential activities outside of school hours whenever possible.

Regular attendance is expected of all students and is essential for academic success. Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that students attend school consistently and comply with the attendance requirements established by Palmer Catholic Academy, the Diocese of St. Augustine, and the State of Florida.

Students must be present for at least **50% of the instructional day** in order to be counted present. Students arriving after **11:00 a.m.** or leaving before **11:30 a.m.** will be marked absent for the day. See Preschool Addendum for Preschool Attendance Requirements.

In accordance with Diocese of St. Augustine policy, students must attend a minimum of **37 days during each 45-day grading period** to be eligible to receive a passing grade for that grading period. This attendance requirement applies to each individual subject as well.

Students who accumulate **eight (8) or more unexcused absences** in a grading period for any subject may be placed on academic probation and required to attend a parent conference to determine the student's academic standing.

Additionally, a student with **five (5) unexcused absences within a calendar month** or **ten (10) unexcused absences within a 90-calendar-day period** may be referred to the principal for a conference with the student's parent(s) or legal guardian to address attendance concerns.

Palmer Catholic Academy follows all attendance requirements established by the Diocese of St. Augustine and the State of Florida, including Florida Statutes governing compulsory school attendance.

The Principal can work with a student who requires a prolonged absence due to a documented medical issue by creating a Learning Plan which can include working from home and completing all classwork, homework, and assessments. Plans will be created on a case-by-case basis and will require signatures from parents, teachers, and administration.

Families participating in Florida scholarship programs should be aware that excessive absences or failure to follow any of the school's attendance policies may affect their scholarship eligibility under applicable state requirements.

Reporting Absences

It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to contact the school if their child will be absent and to state the reason for the absence. The PCA Attendance Officer must receive an email (lkokos@pcapvb.org) or voicemail (904-543-8515, ext. 113) from the parent/guardian by 8:00 AM for **each day** a student is absent from school. This policy is in place for the protection of all PCA students

Students returning to school from an absence are required to present a written explanatory excuse from their parent(s) or legal guardian stating the cause for the absence. Failure to provide a note will result in an automatic unexcused absence. A physician's note is needed when the student (1) has been absent for three or more consecutive days, (2) has had surgery, (3) is returning to school after hospitalization, (4) has been under a doctor's care for a significant illness, or (5) is returning to school after being excluded because of a communicable disease.

Students must be in school unless the absence has been deemed an “excused absence.” Excused absences include the following: (1) illness or injury of the student; (2) serious illness or death in the student’s family; (3) scheduled doctor or dentist appointment; (4) special events such as family weddings, important public functions, etc., which require permission from the principal at least five days in advance; (5) required court appearance or supervised visitation; and (6) having or being suspected of having a communicable disease or infestation, including, but not limited to head lice, ringworm, impetigo, and scabies.

Unexcused absences include but are not limited to the following: (1) pleasure trips; (2) suspension from school; (3) truancy; or (4) other avoidable absences that are not on the “excused absences” list. Students with more than 8 unexcused absences in any given class within a quarter risk receiving a failing grade for that quarter. The principal can waive this policy in extreme circumstances.

Personal Illness Guidelines

Students will not be allowed to attend school if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever over 100 degrees or lower temperature is accompanied with other symptoms
- Witnessed or reported vomiting / diarrhea
- Undiagnosed rash
- Sore throat with other symptoms
- Suspected conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Any symptom at the discretion of the school
- Persistent cough
- A communicable disease such as head lice*, impetigo or ringworm.
- A positive COVID test

Readmittance after Illness Guidelines

- Strep throat: 48 hours after the start of oral antibiotics or 24 hours after an injection
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye): at least 24 hours after the start of medication and when there’s no longer any discharge present
- Vomiting or Diarrhea: at least 24 hours with no symptoms
- Chicken pox: all lesions are dry and crusted
- Lice and Scabies: Following medical treatment. See Diocesan “NO-NITS” policy above.
- Impetigo: (Blisters with honey colored crust) At least 24 hours after the start of the medication. If blister continues after the treatment begins, the child should be re-examined by a physician.
- Hepatitis: Doctor statement required for re-admittance.
- Fevers: Students will not be permitted back to school unless they have been fever-free for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medicines.

Head Lice/Nit Policy

No child (ren) will be admitted to school with head lice or nits. Students cannot return to school until they are lice and nit free. They must be accompanied by a parent/guardian upon their return to school and immediately notify the principal or school health room coordinator. The Diocese has a “NO-NIT” policy. If a teacher suspects that a student may have head lice/nits, the student will be sent to the health room.

Make-up Work after Absences

The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times to eliminate the need to interrupt a child’s learning process. Missed assignments are the student’s responsibility.

Students who are absent due to illness have **one day for each day of absence** to make up the missed assignments, quizzes or tests. Students and parents/guardians may obtain make-up work by referring to

Microsoft Teams (grades 4-8) or emailing the homeroom teacher (PK-3). For students absent for one day, make up work will be completed when the student returns to the classroom.

Students who are absent for trips/travel/sports tournaments/etc. must have all work completed and submitted **on the day of their return**. Any missed assignments need to be made up on the day of the return. Please see information below about PRE-PLANNED ABSENCES.

PRE-PLANNED ABSENCES (PK-8)

Families are strongly encouraged to schedule vacations and other non-essential travel during school holidays whenever possible. Because classroom instruction, discussions, and hands-on learning experiences cannot always be replicated through make-up work, pre-planned absences should be limited.

If a pre-planned absence is necessary, the following procedures must be followed:

- Submit a completed **Pre-Planned Absence Form** to the school office **at least five (5) school days** before the absence. Forms are available in the front office and on the PCA website.
- Obtain the required signatures from each of the student's teachers and the principal.
- Allow teachers the full **five school days** to prepare assignments and instructional materials.
- Once approved, it is the responsibility of the student and family to obtain all assignments before the absence begins.
- All assignments are ***due on the student's first day back at school*** unless otherwise directed by the teacher. Quizzes and tests missed during the absence will be made up at the teacher's discretion.

Approval of a pre-planned absence is based on the student's academic standing and classroom progress. Teachers may recommend that a request not be approved if the absence would significantly impact the student's learning or academic performance. If a teacher does not approve the request, the absence will be considered unexcused.

TARDY POLICY

Students are expected to arrive at school on time and ready to begin the school day. Instruction begins promptly at **8:00 AM**, and arriving on time helps students establish positive habits while minimizing disruptions to classroom learning.

Students in **Grades K–8** who arrive after **8:00 AM** must report to the school office before going to class. Once morning carpool has ended, a parent or authorized adult must accompany the student into the building and complete the check-in process at the front office. Students may not report directly to the classroom after **8:00 a.m.** without first checking in through the school office.

Excessive tardiness disrupts instruction and may impact student learning. Families are encouraged to schedule appointments outside of school hours whenever possible.

For Middle School students, a conference with administration may be required after **six (6) tardies** in a grading quarter to discuss attendance concerns and develop a plan for improvement.

Students who accumulate **more than five (5) tardies and/or early dismissals during a grading quarter** will be assessed a **\$5.00 fee for each additional occurrence**, unless documentation from a healthcare provider is provided. Charges will be applied to the family's FACTS account.

EARLY DISMISSALS

Whenever possible, medical appointments, family appointments, and other non-emergency activities should be scheduled outside of school hours. Early dismissals interrupt classroom instruction and are discouraged except when necessary.

Students in **Grades K–8** who leave school before **11:30 AM** are considered absent for the entire school day.

When an early dismissal is necessary:

- A parent, guardian, or other authorized adult must sign the student out through the school office.
- Students will be called from class **only after** the authorized adult has arrived. Please allow adequate time for your student to gather belongings and report to the office.
- To help ensure the safety of students and maintain traffic flow, please park only in a designated parking space when signing a student out early. Vehicles may not be left unattended in fire lanes or areas that impede traffic flow.
- Students may not leave campus to retrieve forgotten homework, lunches, athletic equipment, or other personal items.

Students who accumulate **more than five (5) tardies and/or early dismissals during a grading quarter** will be assessed a **\$5.00 fee for each additional occurrence**, unless documentation from a healthcare provider is provided. Charges will be applied to the family's FACTS account.



FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

Parents are the primary educators of their children, and we are grateful for the trust you place in Palmer Catholic Academy. By working together with open communication, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to each child's success, we strengthen the partnership that allows students to flourish.

*"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil."
Ecclesiastes 4:9*

Included in this section:

- ✓ Communication Expectations
- ✓ Parent-Teacher Conferences
- ✓ Class Placement
- ✓ Home & School Association (HSA)
- ✓ Volunteer Points Policy - Required
- ✓ Homeroom Parents
- ✓ Sponsorship Opportunities to Support PCA
- ✓ Student Records
- ✓ In Loco Parentis
- ✓ Social Media and Online Communication

COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS

Open, respectful, and timely communication is essential to a successful home-school partnership. Parents, faculty, and staff are expected to communicate with one another in a manner that reflects Christian values, mutual respect, and professionalism. When concerns arise, we encourage families to address them promptly through the appropriate channels so that they may be resolved collaboratively and in the best interest of the student. Should communication become inappropriate or the partnership between home and school be compromised, administration may intervene through email or by requesting a conference to help resolve the matter constructively.

Our school maintains communication with parents and students in several ways.

Communication Tool	Purpose
Blue Angel Weekly	School-wide news, events, and important reminders
Teacher Newsletters (PK–5)	Classroom updates, learning objectives, homework, and upcoming assessments
FACTS Family Portal	Grades, attendance, report cards, and school information
Email	Primary communication between school and families
Communication Folders (PK–5)	Daily home-school communication and important papers
Student Planners (Grades 1–5)	Homework assignments and parent communication
Website	Calendar, forms, handbook, athletics, and resources
Social Media	School celebrations and event highlights
Meet & Greet, Open House & Town Halls	Opportunities to connect with teachers and administration

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Regular communication between parents and teachers is an important part of supporting student success. Conferences may be scheduled whenever a parent or teacher believes additional discussion would benefit the student.

Parents are encouraged to contact the classroom teacher first regarding questions or concerns involving their child. Conferences should be scheduled in advance by email or telephone.

To respect student privacy and instructional time:

- Conferences are by appointment only.
- Teachers should not be approached during instructional time, arrival, dismissal, or in hallways.
- Siblings should not attend conferences whenever possible.

If additional discussion is needed, administration may participate in a follow-up conference.

Teachers maintain documentation of conferences as part of the student's educational record.

CLASS PLACEMENT

At Palmer Catholic Academy, we are committed to placing each student in the learning environment where he or she has the greatest opportunity to grow academically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

The process of developing class lists is thoughtful and collaborative. Teachers and administrators carefully consider many factors, including academic needs, learning styles, social-emotional development, class balance, student relationships, and the overall composition of each classroom.

Parents are welcome to share information they believe may be helpful regarding their child's placement. While all requests will be thoughtfully considered, we are unable to guarantee specific teacher, classroom, or peer requests.

Final classroom placements are made at the discretion of school administration and are considered final.

We appreciate your trust in our faculty and administration as we prayerfully make placement decisions that we believe are in the best interest of every student and the school community.

HOME & SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (HSA)

The PCA Home & School Association (HSA) is a parent-run organization whose purpose and mission is to fundraise money to offset general expenses the school incurs throughout the school year. HSA also promotes community and goodwill for the families, students, teachers and staff of PCA. Every family is automatically a member of HSA and is encouraged to attend meetings. Many volunteer opportunities will be announced throughout the year to support HSA events and fundraisers. Please see the Volunteer Policy for additional details.

VOLUNTEER POINTS POLICY - REQUIRED



Palmer Catholic Academy HSA Volunteer Policy 2026 -2027 School Year

Each family is required to provide **25 volunteer "points"** to the school during the 2026/2027 school year. All volunteer commitments are to be completed in a single school year (July - June) unless special accommodations have been arranged with the principals. Volunteer commitments performed at your parish that are not for school sponsored events **will not be counted**.

Volunteering is an essential component to our Catholic Identity because it represents "Love in Action"—embodying Christ's command to serve others.

Various opportunities come with assigned point values. Volunteer commitments are to be performed by the students' caregivers if they have completed the security clearance, NOT by the student. See HSA tab on PCA website and handbook for descriptions of roles.

- For a cost of **\$2,500 paid by September 1st**, you are able to buy your 25 points. Families choosing to opt-out are still encouraged to volunteer at school as their schedules allow. This is separate from the Family Partnership option.
- Lunch & Recess duties are no longer required, however each shift will earn you 5 points. This is still an excellent way to help out the school and your presence is needed.
- Other opportunities will be communicated throughout the school year and a point level will be assigned. All volunteer opportunities will be posted to the HSA SignUp Account. Please check regularly for new opportunities.
- **Siblings are not permitted at any time while parents are volunteering.**

A fine of \$120 per point will be assessed for any unfulfilled volunteer points.

25 Points	20 Points	15 Points	10 Points	5 Points	1 Point
HSA Executive Board PCA School Board Volunteer Lead Coach of PCA Team <i>(must be approved by school administration and complete additional paperwork)</i> Club Lead Sponsor <i>(must be school approved)</i>	HSA Committee Chair: - Angel Ball - Golf Tournament - Moms Ministry - Dads Ministry - 8th Grade Committee Military Liaison Concessions Manager Room Parent Yearbook Assistant <i>(must be approved by school administration and complete additional training)</i>	Club Assistant Fall Festival Chair Musical Production Coordinators - Star Grams - Concessions Family Sponsorship - Platinum/Diamond Uniform Closet & Lost/Found Manager	Committee Member: - Angel Ball - Golf Tournament - Moms Ministry - Dads Ministry - 8th Grade Committee <i>(must be present at meetings as needed)</i> Spirit Rock Manager Family Sponsorship - Gold Spirit Wear Coordinators Family Mentor Coordinators STREAM Night Teacher Liaison Art Show Teacher Liaison Book Fair Coordinators Teacher Appreciation Representative Science Fair Judge <i>(must have qualifications and approval by admin)</i>	Lunch/Recess Shifts Field Trip Chaperone New Family Mentor Field Day/Color Run Volunteer Manage Traveling Mary Musical Production Volunteer Family Sponsorship - Silver Angel Ball Night-Of Event Assistance Shift* <i>*Points will be shared on the sign-up for the event and range between 1-5 points.</i>	Class Party Volunteer Concessions Shift Clean Uniform Closet Event Assistance Shift* Carline Duty Classroom Volunteer Various At-Home opportunities as needed by HSA <i>*Points will be shared on the sign-up for the event and range between 1-5 points.</i>

***When a family has ONLY a VPK student, and no other PCA students:**

- enrolled in VPK ONLY or VPK PLUS ENRICHMENT hours - the family is **not required** to complete the 25 volunteer points but **is encouraged** to volunteer and support the school.
- enrolled in PK4 but not receiving VPK funding – the family is required to complete the 20 volunteer points.

It is the family's responsibility (not PCA staff) for logging off-site volunteer points which will be tracked by HSA on the Sign-Up account.

HOMEROOM PARENTS

Homeroom Parents play an important role in supporting classroom teachers and helping to build a strong sense of community within the classroom. Working under the direction of the classroom teacher, Homeroom Parents may assist with classroom celebrations, special events, volunteer coordination, and other activities throughout the school year.

Homeroom Parents support the teacher's plans and help communicate volunteer opportunities to other families. Classroom activities, projects, and celebrations remain under the direction and approval of the classroom teacher.

Parents interested in serving as a Homeroom Parent should indicate their interest on the Home & School Association (HSA) volunteer form distributed at the beginning of the school year. Because this role requires a significant commitment throughout the year, Homeroom Parents will receive **10 volunteer points** toward the family's annual **25-point** volunteer requirement.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT PCA

The generosity of our families, parish, local businesses, and community partners helps Palmer Catholic Academy continue to provide exceptional opportunities for our students. Palmer Catholic Academy is grateful for the generous support of local businesses and families whose partnerships help enhance educational programs, student activities, and campus improvements throughout the school year.

Businesses may participate in the school's **Gold, Silver, or Bronze Sponsorship Program**, which offers a variety of recognition and advertising opportunities. Sponsorships are available on a first-come, first-served basis, as advertising space is limited.

Families who wish to further support Palmer Catholic Academy may also participate through the school's **Family Sponsorship Program**.

For current sponsorship opportunities, benefits, and application information, please visit the Palmer Catholic Academy website or contact the school office.

STUDENT RECORDS

Palmer Catholic Academy maintains cumulative educational records for each student in accordance with diocesan policies and applicable laws.

Student records are reviewed and updated annually to ensure accurate information is maintained. When a student transfers to another school, official records are sent directly to the receiving school upon written request and after all financial obligations have been satisfied.

Permanent student records are maintained by Palmer Catholic Academy in accordance with diocesan record retention requirements.

PARENT/GUARDIAN AUTHORIZATION (IN LOCO PARENTIS)

If a parent or legal guardian will be away for an extended period of time and another adult will be responsible for the care of the student, an **Affidavit to Establish an In Loco Parentis Relationship** must be completed and submitted to the school.

This form authorizes the designated adult to act on behalf of the parent or guardian for school-related matters, including emergency situations, while the parent or guardian is unavailable.

The affidavit:

- Must be completed, signed, and notarized.
- Is available on the Palmer Catholic Academy website under **Parents > Forms & Information** or from the school office.
- May be notarized at Palmer Catholic Academy for your convenience.

Parents are responsible for notifying the school promptly whenever caregiving arrangements change.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE COMMUNICATION

At Palmer Catholic Academy, we value respectful communication and a strong partnership between home and school. Social media can be a valuable tool for sharing information and celebrating our school community. We ask all members of the Palmer Catholic Academy community to use these platforms in a manner that reflects Christian values, mutual respect, and our shared commitment to our students.

Parents are encouraged to address questions or concerns directly with the appropriate teacher or school administrator using the communication procedures outlined in this handbook before discussing concerns on social media or other public forums.

Public comments, posts, or online discussions that are false, defamatory, threatening, harassing, or disruptive to the school community may negatively impact the collaborative relationship between home and school.

When concerns arise regarding inappropriate social media activity involving the school, students, staff, or families, school administration may request a meeting to discuss the matter and work toward a respectful resolution.

Palmer Catholic Academy reserves the right to take appropriate action when online behavior substantially disrupts the school environment or interferes with the school's mission, operations, or the safety and well-being of members of the school community.



ADMISSIONS, ENROLLMENT & TUITION

Choosing a Catholic education is an investment in your child's faith, character, and academic future. Palmer Catholic Academy is honored to partner with families who share our mission of forming disciples of Christ while providing an excellent educational experience. The following policies outline our admissions process, enrollment expectations, tuition responsibilities, and financial procedures.

*"From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required."
Luke 12:48*

Included in this section:

- ✓ Admissions
- ✓ Probationary Enrollment
- ✓ Non-Discrimination Policy
- ✓ Diocesan Educational Needs Policy
- ✓ Re-enrollment & Enrollment Priority
- ✓ Tuition and Fees
- ✓ Financial Assistance
- ✓ Withdrawals

ADMISSIONS

Palmer Catholic Academy welcomes students who will benefit from and contribute positively to our Christ-centered learning community.

As part of the admissions process, prospective students may participate in age-appropriate academic screening, placement testing, student interviews, and/or parent conferences. Previous academic records, standardized test scores, health records, and other educational documentation are reviewed to determine whether Palmer Catholic Academy is able to meet the student's educational needs.

Students transferring from another school must provide:

- Official academic transcripts
- Standardized assessment results (when available)
- Health and immunization records
- Any applicable educational evaluations, accommodation plans (504), Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), or other supporting documentation
- For homeschooled students, documentation verifying successful completion of the previous grade level

Prior to admission and acceptance to Palmer Catholic Academy, new students will be assessed so that the Administration can determine each student's level of competency in certain scholastic areas. An interview with parents may be required.

As part of the admissions process, Palmer Catholic Academy may contact a student's previous school to review academic progress, attendance, behavior, and educational records before a final admission decision is made.

To be eligible for admission, students must meet the following age requirements established by the State of Florida:

- **PK4:** Four years old on or before September 1
- **Kindergarten:** Five years old on or before September 1
- **Grade 1:** Six years old on or before September 1 and successful completion of Kindergarten

Students transferring from another state who have successfully completed Kindergarten and meet that state's age requirements may be considered for provisional admission in accordance with Florida law and diocesan policy.

PROBATIONARY ENROLLMENT

All newly admitted students are accepted on a **one-semester probationary period**.

This probationary period allows the school and family to work collaboratively to ensure that Palmer Catholic Academy is an appropriate educational setting for the student academically, behaviorally, socially, and spiritually.

During this period, administration and teachers closely monitor student progress. If significant academic, behavioral, or other concerns arise that cannot be satisfactorily resolved, Palmer Catholic Academy reserves the right to discontinue enrollment. Final decisions regarding enrollment and continued enrollment rest with the Principal and Pastor.

As a Catholic school, Palmer Catholic Academy also reserves the right to address behaviors or actions that

are inconsistent with the teachings and mission of the Catholic Church.

All newly accepted students will be placed on a minimum probationary period of one school semester.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Palmer Catholic Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Palmer Catholic Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

DIOCESAN EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

The Diocese of St. Augustine is committed to helping every child reach his or her fullest intellectual, spiritual, social, emotional, and physical potential.

Palmer Catholic Academy serves students who are able to learn successfully within a traditional classroom setting. Because of the nature of our educational program and available resources, we are able to provide reasonable accommodations for some students; however, we are not able to offer the full continuum of special education services available through the public school system.

Parents are expected to disclose any diagnosed learning differences, medical conditions, educational evaluations, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), Section 504 Plans, or other specialized learning needs during the admissions process.

The school's Student Support Team will review all available documentation to determine whether Palmer Catholic Academy can appropriately meet the student's educational needs within our program. Students accepted with documented accommodations will have a **Diocesan Student Support Plan (SSP)** developed and reviewed annually.

A parentally placed private school student with a disability does not have an individual right to receive some or all of the special education and related services that would be available if enrolled in a public school under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

RE-ENROLLMENT & ENROLLMENT PRIORITY

Current Palmer Catholic Academy families are invited to re-enroll each year before enrollment opens to new families. At this time, siblings of currently enrolled students may also register for the upcoming school year.

Re-enrollment is contingent upon:

- Satisfaction of all financial obligations
- Completion of the annual volunteer requirement
- The student's successful academic and behavioral progress

When space is available, enrollment priority is given in the following order:

1. Current students and their siblings
2. Children of Palmer Catholic Academy employees
3. Students enrolled in the Palmer Catholic Academy Preschool / St. John Paul II Early Learning Center

4. Supporting parishioners* of Our Lady Star of the Sea and St. John Paul II
5. Catholic families transferring from another parish
6. Other applicants

***Supporting parishioners** are registered members of Our Lady Star of the Sea or St. John Paul II Parish who regularly participate in parish life and support the parish through worship, service, and stewardship.

TUITION AND FEES

Palmer Catholic Academy utilizes **FACTS Tuition Management** for tuition payments and incidental billing. All families are required to establish a FACTS account upon enrollment.

Through FACTS, families may conveniently manage tuition payments and view charges for school-related expenses, including the Academic and Activities fee, before and after school care, athletics, clubs, field trips, replacement items, lunches, the Netsanet Orphanage sponsorship, and other approved school fees. Families with students in **Grades 3–8** may also access grades and academic information through the FACTS Family Portal.

Current tuition rates, fees, and payment options are published annually in the **Palmer Catholic Academy Tuition & Fee Schedule**, which is available on the school website under the Admissions tab.

Payment Options

Tuition may be paid:

- In one annual payment
- In two semi-annual payments
- In ten monthly installments through FACTS

Families selecting a monthly payment plan may choose either the **1st** or **5th** of each month as their automatic payment date.

Annual Registration and Academic & Activities Fees are **non-refundable and non-transferable**. The first tuition payment is also **non-refundable and non-transferable**.

Scholarships

All students in **Grades K–8** are encouraged to apply for available Florida state scholarship programs. Scholarship information and eligibility requirements are outlined in the **Financial Assistance** section of this handbook and on the Palmer Catholic Academy website.

For **VPK Plus Enrichment** students, the sibling tuition rate applies when the sibling is enrolled at Palmer Catholic Academy or as a full-time student at Palmer Catholic Academy Preschool.

Financial Obligations

Families are expected to keep tuition and all financial obligations current throughout the school year. Students whose accounts are not current may have access to report cards and the FACTS Family Portal temporarily restricted until satisfactory payment arrangements have been made.

Eighth-grade students must have all tuition, fees, fines, and other financial obligations paid in full and return all school-owned property, including textbooks, library materials, iPads, charging cords, and other issued equipment, before participating in graduation ceremonies, receiving a diploma, or having official transcripts released.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Palmer Catholic Academy is committed to making a Catholic education as accessible as possible for families. Financial assistance is available through a combination of **Florida state scholarship programs**, **parish tuition assistance**, and **payment plan options**.

Florida State Scholarships

Palmer Catholic Academy participates in the following Florida scholarship programs:

- **Family Empowerment Scholarship for Educational Options (FES-EO)**
- **Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA)**
- **Florida Tax Credit Scholarship (FTC)**

All students in **Grades K–8** are encouraged to apply for available state scholarship opportunities each year. Information regarding eligibility and application deadlines is available through the Florida Department of Education and the school's website.

Parish Tuition Assistance

Additional tuition assistance may be available through **Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish** for families demonstrating financial need.

Families requesting parish tuition assistance must first apply for all eligible Florida state scholarships before submitting a **FACTS Grant & Aid** application.

Supporting documentation, including a letter explaining the family's financial circumstances and a copy of the most recently filed federal income tax return, must accompany the application. All financial assistance applications are treated confidentially.

The FACTS Grant & Aid application process opens annually in **January** for a limited application period.

Payment Plans

Families experiencing temporary financial hardship may request a payment plan for the Academic & Activities Fee. Requests must be submitted using the **Fee Payment Plan Application**, available through the school office, and approved prior to the applicable payment deadline.

WITHDRAWALS

Parents withdrawing a student from Palmer Catholic Academy must provide **written notice at least thirty (30) days** before the student's last day of attendance. If less than thirty days' notice is provided, the next month's tuition payment remains due.

Before official records are released:

- All tuition and fees must be paid in full.
- School-owned property, including textbooks, library books, iPads, chargers, and other issued materials, must be returned.

Official records and transcripts are forwarded directly to the receiving school upon written request and after all financial obligations have been satisfied.

Academic & Activities Fee and the first month's tuition are **non-refundable and non-transferable**.



STUDENT ACTIVITIES & ATHLETICS

Students discover their God-given gifts through athletics, arts, leadership, service, and extracurricular opportunities that build confidence, character, teamwork, and school spirit.

*"Whatever you do, do from the heart, as for the Lord and not for others."
Colossians 3:23*

Included in this section:

- ✓ Student Clubs
- ✓ Academic Support Programs
- ✓ Safety Patrol
- ✓ Athletics

STUDENT CLUBS

Palmer Catholic Academy offers a variety of extracurricular clubs and enrichment opportunities throughout the school year. Available clubs may vary based on student interest, staff availability, and scheduling. Information regarding club offerings, meeting dates, and registration will be shared with families each fall.

Participation in clubs is a privilege, and students are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior, maintain good academic standing, and follow all school rules while participating in extracurricular activities.

Please note:

- All clubs must be approved by the Principal and operate in accordance with Diocese of St. Augustine policies.
- Clubs may be sponsored by faculty, staff, or other qualified individuals with the approval of the Principal.
- Club fees will be billed through FACTS.
- Students must be picked up promptly at the conclusion of each club meeting.
- Siblings who are not participating in a club or school-sponsored activity may not remain on campus after dismissal and should be picked up at their regular dismissal time.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Palmer Catholic Academy also offers academic support opportunities designed to help students strengthen skills and achieve academic success.

- **WIN Club (Grades 1–5)** is available by teacher invitation for students who would benefit from additional small-group instruction and targeted skill development.
- **Homework Club (Grades 3–8)** is available by invitation and provides teacher-supervised academic support for homework completion. Homework Club is intended solely for academic assistance and is not an after-school childcare program.

SAFETY PATROL

Safety Patrol provides students in **Grades 5–8** with an opportunity to develop leadership, responsibility, and service while helping maintain a safe and welcoming school environment.

Safety Patrol members assist with morning arrival, hallway supervision, flag ceremonies, and helping our youngest students safely reach their classrooms.

Selection is based on leadership potential, responsibility, academic performance, and teacher recommendations. To remain in good standing, Safety Patrol members must:

- Maintain at least a **B average**.
- Demonstrate exemplary conduct and serve as positive role models.
- Be available to fulfill assigned morning or afternoon duty schedules.
- Receive two teacher recommendations.

Students who receive significant disciplinary consequences or accumulate **six or more demerits** during the school year may be removed from Safety Patrol at the discretion of administration.

ATHLETICS

Participation in athletics is an extension of the educational mission of Palmer Catholic Academy. Student-athletes are expected to represent the school with sportsmanship, integrity, respect, and Christian character while balancing academic responsibilities with athletic commitments.

Students who are selected for a team are expected to attend practices and games regularly and fulfill the responsibilities associated with team membership.

Athletic Eligibility

To participate in interscholastic athletics, students must:

- Maintain academic eligibility (see below) as established by the Diocese of St. Augustine Catholic Grade School Conference.
- Demonstrate appropriate conduct both in and out of the classroom.
- Have a current Diocese of St. Augustine Athletic Physical Participation Form on file, dated after **June 1** of the current school year.
- Provide written medical clearance before returning to participation following an injury.

The Principal reserves the right to suspend or remove a student from athletic participation due to academic concerns, excessive absences, disciplinary issues, or conduct inconsistent with Palmer Catholic Academy's expectations.

Academic Eligibility

In accordance with the **Diocese of St. Augustine Catholic Grade School Conference By-Laws**, student-athletes must maintain satisfactory academic progress to participate in interscholastic athletics.

A student is **academically ineligible** if he or she receives:

- **Two (2) or more grades of 69% (D) or below** in major subjects, **or**
- **One (1) grade of 59% (F) or below** in any major subject.

Major subjects include:

- Religion
- English/Spelling
- Reading/Literature
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies

Student grades are reviewed at **mid-quarter** and **at the end of each grading quarter** to determine athletic eligibility.

Students determined to be academically ineligible will be suspended from athletic participation for:

- **Five (5) academic days** following a mid-quarter grade review.
- **Ten (10) academic days** following an end-of-quarter grade review.

Eligibility may be reinstated following the suspension period if the student's grades meet diocesan eligibility requirements. Students must also be academically eligible prior to participating in athletic tryouts.

The Principal reserves the right to establish **more stringent local eligibility requirements** and may suspend or declare a student ineligible for athletic participation due to excessive absences, unsatisfactory conduct, or violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

Students transferring from another Catholic school within the Diocese while academically ineligible will retain their ineligible status until eligibility is restored in accordance with diocesan policies.

All students shall be provided an equal opportunity to try out for athletic teams, provided they meet all eligibility requirements established by Palmer Catholic Academy and the Diocese of St. Augustine.



RESOURCES & REFERENCE

This section contains the forms, agreements, and reference materials that support the policies outlined throughout this handbook. We encourage families to review these resources carefully and keep them available for future reference throughout the school year.

*"Let all things be done properly and in order."
— 1 Corinthians 14:40*

Included in this section:

- ✓ PCA Addendum for Preschool Students
- ✓ PCA Cell Phone Contract for Middle Schoolers
- ✓ Palmer Network Acceptable Use Policy
- ✓ Diocese of St. Augustine Network Acceptable Use Policy
- ✓ Standards of Ethical Conduct
- ✓ Reporting Educator/Professional Misconduct
- ✓ IPAD User Agreement & Acceptable Use Policy
- ✓ Immunization and Screening Policy for the Diocese of St. Augustine

ADDENDUM FOR PRESCHOOL STUDENTS

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION:

In the preschool classrooms of Palmer Catholic Academy, our teachers and paraprofessionals encourage the natural curiosity of each child to learn about the world around them, in the light of our Catholic faith. Our staff develop the whole child, in a Catholic and Christ centered educational environment. Our students learn in a play-based environment, in which their academic and social growth is facilitated by our staff. The schedule of activities and hands-on, active learning experiences facilitate the growth of children throughout their school day. Our teachers plan a wide variety of learning experiences for the children, encouraging them to explore and problem solve in a safe, nurturing and faith-based environment.

NO TOUCH POLICY

For the dignity and safety of your child, PCA faculty cannot assist your child in wiping/cleansing when they use the toilet or if they soil their clothing with urine or feces. If this should occur the office will contact the parent(s) to come and pick up their child. If the parent(s) cannot be reached the office will proceed in calling the emergency contacts.

Palmer Catholic Academy recognizes that in the development of young children “bathroom” accidents may occur. If a child needs assistance in wiping, the teacher/assistant will offer the child a “flushable wipe”.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

All children enrolling in Palmer Catholic Academy’s Four-year-old classes must be the required age by September 1st. Children must be familiar with public bathroom type facilities and completely toilet trained, and Pull-ups are not acceptable.

Your child is toilet trained when (without any reminders) can walk independently to the toilet, pull down his/her pants, urinate or pass bowel movements, wipe/cleanse him/herself without assistance and pull up his/her pants. Your child is not fully toilet trained if he/she has four or more accidents within a four- week period. At that time, the parents will meet with the Director and other alternatives will be decided upon.

Our preschool follows the basic administrative policies as provided by the Diocese of St. Augustine.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL OF STUDENTS/CARPOOL LINE PROCEDURES

Please also see the handbook section on Arrival and Dismissal if your preschooler has older siblings. The following procedures will assist you in the drop-off and pick up of your student:

Morning Drop Off - Carpool line

- Please pull forward to the STOP sign in front of the school.
- Put your car in the park and wait for a staff member to assist your children out of the car.
- Drop off begins at 7:15 AM
- Students enrolled in VPK Only hours can also arrive as early as 7:15 am.

Dismissal

- **VPK ONLY students** - dismissal is at 11:30. Please park along the curb and a staff member will walk your child to their car at dismissal time.
- **VPK Plus Enrichment students** - begins at 2:15. Please arrive promptly for the dismissal time of the oldest sibling. Students who have not been picked up by the end of carpool will be walked to Angels After Hours and charged a fee. See Handbook for fees.
- If your preschool student is your ONLY student at PCA, please arrive for carpool/dismissal promptly at 2:10. Your child will be walked to meet you in the carline at 2:15 PM. Once your child is safely

buckled into their car seat, please exit the parking lot IMMEDIATELY. We have a large number of families coming through carpool line following the 2:15 dismissal. We want to ensure that dismissal moves as efficiently as possible. We appreciate your cooperation.

- AT NO TIME ARE CHILDREN ALLOWED TO BE UNACCOMPANIED ON THE SIDEWALK AREAS OR ANYWHERE ON THE PARKING LOT WITHOUT AN ADULT PRESENT AND HOLDING THEIR HAND
- If you have older children attending PCA, your preschool student will be dismissed at the Release time for the oldest sibling. A staff member will walk your child to your vehicle.

Early release days

- pick-up is at 12:00pm unless there is an older sibling (older sibling pick-up time applies). On these early release days, parents may enter the carpool line.
- Parents are to stay in the car and pull into the carpool line.
- Families will receive a carpool card with the student's name.
- Carpool changes require written or verbal parental consent.
- The carpool card should be placed on the dashboard.
- Follow the procedures on the back of the carpool card.
- Please pull forward to the STOP sign in front of the school. Put your car in park and wait for a staff member to escort your child to the car.
- After your child is safely in the car, please pull forward to the "holding area" and buckle your child into their car seat in order to prevent a backup.

EARLY/LATE PICK UP (Please See PCA Handbook)

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The manner in which a teacher handles a discipline situation will depend on the child and the individual occurrence.

The management technique could involve any of the following:

- Provide ample activities to keep the child involved.
- Discussion with the child and give gentle explanations and reminders.
- Positive reinforcement and encouragement.
- Give caring time.
- Redirect the child.
- Provide a quiet time. (This is a short time where the child is given time in the classroom to collect him/herself until they are ready to be a part of the group activities again.)
- Discuss the situation with the parents and set up a plan of action.

If all the above steps are unsuccessful or repetitive, the child may be dismissed with the principal and pastor's approval.

Discipline will never include any of the following:

- Physical punishment.
- Taking away or threatening to take away snacks, play, recess and/or resource class.
- Making any child feel that they are "bad."

ALLERGIES & SNACKS

At the discretion of our administration, our preschool classrooms may be required to be "NUT FREE" environments. This may include but is not limited to, whole nuts, peanut butter, almond butter, hazelnut butter and walnut butter. If you choose to use an alternate spread such as Sun Butter or Soy Butter, please send in a copy of the label identifying this product(s) since they have the scent of peanuts and may be mistaken for an actual peanut butter product. Our administration may prohibit products that state 'may

have traces of nuts' or 'made in a facility that may have traces of nuts', if a child in the classroom has a life-threatening allergy to those foods.

No hard candy, popcorn, caramel corn, are permitted as these are significant choking hazards for young children.

Please read food product labels carefully. Please ensure that your child's teacher and the school office are made aware of your child's allergies.

Special birthday snacks may be organized through the classroom teacher and brought to the school for your child's birthday celebration. Birthday snack suggestions are cookies, mini brownie bites, a cookie cake, mini muffins. NO FROSTED CUPAKES. Balloons, party favors, treat bags cannot be sent to school. Please inform your child's teacher that you would like to bring in a birthday snack. The teachers plan their classroom schedules in advance and this notice will assist in making your child's birthday special. All food items must be purchased from a restaurant or grocery store in prepackaged, sealed containers.

VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN (VPK) PROGRAM

The Voluntary Prekindergarten program is funded by the State of Florida. The following procedures are required for the VPK Program, as per the State of Florida:

- Student must be four years old by September 1st
- Family must be residents of Florida
- Family must attend enrollment sessions at designated locations to receive Voluntary Pre-kindergarten Education Program Child Eligibility Enrollment Certificate or they can register for certificate online. Go to <https://familyservices.floridaeearlylearning.com/> for instructions.
- Family must provide a copy of proof of Florida residency (driver's license) and child's birth certificate at enrollment session
- PCA must receive the certificate naming Palmer Catholic Academy as provider.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Parents must sign the Parental Choice certificate at the end of the month, verifying their child's attendance record. The director will notify parents each month when the signature is due.

If you authorize someone to sign on your behalf, this authorization must be sent via email to the director. It is very important that the form is completed fully and accurately. PCA staff are not permitted to complete any section of the form on your behalf.

Adhering to PCA time of arrival and dismissal will help maintain consistency and assist in your child's overall learning experience. Inform school office personnel via written documentation, phone call/voice mail or email if your child will not be attending school.

Office personnel will call families to verify an absence if written documentation, phone call/voice message or email was not received.

All Tuition and fee schedules are on the pcapvb.org website.

Four-year-old Prekindergarten Classes- Child must be four years old on September 1st

For additional information, policies and updates please refer to the frequently asked questions on <https://familyservices.floridaeearlylearning.com/> and click on Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK).



MIDDLE SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

Palmer Catholic Academy Mission Statement: Palmer Catholic Academy of Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church provides a Catholic and Christ-centered educational environment that inspires all students to reach their full spiritual and academic potential and become responsible, respectful, and reverent disciples of Christ..

Welcome to all returning and new students! The Palmer Middle School team of teachers is looking forward to another exciting year at Palmer Catholic Academy. The team is dedicated to inspiring all students to reach their full spiritual and academic potential. Please read and review the following Middle School Expectations.

Students must **come to class prepared** every day with their charged iPad, pen, pencil, paper, books, planner, homework, recreational book, etc. Students are responsible for bringing and replenishing their own supplies throughout the year.

iPads are an important tool in our educational objectives and lessons. Students must bring their iPads to school charged and ready for use. iPads will be used for educational purposes only. Students are not permitted to use their iPads to play non-school related games or navigate non-school related sites. Students are responsible for keeping their iPad and case in good condition. Please refer to the iPad User Agreement for more details.

Every minute of each class is a vital part of instructional time; therefore, students **must be on time for every class!** Students will be given **two locker breaks** during the school day in addition to locker time before and after school. Students are responsible for getting all the items needed for their next classes at that time. Students should not carry all their books around all day. **No locker trips will be permitted outside of planned locker breaks.**

All work must be done in **blue or black ink**. All math assignments must be done in **pencil**, or **they will not be graded**. **No gel pens** are to be used for any assignments. Work done in **gel pens will not be graded**. Any work not completed as stated by teacher will not be graded. **Papers and homework assignments with no name** on them will automatically lose 2 points off the total grade.

Students are expected to **turn all assignments in on time!** "On time" means on the day it is due and at the beginning of the class in which it was assigned.

- Daily homework not turned in at the beginning of class will receive a zero (no late homework accepted).
- Long-term assignments can be turned in by 8:30 AM the next morning for 20% off.

The middle school years are big growth years for student **responsibility and independence**. **Communication between parents, teachers, and students is an important part of successful learning.** Microsoft Teams will be used by Middle school teachers. Assignments can easily be accessed by students and parents through Teams. Teachers will post assignments, projects, test dates, and other important information. Assignments may be changed based on the class that day; therefore, parents, please ask your students each day about their homework, projects, etc. Students should check Teams periodically throughout the day and after 3:30 for updates regarding homework, tests, and upcoming assignments. Teachers will check their email and voicemail daily after 3:00 PM to retrieve and respond to any messages

The uniform policy will be enforced. Appropriate attire will be worn at all times with particular attention focused on the mandatory uniform policy for Thursday Mass. Please refer to the Parent/Student handbook for specific details. Remember, all shirts must be tucked in at all times, ID badges and belts must be worn, no footies are allowed (SOLID navy blue, black, or white socks only) and, as students grow, **new uniforms need to be**

purchased and/or altered to fit properly. Please refer to the Student Code of Conduct for disciplinary actions assigned for uniform violations.

Chewing gum is prohibited at all times, including while on school campus, school-related events, and on any school bus trips. This policy is in place to ensure an environment where we all can take pride in the upkeep and cleanliness of our school. Please refer to the Student Code of Conduct for disciplinary actions assigned for gum chewing.

Cell Phones: Students who bring cell phones to school need to complete a *Cell Phone Agreement (at the end of this document)* and will give their cell phone to their homeroom teacher at the beginning of the school day. It will be returned to the student at the end of the school day. **After school hours, cell phones are to remain in your backpack – they are not to be used anywhere on PCA property (including carpool).** If you must contact your parents, ask a middle school teacher for a front office pass in order to use the front office phone. **Students are not allowed to carry around their cell phones during the school day. Any cell phone confiscated by a teacher will be given to Mrs. DosSantos, and a parent must pick it up after school.**

Academic dishonesty will not be accepted in any form in middle school. This includes cheating, copying homework, and plagiarism. Teachers will review all guidelines related to academic dishonesty in class. Parents please also review these rules with your students, and see the Code of Conduct for more details.

Students will be expected to follow school rules as well as individual classroom rules (posted in each classroom), sports teams, Homework Club, cafeteria, and club rules. For all behavior expectations and consequences, please refer to the Palmer Catholic Academy Code of Conduct. Parents, please read carefully and discuss with your student.

We are looking forward to an outstanding year of academic growth and success, respect for one another, community service, and being united in our faith!

Please bring this signed section with you on or before the first day of school:

I understand and will comply with PCA Middle School Expectations and the Palmer Parent/Student Handbook:

(Student Signature)

(Date)

(Parent Signature)

(Date)

CELL PHONE CONTRACT

REQUIRED FOR ANY MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT WHO WILL HAVE A CELL PHONE ON CAMPUS AT ANY TIME**

This contract concerns the possession and use of cellular telephones by students (**middle school only**) on the campus of Palmer Catholic Academy. Cell phone rules and regulations are outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook. Signing this contract is an acknowledgement that both parent and child have read and understood the policy and agree to abide by it. **All student cell phones that will be brought to school at any time must be registered with the front office through this form.** If a student is found in possession of a cell phone without this completed cell phone contract, his/her cell phone will be confiscated and brought to the principal. This applies to instructional hours as well as after school activities, sports, and events. If the phone is confiscated a second time, the student's cell phone privileges will be revoked for the remainder of the school year. Parents and students must sign and agree to the contract below.

Student Name (Print): _____ Homeroom: _____

STUDENT CONTRACT

I, _____, understand that possessing a cell phone on campus is a privilege, not a right, and that permission may be revoked at any time if school policies are violated. I have read the Parent/Student Handbook policy regarding cell phones and agree to its provisions. Additionally, I acknowledge that the school and its staff are not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage to my cell phone and furthermore will not dedicate its resources to investigating loss, theft or damage.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

PARENT CONTRACT

I, _____, agree to allow my child to possess a cell phone on the Palmer Catholic Academy campus. I acknowledge that the school and its staff are not responsible for loss, theft, damage to the cell phone and furthermore will not dedicate its resources to investigating loss, theft, or damage. I have read the Parent/Student Handbook policy regarding cell phones and agree to its provisions. If my child's phone is confiscated due to policy violation, I acknowledge that I must come to the school to retrieve it at the convenience of the school staff.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

STUDENT CELL PHONE INFORMATION

Cell Phone Manufacturer: _____

Model: _____

Color: _____

Cell phone number (include area code): _____

PALMER CATHOLIC ACADEMY NETWORK ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Parent/Guardian signature from page 2 of the Handbook is acceptance of the Network Policies and should ensure that the student understands his/her obligations prior to signing.

The school's Technology Coordinator and each classroom teacher have read the DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE NETWORK ACCEPTABLE POLICY and agree to review this agreement and network etiquette with students at the beginning of the school year and then periodically throughout the year. Students will be monitored in a diligent and responsible manner. Since students may also use the network for individual work or in the context of other classes, each of them will be held responsible.

Each student's parent or legal guardian of this(these) student(s), have read the DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE NETWORK ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY in the Student Handbook and understand that this access is only for educational purposes. Parents/guardians recognize that it is impossible for the school to restrict access to all controversial materials and will not hold the Diocese of St. Augustine, the school or any employee responsible for materials acquired on the network. Parents/guardians hereby give permission to grant Internet access privileges to their child(ren) and certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Users may not post on personal Internet (ex: Facebook, Twitter, Myspace) sites to which they have access away from school grounds, any pictures or inappropriate text comments that reflect a negative image of the school or school personnel, other student, races, and/or ethnicities.

DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE NETWORK ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY



The Network Acceptable Use Policy for all Parishes, Schools, and Entities of the Diocese of St. Augustine Updated: April 30, 2018

1.0 Glossary of Terms

1.1 Authorized users

1. “Employee:” Any layperson who is employed by or engaged in ministry in any diocesan entity, whether part-time or full-time, who is given payment for services rendered, and for whom the diocesan entity is obligated to withhold payroll taxes (FICA, Medicare, and withholding).
2. “Volunteer:” Any unpaid person engaged or involved in a diocesan activity, specifically as it relates to database creation and/or management, IT services, or internet-related services.
3. “Church Personnel:” For purposes of this policy only, Church Personnel includes all individuals who minister, work, or volunteer in any school, parish, or ministry of the diocese whose compliance with this policy is required. The term has no legal meaning or significance outside the scope of this policy and is not indicative of any employment or agency relationship.
4. “Consultant:” Independent contractors, consultants, vendors or other persons who are not subject to the supervision of the Bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine and for whom no such duty to withhold payroll taxes exist, but provide expertise on database creation and/or management, IT services, or internet-related services.

1.3 Internet/Intranet/Extranet-related systems

These systems include, but are not limited to, computer equipment, software, operating systems, storage media, network accounts providing electronic mail, World Wide Web browsing and FTP.

1. All Internet/Intranet/Extranet-related systems are the property of the diocesan entity it serves. These systems are used for business purposes in serving the interests of the diocesan entity, its staff, and its constituents in the course of its normal operations.

1.4 Diocesan entity

Any parish, school, entity or ministry of the Diocese of St. Augustine, including those entities which are separately incorporated under 501(c) (3).

1.5 Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

Any information about an individual that can be used to distinguish or trace a person's identity. PII is defined as any one or more of types of information including, but not limited to:

1. Social Security number
2. Username and password
3. Passport number
4. Credit card number
5. Clearances
6. Banking information
7. Biometrics
8. Data and place of birth
9. Mother's maiden name
10. Criminal, medical and financial records
11. Educational transcripts
12. Photos and video including any of the above

All electronic files that contain PII will reside with the diocesan entity's physically secure location. All physical files that contain PII will reside within a locked file cabinet or room when not being actively viewed or modified.

PII is not to be downloaded to workstations or mobile devices (such as laptops, personal digital assistants, mobile phones, tablets or removable media) or systems outside the protection of the diocesan entity. PII will also not be sent through any form of unsecured electronic communication as significant security risk emerge when PII is transferred from a secure location to a less secure location or is disposed of improperly. When disposing of PII, the physical or electronic file should be shredded or securely deleted. Authorized diocesan personnel will do all disposal of PII.

All PII will be collected only when there is a legal authority, and it is necessary to conduct diocesan business.

Access to PII is only conducted when the information is needed to conduct official diocesan business and should only be utilized for official purposes. Authorized users will not create duplicate copies of documents that contain PII and will destroy the documents when no longer needed. When PII is extracted from a document, authorized users may only target the PII that is required for the task. PII that is extracted shall not be retained beyond the records retention rules for the data and the system it was accessed from. PII shall not be stored or transmitted via personally owned devices. PII may not be taken home by any authorized user.

1.6 Personally Owned Information Systems

Personally owned devices include cell phones, tablets or any other device that is owned and maintained by the user, not the diocesan entity.

Personally owned devices are not allowed to access the diocesan entities network. Therefore, a device that is not owned by the Diocese of St. Augustine shall not process, store, access or transmit data or confidential information.

Under no circumstances are users allowed to connect their personal device to a diocesan entity network or any diocesan-owned devices, applications or systems.

1.7 Spam

Unauthorized and/or unsolicited electronic mass mailings.

1.8 IT

Information Technology

1.9 Internet

Includes both external and internal access of communications and data storage equipment, either owned or reserved for use by the diocese, by digital information devices including personal computers (PCs), personal digital assistants (PDAs) and similar devices. The term "Internet," as it applies to external resources, is meant to be all-inclusive and comprises other similar or analogous terms such as the "World Wide Web," "email," and "the Net."

1.10 Network

A communications system connects two or more computers and their peripheral devices to exchange information and share resources. For this policy, this also includes stand-alone computers.

2.0 Overview

The Diocese of St. Augustine recognizes that the Network/Internet and other emerging technologies allow authorized users access to immense information globally. The Diocese of St. Augustine's goal in providing this privilege to authorized users is to promote professional excellence, innovation, and communication. The use of the Network/Internet or other emerging technologies will be guided by the Diocesan Network Acceptable Use Policy (DNAUP). All Diocese of St. Augustine authorized users are required to sign a written DNAUP and to abide by the terms and conditions of the policy and its accompanying regulations.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to authorized users of any school, parish or ministry of the Diocese of St. Augustine, including all personnel affiliated with third parties. This policy applies to all equipment that is owned or used by the diocesan entity.

4.0 Purpose

The purpose of this DNAUP is not to impose restrictions that are contrary to an established culture of openness, transparency, trust, and integrity. Rather, the Diocese of St. Augustine is committed to protecting its authorized users from illegal or damaging actions by individuals, either knowingly or unknowingly.

These rules are in place to protect authorized users and diocesan entities. Inappropriate use exposes diocesan entities to risks including virus attacks, compromise of network systems and services and legal issues. Anyone with knowledge of inappropriate material/content should report this information verbally and in writing to the IT authority or the principal, pastor, or layperson in charge of the school, parish or ministry of the diocese.

5.0 Policy

5.1 General Use and Ownership

1. Authorized users should be aware that the data they create on systems remains the property of the diocesan entity. Because of the need to protect the network, management cannot guarantee the confidentiality of information stored on any network device belonging to a diocesan entity.
2. Authorized users are responsible for exercising good judgment regarding the use of network/computer systems. Authorized users should be guided by diocesan policies on personal use, and if there is any uncertainty, authorized users should consult their supervisor or manager.
3. The Diocese of St. Augustine recommends that any information that users consider sensitive or vulnerable be encrypted, especially when stored on external media.
4. Authorized personnel, acting on behalf of the Diocese of St. Augustine, may monitor equipment, systems, and network traffic at any time. The Diocese of St. Augustine maintains the right to monitor all network/computer activity derived from or utilized through its resources, whether it is online, downloaded or through printed material.
5. The Diocese of St. Augustine, through its entities, reserves the right to audit networks and systems on a periodic basis to ensure compliance with this policy.
6. All data and files on network/computer systems are the property of the Diocese of St. Augustine.

5.2 Security and Proprietary Information

1. Anyone responsible for entering information into a database or having access to database information used by any diocesan entity, whether clergy, religious, employee or volunteer, must be FBI fingerprinted and background checked and cleared.
2. The appropriate IT authority of each diocesan entity does everything possible to ensure the diocesan entity network is properly maintained and adequate security measures are operational. To assist the appropriate IT authority of each diocesan entity in sustaining this goal, authorized users, through their supervisor, should notify their IT authority when software and hardware modifications are necessary on any diocesan computer workstation. At no time should a computer be connected to a diocesan entity network without the approval of the IT authority of the diocesan entity.

The user interface for information contained on Internet/Intranet/ Extranet-related systems should be classified as either confidential or not confidential, as defined by school confidentiality guidelines. Staff and students should take all necessary steps to prevent unauthorized access to this information.

3. **Password Policy**

Passwords will be created by each authorized user for their own use, with the exception of students, volunteers, and temporary/contractual personnel.

Authorized user passwords shall not be shared. It is the responsibility of each authorized user to keep his/her password confidential. Anyone whose password becomes known to another person should notify the IT authority immediately, and a new password will be created. Anyone who becomes aware of anyone else's password should contact the IT authority immediately, and a new password will be created.

Temporary passwords used by students, volunteers or temporary/contractual personnel may be known by the supervisor and other appropriate authorities. However, temporary passwords should not be shared. System server level passwords should be changed quarterly by the IT authority; user level passwords should be changed at least every 90-days.

4. **Authentication Strategy**

This Password Policy applies to all information systems and applications that contain or access the diocesan entity's information or services. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Mainframes, servers and other devices that provide centralized computing capabilities
- SAN, NAS and other devices that provide centralized storage capabilities.
- Diocesan issued desktops, laptops, or any other device that provides distributed computing capabilities.
- Routers, switches and other devices that provide network capabilities.
- Firewalls and other devices that provide dedicated security capabilities.
- Windows Domain Accounts, diocesan email accounts, diocesan entity application accounts as well as any other information system or service.

The diocese dictates that each password and User-ID be unique and not be shared with any other individual. Users are forbidden to share their unique password or write it down. All passwords must be memorized.

Each user who is authorized to access, store, process, administer and maintain the system, applications and data must be uniquely identified.

If personnel are on the diocesan entity's network, a username and password are required. All passwords should:

- Not contain significant portions of the user's account name or full name.
- Be at least eight (8) characters in length.
- Contain characters from three of the four categories:
 - English uppercase characters (A to Z)
 - English lowercase characters (a to z)
 - Base 10 digits (0 through 9)
 - Non-alphabetic characters (!, \$, #, %, etc.)

- Not be the same as the username.
 - Changed within a maximum of 90 calendar days.
 - Not be identical to the previous ten (10) passwords.
 - Must consist of 1 uppercase letter, 1 number, 1 special character.
 - Not be displayed when entered.
- a. All PCs, laptops, and workstations should be secured with a password-protected screensaver with the automatic activation feature set at 15 minutes or less, or by logging-off (control-alt-delete for Windows 7 Professional and above users) when the host will be unattended.
 - b. Due to the vulnerability of external media, such as flash drives, special care should be exercised to protect systems from damaging viruses in accordance with this policy. Authorized users are required to obtain supervisor approval before using, transmitting or taking files off-site. Information considered sensitive and of a confidential nature, such as personnel files and payroll data, are not permitted to leave the work site for any reason.
 - c. Postings by authorized users from any diocesan email address to online bulletin boards, forums, chat rooms, web logs ("blogs") and any other similar non-work-related discussion groups are prohibited, unless they are specifically work-related.
 - d. All hosts used by the authorized user that is connected to any diocesan Internet/Intranet/Extranet shall be continually executing approved virus-scanning software with a current virus database.
 - e. Authorized users must use extreme caution when opening email attachments received from unknown senders, which may contain viruses, email bombs, or Trojan horse code.
 - f. Consult with your IT authority before sending "blast" emails. Sending an email to more than 100 recipients at a time is considered a "blast" email. The diocese discourages this practice unless an outside vendor is used to manage the dissemination of such emails.
 - g. Whenever sending "blast" emails or emails to many recipients, use the blind copy (bc) for the recipients to ensure respect for the privacy of each address.

5. **Incident Response for Desktop and Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) Computers**

If an incident occurs involving any device (workstations, smartphones, laptops, tablets, etc.) that is on a diocesan entity network, the appropriate supervisor shall be contacted immediately. If it is deemed by the supervisor to be a security breach of confidential information, a Security Incident Response Form will be completed.

All users are responsible for reporting known or suspected information or information technology security incidents. All incidents must be reported immediately to the

appropriate supervisor. The supervisor will inform the IT authority and document the incident.

The diocesan entity will employ on all desktop and laptop devices and will ensure that the antivirus software is up-to-date.

Incident response will be managed based on the level of severity of the incident. The level is a measure of its impact or threat on the operation or integrity of the Diocese of St. Augustine and its' information. High Level (potential to impact the network or data) Medium Level (potential to impact one system or non-critical system) Low Level (has little or no risk of infecting the network or system).

The diocesan entity will identify the security breach by conducting the following:

- a. Confirm the discovery of a compromised resource(s).
- b. Evaluate the security incident.
- c. Identify the system(s) of information affected.
- d. Review all preliminary details.
- e. Characterize the impact on the diocesan entity as: minimal, serious, or critical.
- f. Determine where and how the breach occurred.
 - a. Identify the source of the compromise and the time frame involved.
Review the network to identify all compromised or affected systems.
- g. Examine appropriate system and audit logs for further irregularities.
 - a. Document all internet protocol (IP) addresses, operating systems, domain system names and other pertinent system information.
- h. Initiate measures to contain and control the incident to prevent further unauthorized access.
- i. Document actions through the process from initial detection to final resolution.

5.3 Unacceptable Use

1. A database of subscribers for parish or other diocesan entities can be a useful tool for parish or entity distribution of important messages, calendar of events, or other data. The marketplace is full of companies that offer such database opportunities. This type of database can also compromise a person's identity and/or place an individual in danger if the database is misused, compromised or shared indiscreetly. No parish or diocesan entity should create or subscribe to a vehicle by which subscribers, other than authorized personnel such as employees, priests, deacons, religious or those designated at the discretion of the pastor or head of the diocesan entity, are given email addresses to communicate with other subscribers. This does not apply to instructional technology or methodology which includes approved subscriber access for a specific instructional purpose and is monitored for this purpose. This instructional technology should not offer chat or chat rooms separate from the monitored purpose. Also, the application should NOT:
 - a. Allow blogs
 - b. Require or request photos of subscribers
 - c. Ask for age or gender of subscribers
 - d. Display subscriber email addresses

- e. Allow subscribers access to other subscriber information

As we utilize the Internet, email and other technology for communication, we must be aware of the serious and grave danger to our children and young people when information is misguided or given innocently to the wrong people.

- 2. The following activities are, in general, prohibited. Authorized users may be exempted from these restrictions during the course of their legitimate job responsibilities (e.g., systems administration staff may need to disable the network access of a host if that host is disrupting production services).
 - a. Under no circumstances is an authorized user allowed to engage in any activity that is illegal under local, state, federal or international law while utilizing the diocesan entity-owned resources.
 - b. Authorized users are prohibited from attempting to circumvent or subvert any system's security measures. Authorized users are prohibited from using any computer program or device to intercept or decode passwords or similar access control information.
 - c. When an authorized user becomes "unauthorized" by employment, dismissal, graduation, retirement, etc., or if the authorized user is assigned a new position and/or responsibilities within the diocese, his/her access authorization will automatically be reviewed with the appropriate individual to determine whether continued access is warranted. This person may not use facilities, accounts, access codes, privileges or information for which he/she has not been authorized.

3. **System and Network Activities**

The following activities are strictly prohibited, with no exceptions:

- a. Violations of the rights of any person or company protected by copyright, trade secret, patent or other intellectual property, or similar laws or regulations, including, but not limited to, the installation or distribution of "pirated" or other software products that are not appropriately licensed for use by the diocesan entity.
- b. Unauthorized copying of copyrighted material including, but not limited to, digitization and distribution of photographs from magazines, books, or other copyrighted sources, copyrighted music, and the installation of any copyrighted software for which the diocesan entity or the end user does not have an active license is strictly prohibited. Public disclosure of information about programs (e.g., source code) without the owner's authorization is prohibited.
- c. Exporting software, technical information, encryption software or technology, in violation of international or regional export control laws, is illegal. The appropriate management should be consulted before export of any material that is in question.
- d. Introduction of malicious programs into the network or server (e.g., viruses, worms, Trojan horses, email bombs, etc.).

- e. Revealing your account password to others or allowing the use of your account by others. This includes family and other household members when work is being done at home.
- f. The installation or use of Instant Messaging is prohibited without prior approval from the appropriate department directory.
- g. The installation or use of Instant Messaging is prohibited.
- h. Using a diocesan computing asset to access inappropriate or offensive material or to engage in the procuring or transmitting of material that violates diocesan anti-harassment or hostile environment policies.
- i. Making fraudulent offers of products, items or services originating from any diocesan entity account.
- j. Making statements about warranty, expressly or implied, unless it is a part of normal job duties.
- k. Effecting security breaches or disruptions of network communication. Security breaches include, but are not limited to, accessing data of which the authorized user is not an intended recipient or logging into a server or account that the authorized user is not expressly authorized to access unless these duties are within the scope of regular duties. For purposes of this section, 'disruption' includes, but is not limited to, creating or propagating viruses, hacking, network sniffing, spamming, pinged floods, packet spoofing, password grabbing, disk scavenging, denial of service and forged routing information for malicious purposes.
- l. Port scanning or security scanning is expressly prohibited unless prior notification is made to the Diocese of St. Augustine.
- m. Executing any form of network monitoring which will intercept data not intended for the authorized user's host, unless this activity is a part of the authorized user's normal job duty.
- n. Circumventing user authentication or the security of any host, network or account.
- o. Using any program/script/command, or sending messages of any kind, with the intent to interfere with, or disable, a user's terminal session, via any means, locally or via the Internet/Intranet/Extranet.
- p. Posting photos, digital video, and other personal information of children and diocesan personnel, without authorization, to Internet sites is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, activities that are conducted on personal computer equipment off-site and after working hours.

- q. Peer-to-Peer file sharing. This includes, but is not limited to, Lime wire, Morpheus, and Napster.

4. **Employee Responsibilities**

Privacy: No authorized user should view, copy, alter or destroy another's personal electronic files without permission.

Harassment, Libel, and Slander: Under no circumstances, may any authorized user use Diocese of St. Augustine computers or network resources to libel, slander or harass any other person.

Abuse of Computer Resources: Abuse of Diocese of St. Augustine computer resources is prohibited. This abuse includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Unauthorized use of software: Software downloaded from the Internet or loaded from disks and flash drives are prohibited unless approved by the IT authority.
2. Game Playing: Installing or playing recreational games, which is not part of authorized and assigned job-related activity, are considered unacceptable practices and are prohibited.
3. Chain Letters: The propagation of chain letters (email), "Ponzi" or other "pyramid" schemes of any type are considered an unacceptable practice and are prohibited.
4. Unauthorized Servers: The establishment of a background process that services incoming requests from anonymous diocesan employees for purposes of music/radio/video continuous Internet connectivity, chatting or browsing the Internet is prohibited.
5. Unauthorized Monitoring: An employee may not use computing resources for unauthorized monitoring of electronic communications of other employees.
6. Private Commercial Purposes: Personal use of network and computer resources of the Diocese of St. Augustine is prohibited.

5.4 **Email and Communications Activities**

Diocesan entities maintain electronic mail systems. These systems are provided by the diocesan entity to assist in conducting business within the diocese.

1. Any form of harassment via email, telephone or paging, whether through language, frequency, or size of messages is not allowed.
2. Unauthorized use, or forging, of email header information, is not allowed.

3. Solicitation of email for any other email address with the intent to harass or to collect replies from an email other than that of the poster's account is not allowed.
4. Posting the same or similar non-business-related messages to large numbers of newsgroups (newsgroup spam) is not allowed.
5. The electronic mail system hardware is the property of the diocesan entity. Additionally, all messages composed, sent or received on the electronic mail system are and remain the property of the diocesan entity. The diocese, through the appropriate authority, reserves the right to review, audit, intercept, and access all messages created, received or sent over the electronic mail system for any purpose.
6. The email system was created to facilitate operations of the diocesan entity. It should be used primarily for business purposes, and only incidentally for personal use. Likewise, personal email through such networks as AOL, Yahoo, Gmail, and others should be accessed on a limited basis, unless those networks are being used for diocesan business.
7. The electronic mail system may not be used to solicit or proselytize for commercial ventures, political causes, outside organizations or other non-job related solicitations.
8. The electronic mail system is not to be used to create any offensive or disruptive messages. Among those which are considered offensive are any messages which contain sexual implications, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any other comment that offensively addresses someone's age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, veteran or marital status.
9. The confidentiality of any message should not be assumed. Even when a message is erased, it is still possible to retrieve and read that message. Further, the use of passwords for security does not guarantee confidentiality.
10. Notwithstanding the diocese's right to retrieve and read any electronic mail messages, such messages should be treated as confidential by other authorized users and accessed only by the intended recipient. Authorized users are not authorized to retrieve or read any email messages that are not sent to them.
11. Authorized users shall not use a code, access a file, or retrieve any stored information unless authorized to do so. Authorized users should not attempt to gain access to another authorized user's messages without the latter's permission.
12. All authorized users should perform routine maintenance of their mailboxes and delete messages they are no longer using.
13. The appropriate authority should be notified if a user becomes aware of emails which violate this policy.

14. Extreme care should be exercised when sending emails with sensitive information because a majority of email systems are not encrypted and secure.

6.0 Enforcement

Effective security is a team effort involving the participation and support of every authorized user who deals with information and/or information systems. It is the responsibility of every authorized user to know these guidelines and to conduct their activities accordingly.

The Diocese of St. Augustine does not sanction any use of the Network/Internet and other available technology that is not authorized by or conducted strictly in compliance with this policy and its regulations. Authorized users who disregard the DNAUP may have their Network/Internet privileges suspended or revoked and may be subject to appropriate corrective action, up to and including termination.

The Diocese of St. Augustine reserves the right to suspend or revoke such privileges if any supervisor believes the authorized user's conduct to be inappropriate or noncompliant with the DNAUP.

Authorized users granted access to the Network/Internet, and other technologies through the Diocese of St. Augustine assume personal responsibility and liability, for their actions. Also, any employee, volunteer, or contractor found to have violated this policy may be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination.

Authorized users who have read and signed the DNAUP form and who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner will be authorized Network/Internet access.

7.0 System Back-up(s)

Although the diocesan entity should provide system back-ups as a standard operating procedure, it is the responsibility of each authorized user to back up his/her specific computer workstation data. Depending upon the amount of the individual workstation usage, workstation backups should occur daily.

8.0 Virus Protection

All networked computers must have current virus protection software, operating system updates, such as Windows updates, installed and operational at all times. Windows updates should occur at least monthly.

Patch Management

All workstations, mobile devices and servers owned by the Diocese of St. Augustine must have up-to-date operating system security patches installed in order to protect the device and network from known vulnerabilities.

Workstations, desktops and laptops have automatic updates enabled for the operating system patches. Current diocesan entity servers have the minimum baseline requirements that define the default operating system level, service pack, hotfix, and patch level required to ensure the security of diocesan data and networks.

IT will manage the patching needs for the servers on the network. In addition, they will manage the patching needs for all workstations on the network. IT will routinely assess the compliance of the patching policy and will provide guidance to all personnel of any security and patch management issues. IT also approves monthly and emergency patch deployments if necessary.

IT will monitor and report the outcome of each patching cycle. If a patch is causing vulnerability on the network or appliance, IT will roll the patch back in order to lessen the chance of vulnerabilities on the network.

The diocesan IT authority shall review all security relevant patches, service packs, and hot fixes from the vendors. Once reviewed, the patches will be fixed promptly.

9.0 Website Requirements

Diocesan entity websites are not permitted to link to other websites that conflict with church teaching and the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church. Permissible links fall into these main areas:

1. Official Church sites, such as the Vatican, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, state conferences, archdioceses, and dioceses;
2. Parts of the diocese such as parishes, schools and ministries operated by the diocese or approved resources associated with those ministries; and
3. Under the oversight of a bishop or religious congregation, or listed in the Official Catholic Directory. Church leaders should use prudence in evaluating links to other commercial opportunities on its site. It is the diocesan entity's responsibility to evaluate its hosts' advertisers and sponsors on a regular basis.
4. Use of photos on websites should be group photos. Where children are involved, first names only should be used. Parents/guardians must sign permission slips each year for the use of children's photos; therefore, all photos, particularly those which include children, should regularly be refreshed.
5. Approved websites by diocesan entities should post the following disclaimer to the homepage of each site:

"Although links to and from this website are frequently monitored for content, anyone who finds inappropriate content should immediately notify the [diocesan entity], so the link may be reviewed and/or removed."
6. All diocesan parishes, schools, and entities should have a link to the Diocese of St. Augustine website, www.dosafl.com, on its own website.
7. Diocesan entities, except parishes and schools, must obtain approval from their supervisor and/or the Director of Communications before establishing a website.

- 10.0** To provide interactive service, diocesan entities may collect personally-identifiable information from the users of the website. If such information is collected, the user will be informed about this practice. Additionally, if a website is directed to children or if a general audience website collects personal information from children, the diocesan entity must comply with the Diocese of St. Augustine online privacy policy. The privacy policy is attached and also posted on the Diocese of St. Augustine website under policies and procedures at www.dosafl.com.

ADDENDUM

“Best Practices”

Computer Security and Virus Protection:

- Install anti-virus software and keep it up-to-date. Refer all questions to the IT authority of the diocesan entity.
- Be cautious when opening email attachments

Content Filters

1. Content filtering is the blocking of content based on a rating system that is static, dynamic or a combination of both. Several content filtering products use a remote database of previously classified sites or IP addresses in conjunction with a local cache of frequently or recently requested sites. Some use a dynamic rating system that evaluates the content on the fly. Newer dynamic rating technologies offer more protection and use context-based rules instead of relying only on single keyword blocking.
2. All content filtering products will have about a dozen different content categories, such as Violence, Pornography, Hate/Racism, Nudity, and so on.
3. Some content filter manufacturers you may be familiar with include SonicWall, WatchGuard, Websense, SurfControl, and Symantec. These products offer gateway control; there are numerous client-based products available that load on the desktop, but capabilities are limited and management is difficult for a network with even a handful of PCs.

Electronic Media Sanitization and Disposal

1. Electronic media that has reached the end of its lifecycle must be sanitized and disposed of to ensure that confidential information is not viewed or accessed by unauthorized individuals. Electronic media is defined as any electronic storage device that is used to record information, including, but not limited to: hard disks, magnetic tapes, compact disks, videotapes, audiotapes, and removable storage devices such as USB drives.
2. All electronic media must be properly sanitized before being transferred from the custody of the diocesan entity. The proper method of sanitization depends on the type of media and the intended disposition of the media.
3. Hard Drives: The diocesan entity will overwrite the hard drive utilizing a three-pass wipe and/or physically destroyed. This will ensure that the data on the drive is overwritten with patterns of binary ones and zeros. The sanitization of the hard drive is not complete until the third wipe passes and a verification pass is complete.
4. Destruction of the hard drive will be conducted onsite by the document destruction vendor of the diocesan entity. This will be carried out or witnessed by authorized personnel of the diocesan.

5. USB drives, floppy disks, rewritable CD-ROMS, zip disks, videotapes, hard drives and audiotapes will be erased if able and then destroyed by drilling or smashing, witnessed or carried out by authorized personnel of the diocese.

Media Protection

1. Media in all forms shall be protected at all times.
2. Digital and physical media is restricted to authorized individuals. Only those users of the diocesan entity who have appropriate training will be allowed to access diocesan information or data in any form.
3. Handling physical media – The Diocese of St. Augustine will ensure that only authorized individuals will be granted access to media containing confidential information.
4. The media will be stored within a physically secure building and kept behind locked doors and locked cabinets. When no longer needed, the electronic media will be disposed of by the IT authority of the diocesan entity. Hard copies will be disposed of by authorized agency personnel only by depositing the hard copies into the locked receptacle for document shredding by the vendor of the diocese.
5. When it comes time for onsite shredding by the contracted vendor, authorized personnel of the diocesan entity will witness that shredding by the document destruction vendor.
6. Any media that is transported outside the physically secure location will be kept in a sealed envelope to ensure security is kept. When the media is released to another user, the user will document the transaction in a secondary dissemination log for validation purposes.
7. At no time will the physical media be released to an unauthorized person or left without proper documentation.

Minimum telecommunications closet size

Include space for an uninterruptible power supply in each closet. There should be a minimum of two electrical circuits in each closet. Design for good even lighting throughout the entire closet space both high and low. And finally, provide for enough cooling capacity for the electronics in the room.

Make sure there is some access control, and they are not open to the public.

Phishing and Spam

Follow these guidelines to avoid scams that can potentially infect your computer and the network:

- Be suspicious of any email or communication (including text messages, social media posts, ads) with urgent requests for personal financial information.

- Phishers typically include upsetting or exciting (but false) statements to get people to hand over their usernames, passwords, credit card numbers, Social Security numbers, date of birth and other personal information. Do not reply to any email without verifying the identity of the sender. Check the reply-to-email address and contact the sender directly to verify. Most phishing emails will come from a display name you recognize.
- Avoid clicking on links. Instead, go to the website by typing the web address directly into your browser or by searching for it in a search engine. Calling the company to verify its legitimacy is also an option, too.
- Pay attention to the website you are being directed to and hover over URLs. An email that appears to be from PayPal could direct you to a website that is instead <http://www.2paypal.com> or “[hxxp://www.gotyouscammed.com/paypal/login.htm](http://www.hxxp://www.gotyouscammed.com/paypal/login.htm).”

Physical Protection

1. Only authorized personnel have access to the Catholic Center and the Father Felix Varela Center. The buildings are equipped with key access for diocesan personnel. Visitors must sign in at the front desk of the Catholic Center. The Diocese of St. Augustine has a policy that non-agency guests are to be escorted by diocesan personnel to the office or department of the person they are scheduled to meet with. When escorted into the buildings, visitors must be accompanied by an authorized staff member.
2. All computer screens will be turned away from public view.
3. All physical media containing confidential information or data will be locked in filing cabinet in a locked office. Only authorized personnel will have a key to the cabinet.
4. All computer components will be locked in the secure server room. Only IT will have access to the server room. All vendors and contractors will undergo fingerprint-based records checks and will complete appropriate security awareness training.

Secure Network Closets

When designing and building telecommunications closets make sure that they are:

- At least One Closet Per Floor
- A safe working environment
- Provide enough space for today's technology as well as the potential for scalability.

Spyware

Spyware installs itself onto a user's computer by stealth, subterfuge and/or social engineering and sends information from that computer to a third party without the user's permission or knowledge. Spyware includes keyloggers, backdoor Trojans, password stealers, and botnet worms, which cause corporate data theft, financial loss, and network damage. To protect your computers against it, the computers utilizing your network need to have a spyware detection program. Good anti-virus programs can detect and remove spyware programs, which are treated as a type of Trojan.

System Backup

- Develop backup and restore strategies and test them. With a good plan, you can quickly recover your data if it is lost.
- Back up all data on the system and boot volumes and the System State. This precaution prepares you for the unlikely event of a disk failure.
- Create a backup log. Keep a book of logs to make it easier to locate specific files.
- Retain copies. Keep at least three copies of the media. Keep at least one copy off-site in a properly-controlled environment.
- Perform trial restorations to verify that your files were properly backed up. A trial restoration can uncover hardware problems that do not show up when you verify software.
- Secure devices and media. It is possible for someone to access the data from a stolen medium by restoring the data to another server for which they are an administrator.

DIOCESE OF SAINT AUGUSTINE STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT FOR LAY EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

Introduction

The term “church worker” includes clergy, religious, lay ministers and employees, and volunteers in diocesan or parish ministries or programs.

Applicability

The following ethical standards apply to church workers in the Diocese of St. Augustine. These ethical standards are not intended to inhibit any church workers in carrying out their ministry or jobs, or to limit their accessibility to the faithful. Accordingly, these standards are to be interpreted broadly, and with the understanding that they will require adaptation to various and changing circumstances. These ethical standards presuppose the existence of other laws, policies and procedures, both civil and canonical. Actions already condemned by the law or moral teachings of the Church, or by civil law are rarely repeated in these ethical standards except when deemed necessary to emphasize their significance or seriousness.

The primary purpose of these ethical standards is to serve as a guide for more effective ministry and job performance for those to whom they are applicable. Ultimately, these ethical standards are intended to assist us all in the living out of our diocesan mission statement as we, “strive to know, love and serve God in our world through the grace of Jesus Christ, the love of the Father and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.”

-Standards of Conduct Regarding Counseling Activities (Applies to those involved in counseling activities of any kind)

When clergy, religious, spiritual directors and church workers are involved in counseling activities, they are in a professional relationship with the persons they counsel – as such, they should always be aware that they have considerable personal power because of their ministerial role. Accordingly, they should be particularly aware of the need for healthy physical, emotional, sexual, intellectual and spiritual boundaries. The pastoral and spiritual well- being of those counseled should always be the focus of the relationship.

Any church workers engaged in counseling on behalf of a parish or diocesan ministry, and spiritual directors should be mindful of their level of training and competence and should so advise those who seek their counsel. They should make appropriate referrals to other professionals when this would be in the best interest of the person seeking counseling.

Counseling by all except spiritual directors should be short-term in nature. If additional counseling appears to be needed after about three counseling sessions, the person counseled should normally be referred to an appropriately qualified professional.

“For lack of guidance a people falls; security lies in many counselors.” Proverbs 11:14

However, this ethical standard is not meant to preclude longer periods of counseling within the context of specific programs with established goals and objectives such as, for example, marriage preparation or Project Rachel post- abortion counseling.

Any church workers engaged in counseling on behalf of a parish or diocesan ministry, and spiritual directors should give careful consideration to the possible consequences of entering into a counseling relationship with a person with whom there is a pre-existing business, professional or social relationship. Pre-existing relationships can blur the appropriate boundaries necessary for a counselor-counselee relationship and can impair the judgment of the counselor or spiritual director. Where this situation is unavoidable, counselors and spiritual director should even more diligently establish and maintain appropriate boundaries.

Counseling and spiritual direction sessions should never be audio taped or videotaped.

Any church workers engaged in counseling on behalf of a parish or diocesan ministry, and spiritual directors should studiously avoid any inappropriate sexual innuendo in the content of counseling or direction. This is especially so when the subject matter of the counseling or spiritual direction involves some aspect of human sexuality. Any church workers engaged in counseling on behalf of a parish or diocesan ministry, and spiritual directors assume complete responsibility for establishing and maintaining clear and appropriate boundaries in all counseling-related relationships. If a person being counseled, by word or actions, indicates an unwillingness or inability to abide by appropriate boundaries, it is the responsibility of the counselor or spiritual director to immediately terminate counseling and, if warranted, refer the person being counseled to another professional.

Physical contact beyond a handshake between a church worker engaged in counseling on behalf of a parish or diocesan ministry, or spiritual director and one being counseled can be misconstrued and should be avoided unless the counselor or spiritual director is certain that the contact is appropriate under the circumstances.

Counseling and spiritual direction sessions should always be conducted at appropriate places and times.

Whenever possible, counseling sessions should be held during regular business hours established by the parish or ministry, and in an office setting. Further, offices in which counseling takes place should be designed to include a window in the door or wall, made of glass or similar material, through which human forms are distinctly visible. Where no such counseling setting is currently available steps should be taken at the earliest possible time to modify existing counseling facilities.

-Sessions should never be conducted in the private living quarters of either the priest, deacon, religious, church worker engaged in counseling on behalf of a parish or diocesan ministry, or spiritual director or the person being counseled.

Sessions should not be conducted at places or times which could cause confusion or generate ambiguity about the nature of the relationship either in the mind of the church worker engaged in counseling on behalf of a parish or diocesan ministry, spiritual director, the person being counseled, or the church community.

Any church workers engaged in counseling on behalf of a parish or diocesan ministry, or spiritual directors should be careful to observe the ethical standards of any professional associations to which they may be required to belong, to the extent that those ethical standards do not contravene divine law or the moral teachings of the Church.

Standards of Conduct in Financial Matters and Regarding Church Property

Church workers should be good stewards of any church property or goods over which they exercise supervision. They should treat such property with the care, concern, and respect with which they would treat their own private property.

Church workers should avoid commingling their own private funds with church funds, and they should never expend church funds for private or non-church purposes. There should always be a direct and articulable church-related purpose for the expenditure of church funds.

Church workers should never appropriate church property or resources to their own private or non-church uses, or allow others to do so. Occasionally, however, it may be appropriate to allow the use of church property or resources for a civic or social event. This should only be done with the specific approval of the pastor or church official responsible for the property or resources.

Standards of Conduct in Dealing with Minors and Vulnerable Adults

Church workers have a moral and ethical obligation to use good judgment in dealing with minors and vulnerable adults. Good judgment in this context means that church workers will avoid any actions which violate personal integrity or abuse the trust bestowed upon them as a result of their positions. It means that the physical and emotional safety and security of minors and vulnerable adults will always be given paramount consideration in church programs and ministries. It means that church workers will always strive to avoid even the appearance of impropriety in such matters.

“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained by the world.” James 1:27

Definition of a vulnerable adult: A vulnerable adult is a person 18 years or older whose ability to engage in the normal activities of daily living, or to care for him/herself is impaired because of mental, emotional, physical or developmental causes, or from the infirmities of old age. Florida Statutes, Sec. 415.102

Church workers should avoid physical contact with minors and vulnerable adults beyond what is required by the circumstances. When circumstances do call for physical contact that contact should never go beyond hugs, handshakes or hand-holding.

Any physical contact with minors or vulnerable adults should only occur in circumstances that are in plain view of others, for example, in the same room, from a distance or by way of window or glass opening.

The emotional comfort of the minor or vulnerable adult, rather than the church worker's habits or modes of expression, should always be the primary consideration when engaging in any physical contact.

Church workers should be conscious of their vulnerability when working alone with minors or vulnerable adults. Accordingly, a team approach to ministries and programs involving these persons is always preferable to the extent possible.

The use of any alcohol or tobacco products by church workers while actively engaged in youth ministry or activity with minors or vulnerable adults is unethical conduct in this diocese.

It is always unethical and usually illegal for church workers to provide, or to knowingly tolerate the provision of, alcohol or tobacco products to minors or vulnerable adults.

Overnight accommodations in rectories or convents should never be provided for minors or vulnerable adults who are unaccompanied by parents or legal guardians, or who are not closely related by blood or marriage to the priest or religious occupants of the rectory or convent.

Church workers should never go on diocesan or parish sponsored outings or overnight trips without chaperones for minors or vulnerable adults other than their own children, or those who are closely related to them. Additionally, it is inappropriate for an adult to share a bed with a minor or vulnerable adult during any church- sponsored travel or outings.

It is unethical, immoral and potentially illegal for a church worker to show sexually explicit materials of any kind or type, under any circumstances, to minors or vulnerable adults.

It is unethical, immoral and potentially illegal for church workers to discuss sexual experiences, engage in sexual innuendo, or tell sexually oriented jokes with or to minors or vulnerable adults.

It is unethical and immoral for church workers to use sexually explicit language or “curse” words in the presence or hearing of minors or vulnerable adults.

This ethical standard is not meant to prohibit any diocesan or parish authorized educational programs which include discussions of sexuality in the context of catechetical instruction or education in Christian morality.

Standards of Conduct in the Maintenance of a Proper Work Place and Ministry Environment

Church workers should ensure that a professional work environment exists in the church community – an environment that is free from physical or psychological intimidation or harassment. Harassment denigrates another’s personal dignity, can violate one’s privacy, and detracts from the mission of the parish or diocesan agency.

A hostile work and ministry environment can arise from a broad range of physical or verbal behaviors, including, but not limited to:
physical or emotional abuse,
racial insults or innuendo,
derogatory ethnic slurs or comments,
the telling of sexually oriented jokes,
unwelcome sexual advances or touching, or
the display of lewd or offensive materials.

Such a hostile work environment can arise from a single serious incident, or from a pattern of behavior which has the effect of creating a hostile or intimidating environment. The conduct described above is unethical and unacceptable for any church worker.

Sexual harassment is particularly offensive and unacceptable in a work or ministry environment. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome requests for sexual favors, or any other unwelcome physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature. It includes making unwelcome statements (written or oral) of a sexual nature to a person, or in a person’s presence.

Sexual harassment occurs when the victim of such conduct feels offended, humiliated or intimidated, and a reasonable person having access to all relevant information would also regard the conduct as sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is unethical, immoral and potentially illegal misconduct.

Standards of Conduct Regarding Parish and Diocesan Records and Information

Appropriate confidentiality should be maintained in creating, storing, accessing and disposing of parish and diocesan records.

Sacramental records should generally be regarded as confidential and should only be made available to the persons referenced therein, or to other church workers with an official need to know.

When compiling and publishing parochial or diocesan statistical information from sacramental records, great care should be taken to preserve the anonymity and privacy of individuals.

Information regarding adoption and legitimacy contained in sacramental records should always remain confidential. The procedures for registering the baptism of adopted children, or issuing baptismal certificates for them, promulgated by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (now the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops) on October 20, 2000 should be carefully observed. These may be obtained from the chancellor's office.

Only those church workers specifically authorized to access sacramental records should handle requests for access to them or for certificates.

Mailing lists of registered parishioners should never be sold or given to other agencies.

Parish, school and diocesan financial records, including records of donations and contributions, are to be treated as confidential, except as required for diocesan reporting and accountability purposes, and except as access is required by governmental agencies.

Records of individual contributions to a parish, the diocese, or to a ministry of the parish or diocese should be regarded as confidential and should be maintained in strict confidence unless disclosure is required by law, or unless disclosure of such information is requested or authorized by the donor.

Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest can have a significant negative impact upon the effectiveness of the ministry and the church worker. Church workers should avoid situations that might lead to a conflict of interest. Additionally, even the appearance of a conflict of interest can call into question the integrity of the church worker.

Church workers should disclose all relevant factors that potentially could create a conflict of interest.

Church workers should inform all parties when a real or potential conflict of interest arises. Resolution of conflict of interest situations should protect the person receiving ministerial services.

Church workers should not take advantage of anyone to whom they are providing services in order to further their personal or business interests, or the interests of close members of their families.

“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel... Thus says the Lord God: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who have been pasturing themselves! Should not shepherds, rather, pasture sheep? You have fed off their milk, worn their wool, and slaughtered the fatlings, but the sheep you have not pastured.” Ezekiel 34:2-3

When pastoral counseling or spiritual direction are provided to two or more people who have a relationship with each other, the church worker should:

- clarify with all parties the nature of each relationship;
- consider any possible conflicts of interest;
- take appropriate action to eliminate the conflict, and
- obtain from all parties written consent to continue counseling or spiritual direction.

Conflicts of interest may also arise when a church worker's independent judgment is impaired by prior dealings, by becoming personally involved in a given circumstance, or by becoming an advocate for one person against another. In such situations the church worker should advise the persons concerned that he or she can no longer provide services or counseling. Referral to another church worker or spiritual director is normally appropriate in such cases.

REPORTING EDUCATOR/PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT

“All employees and agents of a public school district, charter school or private school have an obligation and legal responsibility to report misconduct by instructional personnel and school administrators which affect the health, safety or welfare of a student. If someone tells you about misconduct, be a LEADER: LISTEN, EVALUATE, ACT IMMEDIATELY, DOCUMENT, ENCOURAGE, REPORT.” Florida statutes 1006.061/Florida Department of Education

Palmer Catholic Academy will treat all allegations of sexual misconduct seriously and deal with them in a prompt, confidential and thorough manner.

-Allegations and complaints can be made by contacting:

Daniela DosSantos, Principal
Fionnuala San Juan, Assistant Principal
(904)543-8515

Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator: (904) 262-3200, ext. 129

-Allegations may also be reported directly to:

Department of Children and Families:

1-800-96Abuse 1-800-962-2873

<http://www.myflfamilies.com/>

-In Emergency situations call 911

CHILD ABUSE
Look for the signs
Dial 1-800-96-ABUSE

Signs of Physical Abuse
The child may have unexplained:
- bruises, welts, cuts or other injuries
- broken bones
- burns
A child experiencing physical abuse may:
- seem withdrawn or depressed
- seem afraid to go home or may run away
- shy away from physical contact
- be aggressive
- wear inappropriate clothing to hide injuries

Signs of Sexual Abuse
The child may have:
- torn, stained or bloody underwear
- trouble walking or sitting
- pain or itching in genital area
- a sexually transmitted disease
A child experiencing sexual abuse may:
- have unusual knowledge of sex or act seductively
- fear a particular person
- seem withdrawn or depressed
- gain or lose weight suddenly
- shy away from physical contact
- run away from home

Signs of Neglect
The child may have:
- unattended medical needs
- little or no supervision at home
- poor hygiene
- appear underweight
A child experiencing neglect may:
- be frequently tired or hungry
- steal food
- appear overly needy for adult attention

Look for the Patterns
Serious abuse usually involves a combination of factors. While a single sign may not be significant, a pattern of physical or behavioral signs is a serious indicator and should be reported.

If a child tells YOU about abuse:
Be a good listener. Show that you understand and believe what the child tells you. Encourage, but don't pressure him/her to talk. Ask open ended questions.
Be supportive. Tell the child he/she did the right thing by coming to you. Stress that he/she is not to blame. Let the child know that you want to help.
Don't overreact. This can frighten the child or prevent him/her from telling you more. Do not talk negatively about the suspected abuser in front of the child.
Document and report it. Document your conversation as soon as you can. If possible, write down the child's exact words.
Don't delay. Never assume someone else will report the abuse. The sooner it's reported, the sooner the child and their family can be helped.

WHO MUST REPORT ABUSE?
Doctors Police Officers
Nurses Child Care Workers
Social Workers Any Witnesses
Any/All School Personnel

Call or Report it online at: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>

IMMUNIZATION AND SCREENING POLICY FOR THE DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Immunization and Screening Policy for the Diocese of St. Augustine

This policy is written and revised with careful consideration for the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and the laws of the State of Florida. We are appreciative of the epidemiologists, pediatricians, theologians, attorneys, and educators who have assisted in the writing of this policy and its revisions. There are misconceptions regarding the moral implications around the distant cell line of an aborted baby. We assure you that the reception of the school-mandated vaccines *does not incur sin*. Rather, the teachings of the Church align with concern for one's neighbor. We are speaking here of concern for the larger community, society, and the world. The Church has never been without expectations and policies. Therefore, to be a part of a Catholic school community one would need to comply with the rules, expectations, and policies of the community in which one wants to participate. This policy covers all areas regarding school-mandated vaccines for the schools of the Diocese of St. Augustine. Questions regarding the policy can be made to the Office of the Superintendent.

Title XLVIII, Chapter 1003.22 (1) of *Florida Statutes* states that every school, public or private, shall require each student entitled to admission for the first time in a Florida school to "present a certification of a school-entry medical examination performed within one year prior to enrollment in school." Consequently, in the future, out-of-state students enrolling in our school must present the above-mentioned certification.

Title XLVIII, Chapter 1003.22 (2) through (4) of *Florida Statutes* states that "The Department of Health, after consultation with the Department of Education, shall adopt rules governing the immunization of children against, the testing for, and the control of preventable communicable diseases....Immunizations shall be required for poliomyelitis, diphtheria, rubeola, rubella, pertussis, mumps, tetanus, and other communicable diseases as determined by the rules of the Department of Health. The manner and frequency of administration of the immunization or testing shall conform to recognized standards of medical practice. The Department of Health shall supervise and secure the enforcement of the required immunization." The section goes on to direct that; "...prior to admittance to or attendance in a public or private school, grades kindergarten through 12, or any other initial entrance into a Florida public or private school, each child present or have on file with the school a certification of immunization for the prevention of those communicable diseases for which immunization is required by the Department of Health and further shall provide for appropriate screening of its students for scoliosis at the proper age. Such certification shall be made on forms approved and provided by the Department of Health and shall become a part of each student's permanent record, to be transferred when the student transfers, is promoted, or changes schools."

Immunization Requirements

The Florida Department of Health Immunization Section sets forth the following as requirements for school entry:

Prior to entry, attendance, or transfer to preschools, schools (kindergarten through 12th grade), each child shall have on file a *Florida Certification of Immunization*, DH680 (sample included at end of this policy), documenting the following:

Public/Non-Public Schools K-12:

- Four or five doses of diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis vaccine (Seventh Grade: In addition to all other compulsory school immunizations, children entering, attending, or transferring to the seventh grade in Florida schools are required to complete one dose of tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis vaccine [Tdap])
- Three, four or five doses of polio vaccine
- Two doses of measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine
- Two or three doses of hepatitis B vaccine
- Two doses of varicella vaccine

Public/Non-Public Pre-K (age-appropriate doses as indicated):

- Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis vaccine
- Polio vaccine
- Measles vaccine
- Mumps vaccine
- Rubella vaccine
- Hepatitis B vaccine
- Varicella vaccine
- *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) vaccine

Exemptions from Immunization Requirements

There are generally recognized to be three types of exemptions sought from the schools' immunization policy—*religious, conscience, and medical*.

- *Religious exemptions*: There is nothing in Catholic moral teachings which would hold that the use of vaccines is immoral and sinful. Accepting the opinion of the much-respected *National Catholic Bioethics Center*, the Bishops of Florida take the position that, "Catholic schools or a Catholic diocese cannot grant an exemption from vaccination on *religious* grounds since the Catholic Church does not teach that the use of vaccinations...is intrinsically evil." Accordingly, requests for exemptions based on religious beliefs will not be considered in any Catholic schools of this diocese.

Note: Some are concerned about vaccines derived from fetal cell lines. There are indeed a number of vaccines that are made from the cells of one or more aborted fetuses (for instance, rubella [German measles], varicella [chickenpox], and hepatitis A). But, it is important to note that it has been almost 50-years since those original cell lines were obtained, and since that time the cell lines have grown independently and, therefore, the *descendent* cells used in vaccines today are *not* the cells of the aborted child. In fact, one cannot accurately say that the vaccines developed and used today contain any of the cells from the

original abortion. A statement from the *Pontifical Academy for Life* issued in 2005 holds that one may use these products, despite their distant association with abortion, at least until such time as new vaccines become available. They point out that, besides the risk to themselves, children who have not been immunized pose a potential threat in the schools to other children, teachers, parents, and other visitors (particularly in the case of German measles and congenital rubella syndrome, and contact, even brief, with pregnant women). Therefore, one is morally free to use the vaccine regardless of its historical association with abortion.

- *Conscience exemptions:* As discussed above, the risk to public health in our Catholic schools has been determined to be too grave to allow exemptions from immunizations on the basis of conscience, or even for parents who erroneously believe that it would be sinful to have their children immunized. Social teachings of the Catholic Church are firm and consistent on the “*common good*” as the principle guide to reason in this regard. In justice, we consider and sometimes place the needs of others above our own. It is in that spirit that the Catholic Church recognizes a parent’s right to decide what is in the best interest of their child, so long as the effects of that decision only impacts them or their child. It is clearly a different matter when the consequence of that decision potentially puts others at risk. The good of respecting the conscience of parents of a single child is outweighed by the harm which could come to many as a result of an exemption on the basis of conscience. Accordingly, requests for exemptions based on conscience will not be considered in any Catholic schools of this diocese.
- *Medical exemptions:* Medical exemptions will be considered, but only if a determination can be made by diocesan officials that, based on medical evidence, admission of the child without a vaccination would not constitute a health risk to the school community under the circumstances. If such a determination cannot be made, a medical exemption will not be granted. This exemption is reserved to Diocesan officials and is not to be granted at the parish or school administrative level.

In coming to such a decision, Diocesan officials, working with the Florida Department of Health Immunization Section and other medical experts (e.g., pediatricians and immunologists), will need to be convinced that immunization/boosters are unnecessary because the child *already possesses sufficient immunity (antibody levels)*.

To credibly establish sufficient immunity, parents have several options:

- *Begin the **Catch-Up Schedule** of immunization as defined by the Center for Disease Control (CDC).* Before beginning classes, the child must have received the first dose of all required vaccines and provide a Florida Form DH680 as evidence of that fact. To remain enrolled, the child must receive all remaining vaccinations as per the *Catch-Up Schedule* timeline and provide updated DH680s as evidence of that fact. It is preferred that the data be entered into the online statewide immunization registry—*Florida SHOTS*. As long as the child remains on this schedule, the Florida Department of Health and CDC have determined that sufficient immunity will exist.
- *Immunity due to **prior disease exposure**.* Some children have already had

diseases for which we immunize. When exposed in this way, a healthy child's own body will develop immunity to the disease. If that is the case, the parents must provide official medical records documenting that history of prior illness/exposure to one of the communicable diseases and this will be acceptable for that specific disease. Mere assertion by the parent that the child had a disease is not sufficient. If medical documentation is not available or prior history is questionable, the child may either be immunized (*this is always preferred*; read above) or the parent may pay to obtain serologic evidence (read below).

- **Serologic evidence of immunity.** In certain situations serologic testing for immunity (i.e., titer testing) is acceptable as evidence of a child's immunity. Titers are only valid and accepted for the following diseases and then only if the specific form of the test is conducted:

- **Measles:** Rubeola antibody IgG
- **Mumps:** Mumps antibody IgG
- **Rubella:** Rubella antibody IgG
- **Hepatitis B:** Hepatitis B surface antibody (HBsAb) titer (must be a quantitative test that is >10mg/dl)
- **Varicella:** Varicella antibody IgG (this test is most effective to immunity derived from natural exposure and may not detect vaccine-induced antibody)

Titers will not be accepted as a replacement for: DTap-Tdap, Meningococcal, Polio, Pneumococcal, or Hepatitis A. This is because immunities for Tetanus and Pertussis wane over time and there are no acceptable immunity tests for the others. (*Note: Titer/skin tests only reveal the current level of immunity.* Exemptions granted on this basis are only good for the immediate school year, and must be requested and reapproved prior to each school year.)

If a parent refuses to cooperate in having their child immunized, obtaining the serologic testing, or providing medical evidence of prior exposure/immunity; the medical exemption request will be presumed to have been withdrawn and the child will not be admitted to the school.

Florida Certification of Immunization (Form DH680)



FloridaShots

FLORIDA CERTIFICATION OF IMMUNIZATION

Legal Authority: Sections 1003.22, 402.305, 402.313, Florida Statutes; Rule 64D-3.046, Florida Administrative Code

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MI	DOB (MM/DD/YYYY)
PARENT OR GUARDIAN	CHILD'S SS# (Optional)	STATE IMMUNIZATION ID#	

Directions:

- Enter all appropriate doses and dates below.
- Sign and date appropriate certificate (A, B, or C) on form.
- For additional information: See *Immunization Guidelines—Florida Schools, Childcare Facilities and Family Daycare Homes* for information and instructions on form completion and immunization requirements. Guidelines are available at: www.immunizeFlorida.org/schoolguide.pdf

VACCINE	DOE	Dose 1 MM/DD/YYYY	Dose 2 MM/DD/YYYY	Dose 3 MM/DD/YYYY	Dose 4 MM/DD/YYYY	Dose 5 MM/DD/YYYY
DTaP/DT	A					
DT	B					
Tdap	P					
Td	Q					
Polio	D					
Hib	E					
MMR (Combined)	F					
(Separate)	G, H					
	I	Measles (dose 1)	Measles (dose 2)	Mumps (dose 1)	Mumps (dose 2)	
	J	Rubella (dose 1)	Rubella (dose 2)			
Hepatitis B	K					
Varicella	L					
Varicella Disease	M					
PneumoConjugate	N					

Select appropriate box(es)

Certificate of Immunization for K-12

Part A-Complete

☐ DOE Code 1: Check box if immunizations are complete for kindergarten entry

☐ DOE Code 8: Check box if immunizations are complete for 7th grade

I have reviewed the records available, and to the best of my knowledge, the above named child has adequately been immunized for school attendance, as documented above.

Temporary Medical Exemption Expiration date: _____

Part B-Temporary

☐ DOE Code 2 (For children in daycare, family daycare homes, preschool, kindergarten and grades 1 through 12 who are incomplete for immunizations in Part A) Invalid without expiration date.

I certify that the above named child has received the immunizations documented above and has commenced a schedule to complete the required immunization. Additional immunizations are not medically indicated at this time.

Permanent Medical Exemption

Part C-Permanent

(For medically contraindicated immunizations, list each vaccine and state valid clinical reasoning or evidence for exemption.)

☐ DOE Code 3

I certify the physical condition of this child is such that immunizations as indicated in Part C above are medically contraindicated.

Physician or Clinic Name: _____

Physician or
Authorized Signature: _____

Issued by: _____

Date: _____

DH 680 07/2010

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK - SIGNATURE PAGE

Please print this signature page, initial each section, sign below and return this sheet to the school office via email (palmercatholic@pcapvb.org) by Tuesday, August 18, 2026. Thank you!

_____ I have read the 2026-2027 PCA PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK in its entirety. I agree to abide by and accept the rules, regulations, and responsibilities as set forth by this handbook including the PCA Family Volunteer Point Policy and exhibits.

_____ I understand that the Academic and Activities fee along with the first month's tuition payment are non-refundable and non-transferrable. I have also read and understood the withdrawal process.

_____ I have read and understand the school's Attendance Policy.

_____ **Internet Policy:** As parent or legal guardian, I have read, understand and will abide by the Diocese of St. Augustine INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT (found in the exhibits). I understand that this access is only for educational purposes. I also recognize that it is impossible for the school to restrict access to all controversial material, and I will not hold the Diocese of St. Augustine, the school or any employee responsible for materials acquired on the network. I hereby give permission to grant Internet access privileges to my child and certify that the information contained on this form is correct. **Parents should ensure that each student understands his/her obligations and attests to the following prior to signing: I (Student) further understand that any violation of the regulations above is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary and/or appropriate legal action may be taken. Photos of students while at Palmer or in Palmer uniform, faculty member photos, or any school photos may NOT be placed on any type of internet site or social media.**

_____ **Standards of Ethical Conduct for Lay Employees & Covered Volunteers:** I have read the Standards of Ethical Conduct (Exhibit). I agree that, if I do not understand something in these standards, or I am not sure if something in them applies to me, I will contact Palmer Catholic Academy staff or the chancellor of the Diocese of St. Augustine.

_____ **Waiver:** PCA reserves the right to amend the handbook at any time. The School Administration reserves the right to waive and/or deviate from any and all disciplinary regulations for just cause at his/her discretion.

_____ **Child Photography Release:** Without compensation, I hereby grant permission to the Catholic Diocese of St. Augustine and Palmer Catholic Academy to use and reproduce photographs taken of my child. These photographs may be used for news and editorial purposes in publications, electronic reproductions (websites), and/or brochures. In addition, I grant my permission to alter the same photos without restriction and to copyright the same. I hereby release the photographer, the journalists and the publications or media outlets they represent, as well as the parish/church/school involved, the Catholic Diocese of Saint Augustine and all their employees and agents, from all claims and liability relating to said photographs.

Parents check the appropriate boxes to allow FOR ADDITIONAL PERMISSIONS REGARDING CHILD PHOTOGRAPHY:

☐ **I DO GIVE PERMISSION** for my child/children to be included and/or participate in the school's social media (Facebook and Instagram) as stated above in the Child Photography Release **without their name**.

☐ **I DO GIVE PERMISSION** for my child/children to be included and/or participate in the school's social media (Facebook and Instagram) as stated above in the Child Photography Release **with their first name**.

☐ **I DO NOT GIVE PERMISSION** for my child/children to be included and/or participate in the school's social media (Facebook and Instagram).

☐ **I DO GIVE PERMISSION** for my child/children to be included in class newsletters (sent to class families only) as stated above in the Child Photography Release.

☐ **I DO GIVE PERMISSION** for my child/children to be included in the Blue Angel Weekly (sent to all PCA families and posted on the PCA website) as stated above in the Child Photography Release.

☐ **I DO GIVE PERMISSION** for my child/children to be included in the parish bulletin as stated above in the Child Photography Release.

Parent's Name Printed _____

Parent's signature/acknowledgement of above: _____ Date: _____

Print Child's Name: _____ Grade: _____ Print Child's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Print Child's Name: _____ Grade: _____ Print Child's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Print Child's Name: _____ Grade: _____ Print Child's Name: _____ Grade: _____