

PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION ACADEMY

Philosophy of Education

And God created man to His own image: to the image of God He created him: male and female He created them. (Genesis 1, 27)

At the very outset of Christian education, we meet this question: “Why did God make you?” Our Catholic Faith gives us the answer: “God made me to know Him, to love Him, and serve Him in this world, so as to be happy with Him in heaven.” Following from this simple and straightforward answer concerning human destiny, Pope Pius XI clearly explains and beautifully expresses the Christian Principles for human education. In his encyclical *Divini Illius Magistri*, devoted to the Christian education of youth, Pope Pius XI states that men,

... created by God to His image and likeness and destined for Him Who is infinite perfection, realize today more than ever amid the most exuberant material progress, the insufficiency of earthly goods to produce true happiness either for the individual or for the nations. And hence they feel more keenly in themselves the impulse towards a perfection that is higher, which impulse is implanted in their rational nature by the Creator Himself. This perfection they seek to acquire by means of education. (Paragraph 6)

Immaculate Conception Academy’s understanding of human education begins with the Christian teaching about human nature. True education enables a person to understand who he is: a creature made in the very image of his divine Creator; a fallen, sinful creature—it is true—but a creature redeemed by a loving God, to Whom he is responsible for his actions.

In professing that God created us in His very image, Immaculate Conception Academy rejects materialism in any form. We profess, therefore, that:

- Each of us is uniquely created by God, known and loved by God, and responsible to God, which fact should instill in us a profound self-respect; we are not “gods” unto ourselves, and there is no place in our hearts for a narcissistic sense of self-esteem.
- We are wonderfully made with a divine purpose; thus, we are not merely an accidental product of blind evolutionary forces.
- We are capable of the most courageous and generous acts for the noblest of motives; we are not merely, as Karl Marx taught, economic animals whose ultimate destiny is to live and to die as workers in a communist society.

- We are able to know the objective truth and the objective moral law which is the condition of all sane human living and learning, contrary to the teaching of existentialism which holds that each person must construct his own reality and his own morality.
- True human education means drawing a person out of the darkness of ignorance and error by enlightening his mind and sanctifying his will, rather than simply drawing out of a person some light of knowledge he already naturally possesses.

Materialism views human beings as nothing more than animals or chemical machines which can be trained but not truly educated. To the contrary, Christianity maintains that we have immortal souls created by God precisely to know truth and to love goodness. All education must begin with this understanding and must be directed to this goal.

In fact, since education consists essentially in preparing man for what he must be and for what he must do here below, in order to attain the sublime end for which he was created, it is clear that there can be no true education which is not wholly directed to man's last end, and that in the present order of Providence, since God has revealed Himself to us in the Person of His Only Begotten Son, who alone is "the way, the truth and the life," there can be no ideally perfect education which is not Christian education. (Paragraph 7)

The Goal of the Academy

The proper and immediate end of Christian education is to cooperate with divine grace in forming the true and perfect Christian, that is, to form Christ Himself in those regenerated by Baptism, according to the emphatic expression of the Apostle: "My little children, of whom I am in labor again, until Christ be formed in you." [Galatians 4, 19] For the true Christian must live a supernatural life in Christ; "Christ who is your life," [Colossians 3, 4] and display it in all his actions... (Paragraph 94)

The English word "student" derives from the Latin word for someone who strives zealously for a goal. In that sense, we are all meant to be lifelong students. The goal for which we strive is the perfection of our distinctly human powers of knowing truth and loving goodness. The greater the thoughts which fill our minds and hearts, the better we are as persons. In the limited sense of the word, a "student" is one who pursues academic excellence. But to the true student, in the full meaning of the term, mere academic excellence is not sufficient. He

must also strive for personal excellence. True education is crowned and completed by moral education.

For the Christian student, personal excellence consists in keeping the law of God by being faithful to Christ. It means observing the Commandments of God out of love: "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." It means following the Beatitudes as a way of life: "Blessed are those..." It means taking to heart and applying the lessons of the two greatest instructions ever given: Christ's Sermon on the Mount (St. Matthew 5-7) and Discourse at the Last Supper (St. John 15).

Hence the true Christian, product of Christian education, is the supernatural man who thinks, judges and acts constantly and consistently in accordance with right reason illumined by the supernatural light of the example and teaching of Christ; in other words, to use the current term, the true and finished man of character. (Paragraph 96)

The Mission of the Academy

For precisely this reason, Christian education takes in the whole aggregate of human life, physical and spiritual, intellectual and moral, individual, domestic and social, not with a view of reducing it in any way, but in order to elevate, regulate and perfect it, in accordance with the example and teaching of Christ. (Paragraph 95)

Because true Christian education concerns the perfection of all the human faculties, Immaculate Conception Academy sees its mission as involving the entire human being and all the person's powers of intellect and will, memory and imagination, appetites and passions. The purpose is to instill in the student's intellect a devotion to truth, to bring the student's will under the direction of his intellect, and to place his appetites and passions under control of his will. The Academy's mission, therefore, is expressed well in the invocation: "Come, Holy Ghost, enlighten my mind that I may know what is right; strengthen my will that I may do what is right; inflame my heart with love for God and charity for my neighbor."

The Academy dedicates itself to instilling a zeal for both intellectual and moral excellence—and providing the means to achieve them. The educational programs of the Academy embrace the physical, social, and spiritual development of its students.

The true Christian does not renounce the activities of this life; he does not stunt his natural faculties but he develops and perfects them by coordinating them with the supernatural. He thus ennobles what is merely natural in life and secures for it new strength in the material and temporal order, no less than in the spiritual and eternal.

Educational Method

True education has a two-fold object: (1) the perfection of the human intellect in its ability to know, to reason, and to express itself and (2) the formation of the will to adhere to what is good and right. To accomplish the two-fold purpose, the Academy employs tried and true methods from the best of human history.

1. Education of the Intellect

Perfect schools are the result not so much of good methods as of good teachers, teachers who are thoroughly prepared and well-grounded in the matter they have to teach; who possess the intellectual and moral qualifications required by their important office; who cherish a pure and holy love for the youths confided to them, because they love Jesus Christ and His Church, of which these are the children of predilection; and who have therefore sincerely at heart the true good of family and country. (Paragraph 88)

To achieve the intellectual development of its students, the Academy employs the classical curriculum, the educational program which has produced the greatest works of literature and the great advancements in the sciences. St. Ignatius Loyola saw in this program an excellent means for the education and salvation of souls and ordered the Society of Jesus to make use of it in all their schools. In the earliest years of educating the students (the Grammar stage), the classical curriculum focuses on developing the student's abilities to learn information, by listening and reading, and to render that information by the spoken and written word. During the middle years of education (the Logic stage), the curriculum develops the student's reasoning powers and awakens him to the power of logical thinking, weighing the value of statements according to the rules of logical reasoning and, by the processes of induction and deduction, drawing logical conclusions as well as identifying fallacious arguments. In the latter years of education (the Rhetoric stage), the classical curriculum builds upon the student's knowledge and reasoning abilities to develop the powers of expressing thoughts in a clear, orderly, elegant, and logical manner.

Throughout this entire educational process, the classical curriculum enhances the student's powers of learning, reasoning, and self-expression by the inculcation of the Latin language and study of the great literature produced by civilization. A hallmark of the classical curriculum is that the courses of study are not treated as isolated subjects, but they are consistently inter-related to manifest the unity of truth and of knowledge as it has developed through human history to the present day. In this way the classical curriculum enables a student to perfect his powers of knowing accurately, reasoning soundly, and expressing thoughts with clarity and precision.

2. Formation of the Will:

In order to obtain perfect education, it is of the utmost importance to see that all those conditions which surround the child during the period of his formation, in other words that the combination of circumstances which we call environment, correspond exactly to the end proposed. (Paragraph 70)

The Academy follows the disciplinary method of the great 19th century educator, St. John Bosco. As opposed to the "repressive" system prevailing in his time, Don Bosco prescribed the "preventive" system based on the three pillars of reason, religion, and kindness. Discipline erupting from anger and passion is inconsistent, arbitrary, and unfair; it confuses and embitters the child rather than correcting and instructing him. When reason dominates the teacher's actions, discipline is measured and consistent, fair and constructive. The instructor not only requires right behavior in his students but demonstrates it in his own life.

Religion is the second element in Don Bosco's method. By religion we put into practice the truths we know by faith. By religion we cultivate in ourselves humility, prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, honesty, purity, etc.—not only for the natural motive of a trouble-free life (as the pagan philosophers taught) but to fulfill the Great Commandments of God in obedience to Christ.

Kindness makes virtue attractive. It is the love of God expressed through us, His human creatures. It inspires the young in our care to follow the three admonitions of Don Bosco to his students: be cheerful, work hard, and obey the rules. The teacher expresses care for students by rejoicing with them in their prosperity and their strengths, comforting and encouraging them in adversity, and supporting them in their challenges and weaknesses. This requires the teacher's steady vigilance for the students' benefit.

This necessary vigilance does not demand that young people be removed from the society in which they must live and save their souls; but that today more than ever they should be forewarned and

forearmed as Christians against the seductions and the errors of the world, which, as Holy Writ admonishes us, is all “concupiscence of the flesh, concupiscence of the eyes and pride of life.” [I John 2, 16]... (Paragraph 92)

The formation of the will, or moral education, as envisioned by Saint John Bosco, is ultimately the formation of the conscience. The development of the human conscience demands patient supervision and persevering care through many years. Christ has commanded us to be vigilant. This vigilance for parents and teachers concerns not only themselves but also extends to the impressionable minds and promising souls of the young entrusted to their care.

The Vision of the Academy

Pope Pius XI dedicated himself to labor for “**the Peace of Christ in the Reign of Christ—Pax Christi in Regno Christi!**” The true Christian education of today’s youth is an essential aspect of securing peace by building the reign of Christ in this world. The education we provide young people today must help them secure peace for the generations to come.

The Catholic Church calls the education of young minds and hearts the “ars artium”—the greatest of all arts. It is to that greatest of all arts that Immaculate Conception Academy is dedicated. The saying is true:

“No one can change the past; only a few can influence the present; we all have great power to shape the future by educating today’s children—tomorrow’s leaders.”

ACADEMY RULES AND REGULATIONS

I. Obligations and Expectations

A. The Obligations of the Academy

Immaculate Conception Academy accepts the obligation to provide its students with a true Roman Catholic education modeled on the Classical Latin Curriculum.

The Academy (consisting of the Administration, Faculty, Staff, and Parent Volunteers) further accepts the obligation to treat all students with charity, courtesy, understanding, and fairness in all matters. However, that obligation does not mean that all students will be necessarily treated the same. The Academy at all times retains the discretion to treat individual students according to their personal needs and circumstances consistent with the Academy's mission.

To the extent it is possible and subject to the availability of priests, the Academy will provide students with daily Mass offered in the Traditional Latin Rite as well as regular opportunities for Confessions.

B. The Obligations of Students

As compared to their age mates in other schools and elsewhere in society, Academy Students are privileged and the Academy expects extraordinary things from them. Academy Students must assume and accept responsibility for their actions, realizing according to their age and level of maturity that they are first and foremost accountable to God for their actions. Secondarily, they are responsible to their parents, to the Academy, and to fellow students to strive for excellence in academics and, as they advance in age, to act in a manner becoming of young Catholic men and women.

The Academy and parents must guide the students, but the ultimate responsibility rests with the students. The success of most students will depend on their own best efforts, cooperation, and work ethic.

In all places and at all times, Academy students must be:

- **HONEST** - Telling the truth, avoiding deceptive behavior, and submitting only their own work;
- **OBEDIENT** - Doing what they are told by Academy Administration, faculty, staff, and parents without protest or argument;
- **RESPECTFUL** - Addressing elders with their proper titles, showing courtesy and offering help where assistance is needed, being attentive when elders are present or speaking, and showing respect to visitors;
- **ORDERLY** - Adhering to the Academy Uniform Code, maintaining a neat and clean appearance with good habits of personal hygiene, and keeping desks and lockers neat and clean;

- **RESPONSIBLE** - Following instructions and carrying out assigned tasks promptly and precisely;
- **COOPERATIVE** - Working in peaceful and productive collaboration with others;
- **PROMPT** - Arriving on time and prepared for each school day and for individual classes; submitting assigned class work and homework when it is due; arriving on time for daily Mass (meaning for prayers five minutes before the scheduled Mass time);
- **HARD WORKING** - Giving one's best efforts in all phases of life at the Academy: spiritual, academic, and extra-curricular.

Students should exercise these demanding virtues joyfully and with confidence that such an effort will prepare them for spiritual, academic, and personal success in the future.

C. Parental Authority and Obligations

Parents receive their responsibility for the education and discipline of their children directly from God. Parents of children attending the Academy entrust this authority to Academy Administration, faculty, and staff during the school day and at other Academy activities.

1. Supervising Academic Work

Parents have easy access to the academic performance and progress of students. Parents are obliged to review regularly the performances and grades of their children and to ensure that the students are devoting adequate effort to the completion of homework assignments and studying for tests. Faculty members will gladly discuss with parents the academic successes and struggles of any student.

2. Addressing Concerns with the Academy

The Administration, faculty, staff, and parents have the responsibility to work in close cooperation with each other, to show mutual respect and charity even in times of disagreement, and to respect the boundaries of each one's authority. Anything less risks the subversion of proper authority and sends an undesirable message to Academy students, who will benefit by their exposure to charitable adults resolving problems in charitable and productive ways.

If parents have questions or concerns regarding specific academic decisions or disciplinary actions, it is their responsibility first to address those questions or concerns with the faculty or staff member(s) involved in the matter. Parents violate this responsibility if they first bring their grievances to the Administration, to other faculty or staff members, to other parents, or to students. If matters are not resolved after discussions with the appropriate faculty or staff member, only then should parents bring their concerns to the Administration.

3. Communicating with the Academy

The Academy understands that effective communication between the Academy and parents is essential to the successful education of the students. Parents are responsible for actively participating in the available avenues for such communications to and from the Academy. There are two particularly valuable opportunities for faculty-parent communications.

First, the Academy hosts multiple parent-teacher conferences during the school year (typically one each quarter in the evening), which offer information from the Administration as well as opportunities for parents to meet privately with individual teachers. **Only extraordinary circumstances justify a parent's failure to attend such conferences, particularly when they know that a child is struggling academically or failing in their effort or conduct.**

Second, parents must recognize that the regular delivery of information to parents is a responsibility shared collectively by the Academy, parents, and students. Apart from those circumstances requiring immediate personal or telephone contact, the primary method of communication from the Academy to parents will be by email. It is therefore imperative that all parents provide the Academy office with current email addresses and to check their email at least twice a day (when possible). If parents do not have access to email, the Academy must rely on students (and expect them) to deliver to their parents written notes, messages, deficiency reports, report cards, and other documents on the same day the students receive them. The Academy will not be responsible for the consequences resulting from a student's failure or refusal to deliver messages home from the Academy.

Academy personnel will make every effort to contact parents/guardians promptly when the moral, educational, or physical welfare of the student is concerned. In its discretion and depending on whether time is of the essence, the Academy may elect to communicate to parents by telephone or via First Class Mail. The Academy office will notify parents by email when mid-term reports are sent home.

Any parents desiring to speak with a child or deliver belongings (e.g., lunches) to a child during the school day must do so through the Academy office. Only emergency messages will be delivered to students during class time.

4. Supervising Use of the Internet and Other Electronic Media at Home

Parents who permit their children access to the Internet at home are obliged to impose the following measures:

- Monitor every student use of the Internet and all sites visited.
- Place all computers accessible to the student in open areas of the home.
- Arrange that all computers accessible to the student (i) be protected by a password known to the parents; (ii) have accountability software installed; and (iii) have filtering software installed.

The same rules that govern Internet use at home equally apply to a student's access to television, movies, music, and other forms of entertainment, including social media. Academy students must not be permitted to watch immoral movies/television or to listen to profane and immoral music.

If a student who has watched or listened to such "entertainment" discusses it with another student, such conduct becomes the concern of the Academy and is subject to discipline.

5. Fundraising Opportunities and Obligations

The Academy participates in multiple fundraising events each year in an effort to close the gap between tuition revenues and the cost of operating the Academy. While all parents are obligated to participate in Academy fundraisers with their children, the obligation is particularly compelling for those parents who have cannot otherwise meet their tuition requirements.

II. Student Attendance: Tardiness, Absences, and Truancy

A. Introduction

All students must attend the Academy's required religious services and academic instructions for the sake of their moral and intellectual development.

For the sake of intellectual development, a student's consistent attendance at Academy classes and scholastic functions is absolutely essential. Every absence impairs the student's ability to succeed and undermines the student's commitment to his education. Parents undermine a child's education and the authority of the Academy when they encourage or tolerate the attitude that attendance (or non-attendance) is of little consequence. It is difficult to overstate the problems posed by missed school days and classes, which always adversely affect not only the absent student but also the Academy faculty, staff, and other students. Teachers structure their lessons around the vacations periods of the year so that teaching continuity remains intact. Every absence interrupts that learning process.

B. Tardiness and Absence

1. Tardiness

A student is **tardy** when he is late for either the start of the school day or for the beginning of Mass, a class period, or any Academy function during school hours. A student is *tardy to school* when he is not at his assigned desk for the start of morning homeroom, which normally begins at 8:00 a.m. A student is *tardy to class* when he is not at his assigned desk for the scheduled start of the period. A student is *tardy for Mass* when he is not in his assigned pew five minutes before the scheduled time for Mass to begin. And a student is *tardy to any school function* if he is not in the assigned location at the appropriate starting time.

The Academy designates all tardiness as either excused or unexcused. An **excused tardy** is one for which the student has a legitimate excuse or the approval of the Principal or the Headmaster. Students will incur no penalties for excused tardiness. An **unexcused tardy** is one for which the student has no legitimate excuse, and there will be penalties for such tardiness.

2. Absence

A student is **absent** when he is not present for a school day, a class period, or any Academy function or ceremony during the school day. *Absence from school* is when the student is not on campus and misses the entire school day. **But a student may be present on Academy grounds and still be absent if he does not attend his classes and other functions.** If a student is on campus but fails to attend a class period, he will be marked as *absent from class*. A student may also be on campus but fail to come to Mass or a scheduled ceremony or function. In such a case, the student will also be marked as absent. **All absences will be designated by the Academy as excused or unexcused.**

The Academy recognizes an **excused absence** as one when the student has permission from the Principal or the Headmaster to miss a school day or class for sufficient reasons. **Only the Academy Principal or the Headmaster can grant such permission.** And when this permission is given to a student, the Academy Office and any classroom teachers will be notified.

An **unexcused absence** occurs when a student misses the school day, a class period, or any school day function without a legitimate excuse and the permission of the Academy.

Skipping a school day occurs when a student misses a school day without the knowledge or consent of a parent and without the approval of the Academy Administration. Skipping a school day is a Level One Offense and also constitutes truancy.

Any student who is absent 38 or more class periods in a single month (with or without a legitimate excuse) or who is absent 65 or more class periods in a single year (with or without a legitimate excuse) will be deemed **excessively absent**. When the Academy designates a student as excessively absent, the Administration will communicate that fact to the family and the family will be required to attend a meeting with the Administration.

C. Policy for Student Tardiness

The school day begins at the 8:00 a.m. bell (beginning of Homeroom) and concludes with the final prayer at the end of afternoon Homeroom. Students must arrive at school on time and be in their homerooms prepared to begin prayers when the bell rings at 8:00 a.m. Neither traffic delays nor travel distance from home to school are excuses for chronic tardiness. Parents and others who are responsible for transporting children to school bear the responsibility of making sure that they arrive on time.

Rules governing tardiness apply not only for arrival at the beginning of the school day but also for each period throughout the school day. All tardiness will be recorded at the Academy Office.

1. Late Arrival or Early Departure

Students who fail to arrive on time for their 8:00 a.m. homeroom period shall be deemed tardy. Tardiness may be excused when it results from a documented traffic delay, when the student is delayed by the action of the Academy faculty or staff, or for other extraordinary circumstances at the discretion of the Academy Administration. **Ordinarily, a student who misses part of a school day must be present for four full class periods in order to receive credit for attending a full school day.**

When parents or students know that students must leave a class early, they have the responsibility to provide advance written notice of the planned departure to the Headmaster. If the early departure is approved, the Academy Office will give advance notice to any and all teachers whose classes will be missed. When the student does leave the Academy early he must always check out at the Academy Office.

High school students employed outside the Academy must schedule their work hours so that the student need not leave the Academy before afternoon dismissal.

2. Penalties for Unexcused Tardiness

The third unexcused tardy and all subsequent tardies in a semester will result in lunchtime detentions. These detentions will usually be served on the same day as the unexcused tardy is issued. Chronic tardiness may result in an after-school or a Saturday detention at the discretion of the Principal or the Headmaster. **Students who continue to be late even after serving detentions may be subject to suspension.**

Any student who accumulates five unexcused tardies in a single class in one quarter will be seen as missing the equivalent of an entire class period, and the student may be subject to a Saturday detention in order to make up the missing class time.

D. Policy for Student Absences

1. Recording and Tracking Absences

The Academy Office records all absences—both excused and unexcused. **The Academy tracks these student absences by noting the number of class periods they miss, in addition to recording the number of days missed.** So if a student is absent for an entire school day that would generally be recorded as six missed class periods. If a student is tardy or leaves school early, the Academy will also note the class periods missed and that time will count toward a student's overall time missed. The number of class periods missed by a student is an important factor in determining whether a student can be promoted or receive academic credit for a course.

2. Excused Absences

The Academy recognizes an excused absence as one when the student has permission from the Principal or the Headmaster to miss a school day or class for sufficient reasons, such as:

- Illness, injury, and/or other medical needs;
- Death or severe injury of a family member;
- Dangerous weather or other road conditions that prevent school attendance;
- Special circumstances approved by the Principal or the Headmaster.

Whenever possible, parents should provide advance notice to the Academy that a student will be absent for one of those reasons. **Phone calls from parents are not sufficient to excuse an absence. Parents must address a signed and dated explanatory note to the Headmaster.** Such a note from a parent will be accepted for an excused absence only three times each semester. **The returning student is responsible for delivering any such note to the Academy Office on the same day the student returns to school.** A doctor's note may be required to excuse any absences exceeding three per semester. When a child is experiencing medical issues, parents should make every effort to schedule non-emergency medical appointments outside of school hours.

An excess of excused absences—38 or more class periods in a month; 65 or more class periods in a year—may be grounds for the Academy to require a student to attend additional instruction or make-up days before the student can be promoted or receive academic credit for the course.

3. Unexcused Absences

High school students will be required to serve detentions after their third unexcused absence and for each subsequent unexcused absence in any semester. These detentions will be used to make up for the missed class time, in order for the students to compile the hours necessary to earn their academic credits. During these detentions the students will do academic work to make up for the missed classroom hours and earn the necessary credit. If these missed class periods are not made up during the school year, then the student must make up the time during the Summer Vacation. Students will not be

promoted or graduated until they have made up the missing class periods to the satisfaction of the Academy Administration.

Any student who misses 20 or more class periods in a particular subject may not be permitted to advance on to the next grade level until they have made up the class work to the satisfaction of the Academy Administration.

4. Student Absentee Form

The Academy strongly discourages family decisions that cause students to miss school for reasons not listed in Section D, above. Family vacations, personal holidays, recreational and sporting events, and other discretionary personal activities are generally not good cause for a student to miss school and will normally be classified as non-excused absences.

Parents who anticipate a student absence for such reasons must complete a *Student Absentee Form*, which provides advance notification to the Academy of the anticipated absence and allows faculty and staff to provide the student with instructional material so that the student can complete the missed assignments. The Administration, in collaboration with individual teachers, may impose conditions for submitting missed work and make-up tests. The procedure for submitting the *Student Absentee Form* is as follows:

1. A parent submits to the Headmaster a signed and dated letter explaining the proposed absence, identifying which students will be absent, and identifying the days when they will be absent. The letter should be submitted as soon as the likelihood of a student absence is known.
2. Every student designated in the parent's letter obtains a copy of the *Student Absentee Form* from the Academy Office and delivers it to all the student's teachers in order to obtain the teachers' assignments and signatures. If possible, the student should submit the form to the teachers a week in advance of the expected absence.
3. The students return the completed *Student Absentee Form* to the Headmaster, and he will classify the absence(s) as excused or unexcused.
4. Regardless of how the Headmaster classifies the absence, the student(s) must return to school with all assignments completed.

Students who fail to comply with this procedure or fail to turn in the missed assignments upon their return to school will receive a grade of "0" for all missed assignments and tests. In such event, the only recourse for the student to receive a grade for the missed work would be with the approval of both the teacher and the Headmaster.

E. Truancy and Academy Policy for Truancy

1. Truancy

The Academy designates as an **habitual truant** any student who meets one of the following criteria:

- Absent 30 or more consecutive class hours (5 school days) without a legitimate excuse approved by the Principal or the Headmaster;
- Absent 42 or more class periods (7 school days) in a single month without a legitimate excuse approved by the Principal or the Headmaster;
- Absent 72 or more class periods (12 school days) in a school year without a legitimate excuse approved by the Principal or the Headmaster.

2, Policy for Truancy

Any Academy student in grades Kindergarten through Twelve whose absences during a school year meet the definitions of an “habitual truant” will not be promoted and will have to repeat the grade level, unless special arrangements are made with the Academy Administration.

F. Daily Attendance Policy and Procedures

1. Policy

All Students must be present and prepared for all their Academy classes on school days.

All students must also attend, as appropriate to grade level, all designated scholastic functions, school assemblies, extracurricular activities, field days, and school service days (including fundraising events). All students must also attend, as required by the Academy, all required religious services and exercises, including school Masses, Holy Days of Obligation, the Triduum of Holy Week, Days of Recollection, and retreats.

Individual students and/or grade levels may in specific instances be excused from such obligations by the Academy Administration.

2. Daily Procedures

Attendance roll will be taken during every homeroom period at the beginning of the school day and communicated to the Academy Office, which will prepare and issue to the teachers a complete list of absentees for the day. Students who miss the homeroom period will be listed as absent until they personally report to the Academy Office to confirm their attendance. The Academy Office will notify a parent by telephone or email that a child is unexpectedly absent for the opening period.

Students who are tardy or absent for the homeroom period must report to the Academy Office immediately upon arriving at school so that their late attendance can be recorded.

The Academy Office will notify teachers by the beginning of the second class period about which students are absent from school. The Office will update this list throughout the day as changes occur.

III. Academy Uniform Policy

A. Uniform Code

The Academy requires all students to wear the prescribed uniform throughout the school day. The benefits of a prescribed uniform code include (i) relieving families of the burdens and expense of providing a day-to-day wardrobe for students; (ii) assuring that students do not wear immodest or inappropriate attire to school, (iii) eliminating any pressure on students to conform to fashionable trends in clothing or to otherwise “compete” by their manner of dress at school, (iv) contributing to a sense that every student belongs as an equal member of the student body, (v) fostering humility and self-discipline, (vi) contributing to a sense of mission, and (vii) providing a visible image of one who is representative of the Academy.

Students are to be neat, modest, well-groomed, and in complete uniform when they are on the grounds of the Academy during school days and at academy-related functions. The only exceptions to this policy are:

1. During Recess periods, the uniform policy is relaxed and students may change shoes and loosen ties. Students must tuck in their shirts, put on their ties, and fasten all buttons before entering the school building to resume classes.
2. After school when students are waiting for other activities or waiting for parents before they leave the school grounds (at which times the uniform policy is relaxed but not abandoned).
3. Wearing approved clothing for Academy extracurricular activities, including athletic events, Academy plays, concerts and practices, volunteer work activities, and parish-related activities and meals
4. Other exceptions specifically authorized by Academy Administration, faculty, staff.

The modesty requirements that apply with the Academy Uniform Code always apply when students are at Academy-related functions, including sporting events. Students bear the joint responsibility with their parents of maintaining their Academy uniforms and shoes in neat, clean, and good condition. Torn or frayed garments are to be mended or replaced promptly.

Because the Academy uniform is representative of the Academy and its good name, students who act in an unbecoming manner in public while in school uniform, whether or not on Academy property, shall be subject to disciplinary action by the Academy. Even when the prescribed Academy uniform is not required, students must still dress neatly and modestly while on Academy grounds and at all Academy functions.

As a general rule, a note from a parent does not relieve a student of the duty to dress in compliance with the Uniform Code. However, for a sufficient reason, the Administration may honor a parent note as a temporary dispensation from the uniform code. For any day or period of time when a student is unable to wear approved clothing or footwear, the student must deliver to the Headmaster a parent's note explaining why the student cannot comply with the uniform code and stating when the student will resume wearing the required clothing or shoes.

B. Specific Clothing Requirements and Prohibitions

The Administration will make the final decision regarding a student's compliance with the Uniform Code based on the following guidelines:

Uniforms for Boys

GRADES K – 8

1. Navy blue dress slacks with black belt.
2. Light blue shirt with button-down collar. Shirts must be of oxford cloth. Short sleeve shirts are permitted during the First and Fourth Quarters. Long sleeve shirts are permitted year-long. Shirts must be tucked in with buttons fastened. The top button may be unfastened during lunch or recess.
3. Navy blue long tie.
4. Plain, entirely black dress shoes with black or navy blue dress socks. Shoes must be able to be polished and the soles must be black. Students in grades 4-8 must have tie shoes.
5. Academy Spirit Wear or Academy-approved navy blue V-Neck sweater (which may be worn in classroom). Hooded sweatshirts are not to be worn in the church.
6. Solid colored coat for outside use in cold weather.

GRADES 9 – 12

1. Dark grey dress slacks with black belt.
2. White shirt with button down collar. Shirts must be of oxford cloth. Short sleeve shirts are permitted during the First and Fourth Quarters. Long sleeve shirts are permitted year-long, but long sleeves may not be rolled up. Shirts must be tucked in with buttons fastened. The top button may be unfastened during lunch or recess.
3. Navy blue long tie.
4. Plain, entirely black tie dress shoes with navy blue, black or grey dress socks. Shoes must be able to be polished, and must have black soles.

5. Navy Blue blazer. The blazer may be taken off during classes and in church in warm weather but it must always be worn between classes and while entering and leaving the church. Blazers must have the approved Academy Crest attached.
6. Academy-approved navy blue or grey V-neck sweater or sweater vest.
7. Academy Spirit Wear or solid blue or black coat. Spirit Wear and coats are for outdoor wear only and are not normally permitted in the classroom. In special circumstances, male students may be given permission to wear Spirit Wear during class time.

Gym Class

During gym class, students in grades 9-12 must wear the prescribed Academy gym uniforms. Students who do not have the prescribed gym uniforms on a given day will be required to wear the regular school uniform to gym class.

Uniforms for Girls

GRADES K - 4

1. Uniform plaid jumper. The jumper's hem must always fall below the entire kneecap whether the student is standing, kneeling or sitting.
2. White blouse with a round collar. Short sleeve shirts are permitted during the First and Fourth Quarters. Long sleeve shirts are permitted all year long. Blouses must be tucked in and buttons should be fastened at all times. The top button may be unfastened during lunch or recess.
3. Navy blue cardigan sweater or Spirit Wear. Hooded sweatshirts are not to be worn in the church.
4. Navy blue knee socks. Socks must be kept up at all times. Students may wear navy blue thermals or leggings with their socks. The socks must always be pulled up so that no skin is visible.
5. Red or blue cross tie.
6. Blue beanie. These are available through the school office.
7. Plain, entirely black dress shoes. Shoes may not be open-toed.
8. Solid colored coat or jacket for outdoor use in cold weather

GRADES 5 - 6

1. Uniform plaid skirt. The hem of the skirt must always fall below the entire kneecap whether the student is standing, kneeling or sitting.
2. White or blue blouse, of oxford cloth. Short or long sleeves are permitted. Blouses must be tucked in and buttons should be fastened at all times. The top button may be unfastened during lunch or recess.
3. Navy blue sweater vest or cardigan. The vest must be worn with the white blouse, but it is not required when the blue blouse is worn.

4. Academy Spirit Wear. Hooded sweatshirts are not to be worn in the church.
5. Navy blue cross tie.
6. Plain, entirely black dress shoes. Shoes may not be open-toed.
7. Navy blue knee socks. Socks must be kept up at all times. Students may wear navy blue thermals or leggings with their socks. The socks must always be pulled up so that no skin is visible.
8. Solid colored coat or jacket for use in cold weather
9. Long chapel veil (mantilla) is to be worn while in church.

GRADES 7 & 8

1. Uniform plaid skirt. The hem of the skirt must always fall below the entire kneecap whether the student is standing, kneeling or sitting.
2. White or blue blouse, of oxford cloth. Short sleeve shirts are permitted during the First and Fourth Quarters. Long sleeve shirts are permitted all year long. Blouses must be tucked in and buttons should be fastened at all times. The top button may be unfastened during lunch or recess.
3. Navy blue sweater vest or cardigan. The vest must be worn with the white blouse, but it is not required when the blue blouse is worn.
4. Academy Spirit Wear which has been approved for school day use. Hooded sweatshirts are not to be worn in the classroom or in the church.
5. Navy blue cross tie.
6. Plain, entirely black dress shoes. Shoes may not be open-toed.
7. Navy blue knee socks. Socks must be kept up at all times. Students may wear navy blue thermals or leggings with their socks. The socks must always be pulled up so that no skin is visible.
8. Solid colored coat or jacket for use in cold weather
9. Long chapel veil (mantilla) is to be worn while in church.

GRADES 9 – 12

1. Uniform gray skirt. The hem of the skirt must touch the floor while the student is kneeling and should reach to the bottom of the kneecap whether the student is standing, kneeling or sitting.
2. White blouse with sweater vest or blue blouse, of oxford cloth. Short sleeve shirts are permitted during the First and Fourth Quarters. Long sleeve shirts are permitted all year long. Short or long sleeves are permitted. Blouses must be tucked in and buttons should be fastened at all times. The top button may be unfastened during lunch or recess.
3. Navy blue sweater vest or cardigan. The vest must be worn with the white blouse, but it is not required when the blue blouse is worn.

4. Navy Blue women's blazer. The blazer may be taken off during classes and in church in warm weather but it must always be worn between classes and while entering and leaving the church. Blazers must have the approved Academy Crest attached.
5. Academy Spirit Wear which has been approved for school day use. Hooded sweatshirts are not to be worn in the classroom or in the church.
6. Navy blue cross tie.
7. Plain, entirely black dress shoes. Shoes may not be open-toed.
8. Navy blue knee socks. Socks must be kept up at all times. Students may wear navy blue thermals or leggings with their socks. The socks must always be pulled up so that no skin is visible.
9. Solid black or blue coat for outdoor use in cold weather.
10. Long chapel veil (mantilla) is to be worn while in church.

Gym Class

During gym class, students in grades 9-12 must wear the prescribed Academy gym uniforms. Students who do not have the prescribed gym uniforms on a given day will be required to wear the regular school uniform to gym class.

C. Prohibitions on Jewelry and Makeup

Students may not wear jewelry, with the exceptions of watches (no digital watches) and the school ring. Unauthorized jewelry will be confiscated and returned only to parents. Religious medals, crosses, and scapulars are not jewelry and may be worn by students in a manner consistent with Catholic Tradition. Girls should not have their ears pierced during the school year if the procedure will require them to continue wearing earrings in the days or weeks following the procedure.

Girls are permitted to wear skin-toned, concealing make-up to cover irregular skin complexions. However, girls may not wear any other type of makeup (e.g., eyeliner, mascara, eye shadow, blush, lipstick) or nail polish. Girls wearing unauthorized makeup will be sent to the school office to remove it and may be subject to other discipline.

D. Regulations for Boys' Hair

Boys at the Academy are required to have traditional, standard, classic style haircuts. The boys need to be neatly combed and appropriately groomed. When it is combed downward, boys' hair must remain above the eyebrows, ears, and collar. There must be no line or shaved sections, and boys are not permitted to have any "fade" or undercut style of haircuts. Two-layered hair, bald heads, shag cuts, spiked, and Mohawks are prohibited. Boys may not wear sideburns that extend below the mid-ear. Male students must always be clean-shaven with no facial hair or stubble. Boys are not permitted to streak or dye their hair.

Any male student who appears at school in violation of these regulations may, after a warning and at the discretion of the Administration, be required to get a haircut before being allowed to return to school. If male students come to school unshaven, they will be made to shave at school.

E. Regulations for Girls' Hair

Female students may grow or trim their hair to any length but they may not wear their hair so short that it resembles a masculine style. Girls must keep their hair out of their eyes. No shaved heads, in whole or in part, are permitted. Girls are not permitted to “streak” their hair or to dye their hair.

IV. Academy Code of Discipline

A. Disciplinary Model

In matters of discipline, Immaculate Conception Academy holds as its ideal the “preventive method of education,” as employed with such admirable results by Saint John Bosco. The three pillars of this system are REASON, RELIGION, and KINDNESS.

- **REASON** is just, fair, and consistent – not arbitrary or subject to outbursts of passion.
- **RELIGION** fosters the filial fear of God, which arises from the love and respect for Divine authority as the foundation of all authority.
- **KINDNESS** includes gentleness without weakness, as well as patience and a readiness to overlook personal slights, impositions, ingratitude and disappointment, without responding with bitterness or sarcasm.

The “***preventive method***” presumes good will on the part of students, and encourages them to do always and everywhere what is right by appealing to all that is good in them. It sees the primary goal of education to be the formation of a right conscience and the sanctification of one’s soul. This method demands constant supervision until the conscience is fully mature and the will is confirmed in goodness.

While this system is able to bring out the best in a student, it is particularly necessary in our own day when children are often exposed to the most corrupting, embittering, and cynical influences at an early age. The simple and inescapable fact remains that to bring out the best in our youth, the method employed must always be based upon the three pillars of REASON, RELIGION, and KINDNESS.

B. Code of Conduct

The Academy expects its students to behave at all times as Catholic ladies and gentlemen. The Code of Conduct applies to all students while they are on school grounds, at school functions, or representing the Academy in any capacity.

Student behavior at other times or places is presumed to be under parental control and is not the responsibility of the Academy. However, any student misconduct that occurs away from Academy-related events that has a negative impact on the reputation of the Academy may render the offending student subject to Academy discipline.

The Principal and the Headmaster—or any members of the faculty or staff as designated by the Administration—have the authority to search desks, lockers, bags, purses and other belongings of any student at any time. Items deemed to be dangerous, unsanitary, or otherwise in conflict with the Code of Conduct or the safety, order, and discipline of the Academy will be confiscated. If the Principal, the Headmaster, or any other faculty member have reason to suppose that a student is carrying dangerous or forbidden items on his person, the student will be asked to empty his pockets.

C. Three Levels of Code Offenses

There are three levels of student offenses at the Academy with Level One Offenses being the most serious.

LEVEL ONE OFFENSES

The most serious violations are classified as Level One Violations. They include:

- Words or actions that are derogatory or contrary to the Catholic Faith or religion, such as blasphemy, heresy, apostasy, or sacrilege.
- Acts of aggression or physical violence committed against Academy faculty, staff, employees, or visitors.
- Acts of aggression or physical violence committed against other students and which carry a risk of serious physical harm.
- Acts of open defiance or gross disrespect toward Academy faculty, staff, or employees, including vulgar, offensive, or profane language.
- The use of obscene and impure words or gestures, or the production or possession of obscene or impure drawings, pictures, or photographs.

- The scandalous and immoral discussion or promotion of homosexuality, transgenderism, or gender dysphoria.
- Forgery (falsely making or producing a copy of a document, signature, or other work in order to deceive).
- Cheating on any academic test or assignment including acts of plagiarism. A more expansive discussion of the sinful ramifications of cheating appears as an Addendum to this Handbook.
- Skipping a school day without permission of parents and the Administration.
- Acts of wanton disrespect (behavior which is openly contemptuous and scandalous) toward persons attending school-related functions.
- Unauthorized access to or use of the Internet while on school grounds during school hours. This offense will normally result in a five-day suspension from school while the Academy Administration reviews whether there are grounds for expulsion.
- Unauthorized use or possession of any mobile phone or electronic device on school grounds between arrival and departure.
- Reporting or causing a false distress signal (pulling a fire alarm, initiating threats, or performing any other actions which would be expected to cause panic or fear).
- Possession, use, sale, or being under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances (illegal drugs), or drug paraphernalia, whether or not on the Academy campus. This includes marijuana and any marijuana/cannabis products, whether legal or illegal.
- Possession, use, sale, or distribution of tobacco or any nicotine products on school property or at a school function.
- Possession, use, sale, or distribution of e-cigarettes on school property or at a school function. This rule applies both to the act of using the e-cigarettes (i.e. vaping) and to the possession of any e-cigarette apparatus or paraphernalia.

Any student found to have committed a Level One Offense shall be subject to a three-day suspension or expulsion at the discretion of the Principal.

LEVEL TWO OFFENSES

The next most serious violations are classified as Level Two Violations. They include:

- Use of profane, offensive, or vulgar words or gestures.
- Acts of aggression or physical violence committed against other students, which acts do not carry a risk of serious physical harm.
- Improper displays of intimacy or affection between students.
- Failure to attend detention or to complete any disciplinary requirement assigned by the Administration, faculty, or staff.
- Malicious behavior toward other students, including: fighting, pushing, shoving, kicking, bullying, threatening, belittling, hazing, or endangering the well-being of self or others through malicious jokes, pranks, tricks, games, etc.
- Unauthorized absence from a scheduled class or a required extracurricular activity.
- Leaving campus during the school day or during any other required Academy event without permission from the Administration.
- Transporting another student off campus during school hours without the Administration's permission.
- Wanton acts of vandalism, including destroying, damaging or defacing any property of the Academy or of anyone affiliated with the Academy, including visitors. Full restitution will be required for the offense of vandalism, in addition to the imposition of other disciplinary measures.

Any student found to have committed a Level Two Offense shall be subject to multiple week day detentions or suspension at the discretion of the Principal.

LEVEL THREE OFFENSES

Level Three Violations include:

- Verbal abuse or disrespectful conduct toward other students.

- Classroom behavior that disturbs the teacher, disturbs other students, or otherwise disrupts the learning environment.
- Disobeying the Academy Code of Conduct in other ways, including but is not limited to: failure to obey directives, instructions, classroom rules and procedures, lunchroom rules or procedures; horseplay and rough-housing; lying; littering; throwing food or being consistently noisy in the halls or lunchroom; mistreating the belongings of others; possession of items described as “contraband;” shooting spit wads, rubber bands or other projectiles; tossing rocks; making disruptive noises; leaving one’s seat without permission; chewing gum; and other non-violent misbehaviors.

Any student found to have committed a Level Three Offense shall be subject to one or more after-school detentions. In the case of chronic misbehaviors, any student may be subject to more severe disciplinary measures or suspension at the discretion of the Principal.

D. Bullying

The Academy forbids bullying of any kind.

A “**bully**” is anyone who tries to intimidate another person by using unfair and unjust advantage in order to serve his selfish purpose.

Therefore, **bullying** is a form of aggression and is, by definition, a Level Two Offense. It can be active or passive. It is **active** when the bully employs force or threats of force to physically control or to injure his victim, or when the bully inflicts psychological and emotional pressure on another by embarrassing him and inducing others to lose respect for him and to shun him or even to join in the bullying themselves.

As the awareness of bullying has increased in recent years, the problem with bullying has become confused by the spread of another form of bullying, which might take the form of passive aggression. The rise of the hypersensitive chronic victims—dubbed “snowflakes”—has produced a sector of our young population who engage in bullying by making insistent demands that whatever offends them—whether it be political or religious speech, or the actions of others—must be banned. These people are ever primed to take offense, and then to bully others by accusing them of “bullying” simply because they express contrary opinions.

Due to the damage they can do, dealing effectively with both these forms of bullying (the active and the passive) is extremely important for the welfare of all the students at the Academy.

- Unchecked active aggression encourages the bully to continue and to intensify his malevolent behavior, which he deems successful in accomplishing his selfish purposes at the expense of his victims. The accused bully might even try to gain sympathy by casting himself as the innocent target of his victim's supposedly false allegations. The aggressive bully can then go on to become more malicious as time goes on and the real victim can lose self-respect and give up, even experiencing symptoms of illness to miss school days and in the process losing all initiative.
- Unchecked passive aggression encourages the accuser in the role of the perpetual victim who cannot deal with the difficulties of life and real or imagined opposition from others. Such behavior might even become self-fulfilling by provoking those accused of bullying to act aggressively against the one they consider to be a false accuser who is getting them into trouble at school and at home.
- As problematic as both behaviors are, yet, it is difficult at times to determine to what extent an accused bully is guilty of aggression and to what extent the alleged victim is over-reacting.
- Another factor which can cloud efforts to resolve accusations of bullying is the parents' natural protectiveness of their own children and the inclination to "absolutize" the accounts given by their own children without taking into consideration the natural bias of a child's subjective view of the situation and his tendency to emphasize the events that are most important to him. No parent wants to think of his child as a bully, any more than any parent wants to consider his child weak and hypersensitive. Nonetheless, it is in the best interest of the children that their parents be objective as possible and open to the possibility that a given child might have a tendency in one direction or the other.

When the Staff and the Administration receive reports of bullying among students, every effort will be made to investigate and determine the facts. This investigation will involve interviewing the parties concerned: the accuser(s), the accused, the witnesses and any staff member(s) responsible for supervision. Also consulted will be others whose insights might be helpful because they have personal knowledge of the behavior and character of those involved.

Parents will be kept informed and will be consulted concerning reports of bullying and the progress in determining the facts. When it appears that all available relevant information has come to light, the Administration must make a judgment of any wrong-doing and will apply suitable correction. The correction will be exactly that: practical measures motivated by love for the children and which are meant to discourage tendencies toward aggressive and manipulative thinking and behavior. Furthermore, any such corrective measures should encourage a sense of deriving from justice and charity for one another.

E. Classroom Disciplinary Process

The classroom disciplinary process at the Academy follows a definite process. It begins with the classroom teacher, who has the initial authority to address classroom disciplinary issues. Minor transgressions committed by students in the classroom will be handled by the teacher, who has wide discretion in such matters.

It is fully within a teacher's discretion to refer a difficult student to the Headmaster at any time for formal discipline, in which case the student should expect that a detention or some other formal discipline will be imposed.

The process for addressing disciplinary problems is as follows:

- Step 1: The teacher meets with the student and corrects the problem.
- Step 2: If subsequent misconduct warrants follow-up action, the teacher imposes disciplinary measures and informs the Headmaster, who contacts the parents with detailed notice of the misconduct with a copy to the Headmaster.
- Step 3: If the misconduct persists after parental notice, appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken by the teacher and the Administration, with the Administration contacting the parents.

For those students whose misbehavior is **serious or chronic** and whose attitude reflects a contempt for the Academy's Code of Discipline and other standards, further disciplinary measures may be imposed by the Administration. Such measures may include, but are not limited to, written punishments, detentions, and suspensions. Repeat offenders can expect the imposition of more severe disciplinary measures.

F. Disciplinary Measures and Procedures

The Academy Administration maintains final responsibility for all disciplinary decisions.

1. *DISCIPLINARY REPORTS*: In cases where a student continues to violate the Code of Conduct and more serious discipline is required (**see Disciplinary Process above**), the teacher will notify the Headmaster, and he will issue a *Disciplinary Report*. These reports state the misconduct involved, the method of correction employed, and any further comments on the breach of discipline. Copies of such reports are put into the student's file and sent home to parents.

2. *DETENTIONS*: The Academy employs three types of detentions as follows:

- (i) **Lunch-time Detentions:** Students are excluded from recess, placed under teacher supervision, eat lunch in silence in the detention room, and are required to perform written exercises quietly.
- (ii) **After-school Detentions:** Students and parents will be notified in advance of the day of after-school detentions, which are served on school days from 3:15 - 4:15 p.m. under supervision of faculty or staff. Students must report to the designated detention room on time for detentions, which may be rescheduled only with permission from the Headmaster. Students may only re-schedule detentions a maximum of two times. After this, students may then be subject to additional detentions or a Saturday detention. After-school detentions may involve a minor work detail for the benefit of a teacher or the Academy.
- (iii) **Saturday Detentions:** Supervised Saturday work details to be performed in or around the school building from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Times and locations of Saturday detentions are subject to reasonable modification with approval of the Headmaster.

3. IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS: Students are isolated from the student body and required to complete academic work under supervision. During the period of an in-school suspension, students are responsible for completing all homework and other assignments. Extra work may also be given to students during the suspension. The purpose of an in-school suspension is to encourage a student to reflect upon the student's attitude and the seriousness of past actions, and to take the necessary steps to avoid such behavior in the future.

4. SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL: Students who have been suspended from school may not be on Academy property on school days or at Academy functions during the suspension, unless specific permission to do so has been given by the Principal or the Headmaster. During the period of suspension, students are required to complete all assigned class work in order to return school. Other conditions for returning to good standing in the Academy may be imposed by the Administration on a case-by-case basis.

5. EXPULSIONS FROM SCHOOL: Students guilty of Level One offenses or other serious or chronic misbehavior may be subject to expulsion from the Academy. A student may be expelled without committing a Level One Offense if the student is consistently disruptive of the school environment and displays no remorse and no resolve to conform to the Academy's Code of Conduct. The Principal alone may expel students.

G. Discipline for Uniform Violations

For students in Grades K - 6, uniform violations are subject to lunchtime detentions, at the discretion of the Administration. Chronic violations of the Uniform Code will be subject to more severe punishments.

For students in Grades 7 – 12, uniform violations are subject to after-school detentions, at the discretion of the Administration. Chronic violations of the Uniform Code will be subject to more severe punishments.

V. Conduct Required of Students on the Academy Campus

A. Standards for Student Attendance and Conduct at Mass

Students at Immaculate Conception Academy have the blessing to attend the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on school days. Attendance at daily Mass affords students the opportunity to put aside the academic demands of the day. It is a time for prayer and quiet reflection, not recreation and amusement.

Mass is, indeed, the Holy Sacrifice in which Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ becomes present upon the altar in our church representing His redemptive death for us on the Cross, and seeks loving union with us by coming to us in Holy Communion. It is the supreme expression of His love for us. Our Lord asks in return that we express our love for Him, especially by our reception of Him in the Holy Eucharist.

1. Student Attendance at Mass

Academy students are required to attend the school day Mass. With certain limited exceptions for the youngest students, Academy students may be excused from Mass on singular occasions only for serious reasons of true necessity and only with the explicit written approval of the Headmaster. Dispensation from regular attendance at the school Mass may be obtained only by express written authorization from the Principal.

2. Time for Arrival at Mass

When third period classes conclude, all students in Grades Seven through Twelve must report to their homerooms to retrieve what they need to assist at Mass (missals, chapel veils, et cetera). Homeroom teachers or other faculty members so assigned will accompany students as a group from the homeroom to the church. All students must be in their assigned pews at least five minutes before the Mass is scheduled to begin, in order to participate in the daily prayers before Mass.

It is understood that a limited number of boys typically serve as sacristans to assist in preparations for Mass. The sacristans must leave the sacristy to attend Mass immediately upon completing their duties in the sacristy.

3. Conduct upon Arriving at the Church for Mass

Whenever students enter or leave the church, they must genuflect toward the tabernacle where Our Lord is present in the Blessed Sacrament. While moving around inside the church, students must genuflect whenever they cross the center aisle passing before the tabernacle.

When the Most Blessed Sacrament is exposed on the altar (e.g., after the Consecration or during Benediction) students must double-genuflect on both knees toward the Tabernacle. Students must wear only approved apparel while attending the school Mass. After they arrive at the church, students may not leave the church without permission before Mass concludes.

4. Conduct during Mass

All students must sit, stand and kneel at the places assigned to them in the church. Students must always conduct themselves with reverence and dignity while in the church. That reverence extends to posture and precludes slouching while standing, sitting or kneeling.

A student whose behavior reflects a lack of respect for the Mass may be required to sit in a particular place in the church under the supervision of a special monitor, and may also be excluded from serving at the altar and singing with the choir. A student's chronic or overtly disrespectful behavior during Mass shall result in disciplinary action up to and including the student's expulsion from the Academy.

The Administration may assign some high school students to sit with classes of younger students. Those high school students will assist the younger students with their personal needs, monitor their behavior, guide them in following the correct prayers in their missals, and generally set a good example for them. Students in the higher grades will be given priority for these important roles with the expectation that they will be the most mature and influential role models for the younger students.

A student who feels ill may sit down and thus signal the teacher-monitor that he is not well. A student who feels ill during the Mass must not receive Holy Communion. Any student who feels ill after receiving Holy Communion must immediately notify a teacher, who shall then notify the priest – either personally or through a server -- at the first reasonable opportunity.

The students in grades 7-12 must have Mass missals with them and must follow them throughout the Mass. Students may not bring non-approved reading material or other extraneous items into the church.

Students may not use the restroom or be in the vestibule of the church unsupervised after the prayers before Mass begin. High school students are expected to use the restrooms in the school building during the break between the end of the third period and the beginning of prayers. In cases of illness or urgent situations, students may use the restroom with approval of an Academy faculty or staff member who is present at Mass.

5. Prayers Before and After Mass

Students must be in their pews at church in time for the prayers before Mass and remain there for prayers after Mass. An assigned faculty member will lead student prayers before and after Mass unless they are led by a priest.

6. Altar Servers and Choir Members

At every school Mass, students will perform as altar servers or choir members. Whether in the sanctuary as servers, in the choir loft as singers, or in the pews, students must be attentive to the Mass and not distract, interact with, or interfere with other students.

7. Final Reflection on the Mass

Our attentive and loving presence at Mass is the most important, the most productive and the most powerful event of every day. The other occupations during the school day focus on matters, and indeed important matters, of our passing lives in this temporary world. But the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass directs our attention and affection to our Heavenly Creator and Father, to our Divine Redeemer and to the everlasting life to which He calls us. This contrast calls to our minds the profound question Our Lord addresses to each one of us: "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world – but lose his soul?"

B. Closed Campus

The Academy has a closed campus. Students must stay on the school grounds from the time they arrive until the time for dismissal. Any student leaving the school grounds must first report to the Academy office and obtain written permission from the Principal or the Headmaster. In the event of such authorization, the student must carry an off-campus pass provided by the school office and return the pass to the school office before the designated time for return.

C. In the Classroom

In the classroom, students must:

- Be in their classroom and at their desks when the bell rings, with all of their books and other materials required for class.
- Maintain silence during the class period, regardless of whether the teacher is present, unless called upon to speak by the teacher;
- Remain seated at their desks unless excused by a teacher;
- Be attentive to the teacher;
- Stand beside their desks whenever a teacher or another adult enters or leaves the room, and when called upon to speak;
- Raise their hands to be acknowledged;
- Refrain from tampering with the belongings of another;

- Refrain from touching classroom equipment, AC units, or the teacher's desk (including anything in or upon it) without the teacher's permission.

D. In the Hallways and Stairwells

Students must maintain dignified behavior whenever they are in the hallways and stairwells during the school day. Students may not talk loudly, run, create congestion by blocking the paths of other, or engage in horseplay (any reckless behavior that endangers the safety of self or others).

Students who must go to their lockers between classes must obtain any needed materials there promptly before walking to their next class. Any student who damages or defaces a locker will be subject to discipline and required to pay restitution for the costs of repair.

Students must politely greet all clergy, members of the faculty and staff, guests, and other adults whom they encounter within the school building. Students should address people with a proper title (e.g., Father, Mr., and Mrs., etc.) along with the appropriate greeting of "Good Morning" or "Good Afternoon."

Students should always display politeness to adults by greeting them, by opening doors for them, and by offering to carry any boxes or other heavy materials they may be carrying.

E. In the Science Lab

Students may enter the science lab to attend regularly assigned classes, to consult with a teacher, to attend an event arranged by a teacher, or to work on an assignment from a science teacher. In every instance, the student must have specific authorization from a science teacher to be in the science lab.

When students attend lectures in the science lab, they are governed by the same rules that apply in regular classrooms. Students may not touch any lab equipment unless authorized by a teacher.

F. In the Lunchroom

Students in Grades K -8 eat lunch in Sacred Heart Hall. Students in grades 9-12 eat lunch in Bishop Mendez Hall. All students must participate in prayers before and after each meal.

The lunch period usually takes place immediately after daily Mass. Students must proceed to eat in their assigned dining areas promptly after the conclusion of the prayers after Mass. Students may not leave their assigned lunchroom without obtaining explicit permission from the cafeteria monitor. The kitchen adjoining Sacred Heart Hall is off limits to students unless they are authorized and accompanied by adults to assist with preparing or serving food.

Hot lunches are provided on most Wednesdays.

Students may not dispose of their lunches in order to skip the meal.

While in their lunchroom, students in Grades K – 8 must:

- Remain seated at the proper table unless performing an assigned lunch job.
- Talk only in conversational tones.
- Raise their hand if they have questions or need the assistance of the lunch monitor.

High school students may speak in conversational tones with other students or faculty during the lunch period. High school students are responsible for cleaning up the tables and floor and for leaving all tables and chairs in their proper locations before leaving the lunchroom.

G. In the Library

The Academy Library is to be used by the students only for research, reading, study, or for approved group meetings. The Administration may give permission for the students to use the Library for class meetings or for meetings of the Student Council.

Aside from the lunch period, students must respect the rights of others who are using the Library by working in silence. No Library materials are to be taken from the Library unless checked out by following Library procedures:

1. Students may check out books for two weeks at a time;
2. Student fills out Book Checkout Form, which is available in the Library;
3. All Checkout Forms must be submitted to the Academy Office.

Students are not permitted in the Library unless they have been authorized to be there by the Principal, the Headmaster, or the Academy Secretary.

To gain admittance to the Library, the students must have the permission of the Administration.

Students authorized to use the library must:

- Follow all Library procedures required by the Administration.
- Remain in the Library for the entire class period unless the Library Pass clearly specifies otherwise.
- Immediately return the Library Pass to the Academy Office when work in the Library has been completed.

H. Field Trips

Field trips are an extension of the regular school curriculum. Specific information regarding the date and activity will be provided prior to each field trip. At the beginning of the school

year parents must sign written permission forms authorizing their children to participate in all Academy field trips. Parents are normally responsible for the cost of a field trip. For compelling reasons and at the request of a parent, a student may be exempted from a field trip.

I. Building Maintenance and Care

Students are responsible for any of their conduct that litters, defaces, or damages the Academy school building, floors, furnishings, lockers, or grounds. Students must place into the nearest trash receptacle any waste or litter that they discover inside or outside the school building. Students should also take the initiative to clean up any debris that they encounter on Academy grounds or call it to the attention of the Administration, the Academy Office, or maintenance staff.

J. Requirements for Student Drivers and Parking

All student drivers must be licensed and adequately insured. No speeding or reckless driving is permitted on school grounds.

All student drivers must park their vehicles on the public streets near the Academy. There is no student parking during the school day in any of the Academy parking lots, which are reserved for faculty parking (north of the high school building along Kenilworth Avenue) and church parking between the high school building and the church.

While the Academy may allow a student to park a vehicle on school grounds during the school day, the Academy is not responsible for any vehicles or their contents while they are on Academy grounds. The Principal or the Headmaster has the right to search student vehicles parked on school grounds. For student vehicles parked off Academy grounds, there may be instances when the Administration has reasonable suspicion or probable cause to believe that the vehicle contains drugs, alcohol, stolen property, or other contraband. In such circumstances the Principal or the Headmaster will contact the student's parents and ask for permission to search the vehicle. When parental permission has not been obtained and the Administration has reason to believe that the safety of the students and the faculty is at risk, the Academy will contact law enforcement to perform the necessary search.

Except during designated and supervised periods for lunch, recess, or playtime, the parking areas are not playgrounds. Play is prohibited when parking areas are in use.

K. Food, Drink, and Chewing Gum

Food and drinks may be consumed only in Sacred Heart Hall, Bishop Mendez Hall, and in the vending area. Students may only eat in their classrooms with the special permission of the Principal or the Headmaster. Food and drink may be stored only in student lockers and

designated bins. Food may not be kept in lockers overnight. Students who do keep food overnight in their lockers will be subject to after-school detention.

Students are strictly prohibited from chewing gum on Academy grounds. Chewing gum is a Level Three offense.

L. Lockers, Book Bags, and Personal Property

Students at most grade levels are provided with lockers, bins, or some other location for storing coats, books and other personal belongings. Students should bring to school only personal items necessary for participation in class and/or extracurricular activities. **The Academy is not responsible for any valuables that are lost, stolen, or damaged.**

Book bags should be stored in student lockers/bins and should not be brought into classrooms unless the student lockers/bins are located in that classroom.

The Principal and the Headmaster—or any members of the faculty or staff as designated by the Administration—have the authority to search at any time the students' desks and lockers, as well as items contained within. These items could include bags, purses and other belongings. Items deemed to be dangerous, unsanitary, or otherwise in conflict with the safety, order, and discipline of the Academy will be confiscated.

M. Toys and Playthings

Students should not bring toys, personal playthings, or other items of amusement to school. This prohibition applies to trading cards of any type. All such items will be confiscated, held by the Headmaster, and discussed with parents for a determination of whether the item should be disposed of or returned to the parents.

N. Cellular Phones

The use and possession of cellular phones (mobile phones) by students during the school day—whether on or off of Academy property or for whatever reason—are strictly prohibited, and constitute a Level One Offense. The only exception to this prohibition is when a member of the Administration, faculty, or staff gives explicit permission for a student to retrieve and use a cellular phone. Typically, a student should contact the school office if telephone use is required during the school day.

Students must turn off and give their cell phones to the Academy Office immediately upon arrival at school. The cell phones will be kept in a locked safe until the end of the school day. Cellular phones will not be released to the students until afternoon dismissal, after the afternoon announcements.

Any unauthorized student possession or use of a cell phone during the school day will result in discipline for the student and confiscation of the cell phone and is considered a Level One Offense. The Headmaster or Office staff will hold confiscated cell phones for 60 days or until the end of the semester, whichever is longer. Parents will be notified if their child is in violation of this policy. It shall be no excuse for a student to claim that he or she forgot to turn in a phone.

Parents should notify the Academy of any children in the family who have a cell phone, regardless of whether the child has parental permission to bring it to school.

O. Electronic Devices

Students may not bring unauthorized electronic devices onto the Academy grounds unless authorized to do so by the Administration, faculty or staff. **This prohibition also applies to all digital watches.** Academy students must use an analog watch (one in which the display is not digital) if they wish to have a wrist watch at school.

If a student violates these prohibitions, the student will be subject to disciplinary action and the parents will be notified. Such items will be sent to the Headmaster and will normally be returned only to a parent. The Academy is not responsible for any lost or damaged confiscated device.

VI. Use of the Internet and Exposure to Other Electronic Media

The Internet is a powerful educational tool that poses grave dangers to students. Adults have the moral responsibility to protect children from those dangers, and it is the highest priority for the Academy and all parents to closely supervise student use of the Internet.

Students must have *Internet Permission Forms* signed by their parents and on file with the Academy office BEFORE they will have access to the Internet at the Academy. The following regulations govern internet access at the Academy:

- All Academy computers shall be electronically monitored and have Internet filtering software.
- Students with a legitimate academic need to access the Internet must receive authorization from the Principal or the Headmaster.
- An Academy faculty or staff member must be present for student Internet use or the student must check in with the Academy office in order to gain Internet access.
- Students may not access the Internet during school hours by using mobile devices.

- The Academy will treat all unauthorized student use of the Internet as a Level One Offense.

If a student brings to school any immoral Internet materials or engages in any immoral or scandalous discussion arising from the student's viewing of the Internet at home or from participation in other electronic media away from the Academy, it becomes a concern of the Academy just as though the material had been viewed at the Academy.

VII. Safety & Medical Procedures

A. Safety Measures

Students must obey all instructions and follow established procedures during all safety drills and actual emergencies. Students must walk in single file and in complete silence to the designated area, where Academy faculty and staff will take a roll call of each class.

Fire Drills: The Academy will hold periodic fire drills during school hours. When the alarm rings, students must evacuate the building according to the Academy's Fire Safety Plan.

Tornado Drills: The Academy will hold periodic tornado drills during school hours. When the alarm sounds, students will be escorted in silence to designated areas in the building according to the Academy's Tornado Drill Plan.

Security Drills: The Academy will hold periodic security drills during school hours. When students receive notice that the drill has begun, they must follow the procedure outlined in the Academy's Security Plan.

B. Illness and Emergency Care

If a student becomes ill or injured, the Academy will contact at least one parent of that student. If the Academy is unable to contact either parent, the Principal or the Headmaster may authorize the necessary medical care and, if necessary, call emergency medical personnel to the school.

Students who are too ill to participate in normal school activities should not be present at the school. Any student who feels ill during a school day should report to an Academy Infirmary for examination by a school nurse. Teachers will report to the Academy Office when they send any student to the Infirmary. No student may be in the infirmary without permission from a school nurse or the Administration.

C. Student Medical Conditions

If a student has a medical condition that requires medication or might require immediate emergency measures, parents should provide the Academy with the following:

1. Written explanation of the medical condition with emergency care instructions, preferably from the attending physician;
2. Signed Medical Authorization Form;
3. List of all medications used by the student;
4. List of all student allergies;
5. List of emergency contacts and phone numbers;
6. Name of the hospital and doctor to contact in the event of an emergency.

Medications: Controlled medications delivered to the Academy for a child must be in the original prescription container and left in the care of the Academy office.

Communicable Diseases: If a physician diagnoses a communicable disease in their child, parents should immediately report that fact to the Academy Principal or the Headmaster.

Parents should not bring to school a child who, within the previous 24 hours, has exhibited a temperature (taken orally) greater than 100 degrees, vomiting or diarrhea. Students should stay home until such symptoms have stopped for at least 24 hours.

A student (or sibling) with a known or suspected communicable disease should not enter the school premises until a physician approves the student's return to school in writing, or the symptoms are no longer present. Examples of communicable diseases include, but are not limited to, strep throat, chickenpox, shingles, herpes simplex, hepatitis A, impetigo, fungus skin infections, head lice, scabies, whooping cough, or reddened eye with thick mucus or pus draining from it. When a child has been diagnosed with any of these diseases, the parent must inform the school office immediately.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

I. Introduction

The Academy is dedicated to providing the Classical Latin Curriculum to prepare its students for life-long learning and because students from a broad range of intellectual abilities can excel and achieve superior levels of knowledge, expression and reasoning abilities by pursuing it.

However, Immaculate Conception Academy, as a “parish school,” has no entrance examination and does not limit its enrollment only to select students. The Academy therefore accounts for less gifted students by offering three different types of high school diplomas, each with its set of standards and course requirements.

II. Three Levels of Diplomas Awarded for High School Graduates

Immaculate Conception Academy awards three levels of high school diplomas.

The first and highest level is the **Classical Diploma**, which is awarded to students who earn at least 25 Carnegie credit hours that include four credit hours of Latin and four credit hours of science.

The second highest level is the **Scholastic Diploma**, which is awarded to students who do not qualify for the Classical Diploma but who earn at least 22 Carnegie credit hours that include at least two credit hours of Latin and three credit hours of science.

The third level is the **Academic Diploma**, which is awarded to students who do not fulfill the requirements for the Scholastic Diploma but still fulfill the minimum requirements of the State of Ohio for high school graduation.

The Academy considers the Classical Diploma to be the standard and expects all Academy students to pursue it with zeal. However, the other two levels of diploma offered by the Academy represent significant achievements by Academy graduates whose varied individual circumstances and abilities may impede them from earning the Classical Diploma.

The required credit hours for the three levels of Diploma are detailed in the charts that appear on the next two pages.

III. Graduation Requirements

A. Academic Credit Required for Graduation from High School

High School graduates from Immaculate Conception Academy High School must have completed the work for eight (8) semesters of high school, earning a minimum of 19 credit hours of work. The Academy will accept and apply as credit toward graduation the qualified credits earned by student who transfer to the Academy from other schools or from home schooling.

The academic credit required for graduation is based on the following course work:

Classical Diploma		
<i>Classes</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Requirements</i>
Religion	4.0	• 25 credit hours • Four Latin Credits • Four Science credits • Cumulative GPA of at least 2.50
English	4.0	
Social Studies	4.0	
Mathematics	4.0	
Science	4.0	
Latin	4.0	
Health	0.5	
Physical Education	0.5	

Scholastic Diploma		
<i>Classes</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Requirements</i>
Religion	4.0	• 22 credit hours • A minimum of 2 Latin Credits • Cumulative GPA of at least 2.0
English	4.0	
Social Studies	4.0	
Mathematics	4.0	
Science	3.0	
Latin	2.0	
Health	0.5	
Physical Education	0.5	

Academic Diploma		
<i>Classes</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Requirements</i>
Religion	4.0	• 20 credit hours • Meet all Ohio Graduation Requirements • This diploma is reserved for students who transfer to the Academy or who are unable to meet additional requirements • Transfer Students must complete one Religion credit per year.
English	4.0	
Social Studies	3.0	
Mathematics	4.0	
Science	3.0	
Health	0.5	
Physical Education	0.5	
Electives	1.0	

The curriculum for all Academy graduates includes course credits for Personal Finance and Government as required by the State of Ohio.

Also following Ohio law, the Academy requires high school graduates to complete one half credit of Physical Education (120 hours of class time). The Physical Education credit requirement is satisfied when a student participates for one season as a member of an organized athletic team.

Students may be excused from participating in the Physical Education program only for documented medical reasons.

B. Factors Influencing Grade Point Average and Graduation

1. Honors Courses

The Academy offers Honors courses to high school students in select subjects. Students who are in Honors Courses take advanced-level courses which proceed at an accelerated pace, or which require extra work on the part of students. Students designated as Honors students receive an additional .5 to their GPA for that course, provided they score 75 percent or higher in the class. These students and these classes will receive Honors credit and designations on Report Cards and academic transcripts.

2. Earning Academic Credit outside the Academy

The College Credit Plus program offers high school students the opportunity to earn both high school credit and free college credit by completing college level courses at accredited institutions. Such outside coursework and credits are generally supported by and will be approved by the Academy provided that the outside coursework:

1. Is taken with consent of the student's parents,
2. Is not, in substance, duplicative of course work previously taken or still available to students through the Academy curriculum,
3. Is not significantly disruptive of the student's other course work at the Academy and does not jeopardize the student's academic standing or progress.
4. Is not significantly disruptive of the Academy schedule and puts no undue burden on the Academy teachers.

In limited circumstances and with faculty supervision, students with suitable academic records and specific goals may be permitted to gain academic credit by completing approved coursework through the Internet. All such outside coursework must be approved by the Administration.

The Academy generally limits approval of such outside credit opportunities to students in the eleventh and twelfth grades who have previously demonstrated the discipline, maturity and academic achievement necessary for success in such classes.

IV. Homework, Examinations, and Grades

A. Homework Philosophy & Time Requirements

The purpose of homework assignments is to provide students with training in independent study and the opportunity to practice and demonstrate the skills and instruction taught in the classroom. Academy teachers assign only as much homework as needed for the purpose of review and reinforcement of material already presented in the classroom. Homework assignments can also serve as preparation for future classwork. Ideally, the teachers in the elementary grades (Kindergarten through Fourth) will also do their best to avoid having written homework every weeknight, and when possible they will also keep written homework to a minimum over the weekends.

The Academy sets homework time guidelines for the various grade levels. When the teachers assign homework, they do so with these guidelines in mind. For example, teachers in Grades 5 and 6 know that the students in those grades should not be spending more than an hour on homework each night, and they design their homework assignments accordingly. **These time limits apply to the homework for all classes combined, and not just to one subject. In other words, a fifth grader should spend a maximum of 60 minutes a night on the homework for all his classes—not 60 minutes on each subject.** Time limits benefit students by allowing them adequate playtime, family time, prayer and rest. Time limits also benefit teachers by informing them of a student's ability to complete the assigned work within the prescribed time. **Additionally, the expectation is that teachers will not assign the maximum amount of homework every single night, but that the homework in these various grade levels will be a reasonable amount to accomplish the objectives of review, reinforcement, or preparation and will be able to be finished within that stipulated time.**

The prescribed amount of time for students of various grade levels to devote to their homework each night is:

Kindergarten: 20 minutes
Grade 1: 25 minutes
Grade 2: 30 minutes
Grade 3: 35 minutes
Grade 4: 40 minutes
Grades 5-6: 60 minutes
Grades 7-8: 80 minutes
Grades 9-12: 120 minutes (AP students: 180 minutes)

However, it is important to note that these time guidelines are designed with the average student in mind. There will be students who will always finish their homework well under these times, and there will also be students who work more methodically, and will need more time to achieve the same task. In every class, there will be different talents and abilities, and teachers and parents must make allowance for this reality.

Students should reasonably divide their time among the subjects for which homework is assigned on any given night. If a student cannot complete a homework assignment in the allotted amount of time, the parent should first let the teacher know how long the student is spending on homework. The parent can write this explanation on the homework assignment itself. When either a parent or a teacher learns that a student consistently struggles with the completion of homework assignments, the parent and teacher should confer to discuss suitable courses of action. The teacher should then inform the Administration of the problem and a recommended solution. If the difficulty persists, the Administration will schedule a meeting to confer with the parents and the teacher to further explore and resolve the matter.

B. Homework Assignments Submitted Late

Students must turn in all assignments when they are due unless the student is specifically authorized to turn them in at some other time. Parents should not assume that teachers have the duty to accept and grade late work, particularly when the delay arises from a child's negligence or unexcused absences. Typically, late assignments will receive a grade of 0 (zero).

A student who misses an assignment due to an absence is responsible for learning about and completing the missed assignment. If a student is unable to submit an assignment by the due date because of illness, an emergency or an excused absence, the student will have a two-day grace period to submit the assignment. If the student fails to do so or to make other arrangements with the teacher, the student will receive a grade of zero. For sufficiently grave reasons or in the case of extended excused absences, a teacher may extend a deadline.

If a student anticipates submitting an assignment after the due date, the student must provide the teacher, on or prior to the due date, with the reason why the work will be late along with the new date when the completed work will be submitted. If the teacher accepts the reason and approves of the new deadline, the teacher may impose little or no penalty if the student complies with it. If the student does not communicate with the teacher on or before the original due date, the student will receive the standard late penalty of zero.

Unless dispensed by the teacher, all assignments must be completed. Students who are missing assignments at the end of an academic quarter will receive an "Incomplete" for that course until all assigned work is satisfactorily completed and submitted. Students will receive no academic credit for any courses designated "Incomplete."

C. Handwriting & Penmanship

Students in grades 7-12 will do all classwork and homework in black or blue ink and in cursive. The exceptions to this rule are mathematical work in the math and science classes, and translation work in Latin and Greek courses. Aside from these exceptions, teachers will ensure that students do their work in neat and legible cursive, in black or blue ink. Students who turn in work that is sloppy or that is not in cursive will be penalized, at the discretion of the teacher.

D. Academy Grading Scale

The following grading scale applies to students and classes in Grades K-12:

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Academic Grade Points (Grades 9-12 Only)</u>
96-100	A+	4.00
93-95	A	4.00
90-92	A-	3.75
86-89	B+	3.50
83-85	B	3.50
80-82	B-	3.00
76-79	C+	2.50
73-75	C	2.00
70-74	C-	2.00
65-69	D	1.00
0-64	F	0.00

E. Conduct and Effort Marks

Ultimately, the formation of character and an education in virtue are always the primary focus in genuine teaching and education. At Immaculate Conception Academy, we strive above all to help the student to know and to do what is good and right. To help in this pursuit, we give students marks in Conduct and Effort. These Conduct and Effort marks are letter grades, and each teacher gives these grades on a quarterly basis to each student in his classes.

The marks in **Conduct** assess the student's behavior, respect, and attitude toward his teachers, fellow students, and the Academy. On the other hand, the marks for **Effort** assess the quantity, quality, and improvement in the student's academic work.

The Administration and the faculty take these marks very seriously, and they are a crucial factor in judging a student's progress. Low marks in either Conduct and Effort—D or below—are always a cause for concern, and such marks ordinarily lead to the Administration contacting the parents for a meeting to discuss the necessary steps to improve the student's behavior or work ethic.

Finally, because these marks are so important, the teachers in grades 7-12 work from a standard rubric when they assess the students in Conduct and Effort. These rubrics serve as

a guideline for the teacher, but they also help the students and parents to understand what these marks mean and how the students can improve in both Conduct and Effort. The Conduct and Effort rubrics are provided below:

1. Rubric for Student Conduct

A: Exemplary Conduct. The student:

- Always follows the rules and can always be relied upon to do the right thing.
- Is a role model for the other students.
- Consistently does more than required and expected, and seeks out opportunities to help the faculty and fellow students.
- Manifests an excellent attitude toward the rules of the Academy, and shows that he has the utmost respect for faculty and fellow students. The student displays enthusiasm for the rules and pride in the Academy.

B: Good Conduct. The student:

- Consistently follows the rules and can normally be relied upon to do the right thing.
- Never, or rarely, causes a distraction or disturbance in the classroom.
- Often does more than required, and seeks out opportunities to help the faculty and fellow students.
- Manifests a good attitude toward the rules of the Academy and is never disrespectful toward the faculty or other students.

C: Fair Conduct. The student:

- Generally follows the rules.
- Occasionally violates the rules, and sometimes causes a distraction in the classroom—but never enough to be sent out of the classroom.
- Does not often do more than required, and usually does not go out of his way to help others.
- Is not openly disrespectful toward the rules, the faculty, or other students.

D: Poor Conduct. The student:

- Frequently disregards the rules and needs frequent reminders from the teacher about the rules.
- Periodically or regularly causes a disturbance or distraction in the classroom, and has to be sent out of the classroom during the academic quarter.
- Rarely goes out of his way to help others.
- Manifests disrespect toward the rules, faculty, or other students.

F: Intolerable Conduct. The student:

- Regularly violates the rules.

- Consistently causes disturbances and distraction in the classroom, requiring dismissal from the classroom on multiple occasions.
- Does not show concern for others.
- Is openly disrespectful toward faculty and fellow students, and manifests contempt for the rules.

Any student who receives an F in Conduct will normally be subject to suspension or expulsion from the Academy.

2. Rubric for Academic Effort

A: Excellent Effort. The student:

- Always submits assignments on time, and occasionally submits work ahead of deadlines.
- Frequently consults with the teacher.
- Submits work that is excellent in quality. The work is always complete, neat, and exceeds requirements.
- Always fulfills his potential, and often exceeds teacher expectations.
- Consistently displays growth and improvement in his work.
- Always actively participates in class. Active participation means that a student pays attention, asks and answers questions, and contributes to class discussions.

B: Good Effort. The student:

- Submits all assignments on time.
- Occasionally consults with the teacher.
- Submits work of good quality, but there is room for improvement in neatness and substance.
- Fulfills his potential and meets teacher expectations.
- Displays steady growth and improvement in his work.
- Generally participates in class.

C: Fair Effort. The student:

- Normally submits assignments on time, but occasionally misses deadlines.
- Rarely consults with the teacher.
- Submits mediocre work, which could be improved in neatness and substance. The work merely meets the minimal requirements.
- Occasionally meets his potential, but often his work does not reflect his abilities.
- Manifests infrequent or sporadic growth or improvement in his work.
- Infrequently participates in class.

D: Poor Effort. The student:

- Frequently submits work late or fails to submit assignments.
- Does not consult with the teacher.
- Submits work which is poor in quality and which often falls short of the requirements. The work is sloppy and occasionally incomplete.
- Consistently falls short of his potential and his work does not reflect his abilities.
- Manifests minimal growth or improvement in his work.
- Does not participate in class.

F: Deficient Effort. The student:

- Usually fails to submit assignments on time and frequently neglects to submit work.
- Never consults with the teacher.
- Submits work which is often illegible and incomplete.
- Does not meet his potential and shows no concern for his work.
- Manifests no perceptible growth or improvement in his work.
- Never participates in class.

When a student receives an F in Effort, it indicates that the student is being willfully inattentive and disengaged in his studies. When such a student obstinately refuses to apply himself to his studies, it could negatively affect the entire class by bad example. Additionally, at a certain point we have to take into account that the teachers are expending a great deal of effort and the student is not cooperating. Therefore, any student who receives an F in Effort is subject to suspension or expulsion from the Academy.

F. Grading System and Examinations

Teachers will post student grades on the Academy website and update them on a regular basis. Parents will have user-names and passwords enabling them to view their children's grades.

Progress reports are issued in the middle of each academic quarter. Report cards are issued at the end of each academic quarter.

1. Final Examinations

Students must be present for all final examinations as scheduled. Individual course examinations will be re-scheduled for individual students only with the approval of both the Principal and the Headmaster. Students may not take examinations earlier than the normally scheduled time without prior written approval from the Principal or the Headmaster. It is especially important that all students take the examinations at the scheduled time so as to maintain the integrity of the tests, and to avoid any suspicion of dishonesty or cheating on the part of the students. Furthermore, students will not be given permission to miss examinations for frivolous reasons—i.e. entertainment, sporting events, visiting with

relatives. The possible consequences for students who miss exams for unapproved reasons include, but are not limited to, an automatic zero on the exam or a percentage being deducted from the final grade on the exam.

G. Cheating

Every act of cheating is a form of lying and it also has the character of stealing if it involves taking advantage of another's work without that student's knowledge and consent.

The damage extends to an entire class when the cheater's unearned score skews a class average or when the teacher grades "on a curve." Cheating gives scandal when the cheater enlists others to contribute willingly to the fraud.

Cheating will not be tolerated at Immaculate Conception Academy. The following are forms of cheating:

- Knowingly possessing/using ANY unauthorized information during a test.
- Plagiarism, which occurs any time a student presents as one's own work the words or ideas of another. This includes copying the homework of others or presenting the work of others as one's own.
- The use of "artificial intelligence" (AI) and applications such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and the like. Students are not to use AI in their reading or writing assignments, and any assignment produced with such technology will be regarded as plagiarism and will receive an automatic zero.
- Theft of test questions for the benefit of self or others for the purpose of cheating.
- Giving or receiving information concerning a test or quiz already given for the benefit of one who must take the same test or quiz at a later time.
- Communicating with other students during a test.
- The copying of another student's work or answers or allowing other students to copy one's own work or answers.
- Concealing or assisting cheating by others.

Any Academy student found guilty of cheating will receive an automatic zero on the assignment or test. These zeroes can only be changed with the consent of the Principal. This

is considered a Level One Offense and students guilty of cheating will also be subject to any or all of the following disciplinary measures:

First offense: Detention, parent consultation, Saturday work detail. Also, if the student is a member of a sports team, the student will be excluded from play for the following three games.

Second offense: Suspension from class, parent consultation and meeting, three Saturday work details. Also, the student will not be allowed to represent the school as a member of a sports team or in any other extracurricular activity for the remainder of that school year.

Third offense: Week-long suspension, parent consultation and meeting. The student may be subject to expulsion at the discretion of the Principal.

V. Honor Roll

The Academy publishes an Honor Roll at the end of each grading period to recognize superior academic achievement by Academy students. Students in grades 4-12 are named to the Honor Roll based upon their academic performance in the following six core subject areas. Students who do not take all six of these courses will not be eligible for the Academy Honor Roll.

The Core Courses

1. English
2. Math

3. History
4. Religion

5. Science
6. Latin or Greek

Students make the Academy Honor Roll when they meet the following academic standards:

Elementary Level: Fourth through Eighth Grades

First Honors: All grades in the core subjects must be 93% or above with no grade in other subjects lower than an 86%

Second Honors: All grades in the core subjects must be 85% or above with no grade in other subjects lower than a 78%

High School: Ninth through Twelfth Grades

Summa cum laude: GPA of 4.0 or higher in the six core subjects

Magna cum laude: GPA of 3.75 or higher in the six core subjects

Cum laude: GPA of 3.5 or higher in the six core subjects

VI. Graduation Ceremony and Honors

A. Elementary School Graduation

At the Elementary School graduation ceremony, the Academy will recognize any student who graduated with a 4.0 GPA average for that academic year

B. High School Graduation: Selection of Valedictorian and Salutatorian

Any student who has attended the Academy for at least three years, has earned at least 18 credit hours from courses taught at the Academy, and has earned the Classical Diploma is eligible for selection as class Valedictorian or Salutatorian. The student with the highest GPA will ordinarily represent the senior class as Valedictorian. The student with the second highest GPA will ordinarily represent the senior class as Salutatorian. In the event of a tie for the highest GPA, the student who earns the highest grades during final exams of the final quarter of enrollment will become the Valedictorian with the other student becoming the Salutatorian. In the event that there is still a tie after the Final Exam grades are considered, the Academy will then consider other factors—namely, the students' marks in Conduct and Effort and their length of time at the Academy. In such a situation, preference will be given to students who have been at the Academy for the entirety of their education or who have been enrolled longer at the Academy.

Grades earned in courses completed outside of the Academy, including courses taken through the Internet, will not be factors in the computation of a student's GPA at the Academy or for purposes of designating the Valedictorian and Salutatorian.

The Valedictorian and Salutatorian of the graduating class are expected to deliver speeches at the Academy graduation ceremony, subject to advance approval of their speeches by the Principal or the Headmaster. Students who do not get this advance approval will not be permitted to deliver their speeches at the ceremony.

Any Level One Offense committed by a student under the Academy Conduct Code during his Junior or Senior years disqualifies that student from being named Valedictorian or Salutatorian.

Ultimately, the selection of the Class Valedictorian and Salutatorian will be determined by the Principal.

C. Recognition for Community Service

Academy students are encouraged to participate in community service programs, either as individuals or in a group. Students who accumulate a minimum of 180 documented hours of community service during their high school careers will receive a Community Service honor cord to wear at the commencement ceremonies. Students must submit to the guidance counselor a completed community service form documenting the service rendered in order to receive credit for the hours.

VII. Academic Probation

The Academy will place on **academic probation** any student whose academic performance or effort falls below the expected standards. A student will be placed on academic probation during any quarter that the student's grade falls below 70% in any core subject, the student's quarterly GPA falls below 2.0, or the student receives a "D" or below for effort in any two subjects. When students are placed on academic probation, their academic progress will be more closely monitored by their teachers, the Academy Guidance Counselor and the Administration. In addition, students will be required to have monthly meetings with the Headmaster or the Guidance Counselor. A student on academic probation remains eligible for all Academy extracurricular activities through the end of the quarter unless the student's grades or effort decline again before the end of the quarter. However, if the student does not achieve a marked improvement after the next grading period, the parents will be required to meet with the Guidance Counselor and a member of the Administration to develop a plan for addressing the academic deficiency.

An **academic suspension** will be imposed prohibiting extracurricular activities when the student's grade in any core subject falls below 65 during a quarter, at the end of a quarter, or if the student's quarterly GPA at the end of a quarter falls below 2.0. Teachers will also inform the Headmaster in writing of any student on academic probation who is failing a course after the first test of a quarter. Any student on academic suspension will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities until the student's grades meet the required levels.

The sanctions of academic probation and academic suspension may be waived for compelling reasons by the Principal or the Headmaster.

VIII. Student Participation in Extracurricular Activities

A. Introduction

The Academy provides students with opportunities to participate in multiple extracurricular activities, including athletics, school plays, school concerts, student government and other clubs and organizations.

B. Student Government and Elections

1. High School Student Government

Each high school class will have two class representatives on the Student Council. One representative will be selected by the students through popular ballot. The other representative will be selected by the Administration. The Class Representatives will represent the class before the Administration and in Student Council meetings. The elections shall take place on the Friday of the week following first quarter mid-term reports.

A class which fails to elect a qualified candidate as representative will have only one representative: the student appointed by the Administration.

In the case of a class which has fewer than 4 total students, that class will combine with another class, and the combined classes will be entitled to only two representatives. In such cases, the freshman and sophomore classes would be combined, and the junior and senior classes would be combined.

2. Qualifications of Candidates for Class Representative

In order to qualify for the position of Class Representative, a student must:

- Be enrolled as a full-time student and a member of the class
- Complete and submit to the Administration a registration form announcing the student's candidacy and containing signature endorsements from two classmates
- Obtain approval for the candidacy from the Principal or the Headmaster
- Be free of any disciplinary detentions or suspensions since the beginning of the first quarter
- Maintain grades of A or B in conduct and effort in the mid-term report

3. Student Campaigning

Students may campaign to persuade classmates of their suitability for office. Campaigns may begin no sooner than one week prior to the election and only after the candidacy has been approved.

Students may promote their candidacy by arranging to make speeches and by posting written material in pre-approved locations in the school building, except that no campaign may discredit or disparage other candidates.

All approved candidates will be afforded equal rights and opportunities for campaigning.

4. Disqualification from Candidacy

A student will automatically lose eligibility as a candidate for office by incurring during the campaign any disciplinary sanction that includes a detention or suspension.

5. The Election Process

Balloting will take place during a high school assembly. Ballots for each class will present the names of all candidates in alphabetical order with a check-box before each name. Paper ballots will be distributed and collected by designated members of faculty and Administration.

Students may vote for at most two candidates on each ballot. Only the official ballots distributed by the Administration during the assembly and only those that have been completed in a clear, unmistakable manner will be accepted and counted.

The results will be publicly tabulated and announced immediately after the balloting.

In order for a student to be elected Class Representative, the student must receive votes on the majority of the ballots submitted—i.e. if 15 ballots are cast, a majority in that case would be 8 votes. If the first ballot results in the election of only one Class Representative, voting will continue by the same process until a second Class Representative is elected. Votes will not be counted on subsequent ballots for a candidate who has already received the majority vote.

If after three ballots two candidates have not received a simple majority of the votes cast, the name of the candidate who received the fewest votes on the third ballot will be withdrawn from the ballot for a fourth vote. Voting will then continue until two candidates receive a majority of the votes cast.

Result shall be reported to and certified by the Principal or the Headmaster. The certified results will be announced and recorded.

6. Duties of Class Representatives

A student can succeed in the role of Class Representative only if the student devotes time and effort to it. At a minimum, a Class Representative must:

- Attend and participate in monthly Student Council meetings with the Academy Administration
- Be aware of matters of importance to members of the class
- Convey information between class, faculty and Administration
- Represent the class to the Administration
- Help to maintain order at student functions
- Lead the class in setting, organizing and carrying out the class goals for the year
- Conduct class meetings (when necessary)
- Petition special meetings with Administration when suitable issues arise

A Class Representative may also lead the class to choose an adult Advisor who is willing to provide guidance on class activities and goals. Any such adult Advisor must be approved by the Administration.

7. Disqualification or Removal from Office

A student who has been duly elected to serve as Class Representative may be disqualified or removed from office under any of the following conditions:

- The student receives a disciplinary suspension or expulsion from school
- The student receives any combination of three academic or disciplinary detentions within one quarter of the school year.
- The student receives three unexcused absences or tardies in the same quarter
- A majority of the class members petition for a recall vote and subsequently remove the representative from office by a vote of at least 75% of the voting class members
- The Principal or the Headmaster determine that the student fails to adequately represent the class or fails to exercise the leadership required of the position
- The Class Representative resigns from the position, and his resignation is accepted by the Administration.

A student's removal from the office of Class Representative must be ratified and announced by the Principal or the Headmaster. In the event that a Class Representative is removed or resigns, the class may hold a special election to fill the vacancy.

C. Academy Athletics

Participation in sports and other extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right. A student's decision to participate in sports and other extra-curricular activities is a significant commitment to fellow teammates and coaches, and an opportunity to personify the ideals and standards of the Academy. The privilege of participation is subject to a student's compliance with all of the Academy's academic and behavioral standards.

Depending on roster size and the availability of coaches, the Academy fields the following athletic teams:

Fall	Boys and Girls Soccer Boys and Girls Cross Country
Winter	Boys and Girls Basketball
Spring	Boys Baseball

According to age and grade level, Academy students may participate as members of the varsity or junior varsity teams (Ninth through Twelfth Grades) or the Elementary team (Sixth through Eighth Grades). In exceptional circumstances, elementary school students may qualify to play for a varsity or junior varsity team.

D. Academic Performance and Participation in Athletics

Participation in extracurricular activities should not interfere with a student's academic work and performance. Indeed, such participation will ideally aid academic performance by forcing a student to align one's priorities and by keeping a student more active, focused, and alert. Unfortunately, misaligned priorities can cause extracurricular activities to detract from the student's academic work.

The rules for academic probation and suspension apply to all students on Academy athletic teams. In such cases, the Academy provides notice of probationary status to the student's parents, coaches, teachers, and to the Academy Athletic Director. The Administration will keep the student, the family, and the coaches informed, stressing that the probationary status may lead to an academic suspension if the student's grades continue to decline.

Once academic suspension has been imposed, the penalty will be lifted only when the student has met the academic criteria spelled out in the Handbook and once the Athletic Director has received a written notification that the suspension has been lifted. This written notification must be issued by either the Principal or the Headmaster.

Additionally, any non-Academy students permitted to play on Academy teams will be held to the same academic standards and Code of Conduct. It is the responsibility of the Athletic Director to ensure that such students provide academic records and accounting to the Administration.

E. Disciplinary Violations and Athletic Participation

Violations of the Student Conduct Code may disqualify a student from participating in sports and other extracurricular activities. Discipline for such violations may include the student being ruled ineligible for participation in team practices and/or games. The gravity of any such misconduct will dictate the timing and severity of a student's suspension from sports and other extracurricular activities.

F. Absenteeism and Athletic Participation

A student cannot be absent from school and compete in Academy extracurricular events on the same day. In order to participate in extracurricular activities on a given school day, at the discretion of the Administration, a student must attend the full school day—i.e. all 6 class periods.

If a student athlete is absent from school on the day following a game and the absence is not excused by the Administration, then the student will not be eligible to play in the next scheduled game.

IX. Administrative Requirements for Textbooks, Promotion, and the Release of Records

The Academy will release student report cards at the end of the school year only after the student has returned all textbooks and other Academy materials in acceptable condition. Textbooks are the property of the Academy and students are responsible for all textbooks issued to them. If books are lost or damaged, students are required to pay for the cost of replacing them. The Academy will not issue additional textbooks to a student without receiving payment of all outstanding book fees. A hold will also be placed on the student's records until all these materials are returned.

Additionally, students will not be promoted and transcripts and other records will not be released until families have paid all tuition, fees and other financial obligations to the Academy.

The Academy will release student transcripts and other records only upon the written request of a parent.

X. Withdrawals

The Administration requests that any parents choosing to withdraw a student from the Academy communicate this decision directly to the Administration. Such communication is really just a matter of common decency and respect, so that the Administration can stay informed about the plans and the needs of the families and students involved.

The Academy will not release the records of students who have been withdrawn without the explicit written request of the parents. In some cases, the Principal or the Headmaster may schedule a conference with the family. The purposes of such a conference would be to discuss the reason for withdrawal, to discuss anything that can be done for the well-being of the

student before the withdrawal, to resolve any issues regarding student records and transcripts, and to schedule the final payment of tuition and fees for that student.

CONCLUSION: ***FIDES ET HONOR***

This Academy Handbook is an integral part of the daily administration and the student life at the Academy. The Administration expects that all faculty, staff, students, and parents will read and know the rules and procedures laid out in these pages. Everything within the Handbook plays an important part in helping to maintain order throughout the school. Saint Thomas Aquinas says true wisdom is ordering things rightly. And that is why this Handbook is such a crucial element in the culture of Immaculate Conception Academy: these rules and procedures help us to know how to set things in order. Having a culture of order, and stressing the importance of order, is one of the ways we communicate genuine wisdom to our students.

The official motto of the Academy is ***Fides et Honor***—*Faith and Honor*. This is another integral part of our school culture. We constantly work on reminding the students of these two ideals. We want these words to serve as rallying points for student life, but also for their lives after their Academy days. As it says on our Academy website: “*The mission of the Academy is to instill in our students both faith and honor by offering them the means and the encouragement necessary to achieve their intellectual, moral, social and physical development in a traditional Catholic environment. All true education must begin with the understanding that God creates every person in His own image with the power of intellect to know truth and the power of will to love goodness. We live the Faith and we pursue Honor.*” It is that same spirit that animates this Handbook and the rules that it presents.

Our emblem at the Academy is the Knight, and the ideal that we hold up to our students is that of knighthood. And true knights lived by a code, and would give everything to defend that code. It is such a code that students can draw from the principles in this Student Handbook. By constantly bringing their attention back to our themes of *Faith and Honor*, and by embracing our identity as Knights, we seek to give them the means to live their Catholic Faith. These ideals, combined with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the principles of the classical curriculum, are what define us as a school. And we at the Academy see all these components as an important part of our responsibility to the students under our care. This same truth is summed up in the Latin phrase “*ardens pietatis studium et praestans rerum scientia*”—which can be loosely translated as “an ardent pursuit of piety and an eminent degree of learning.” Order—*Faith and Honor*—ardent piety and eminent learning—these are the realities that set Catholic schools apart. And those are the realities that we strive for at the Academy. *Fides et Honor!*