

**Holy Cross School**  
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South Portland, ME  
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[www.holycrossmaine.org](http://www.holycrossmaine.org)

## **Student Handbook**

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### **Mission Statement of Maine Catholic Schools**

The mission of the Catholic Schools in Maine is to strengthen the Catholic Church and to create an environment in which the faith is preserved, nourished, shaped and communicated to foster values that give meaningful direction to the Christian family and society. This is accomplished through dedication to the growth, development and formation of the student by proclaiming the message, creating community, providing service and celebrating worship so that our students will become faith-filled Christians, creative and critical thinkers, life-long learners and confident contributors.

### **Mission Statement of Holy Cross School**

Holy Cross School consists of creative and dedicated students, educators, parents and community members who are centered on Gospel values. We are dedicated to nurturing the spiritual, moral, intellectual and social development of each child. We deliver a quality Catholic education focusing on academic excellence, self-discipline, and respect for each other in a caring, affirming community. Our students develop into productive, ethical and socially responsible citizens.

### **Life-Line for Learning**

At Holy Cross School, we all have the right to learn.  
No one has the right to interrupt or waste our time.

At Holy Cross School, we all have the right to be ourselves.  
No one has the right to laugh at us or hurt our feelings.  
At Holy Cross School, we all have the right to hear and be heard.  
No one has the right to keep us from being heard when it is our turn to speak.

At Holy Cross School, we have the right to be safe, and to have our belongings be safe.  
No one has the right to make us feel afraid, or to damage or take our belongings.

## **Administration**

### **Pastor**

The Pastor is the Chief Administrative Officer of the Cluster educational program. In this capacity, the Pastor is director of Holy Cross School. Working in collaboration with the Principal and Advisory Board, he is responsible for defining, promulgating and implementing school policies. The Pastor delegates the day-to-day operational management of the school to the Principal.

### **Principal**

The Principal is the Catholic leader and administrative head of the school. The Principal oversees all of the school staff/faculty and is responsible for the effective operation of the school as an educational institution within the total Cluster education program.

### **School Board**

The School Board is an advisory board. Elected members of the board aid and support the Pastor and Principal in implementing Diocesan, State and local educational policies, assist in the development of the annual budget, and assist in establishing school policies that guides the educational programs at Holy Cross School. The School Board works in partnership with the Home and School Association (HSA) to promote a better understanding of Catholic education in the Cluster and provides support and guidance to the HSA's fundraising efforts.

The School Board is made up of a group of volunteer parents and cluster parishioners. Board members are selected to serve a three-year term, with a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms. The officers of the Board shall consist of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary, all of whom shall be elected annually by the Board membership at the first regular scheduled meeting of the school year in August/September. Meeting dates are on the Master Calendar.

### **Home and School Association**

Our Home and School Association (HSA) is a critical operating body of leaders, parents and students that assure that our school community has fun events and fundraising events planned each school year. The structure of the HSA is a core leadership team of parents and the Principal. This group of parents is established by the Principal every year and all parents are welcome to apply for inclusion. Of the key leaders, one representative will be present for each school board meeting during the year. This representative will be responsible to report on HSA activities, current fundraising status and HSA calendar planning. The Board and Principal advise the HSA in all matters. Members of the leadership team are asked to serve the HSA for a period of no less than 2 years in order to allow for consistency, legacy and stability. Inclusion of all families, students and volunteers is the focus of this community-building group. All families are requested to volunteer to support Holy Cross School students no less than 25 hours per school year. Many of these hours can be filled by participating in the HSA planned events. This volunteering provides the needed structure for our school, allows us to build our community with one another and demonstrates for our children that service activities are a high priority for all of us. Opportunities for volunteering are frequently e-mailed to families. Any questions about participating in events can be addressed to the school office, the Principal or the members of the

leadership team. Meetings and events will be announced and published as part of the school calendar when possible.

### **Volunteerism**

The achievements of the HSA are supported by the volunteer efforts of its members. Each Holy Cross School family is requested to contribute at least 25 hours each year to school activities and fundraising events.

Some of the ways you can become involved include:

- Becoming a room parent and assisting teachers with projects
- Chairing or serving on an HSA committee
- Chaperoning a class field trip
- Coaching a team
- Working on fundraising and/or spiritual events
- Serving the Cluster Parishes

## **Admission and Registration**

Holy Cross School will not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, national or ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies, programs, and athletic or other school administered programs.

The admission requirements for Holy Cross School are as follows:

- Complete an application form
- Submit a Pastoral Agreement if Catholic and wishing to obtain a tuition subsidy from a Catholic community
- Parent(s) and student shall attend a personal interview with the Principal
- Submit birth certificate, health and immunization records
- Submit school records from the previous school attended when appropriate
- Submit a letter of recommendation from past Principal or Teacher when appropriate

When enrollment is full, students are admitted based on the following guidelines in the following order of priority:

- Families who have children currently enrolled are given first priority.
- Families who are registered members and active participants of St. John/Holy Cross, St. Bartholomew's and St. Maximilian Kolbe Parishes.
- Families who are registered members of other Catholic Parishes.
- Beyond these specifications, students will be enrolled at the discretion of the administration in consideration of the academic and social welfare of the students.

## **Academics**

### **Curriculum**

Classes at Holy Cross School are designed to meet the student's fundamental academic needs. The subjects included in the curriculum are Religious Studies, Reading and Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Middle School Latin, Technology, Art, Music, Drama and Physical Education. Our strong curriculum is enhanced by meeting students where they are academically. Our students develop self-confidence, self-respect, strong academic skills and are very well prepared for high school.

Our Faculty's goal is to create the best possible atmosphere for learning using a variety of techniques to meet each student's learning style and need. Each student is expected to participate in all class activities, assemblies, projects and assignments unless there are extenuating circumstances that have been discussed with the family/student, the student's teacher, and the Principal.

We utilize one-to-one laptops for grades 5-8 and one-to-one ipads for grades 2, 3 and 4. Additional iPads are available for grades PreK-1. E-textbooks are utilized where applicable.

### **Special Education/Individual Education Plans**

Individual Education Plans are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Due to the small number of faculty positions available at Holy Cross School we may not be in a position to support the specifics of the IEP. The Principal, in conjunction with the parent(s) and student(s), will review the IEP and discuss if the plan can be met with a successful outcome for the student.

### **Promotion and Retention**

The Principal and the teacher in consultation with the parents/legal guardians shall decide upon all promotions, regular or special. Such decisions should be based on a total evaluation of a student's growth in all areas of development. Although the Principal should always act in consultation with a student's teachers and parents/legal guardians, the final responsibility for a student's promotion or retention rests with the parents.

### **Faculty**

The entire Faculty at Holy Cross School is composed of highly dedicated State of Maine Certified Professionals. They continue their professional growth with re-certification programs and are members of the National Catholic Teachers Association. The Principal is a member of the Maine Principal's Association as well. Their faith, enthusiasm and commitment to excellence are truly outstanding.

### **Progress Reports**

Holy Cross School academic calendar is based on trimesters. Progress reports are available halfway through the trimester; however, the parent portal for grades 3-8 allow a parent to view their child's progress at any time.

### **Report Cards**

Report cards are distributed at the end of the trimester after the Trimester Assembly. The Trimester Assembly recognizes those students who have made the honor roll or who have earned other recognition during the current trimester.

### **Grading System and Honor Roll**

Grading System and Honor Roll: The marking system consists of letter grades for grades three through eight and a Learning Key for Grades Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 2.

#### **Learning Key**

##### ***Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten:***

**4** exceeds expectation; **3** meets expectations; **2** progressing towards expectations; **1** not yet met expectations

### ***Grades 1-2:***

**VG** Very Good; **G** Good; **S** Satisfactory; **N** Needs Improvement.

### ***Grades 3-4:***

#### **Academic:**

**A+** 95-100; **A** 90-94; **B+** 85-89; **B** 80-84; **C+** 75-79; **C** 70-74; **D** Below 70

#### **Behavior/Effort:**

**3** Above Expectation; **2** At Expectation; **1** Below Expectation

### ***Grades 5-8:***

**A** 95-100; **B+** 90-94; **B** 85-89; **C+** 80-84; **C** 75-79; **D** 70-74; **F** Below 70

#### **Behavior/Effort:**

**3** Above Expectation; **2** At Expectation; **1** Below Expectation

**Honor Roll** = A's and B's or 85 and above for students in grades 5 - 8.

**High Honors** = All A's or 95 and above for students in grades 5 – 8.

### **Extra-Curricular Eligibility**

Extra curricular activities are available to all middle school students making reasonable academic progress throughout their classes. Any student not making reasonable progress will be brought to the principal's attention and a meeting of the middle school staff, parent(s) and the student will be held to establish a plan for improvement. Eligibility for extra curricular activities is one consideration of any improvement plan.

### **Homework**

Class work & Homework: Teachers must establish and enforce standards for work that encourage students to put forth their best effort. A student's attitude is reflected in the appearance of his/her work. Neatness is expected!

The following are approximate guidelines for homework times:

- Grades 5 - 8: 1.5 - 2 hours per night (Combined subjects)
- Grade 4: 60 - 75 minutes per night
- Grade 3: 45 - 60 minutes per night
- Grade 2: 30 - 45 minutes per night
- Grade 1: 20 - 30 minutes per night
- Grades Pre-K and K: "Reading to or with parents weekly is encouraged!"

Homework is generally not assigned over weekends or school vacations except for long range assignments, make-up work, or studying for exams.

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance is essential for the success of each student in the school. Daily attendance is the responsibility of the parents as well as the student. Students are expected to be in school each day unless they have a legitimate reason for absence. If a student has been absent or has missed a class for

any reason, it is the student's responsibility to determine what assignments were missed and to make up all work. Students are granted the number of days absent to complete the assignments missed. With the addition of e-mail and the Educonnect platform, students and parents should be aware of all missed assignments and make up missed work in the time allotted. If you are struggling in making up missed work you must contact the teacher and create a make-up plan ASAP.

### **Tardiness**

It is essential that you be on time for school. Being late to school is disruptive to the educational environment of others. It cannot not be stressed enough how important it is to be on time to school! Tardiness disrupts the morning classroom and school routine-it disrupts classroom and school prayer, school announcements, lunch count, and morning routine for both classroom and school, as well as teacher and student routines.

### **Daily Routines**

School is in session from 8:45am to 3:00pm for all grades, Pre-K through Gr. 8. At no time should children be dropped off prior to 8:20am unless they sign in to Before Care. At 8:20am the students signed in to Before Care go outside and join the other students being dropped off by parents. When the 8:35am bell rings, all students line up in their assigned class area on the playground and enter the building in an orderly fashion. Students need to be in their classrooms in the beginning and closing of school.

Middle School students are to sign in on the clipboard on Mrs. McVeigh's desk when they arrive to school. Phones should be off and placed in the designated container. If Middle School students chose to go outside at 8:15am with the other PreK – 4 students, they need to remain outside until all the students enter the building at 8:35am.

### **Student Absences**

When a student is absent, parents are asked to phone the school at #799-6661 or e-mail [holycrossschool@portlanddiocese.org](mailto:holycrossschool@portlanddiocese.org), as well as their child's classroom teacher, before 8:45am. A written excuse must accompany the student upon returning to school if a phone call or e-mail is not received. The note is to be given to the main office secretary stating the child's name, date, number of days absent and the reason for the absence(s). Any absence more than 3 days must be accompanied by a written note from a parent and given to the secretary in the main office.

### **Late Arrival/Early Dismissal**

If a student arrives late (after 8:45am) or must leave early, the parent's signature is required in the school office. If early dismissal is necessary, a note/e-mail from the parent should be sent in to the classroom teacher and the school office at [holycrossschool@portlanddiocese.org](mailto:holycrossschool@portlanddiocese.org). The parent must come into the building to sign their son/daughter out of school.

### **Dismissal Due to Illness During the School Day**

If a child becomes ill while at school, the parents will be notified and they need to arrange for someone to pick up the student from school.

## **Cancellation or Early Dismissal due to Inclement Weather**

In case of heavy snow or other extreme weather conditions, parents will receive a phone call/text message and or an e-mail explaining the situation via the automated Honeywell phone system. If the South Portland Public Schools are closed, then Holy Cross School is also closed. There may also be rare cases where Holy Cross School closes while South Portland remains open. Please be sure that the school always has your most up to date phone numbers and e-mails and that your child knows how to reach you or who to call in case of early dismissal.

## **Drop Off and Pick up –School Parking Lot: School Safety**

The safety of our students is paramount. The combination of moving vehicles and active students is always a problem. Please follow these guidelines for bringing vehicles onto campus. Due to the fact that we share the parking lot with Holy Cross Church, many of our parking areas may not be permanently marked. We will use orange cones as needed to establish boundaries for vehicles coming onto the school parking lot.

### **Restricted area:**

Between 7:00am and 5:00pm no vehicle shall drive into, stop or park in the **yellow lined no parking area** directly outside the gym/cafeteria windows (against the school building). This is a safe area for students, parents and staff to walk. If you come into school during the day and need to park your vehicle in the designated parking lot, however, your vehicle must be moved by 2 pm to another location in order for the car line to be unobstructed during dismissal.

### **Morning Drop Off:**

In driving to school for morning drop off enter the Holy Cross parking lot through entrance closest to Broadway and exit out the parking lot through the other lot opening half way up the street.

- Parents dropping off students will drive their cars parallel to the school outside of the yellow lined no parking area to drop off students (this location is known as the drive-thru). **This is an unloading zone only.** Students should **exit the vehicle on the right side of the car so they do not have to cross in front of other vehicles.** Safety First!
- If a parent intends to enter the school with their child(ren) the parent must park his/her car in the parking lot and walk with their child into the building.
- Do not park against the building or chain link fence or block the drive-thru lane.
- Do not unload in the middle of the parking lot—this is unsafe and it is not a “drive thru” •If a student arrives between 8:20am – 8:35am students go directly to the playground, except for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students who must put their ipads in their cubbies first, in the back of the school during nice weather or to the cafeteria during inclement weather.
- If a student arrives between 8:35am – 8:45am the student enters the building through the front door and goes directly to the classroom. If the student arrives after 8:45 am the student needs to check in to the main office first before going to their classroom.

### **Afternoon Pick Up:**

Students are dismissed at 3:00pm with their class/teacher.

Two ways to pick up your child(ren): car-line and outer parking lot.

**Car-Line:**

- The first pick up lane is the “drive thru lane” parallel to the school. (When this line is filled begin another line)
  - Subsequently, the drivers form several parallel lanes to the drive thru lane. When one lane is full, please begin another line. Do not extend one line out to the road.
  - When parents in the first lane have “collected” their child(ren), that line is dismissed and we fill the second line of cars. This continues until all lines have been dismissed.
  - Stay with your vehicle; your child will come to your car. A teacher in the parking lot will call for each child/family and another staff will walk them to their car.
- The same procedure will be followed on early dismissal days with dismissal being at noon. In inclement weather, children will be dismissed from the gym using the same procedure.

**Outer Parking Lot:**

- Parents can park in either of the 2 church lots on the Red’s Dairy Freeze end of N. Richland and walk down to “pick up” their child(ren) from their class dismissal line. Students will be released via their teachers when the teachers see the student’s parent. Please do not walk over to the student dismissal line; students will come to you.
- Any student going home with anyone except his or her own parent needs to provide a note to the teacher/main office requesting this change for dismissal.
- At the end of dismissal, your son/daughter will be escorted to After Care if you have not arrived on time for pick up. After 3:15pm you will be billed for After Care services in quarter hour increments.

## **Discipline**

\* Refer to the Diocese of Portland Student Policy Book for more specific issues.

In routine cases of discipline

problems, the classroom teacher or adult supervisor who encounters the problem will ordinarily be the person responsible for handling the problem. When necessary, the teacher/adult supervisor assigns a disciplinary action for which they take the responsibility to notify the parents of the students involved.

In the case of serious or repeated violations of school regulations, the infringement of the rights of others, and the destruction of school or parish property, referrals must be made to the Principal who will in turn inform the Pastor if the case warrants.

The Principal may assign in-school suspensions with notification to the parents and teachers. A student's parent/guardian is immediately contacted in the case of any serious or repeated violation; and, in the very rare circumstances where an out-of-school suspension or expulsion is considered, the parent(s) / guardian(s), in conjunction with Principal, and in some circumstances, the Pastor, meet to review the situation. The Principal and Pastor will inform the family of the actions to be taken.

## **Guidelines for Student Behavior**

Students at Holy Cross School are expected to behave in a way that helps make their school conducive to learning in a safe and supportive environment. Students are expected to respect themselves, respect other people and respect other people’s property. Remember this code is in effect on and off campus and at all school-sponsored activities and functions.

## **General Conduct**

- Follow directions
- Never use profanity, foul or abusive language
- Stealing, cheating, lying, fighting or name-calling are never appropriate
- Keep hands, feet, objects and derogatory comments to yourself
- Harassment, intimidation or meanness is not allowed at any time
- Act in a way that your conduct will bring pride to yourself, your parents and Holy Cross School on and off the school grounds.

## **Bullying**

\*From the Diocese of Portland Student Handbook:

Maine Catholic Schools strive to provide environments that are conducive to the highest levels of student learning and achievement as well as providing opportunities for on-going personal and moral development. Because bullying interferes with these aims, it will not be tolerated in the school community.

Bullying includes, but is not limited to, a written, oral or electronic expression or physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof directed at a student or students that:

- Physically harms a student and/or damages a student's property; places a student in reasonable fear of physical harm and/or damage to his/her property; and/or disrupts the instructional program or orderly operation of the school; or
- Is so severe that it creates a hostile educational environment for the student who is bullied and/or interferes with the student's academic performance or ability to meaningfully participate in school activities.

Students are prohibited from engaging in behavior that constitutes bullying while on school grounds and while at all school-sponsored activities. In addition, students are prohibited from engaging in this behavior at other times and while using electronic communications when those actions have the effect of interfering with the ability of a student to meaningfully access their education at school.

Any bullying or suspected bullying should be reported to school personnel. Acts of reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an incident of bullying are prohibited. School staff should investigate and respond to all allegations of bullying and, if bullying is confirmed, appropriate consequences will be imposed.

\*See additional information about on-line bullying under On-Line Harassment/School Safety section

## **Alcohol, Drugs, and Illegal Substances**

Cigarettes, matches, alcohol, drugs and any illegal substances are absolutely forbidden on school property.

## **Weapons**

Weapons are absolutely forbidden on school property. More detailed information is available in the Diocesan Student Handbook.

### **Cafeteria Guidelines**

- Students, PreK – 4 will sit with their class in their assigned area and remain seated at that table throughout the lunch period. (Unless instructed differently by the cafeteria staff)
- Students will keep their table area clean.
- Indoor voices will be required at all times.
- Students will request permission to leave their seats if a need arises
- Teachers will escort all their (PK – 4) students to the cafeteria and teachers on duty will escort all children to the playground at the end of the lunch period.

### **Playground Guidelines Pre-K-4**

- Students will follow established guidelines for using playground equipment and black top space.
- Students will listen and be respectful to all adults on duty.
- Students should go down slides sitting with feet first
- Students may use **playground balls, basketballs, and nerf footballs (no tennis balls)** only on the tarred area—no balls should be used on the wood chip area.
- Students may sit on the low wall and the benches (no students should be standing on the low or high rock wall)
- Students should eat snacks at picnic tables or tarred/brick area (no eating on playground equipment.) Trash should be placed in trashcans.
- Students may use zip line only if they are tall enough to reach it
- Students from 3rd grade up may use monkey bars (no students from PK-2, and no sitting/standing on the tops or hanging upside down on bars)
- Students should not be playing behind the playground structures (the area between Cottage Road and Broadway)
- Students should not be playing/throwing with wood chips
- Students should line up quietly when the bell rings at the end of recess on the brick area
- Students/Teachers should not boost or lift students up to reach playground equipment
- Outside school doors should be LOCKED at ALL TIMES
- Staff should be located behind and in front of the playground structure and on the tar area
- Teacher should accompany all students going into the building to the office or to use the facilities

### **Hallway Guidelines**

#### **Grades: PreK-4**

- Students shall move from class to class accompanied by a teacher
- All students will pass on the right side of the hallways
- Students should walk in an appropriate and safe manner at all times, especially on the stairs.
- Talking shall be limited to the discretion of the teacher in charge.
- No running

#### **Grades 5-8**

- Students shall move from class to class in a quiet, orderly and respectful manner, especially on the stairways, keeping in mind that the lower grades are in class.
- All students will pass on the right side of the hallways and stairways.
- Talking shall be allowed using appropriate indoor volume.
- No running

## **Misconduct**

\*See Diocese of Portland Student Handbook for specific examples

### **Detention**

Any member of the faculty may assign detention. Detention may be assigned because of misconduct, disrespectful behavior, lying, cheating, stealing, tardiness, uniform non-compliance, attendance problems, incomplete academic work or any disruptive behavior that affects the classroom or student. Detention will be handled by the teacher who has assigned the detention.

### **Suspension**

Students committing serious offenses will be subject to suspension by the Principal with notification of the action to the Pastor. Examples of behavior that will result in suspension includes, but may not be limited to:

- Disrespect for staff and/or classmates
- Use of obscene language
- Possession of tobacco, alcohol, weapons and/or any illegal drugs on school property.
- Fighting which results in injury or harm to students or staff
- Defacing or destroying school property
- Continuing misbehavior, excessive detentions, or other serious misconduct
- Lying, cheating, insubordination, non-compliance behavior

A student may not participate in any extra-curricular activities, directly or indirectly, while under suspension

### **Expulsion**

Expulsion from school is considered only as a last resort for the good of the school as well as for the benefit of the individual student. Expulsion is determined by the Pastor in consultation with the Principal after other means of retaining the student in the school have been exhausted.

## **School Property**

- Locker doors should not be slammed but closed appropriately.
- Lockers and cubbies should be kept clean and orderly.
- Locker doors should never be forced closed or kicked.
- Lockers may be personalized with magnetic items or other non-permanent materials; no permanent writing or stickers on or in lockers.
- No locks are allowed on lockers unless permission is granted by the Principal.
- No backpacks or items should be left on the hall floors during school hours.
- Trash should be appropriately disposed of at all times and food should not be left in the lockers overnight.
- No soda or energy drinks are allowed at school.
- Schoolbooks/Computers/iPads shall be assigned to Holy Cross students for the school year. The students are responsible for the care and condition of the schoolbooks/computers/iPads and/or supplies.
- Holy Cross School property and supplies will be treated with care. All damages will be reported to the main office. Misuse of school property could result in school discipline, restitution and/or a referral to law enforcement (or all of the above).

## **Extra Curricular Activities**

Extra curricular activities compliment the school curriculum. Activities provide students with worthwhile leisure time activities, which foster the personal, physical and social growth of each individual. Activities may include: sports, Robotics, community service, Odyssey of the Mind, etc. Our students are also offered the opportunity to participate in competitive athletics including soccer, track and field, basketball and baseball. Holy Cross School and/or The Southern Maine Catholic Association sponsor some of the athletics while others are offered through the South Portland Recreation Department. Our Athletic Director oversees these student opportunities.

Failing grades and/or discipline problems resulting in “Academic” and/or “Behavioral Detention” will be cause for a conference with the student, parent(s), teacher(s) and principal. Possible consequences to be determined: probation, suspension or exclusion from the activity/team/club.

## **Field Trips**

The Diocesan-approved permission form must be signed by a parent to ensure consent for taking the trip. The teacher for specific trips will send notices home. Students are to be dressed in the school uniform unless otherwise directed. All school rules remain in effect during each trip. Walking field trip forms will be gathered at the start of school.

## **Illness Policy**

Under no circumstances should you send your child to school if he/she has any contagious illness or is running a temperature 100 or higher degrees F. A sick child cannot do well in a classroom setting. We assume that any child who is sent to school is well enough to participate in our regular program including outdoor play. If a parent feels that his/her child is not well enough to participate in all activities, he/she should keep child home. Children must be free from fever (100 degrees F or higher), vomiting and diarrhea without non –prescription medicine (i.e. Tylenol, Advil, Imodium) for 24 hours before they return to school.

Criteria for illness is as follows:

- An elevated temperature of 100 degrees F or higher
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Unexplained rash
- Discharge from eyes or ears
- Highly contagious illness such as but not limited to strep throat, scarlet fever, chicken pox, impetigo, conjunctivitis, measles, mumps, viral infections etc.

## **Immunizations**

All students who enroll in a school operated by Maine Catholic Schools are required by Maine Law to present a certificate of immunization or evidence of immunization or immunity against poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (chicken pox.)

Non-immunized students shall not be permitted to attend school or school activities unless one of the following conditions is met:

- A. The parents/guardians provide to the school written assurance that the child will be immunized within 90 days of enrolling in school or his/her first attendance in classes, whichever date is earlier. This option is available only once to a student during their school career; or
- B. The parents/guardians provide a physician's written statement each year that immunization against one or more diseases may be medically inadvisable (as defined by law/regulation); or
- C. The parents/guardians state in writing each year that immunization is contrary to their sincere religious belief or for philosophical reasons.
- D. The Principal with consultation with the Superintendent shall exclude any non-immunized student when there is a clear danger to the health of others as provided by law. If you choose not to have your child immunized, please be aware that your child will have to stay home in the event that there is a break out of a serious contagious disease.

### Allergy Policy

\*Please see Allergy Policy attached as addendum.

### Lice

Wherever children are together, colds, flu, lice and other "catchy" items are present. For prevention and routine family control of head lice, PLEASE check your child's head weekly in a sunny window or under good fluorescent lights. Students may not share brushes, scrunchies, earbuds, or hats.

It is important to note that ANY child with hair can get head lice if the child is head to head with another child who has head lice. Occasionally, head lice may be acquired from sharing clothing (hats, scarves, coats, uniforms) or other personal items (combs, brushes, towels, pillows) that belong to an infested person; and lying on a bed, couch, pillow, carpet, or stuffed animal that has recently been in contact with an infested person's head. If the child's head is persistently itchy and you notice scratching, especially behind the ears you should check for lice and nits. Some children have no itching in the early stage of infestation!

For those of you who have not had the occasion to host these little critters, please keep in mind that head lice live in human hair. **LICE** are about the size of a sesame seed, tan to grayish white, and difficult to find since they move quickly from searching fingers. They do not jump or fly!! They cannot live on animals. They bite the scalp to feast on drops of blood and this causes the itch. The female cements tiny eggs to the hair shaft close to the scalp. **NITS** are head lice eggs. They are very small, about the size of a knot in thread, hard to see, and are often confused for dandruff or hair spray droplets. Nits are oval and usually yellow to white and take about a week to hatch.

PLEASE notify the school if you find lice or nits in your child's hair to help prevent and manage any risk of spread between other children. By the time a case of head lice is identified, the person has usually had lice for at least a week. If a student is found to have lice, school staff will notify you.

Never treat for head lice unless you are sure lice or viable nits are present.

Current treatment approaches recognize the expense and resistance that has developed to the over-the-counter chemical products. For treatment product options, contact your health care provider for advice.

You will also need a good quality metal lice comb; the lice comb must have long (1 and 1/2 inch) metal tines. Some providers recommend a good quality lice comb and a cheap hair conditioner; coat the child's hair with it and then comb all lice and eggs out in sections. After the initial comb-out in small sections, comb the child's dry hair **daily** before school for **6 weeks**. If you do not, the eggs that are still alive will hatch and start the whole infestation over again. You will comb out a couple of tiny lice as missed eggs hatch. After 6 weeks, the life cycle is broken and the lice are gone. If you use a chemical shampoo, you must still comb daily if you are to be rid of the lice.

Machine-wash all clothing and bed linens worn or used by the infested person in the past 2 days before treatment. Use hot water cycle and hot dryer for at least 20 minutes. Nonwashable items can be sealed in a plastic bag for 2 weeks, OR frozen for 3 days. Change the child's bedding initially and then change only the pillow case a couple of times a week as you are continuing to comb. Vacuum the floor and carpet areas, any favorite upholstered chairs and car upholstery. Do not use sprays. Clean combs and brushes in Lysol, rubbing alcohol, or hot soapy water and keep separate.

In order to find everything you could possibly need to know about head lice, there are two very useful websites:

[www.hsph.harvard.edu/headlice](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/headlice)

[www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dpd/parasites/headlice/default.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dpd/parasites/headlice/default.htm)

It is critically important to note that lice do not carry disease. We have created myth and stigma about lice that is not reasonable or useful and just makes children feel bad and miss school unnecessarily. The importance of cooperation and open communication between families and school is the most effective method of control!!!

### **Medication Policy**

If your child has a prescription medication requirement, please send it to school in the original medicine container with the dosage instructions. All medications (over the counter or prescribed) must be given to the school office. You must fill out a Medical Authorization Form for any medication that your child requires. This form may be obtained from the office or on the school website. No medications will be administered without parental consent.

Parental consent must be given by phone to dispense medications such as Tylenol. No student may carry medications of any kind with them during school unless an exception has been documented. If necessary, minor first aid is provided by the Holy Cross staff.

In case of serious injury 911 will be called.

\*The school does not supply any medication, such as Tylenol or Advil or Motrin. If you anticipate your child may need medicine, please send it into the office with a signed Medical Authorization Form and we will keep it in a secure location. You will be called for permission before any medication is given to your child.

It is the policy of Holy Cross School that students will be screened for vision and hearing in accordance with 20-A MRSA 6451 and DOE Rule Chapter 45.

It is the policy of Holy Cross School that staff receives training prior to administering medications.

## **Safety Procedures**

### **Emergency Procedures**

Holy Cross utilizes the Honeywell calling system for emergency and other notifications. In case of an emergency the Honeywell system will send an e-mail, text, and phone message to the parent(s) of the student(s) notifying them of the situation.

### **Fire Drills**

Holy Cross School practices fire drills once a month. A fire drill log is kept in the main office and the South Portland Fire Department is notified at each drill. Holy Cross School is inspected by the Fire Marshall each year for compliance of State Regulations. The School is part of an ABS system that is directly wired to the South Portland Fire Department.

### **Lock Down Drills**

As part of our emergency procedures Lock Down Drills are practiced on a regular basis.

### **Mandatory Reporting**

Any employee, which includes all school employees, parish employees and any volunteer working in a Maine Catholic School, who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or is likely to be abused or neglected must immediately report this suspicion and the basis thereof to the Principal of the school. Abuse or neglect is defined by state law as “a threat to a child’s health or welfare by physical, mental or emotional injury or impairment, sexual abuse or exploitation, deprivation of essential need or lack of protection from these.” In addition to notifying the building Principal, the employee must also make a report directly to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) or the District Attorney when the employee believes a direct report will better protect the child in question. By agreement between the teacher and the Principal, the Principal may make the report to DHHS.

## **Parent –Teacher Team**

### **Parent School Communication**

The education of each student is a joint effort between the school staff and the parents.

It is essential that parents support the school’s philosophy and rules. When the school staff and parents work together the student’s success is assured. If any misunderstanding arises, the parents should call for an appointment to meet with the teacher to discuss the situation. All teachers have e-mail addresses that can be found on the school web site. Check with your child’s teacher to see if email is a good form of communication to use when communicating about school issues. Ongoing communication is the key to our success.

### **Parents as Partners**

As partners in the educational process at Holy Cross School, we ask that parents:

- Set rules, times, and limits so that your child:
  - \*Gets to bed early on school nights
  - \*Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day
  - \*Is dressed according to the school dress code

\*Completes assignments on time

- Arrangements for hot lunch or lunch from home daily
- Actively participate in school activities such as parent/teacher conferences.
- See that the student pays for any damages to schoolbooks, technology or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student.
- Notify the school with a written note, a phone call, or an e-mail to the main office when a student will be absent or tardy.
- Notify the school office in writing of any changes of address or important phone numbers.
- Meet all financial obligations to the school.
- Notify the school in writing of any special circumstances regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health.
- Complete and return to school any requested information promptly.
- Read school notes and informational items and to show interest in student's total education.
- Support the religious and educational goals of the school.
- Support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school.
- Support and participate in opportunities for community involvement to meet the 25 hour commitment requested of each family to meet our fundraising goals.
- Treat teachers and staff with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.

### **Parent Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled through an electronic scheduling program. A notice will go out notifying the parents when the "window" is open to schedule your conference. If you are having difficulty scheduling your conference come to the school and we will help you navigate the system and get you scheduled for conferences.

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled each year in the fall and the spring to discuss all aspects of your child's progress. However, parents are urged to contact their child's teacher whenever they have a concern. Remember, your child has several teachers. If you feel there are issues or circumstances affecting your child's behavior, welfare or learning, please address all of the teachers involved.

Educonnect is the communication/grading (a software program allowing parental monitoring of school work) is available for grades 3 - 8 so parents can monitor their child's academic progress on-line through the "parent portal". A password is assigned to the parents in the beginning of the year so parents can access this feature.

### **Communication**

Once a week, usually on Friday, notices are sent home via the e-mail list. The Holy Cross website and Facebook page also reflect informational items and photos.

## **School Calendar**

School calendars and lunch menus are available to families on-line via the website and Facebook pages. The main office has this information as well. Make sure you review the calendar on a regular basis because of possible changes due to unforeseen circumstances. Every effort is made to give advance notice of changes.

## **School Extended Day Care Program**

Holy Cross School offers before and after school childcare. The program is open before school, from 7:15am to 8:15am and after school, from 3:00pm until 5:15pm. Afternoon care is also open on most early release days from 12:00pm until 5:15pm. Parents will receive prior notification on any days that aftercare is not available.

Childcare is NOT available on snow days.

There is an hourly fee for the Extended Day Care Program (price is reflected on current tuition handout). Time is billed hourly, or in 30-minute intervals, or unlimited prepaid childcare options are available.

All children MUST be picked up by 5:15pm unless there is an emergency. We are aware of those unpredictable and emergency situations. However, for constant “lateness” you will be billed at \$5.00 per minute. It is unfair to our aftercare staff and your child if you are not on time on a regular basis to pick up your child. Late fees apply (\$5.00 per minute) if parents are late in picking up their child after 5:15pm.

Families will be billed on a regular basis. Please pay upon receipt. We rely on your timely payments to keep our operating budget in the black. Late payments are not fair to the other parents that continue to pay promptly. If you are having difficulty paying your bill please notify the Principal so a payment plan can be discussed.

Students who need to be dropped off before 8:15am or picked up after 3:00pm are asked to attend the Extended Day Care Center for safety purposes. If a child is not picked up at 3:00pm, he or she will be asked to join the Extended Day program at the parents’ expense. This is a safety net for all parents and children.

## **School Lunch Program**

Holy Cross School offers a school lunch program Monday through Friday in the cafeteria. Students may purchase hot lunch or bring a bagged lunch. Milk (chocolate and white) may be purchased for those students who bring their lunch. The daily cost of the meal is \$3.00. Each student will have a lunch account here at school. Parents are encouraged to pay ahead for their child’s lunch. You may send a check in to school addressed to “Holy Cross School” with the notation that it is for hot lunch. As children purchase lunch or milk, the cost will be deducted from their account. A lunch menu with 2 options per day will be available before the beginning of each month. On the days when the lunch program is not available, there is often a “Special Lunch” provided by a class or group as a Fundraiser. These Special Lunches need to be paid for separately; lunch accounts may not be used. Bag Lunches will also be available (they must be ordered in advance) on Early Release Days.

## **Outside/Playground Supervision**

•Staff supervision on the schoolyard begins at 8:20am . Students should NOT be left in the schoolyard before that time. If staff is not out on the playground, children should report to the cafeteria and check in with Before Care staff.

- During morning recess and lunchtime, there are staff on supervisory duty in the schoolyard.

### **Spiritual Activities**

The Holy Cross School community offers the students spiritual growth through Religious instruction, prayer, special Liturgies and activities. All students, Catholic and non-Catholic, are required to attend religion classes and participate in religious activities.

All Catholic students are expected to attend Sunday Mass in their own parishes and be active members of their church community.

The school Principal, staff and faculty are responsible for making clear the importance of religious instruction. The quality of the Catholic experience in the school and the emphasis on religious instruction strongly shapes the student's understanding of religion as an essential element of their education and day-to-day life.

### **Telephone/Cell Phones**

\*See Diocese of Portland Student Handbook Student Use of Cell Phones and Electronic Equipment

The office telephone is for school business. Please be sure that your child leaves home with everything he/she needs for the day, hence the need to call home is minimized. Messages can be left at the school office by parents and will be delivered to the student as soon as possible.

Middle School students are to sign in on the clipboard on Mrs. McVeigh's desk when they arrive to school. Phones should be off and placed in the designated container. If Middle School students chose to go outside at 8:15am with the other PreK – 4 students, they need to remain outside until all the students enter the building at 8:35am.

•Parents please don't text your child(ren) during the school day. Students using their cell phone during the school day will result in the loss of the phone for the day. The main office staff is available to get any message to your child(ren) during the day if necessary.

**\*Picture taking and recording both in and out of the classroom with cell phones is prohibited without staff permission-this includes picture taking and recording of other students as well.**

•Please note that valuable items such as phones or personal tablets are brought to school at the student's own risk. The school is not responsible if such items are lost or damaged.

### **Technology**

\*See Diocese of Portland Student Handbook for Student Computer and Internet Use policy and Student Use of Cell Phones and Electronic Equipment

\*See Holy Cross Policies in attached addendum

•All students receiving technology devices from Holy Cross School must read and sign the technology guidelines available when devices are picked up. Failure to follow the technology policy and guidelines will result in loss of the device.

### **School Safety** **Harassment On-Line**

Holy Cross School provides a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional wellbeing of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (seriously or in jest on-line) face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. Harassment of any type is not allowed. The Principal investigates all complaints of harassment.

Students involved in harassing behavior face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. Engagement in harassment using on-line sites such as, but not limited to Snapchat, Instagram or Facebook may result in disciplinary action if the content of the student's post includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students or the parish.

### **Tuition and Fees**

*Prompt and continuous payment of family tuition is paramount for the success of the school. The school relies on your timely tuition payment to operate in the black, pay teachers and invoices on time. Please, please, pay your tuition bill. If there is an unexpected emergency and you have an issue please notify the Principal and/or Business Manager immediately so we can help with the challenge. It is not fair for others to pay their tuition payments on time if you are not paying your tuition payments on time.*

Income for the School's operating budget comes from tuition paid by families, Parish subsidies (which may or may not apply to each student), and money raised through fundraising events sponsored by the Home and School Association. Parish subsidies are granted based on the requirements of each individual Parish, and it is the responsibility of each family to apply for the subsidy.

Families pay tuition through the FACTS Tuition Management Program. Families who wish to lower their monthly budgeted payments, may choose to pay one larger amount to the school before July 1 of the upcoming school year and budget the balance through FACTS.

Families who choose to budget payments must complete the FACTS Automatic Tuition Payment agreement and return it to the Business Office in a timely manner. Eleven monthly payments will be deducted from the specified bank account beginning July 5<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup>. Please refer to the FACTS agreement for information regarding fees charged for returned payments.

It is the responsibility of each school family to keep the Pastor or Parish Business Manager informed of their need to make any changes to their preferred tuition payment plan, or adjustments to the amount of tuition expected to be paid.

After January, families who are current in their tuition payments will be sent a re-enrollment packet for the following school year along with instructions and dates for the re-enrollment process. Each re-enrollment form will require a registration fee per family (amount determined annually by the Pastor in consultation with the Principal and Holy Cross School Board). Families who are not current in their tuition payments jeopardize their ability to re-enroll for the following year until their account is up to date with current financial obligations.

## **Uniforms**

Uniforms are used at Holy Cross School and other Catholic schools for several reasons. We are very proud of our tradition of uniforms since research continues to show that students who wear uniforms tend to be more serious about their responsibilities as learners. In addition, they help to foster a sense of order in the classroom and they indicate to students that school is an institution to be respected. Finally, uniforms help lessen the impact of economic disparity present in any school.

The purpose of the uniform is, as stated above, to reinforce our Catholic values. It is not to cause undue stress or difficulty for families. If there are unusual circumstances that make complying with the uniform code difficult on a certain day, or for a certain period of time, please send in a note with your child or call or e-mail the office.

At Holy Cross School, we offer our traditional “formal dress uniforms”, “warm weather uniforms”, “cold weather uniforms” and “gym uniforms” for all students in Kindergarten through grade 8. Pre-K students wear the gym uniform as their everyday uniform, although they may wear the school uniform if they choose.

- All uniforms are to be neat, clean, ironed and should fit properly.
- Boys’ shirts in the “formal” uniform are to be tucked in at all times during the school day.
- Ladies formal uniform consists of the Peter Pan collar and jumper (K-4) and the skirt and “tuck out” blouse for grades 5-8.
- Shoes should be in good condition and fit properly. No flip-flops or open toe sandals are permitted—even during dress down days. Shoes/sneakers of neutral and/or “non-loud” colors (such as white, blue, gray, black etc.) are to be worn with the school uniform and sneakers of “louder” colors may be worn with the gym uniform only. Shoes and sneakers should be tied at all times.
- Earrings are permitted in the ears only. Distracting earrings are not permitted.
- Body piercing in other parts of the body is not permitted.
- Jewelry shall be appropriate and not offensive or excessive.
- Unnatural or loud hair coloring is not permitted.
- A complete uniform guide is available on the website.

## **Uniform Holidays**

Once a month, the students have a Uniform Holiday and are permitted to wear their casual clothes to school. Uniform Holidays are indicated on the monthly calendar. As fads are ever changing the appropriateness of each one will be determined by the Principal. A good rule for Uniform Holidays (and the uniform in general): if you think you shouldn’t wear it, you shouldn’t. Shorts higher than mid-

thigh length, halter tops, tank tops, exposed or bare shoulders or midriffs, and shirts or hats with offensive logos cannot be worn. No skinny jeans, jeggins, skintight yoga pants or leggings are permitted unless a shirt that covers below the mid-thigh accompanies the outfit (no exceptions). Advertisements on clothing/caps for alcohol, tobacco, or other inappropriate products are no permitted to be worn.

Each student pays \$1 for the privilege of dressing casually. Proceeds from Uniform Holidays go to a grade or cause selected for that month. There are occasionally free Uniform Holidays with a “theme”, for example Red for Valentines Day, Green for St. Patrick’s Day.

### **Appropriate Dress for School Sponsored Activities**

The Holy Cross School dress code, either uniforms or dress down guidelines, is in effect at all school sponsored events (i.e. field trips, dances). The school will inform you whether uniforms or dress down guidelines apply to specific events.

### **Notice of Policy Changes**

The administration of Holy Cross School reserves the right to change any of the policies contained in this handbook.

A copy of this handbook is made available to every family. A statement of agreement to adhere to these policies must be reviewed and signed by each student and parent and returned to school promptly at the beginning of the school year.

\*\*All policies referred to in this handbook are available for reading in the Main Office.

# Holy Cross School Student Handbook Signature Page

I have read the Holy Cross School Student Handbook and agree to follow the school polices and procedures as stated.

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Parent Signature

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Date

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Parent Signature

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Date

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Student Signature

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Date