



St. Frances Cabrini
CATHOLIC SCHOOL
AN INDEPENDENCE MISSION SCHOOL

Student & Family Handbook

SCHOOL CONTACTS

Main Office: 215-748-2994

School Fax Number: 215-405-3987

Website: imsfrances.org

E-mail: office@imsfrances.org or name specific email

Address: 405 North 65th Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19151

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Mission, Vision, History & Accreditation	4
Faculty & Staff Directory	6
Family's Role in Education	7
Family Focus Groups	7
Admissions Policies and Procedures	8
Financial Policies and Procedures and TADS	8
General School Day	10
Technology & Such	12
Religious Instruction	12
Academic Policies and Procedures	13
School Culture and Student Conduct	15
Uniform Policy	18
School & Student Safety	19
Student Health & Welfare	22
Student Activities	23
Prayer	26
Signature Page	27

Introduction

This Student-Family Handbook is provided to inform you of rules, policies, procedures, guidelines and other information you may need or for which you are responsible during the school year. Answers to many frequently asked questions may be found herein and we encourage you to not only review the handbook carefully but also keep it readily available for reference throughout the year. If you have questions or concerns that are not addressed in the handbook, you are encouraged to contact the teachers or administrators in your school.

This handbook contains certain policies and procedures of St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School. St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School may change any of its policies and procedures and apply them as circumstances dictate. Families will be notified of major changes through a written update or email from the principal. This handbook may not cover every situation and the principal will make the final decision when situations arise that are not specifically addressed in this handbook. This handbook will be updated when necessary and reviewed annually by the staff of St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School and Independence Mission Schools.

Students and families must work together with the school and abide by the policies in this handbook. School-to-home cooperation is imperative to the success of the student.

Right to Amend

Every effort has been made to provide you with correct information. The administration reserves the right to change, amend, add or delete any or all of the policies and procedures or guidelines contained in this handbook for just cause and in the best interest of students and the school community. Implementation of these policies and procedures is ultimately at the discretion of the school administration.

St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School, IMS: Mission, Vision, History, & Accreditation

Mission and Vision - IMS

IMS Mission Statement

Independence Mission Schools provides a transformative Catholic education to children of all faiths across the city of Philadelphia. Unlocking our students' potential starts with a culture of love that values and embraces each child. The promise of God's love, shown by our faculty and staff, is at the very core of the Catholic education our schools deliver. This atmosphere sets our students, from pre-kindergarten to grade 8, on the path to a promising future confident in their own worth so they can be ready to succeed both in and out of the classroom.

IMS Vision

Through a deliberate approach that combines both our Catholic Values, academic focus, and unwavering faith in the great potential found within each of our students, we aspire to support our students in becoming problem solvers, critical thinkers, and civic-minded citizens who when faced with life's unknown challenges, demonstrate grace and perseverance.

Mission, Vision, History & Accreditation - SFC

SFC Mission

"To know, Love, and Live, the life of Christ, by providing a value centered education based on the philosophy of Mother Cabrini."

SFC Vision

St. Frances Cabrini School will be a model for Catholic education in our community where students, families, and staff all play an integral part in the development and success of all our students. Mother Cabrini emphasized the importance of education of both the mind & the heart. Thus, St. Frances Cabrini School will provide a learning environment grounded in academic excellence where the intellectual, spiritual, moral, and social-emotional needs of each student can be met. Graduates of St. Frances Cabrini School will be compassionate, caring, and engaged citizens who **know, love, and live** the life of Christ.

To Know Christ  **To Love Others**  **To Live Intentionally**

SFC History

St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School is one of 14 schools in the Independence Mission Schools network. Established in 2012, through the merger of Our Lady of Blessed Sacrament Catholic School and St. Donato Catholic School, SFC served the families in the northside of West Philadelphia. SFC became an IMS school in 2013. Cabrini currently serves its school community in the St. Donato school building, which was established in 1913.

SFC Accreditation

St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School is accredited by the Commission on Elementary Schools of the Middle States Association.

Faculty and Staff Directory

Title	Name	Email
Principal	Ms. Van Robinson	vrobinson@imsfrances.org
Operations Manager	Mrs. Letrice Richardson	lrichardson@imfrances.org
Teacher Leader	Mr. Mark Gonzalez	mgonzalez@imsfrances.org
Pre-Kindergarten	Mrs. Christine Schmeltzer	cschmeltzer@imsfrances.org
Teacher's Aid	Ms. Helen Castiello	hcastiello@imsfrances.org
Kindergarten	Mrs. Anna Venable	avenable@imsfrances.org
First Grade	Ms. Monique Barracks	mbarracks@imsfrances.org
Second Grade	Ms. Catherine Fazio	cfazio@imsfrances.org
Third Grade	Ms. Virginia Rucker	vrucker@imsfrances.org
Fourth & Fifth Grade Math & Science	Mr. Ryan King	rking@imsfrances.org
Fourth & Fifth Grade Reading & Social Studies	Ms. Zakia Griffin	zgriffin@imsfrances.org
Middle School Social Studies & Science	Ms. Meeka Outlaw	moutlaw@imsfrances.org
Middle School Reading	Mr. Christopher Daniels	cdaniels@imsfrances.org
Middle School Math	Ms. Margaret Long	mlong@imsfrances.org
Art	Mr. Francisco Madera	fmadera@imsfrances.org
Physical Education	Ms. Melissa Roberts	mroberts@imsfrances.org
Performing Arts	Ms. Ruth Oliver	eoliver@imsfrances.org
Auxiliary Teacher	TBD	TBD
Receptionists	Ms. Linda Goodwin & Ms. Margaret Parker	office@imsfrances.org
Athletic Director & Lead Custodian	Mr. Kyle Rose	krose@imsfrances.org
Custodian	Mr. Luciano Gomez Rodriguez	lgomezrodriguez@imsfrances.org
Nutritional Development Services	Mr. Jerry Maghee Ms. Helen Monroe	jmaghee@imsfrances.org hmonroe@imsfrances.org
For Catapult & CORA partners, please call the main office.		

Family's Role in Education

At Independence Mission Schools, we consider it a privilege to work with families in the education of children because we believe families are the primary educators of their children. During these formative years, your child needs constant support from both families and faculty in order to develop his or her moral, intellectual, social, cultural and physical endowment. Evidence of mutual respect between families and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships. When concerns arise, please contact your child's teacher or an administrator. Families are expected to support the policies of the school as a condition of enrollment. Just as the family has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

As partners in the educational process we ask families:

- To 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 school day, completes homework assignments on time, has a snack and a lunch every day
- To ensure the student is dressed according to the school uniform dress code throughout the entire school year
- To actively participate in school activities such as open house, family-teacher conferences and fundraising activities
- To notify the school office by 9:00 a.m. when a student is absent and the nature of the absence
- To notify the school office, in writing, of any changes of address or important phone numbers or changes to your child's dismissal routine
- To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health including, but not limited to, medical conditions and child custody orders
- To complete and return to school any requested information promptly
- To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education
- To inform the administration of concerns which may call for administrative action
- To meet all financial obligations to the school, including tuition, fees, and fines for damage to textbooks or school property
- To follow all health guidance and ensure that their child is up-to-date on their required vaccines and that the school is notified in writing of any health condition or allergy

Family Focus Groups

As a way to not only engage families but also create a true school community, SFC will host multiple focus groups to provide perspective & suggestions to improve how we "do school." The focus groups are a prelude to a future home & school association. The association may facilitate many events that greatly enhance the positive atmosphere and school community. Additionally, its primary goal is to foster family involvement and to create communication and a sense of cooperation among home, classroom, and administration. The home & school association may also sponsor fundraisers throughout the year to benefit the school and students. All families will be encouraged to join the family association and participate in events.

Admissions Policies and Procedures

St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School endeavors to accommodate students with special needs as the School's resources and capabilities reasonably permit. The School reserves the right to decline admission or impose reasonable conditions of attendance where circumstances indicate. All new students are placed on academic and behavior probation for the first year they are enrolled at SFC, IMS.

St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School follows the School District of Philadelphia's age requirements for admission. A student who is 5 years old by September 1st is eligible for Kindergarten. A student who is 6 years old by September 1st is eligible for first grade. The necessary forms and certificates for admission include:

- Birth Certificate
- Baptismal certificate (if Catholic)
- Immunization record
- Personal recommendation (from the student's previous teacher, counselor, or principal)
- Copy of the student's most recent report card (or progress report)

The admittance of students is contingent on the following factors:

Academic records and/or testing results: Students must submit satisfactory academic records from their previous school; or, if a child has never attended school, the child will be required to demonstrate academic readiness through an appropriate assessment. New students registering for Grades 2-8 may also demonstrate satisfactory skills on placement tests.

Discipline record: Students must submit evidence of a satisfactory discipline report and the personal recommendation form (provided by SFC) from their previous school.

Agreement for admission: families/guardians must sign a form in which they recognize the obligation for their child to attend all religion classes and to participate in all religious functions offered as part of the school program during the school week; the obligation to pay all required fees and tuition; the obligation to accept and to promote the philosophy, goals, objectives, and regulations of St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School; and the importance which the school places on families worshipping together regularly at their home church.

SFC admits students of any race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin to all of the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to its students. SFC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, its admission policy, or in any school-administered program.

Financial Policies and Procedures and TADS

Tuition Payments

Tuition is billed over a 10-month period from August 15-May 15 TADS will assess a \$40 late fee for any payment which is not made within five days of the due date. Late fees will begin in the month of August. Families select the desired payment method for monthly payment in TADS. Payments may be made by automatic withdrawal from your bank account, by credit card (Mastercard, Discover, Visa or American Express), or by check or money order. All payments by check or money order should be sent by mail to: TADS; Auncore, Inc.; P. O. Box 850136; Minneapolis MN 55485.

Tuition Refund Policy

Tuition is non-refundable.

Return Check Policy

Families are responsible to make full financial restitution for any checks that are returned to SFC due to insufficient funds, including all related fees. Families will be responsible to make full restitution for any school related materials or merchandise given to a student and not returned to the school when due. This includes, but is not limited to: laptops, Scholastic Book Fair, CYO, school activities, & books & materials fees. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the student's privileges being revoked as well as having the report card withheld at the end of the school year.

Office Records

Families are requested to notify the school through email or in writing to the school office of any change of home telephone numbers and/or address, business telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, **and** telephone numbers of emergency contacts so that office records may be accurate, complete, and up-to-date.

Transfer of Students

The family/guardian, in writing, should make notice of withdrawal of a student to the principal & operations manager in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the school to prepare necessary information and settle accounts. No student records may be forwarded to another school until Business Office accounts have been settled and tuition is paid in-full.

Additionally, the school will only share (electronically) student records with another school or entity upon receipt of a written request/confirmation from the parent of record.

Tuition Policies

Students whose tuition payments are not up to date a week prior to school starting may not be permitted to start school.

If tuition and fee obligations are not paid up to date before school events, (trips, dances, etc.) children may not be permitted to participate in the event and will not receive progress reports nor report cards; family access to TADS Educate will be suspended. Eighth grade students will not be permitted to participate in special trips and/or graduation if all tuition and fees due are not paid. Students whose tuition is two months late will be excluded from school until the past due balance is paid. Students who are absent ten or more days, due to tuition delinquency, will be dismissed from school.

The school reserves the right to ask families who have patterns of gross delinquency in meeting financial obligations during the school year to find other accommodations for their children's education.

All scholarships and other awards known to the school will be reflected in my tuition agreement. If further awards are made, they will be credited to accounts as they are confirmed by the School. However, families are responsible for maintaining any conditions required for the award and remain financially liable if the grant/scholarship is NOT ultimately paid to the school by the grantor for any reason.

Families will be notified if their child can not attend school due to non-payment of tuition. If for some reason, our student attends school after their parent/guardian has been notified their child must remain out of school until a payment agreement has been made (& adhered to), our student will remain in the main office for pick-up. Please note, students who are unable to attend school due to non-payment of tuition will be marked absent for the day(s).

General School Day

School Hours

School hours for all students (PreK & Kindergarten) are:

- Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 2:45 p.m.
- Tuesday from 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.
- On half-days dismissal will be at 11:30 a.m. for all students unless otherwise notified.

School hours for all students (1st grade through 8th grade) are:

- Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 3:15 p.m.
- Tuesday from 8:00 a.m. until 1:30 p.m.
- On half-days dismissal will be at 12:00 p.m. for all students unless otherwise notified.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Students are to enter the school through their assigned door; door B (off the patio) for PreK through 1st grade, & door D (through the cafeteria) for 2nd grade through 8th grade. These doors will be open from 7:45 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. After 8:00 a.m. students must enter the school through the front door. All students are to be in their homeroom classroom by 8:00 a.m. Students not in their homeroom classroom by 8:00 a.m. will be noted as absent or late for the day. Any change to your child's arrival or dismissal procedure must be given in writing to the school. Children will only be released to the people who are noted on their pick up form due back to the school the first week of school, or in their emergency contact information in TADS. We will also require identification from anyone who picks up your child, including parents, to input into our school safety system (Raptor).

Early Dismissals

In the rare instance you need to pick your child up from school for an early dismissal please be sure to notify the teacher in writing the morning of the dismissal. Also note, there will be no early dismissals after 1:30 pm (12:30 pm on Tuesdays). If you have an emergency please contact the office for assistance. Please note that early dismissals after 1:30pm disrupt the running of the school day, classroom procedures & preparation of dismissal of all children in our school.

Car Line

Drop off: Please drop off your child on the school side of 65th Street. Additionally, please do not leave your car double parked while walking your child to the school building. If you feel the need to walk your child to the school, please park your car responsibly. Please note that officers from the 19th district have been known to give tickets to cars left in the middle of the road without a driver or parked illegally.

Pick up: Please pick-up your child on the school side of 65th Street, from their designated spot/door for their grade (PreK - 5th grade); students in our middle school are dismissed & requested to walk down 65th Street towards Girard Avenue, if catching the bus or meeting their ride. Again, please do not leave your car double parked while walking to pick up your child from the school building. If you feel the need to walk to the school to pick up your child, please park your car responsibly. Please note that officers from the 19th district have been known to give tickets to cars left in the middle of the road without a driver or parked illegally. Lastly, please do not park in the school bus zone, where cones are placed for everyone's safety & smoother dismissal.

Families are requested & encouraged to schedule a meeting with their child's teacher. Conversing with teachers during dismissal distracts from teachers providing active supervision to all students & does not give family members the full attention they deserve.

After 3:10 p.m. students will be taken to the main office and families can pick them up from the office. After 3:30 p.m. students will be taken to After Care and a fee will be charged.

Buses

Students in 1st through 5th grades may ride the school bus. *Middle grades students may be provided a SEPTA student transpass.* To ride a school bus, students must be registered and assigned through the School District of Philadelphia transportation authority in which he/she resides. A code of bus behavior is issued through the school district. Courtesy, good manners and promptness are required. The children must behave in an orderly fashion and follow the instructions of the bus driver. Students who misbehave will be subject to disciplinary action and loss of riding privileges. The school principal and families/guardians are notified through written referral from the school district if a student's behavior is to be modified. Consistent failure to adhere to bus regulations warrants suspension or expulsion from the use of school transportation. Improper behavior on the school bus could lead to after school detention or suspension from school. Information concerning pick-up times and stops is determined and provided by the individual district.

Walking

Crossing Guards: To ensure their safety, all students must obey the crossing guards and only cross at the corners of 65th & Callowhill Streets or 65th Street & Girard Avenue. Parents & guardians must also obey the crossing guards and wait until the crossing guard allows you to cross the street. This is to ensure that the child is safely escorted onto and off of school property.

Before Care and Breakfast

Before Care is only a free service for students who ride the school bus. There is a fee for all other students; there is a quota of students who may participate in before care. Door D opens at 7:00 a.m. Grab-n-go breakfast is served from 7:45 – 7:59 a.m, for 2nd through 8th grade students, who enter through door D. The menu is sent home monthly & posted outside the kitchen. See Mrs. Richardson to sign up for Before Care.

Please note, breakfast is served in class for students in Pre-K through 1st grade. Also, before care is not available for Pre-K.

After Care Program

The After Care Program runs from dismissal until 6:00 p.m. on Mondays through Thursdays. There is no After Care Program on noon dismissal days. The After Care schedule consists of times for snack (from home), homework, and play. Rates and the After Care Handbook will be provided upon request. See Mrs. Richardson to sign up for After Care. Please note, after care is not available for Pre-K.

Technology & Such

Communication

E-mail is used as the primary means of communication between St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School and families regarding current issues, programs and other information. Please notify the school office of any email address changes throughout the school year. If you do not have email capabilities, please inform the school office in writing. We will additionally use the Class Dojo app as a consistent means of sharing information with families. We encourage families to follow SFC on Facebook & Instagram.

Use/Protection of School Facilities/Property

Students are expected to care for and protect all school property. Families must compensate the school for damages resulting from the loss, destruction or defacement, whether willful or accidental, of school property. Willful destruction or defacement of school property will also subject a student to appropriate disciplinary procedures.

Lost & Found

The school is not responsible for any personal property, electronic items, or clothing that a student brings to school. Students are responsible for monitoring any items they bring into school and the school is not responsible for the replacement of any missing or damaged items.

Photography

As part of our public relations efforts, we routinely photograph faculty, staff, and students involved in school-related activities. Your (non)consent to have your child photographed was indicated in TADS at the time of registration.

Smart Devices, Et Cetera

While it is understandable that today's child has a smart phone at their disposal, upon entry into the school building, we ask that all students turn off their cell phones during the school day. We also request that family members NOT call or text their child during the school day for obvious reasons of disruption to the learning environment. Family members may call the main office if an emergent event arises.

We also request that smart watches not be worn. It has been noted that such devices may be a distraction & used inappropriately in the classroom.

Headphones & earbuds may only be used by students if sanctioned by the teacher; these items will be confiscated otherwise for parents to pick-up from administration.

Religious Instruction

Religious Instruction

The focus of our work and activity is on God, Scripture, values, and morals from the Catholic perspective. Students participate in religion classes daily and they worship monthly as a school family. Our religion program includes religious education classes, sacramental preparation, liturgical and prayer experiences, and opportunities for Catholic witness and service. We hope to further each child's knowledge and practice of their faith and guide them to serve others through the use of their individual gifts and talents.

Mass

Our students and teachers attend Mass at least monthly, on Holy Days of Obligation, and on other days of religious celebration. Families are welcome to attend Mass; please contact your child's teacher if you are interested in celebrating Mass with us.

Academic Policies and Procedures

Student Records

Records will only be released with written permission from a student's family/guardian. Academic records are the property of St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School.

Progress Reports

Progress reports are available at the mid-trimester point each trimester. Families can always review their child's academic progress through Educate.

Report Card Policies

Report cards are issued three times per year to students in Kindergarten through Grade 8. PreK students are given progress reports twice a year. Report cards will be available via TADS Educate at designated time at the end of each trimester.

Family-Teacher Conferences

Planned conferences will be offered multiple times a year. If a family/guardian would like to schedule a family-teacher conference at any other point during the year, they must contact the teacher.

Standardized Testing

The Terra Nova Test is administered each year to students in grades 2 through 7. The results are communicated to families and are utilized by the school for curriculum planning.

MAP Testing is administered to all students in kindergarten through 8th grade. It is given three times during the school year for reading and math, and charts your child's growth.

Curriculum

The St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School curriculum from PreK through Grade Eight includes Religion, reading, mathematics, science, social studies, writing, handwriting (lower grades), art, performing arts, and physical education. The curriculum guidelines for each subject were developed by Independence Mission Schools.

Homework Assignments

Homework is an extension of the learning that takes place in school. Homework provides practice and drill that reinforce classroom learning and provides opportunities for independent study, research, and creative thinking. Homework includes both study and written assignments which students are expected to complete independently. While the assignments should not require undue family assistance or supervision, families can help their children by arranging a quiet, comfortable place to work, checking that assignments are completed and signing homework (if required by the teachers). Since ample time is allowed for the completion of research and long-term assignments or projects, students should pace themselves by spending additional time each night so that these assignments are completed on time.

Homework can be obtained from students' homework books, Google Classroom and/or Class Dojo.

Graduation

Eighth grade students who have completed the prescribed course of study and maintained a suitable conduct record are eligible for graduation if all financial obligations have been met. Procedures for graduation are determined by the principal and the eighth-grade teachers. The principal reserves the right to deny the privilege of graduating and/or participating in graduation exercises to any student who does not meet the academic or behavioral expectations of the school or whose family has not met their financial obligations to the school.

Closing Exercises

Participation in closing exercises is a privilege, not a right. The principal has the right to deny any student from participating in closing exercises if, in their view, the student's conduct, academic or disciplinary record indicates that the privilege should not be extended.

Books

All textbooks are the property of St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School. The school issues textbooks to each student for his/her use. Each textbook must be returned to the teacher at the end of the school year. If a student's book is lost or destroyed, payment must be made in full. The charge for a lost or destroyed textbook will be the retail cost to replace the book.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is defined as any cooperative or solitary attempt to represent the work of any other person as one's own. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Copying any portion of another student's assignment or test
- Looking at any material not provided or directed by the teacher during a test.
- Giving answers to others on a test.
- Informing others of test items before they take the test
- Reporting inaccurate grades
- Use of any electronic device (cell phone, smart watch, etc.) to give or obtain answers on a test.

Both the student who copies and the student who offered materials for copying will receive consequences. Students who are found to be academically dishonest may receive a zero on that assignment/test as well as additional disciplinary consequences.

School Culture and Student Conduct

St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School exists to create a positive, structured, and loving atmosphere in which each student can learn and thrive, while exhibiting proper behavior and self-control. In order to provide a successful learning experience, it is important to establish consistent classroom procedures and clear guidelines around behavioral expectations, using a proactive, preventative approach that keeps our love for our students at the forefront. Each teacher will have consistent expectations for their classroom that will be explained, taught, and modeled. These behaviors will be reinforced throughout the school year. Students are expected to exemplify positive behaviors on school grounds and anywhere students represent SFC. Students should be aware that there are consequences for failure to observe behavior expectations; all consequences should be logical and natural and all adults, especially the classroom teacher, share in the responsibility of consistently responding with logical and natural consequences.

Attendance

Our families are aware of the strong relationship between school success and a good record of attendance. Students are expected to be punctual. Families are asked to schedule trips and vacations around the school calendar. Families should encourage good habits of attendance and punctuality in their children. Whenever a student must be absent from school, a family or guardian must notify the school of the reason before 9:00 a.m. *If we have not received a call by 9:30 am we may contact you. Please respond so we know your child is safe.*

Students who are too ill or otherwise incapacitated to attend classes and participate fully in class activities may not participate in activities scheduled for the afternoon or evening of that day. Students must attend five (5) sequential class periods to participate in an afterschool activity.

Consistent attendance concerns will result in interventions or disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the school for the following year.

Attendance Goal

Our goal is for students to attend school 95% of the time or more. In order to achieve this rate, this would mean that a student would miss no more than nine days of school over the course of the school year.

Late Arrivals

A student who arrives late for school must sign in at the school office and present a note from her/his family/guardian explaining the reason for the lateness (Students who are late because the school bus on which they were riding was late do not need to present a note). Lateness, of course, impacts a perfect attendance record and constitutes a serious infraction because it disrupts class and causes loss of instructional time for all students in the class. In addition, students who are often or excessively late to school may not be allowed to return to St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School the following school year.

Student Expectations

Students attend and participate in the school program so that they may develop to their fullest potential. Students are expected to act in such fashion that their behavior reflects favorably on themselves and the school. Students are expected to:

- respect all other persons by the way they speak to and act toward them
- respect the rights of others, including the right to secure an education in an environment that is orderly and disciplined
- contribute toward establishing and maintaining an atmosphere that generates mutual respect and dignity for all
- behave appropriately in all situations in keeping with the Catholic principles which the school espouses
- be punctual and attend school on a regular basis
- come prepared for class with required supplies and assignments
- make an earnest effort to do their best work
- assist in the efforts of teachers and families to communicate about a student's progress by presenting to families all test papers and other documents requiring signatures of families and returning such to school
- deliver other forms of communication between families and teachers.
- observe the approved school dress code
- respect school property and help keep it free from damage
- accept responsibility for his/her actions
- showcase our school values: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring & citizenship

Discipline Policy and Procedures

The school's main objective is to create a positive, structured and loving atmosphere in which each student can thrive and exhibit proper behavior and self-control. In order to provide a successful learning experience, it is important to establish consistent classroom procedures and clear guidelines for behavioral expectations. A fair, consistent discipline policy is an integral part of a sound educational program. Discipline is a reflection of the philosophy of a Catholic school which strives to develop Christians committed to the observance of just rules and regulations and to assist individuals in responding to their responsibilities and obligations to themselves and others. The philosophy of St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School supports the belief that each child deserves to be guided and encouraged so that proper attitudes toward self and others are fostered.

Students are considered representatives of their school at all times, including on the school bus, at school-sponsored functions, and on social media. Inappropriate behavior outside of the school day may still result in disciplinary action.

Minor infractions that cause distractions and interruptions in the classroom will be addressed in accordance with the classroom management policy of the teacher. These infractions may include but are not limited to:

- being unprepared for class
- failure to follow classroom rules and procedures
- disrespect to peers
- inappropriate language or gestures
- cheating or plagiarism

Consequences may include but are not limited to loss of privileges, lunch/recess/after school detention, and call or conference with the parent.

More serious infractions that require the intervention of administration may result in continued loss of privileges, suspension, and/or expulsion. These consequences are determined at the discretion of the principal. Examples of serious infractions include but are not limited to:

- Fighting of any kind, including play-fighting and horseplay
- Flagrant disrespect for authority to any adult in the building
- Possession and/or use of drugs, nicotine, vapes, or alcohol
- Vandalism of school or parish property
- Possession of weapons
- Bullying or harassment of others, including cyberbullying
- Leaving class or school without permission from a school authority
- Theft
- Violation of acceptable use policy for technology
- Repeated classroom disruptions and offenses
- Repeated suspensions

Any serious infraction will be thoroughly investigated by the principal. The results of the investigation will be communicated to parents and documented at the school level. In the event of a suspension, the principal will determine the requirements for readmittance to the school, which may include a probationary period for the student.

Continued enrollment at the school is a privilege, and full cooperation of families and students in regards to academic, behavioral, attendance, and tuition policies is expected. The principal is entrusted with the ultimate determination of consequences when this cooperation is not met.

Bullying

St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School has a zero-tolerance policy towards any bullying behavior. The definition of bullying is: "Bullying happens when someone with more power unfairly hurts someone with less power over and over again. Power may be physical strength, social skill, verbal ability or any other resource." Instances of bullying that go unreported cannot be dealt with in an appropriate manner. At SFC, we ask that families/guardians notify their child's teacher the first time bullying behavior is reported by their child so that it can be investigated. If the investigation determines it is appropriate, such behavior may be reported to law enforcement. Families are encouraged to report threats of violence or harm to their children to law enforcement, particularly if perpetrated electronically. Students are required to refrain from participating in any malicious, derogatory or inappropriate exchanges via text messages, e-mails, or social networking sites that involve the school name, its employees or other SFC students and families. All incidents should be reported to the school for investigation.

Electronic Device Policy

Students have access to a school-provided Chromebook throughout the day. With the exception of this chromebook, students are NOT PERMITTED to have electronic devices, including but not limited to cell phones, smart watches, and tablets, during school hours without the express consent of a faculty or staff member. The teacher will determine how any electronic devices will be stored in the classroom. Failure to follow these instructions will result in disciplinary action.

For legal and privacy reasons, students are prohibited from taking photographs or video of any school employees or students during school hours or school sponsored events and using them in an unauthorized manner. This includes but is not limited to sharing pictures/videos electronically by phone, email, text messages or social media.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy

All members of the school community are expected to abide by the Technology Acceptable Use Policy provided to families in TADS during the registration process and to teachers and staff at the outset of the school year. Students who fail to abide by this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and/or expulsion at the discretion of the principal.

Uniform Policy

School uniforms are to be ordered through Flynn & O'Hara.

A direct link to review and purchase school uniforms & shoes is available here: <https://flynnohara.com/> . Our school code is: PA021.

The formal uniform is worn daily throughout the school year, for grades 1 through 8. For grades 1 through 8, students are to wear the gym uniform on gym days ONLY. Students in PreK & kindergarten wear the gym uniform everyday.

Neatness and cleanliness in personal attire are very much a part of a child's education and are the responsibility of both the child and the family. Good personal appearance is expected of every student in St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School. The uniform is expected to be worn each day of school. If there are extenuating circumstances that affect the child's ability to wear the uniform, the parent should contact the school.

Throughout the school year, there may be days in which we celebrate various appreciation days or school spirit. Students who do not participate in these days will be expected to have their complete uniform on throughout the school day. Students in "out of uniform attire" that is deemed inappropriate by the administration may be asked to phone a parent in order to have other clothing brought to school or to be taken home in order to change clothes. Detentions will be given to students who consistently do not follow our school dress code.

School & Student Safety

Emergency Communications

Our contact system is TADS Educate. This system will deliver emails/text messages to families individually. Should schools need to close early due to weather, bus delays, for example this system would notify you by email/text messages. All students have been entered into the system. If your emergency contact information changes, please update information by contacting the school office. We will also notify families via Class Dojo.

In the event of an emergency that requires that your child be picked up at an alternate location, information will be communicated to families via TADS Educate & Class Dojo.

Emergency Drills

State Law requires that emergency drills be held periodically throughout the school year. Fire drills are practiced monthly. Lockdown, shelter in place, and evacuation drills are practiced yearly. We will notify families when the latter drills will be executed.

Inspections

Quarterly safety inspections will be conducted by school personnel. The insurance company will conduct annual inspections of the facilities and grounds. Annual asbestos inspections shall be conducted in schools that contain asbestos.

Safety and Security Legal Custody Factors

If for some reason there are court papers restricting the custody and care of your child(ren), WE MUST HAVE COPIES OF THE ORDER IN THE OFFICE. The school staff cannot be responsible for your child's safety if these documents are not on file, especially if they are in regards to a family. Please make sure your child is aware of the persons with whom they are and are not permitted to leave or be with while at school.

Families are asked to inform school personnel when legal custody of the child(ren) resides with one family. It is important for the school to have a copy of the custody decree. This will help school personnel to make effective decisions when the need arises. Custodial families are likewise asked to supply the school with copies of protection from abuse (restraining) orders if the need arises.

Those individuals who have legal custody of the student may attend school meetings, participate in educational decisions and review educational records regarding that student. Persons who do not have legal custody (including those with visitation rights but not legal custody) have no such educational rights and may not participate in these matters.

Unless a court or custody agreement specifies otherwise, each family/guardian with legal custody is entitled to access all school records of the child. Absent a subpoena or court order, school records of the child(ren) may be disclosed only upon written consent of the family/guardian with legal custody.

A child will not be released to a family/guardian that does not have physical custody, without the written consent of the custodial family/guardian. To determine the custodial family/guardian, all separated or divorced families of children enrolled in the school must provide the school with a copy of the court order or custodial agreement adjudicating that determination of custody. This Court Order/Custodial Agreement is placed in a confidential file.

Visitors to Campus

In order to maintain the highest degree of safety for our students, ALL visitors must sign in at the school office upon arrival to the school, providing state sponsored identification to be input into our school safety system.

Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention Policy

Independence Mission School is committed to ensuring a safe school environment that promotes the physical and emotional well-being of all students and works proactively to support the mental health of students to safeguard against the threat of suicide. In order to protect student safety, schools will educate staff and students (in an age appropriate manner) about suicide prevention and provide specific interventions when students express suicidal ideation. These interventions will be instituted whenever school personnel is made aware of a threat of suicidal ideation even if the ideation should occur outside of the school day or off school property.

Should a student express suicidal ideation, the school will first ensure that the student is safe. The school will contact the parent/guardian as soon as possible and will only be able to communicate specific information with the parent/guardian. The school administration will consult Cora/Catapult counselors for support with completing a risk assessment. The counselor will make a recommendation based on the level of risk assignment. Should the level of risk be high enough, the school will recommend that the student be taken to Philadelphia Children's Crisis Response Center (CRC) or Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) Emergency Room for an in-person psychiatric evaluation. The school may require that students be screened by a mental health professional prior to returning to school. In these circumstances, a screening completed by a pediatrician will not be accepted.

For students assessed at medium and/or high risk, mobile crisis could be called to come to the school for an assessment and next steps; however, mobile crisis require parental consent to speak with the child and they do not transport the child to the CRC if that is what is recommended.

If a counselor is not available, the school administration will require a risk assessment be completed by a mental health agency prior to the student returning to school.

In all cases where further evaluation is recommended (ie: PATH, CRC, ER), if the caregiver refuses or does not follow through, a ChildLine call will be placed.

Safe2Say

All IMS schools participate in the Safe2Say program. Safe2Say Something is a youth violence prevention program run by the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General. The program teaches youth and adults how to recognize warning signs and signals, especially within social media, from individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others and to “say something” before it is too late.

Anonymous submissions to Safe2Say can be made through the phone, website, or app. Once received in Safe2Say, the crisis center reviews, assesses and processes all submissions. They then send all submissions to school administration and/or law enforcement for intervention. If needed, the crisis center may contact tipster anonymously through the app for further information.

All schools have a Safe2Say response team that will review and address tips that are reported. False tips have the potential to damage the well-being of other students, adults, or the school entity and will be investigated. Students who make false tips will be subject to serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the school.

ChildLine

All staff and volunteers in IMS are considered mandated reporters. Mandated reporters are certain adults who are legally required to report suspected child abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse. All IMS staff and volunteers must complete mandatory training in order to understand their responsibilities as mandated reporters. When a mandated reporter makes a report to ChildLine, their identity is kept confidential. The school will not be able to tell a family the name of a person making a report.

ChildLine is part of a mandated statewide child protective services program designed to accept child abuse referrals and general child well-being concerns, and transmit the information quickly to the appropriate investigating agency. ChildLine is responsible for receiving verbal and electronic referrals 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Additionally, child abuse investigation outcomes and general protective services assessment outcomes are submitted to, and reviewed and finalized by, ChildLine specialists. When a report is made to ChildLine, the agency forwards the report of suspected child abuse to the local County and Youth agency, which investigates to determine if the allegations are considered abuse or neglect.

Evaluations (EP, IBHS, CORA), screening opt out

For all CORA services, parent/ guardian permission is obtained before conducting a formal screening for an individually referred student. Guardians/parents reserve the right to refuse such services.

While not a screening service, some CORA service providers may conduct classroom consultations (e.g., occupational therapy) or may conduct a classroom guidance session (e.g., counseling). These services are intended to benefit the entire class and are not interventions directed towards one student. In situations like this we do not get parent permission from each classroom student, although teachers and parents are notified that these services are taking place, and parents may opt-out of having their children participate.

CORA Speech therapists also conduct a second grade speech and language screening in elementary grade level schools when deemed appropriate. Screenings efficiently identify most students who communicate within normal limits and those who may have a communication disorder. Speech and language screenings may be carried out informally or with published assessments. Again, we do not get parent permission from each classroom student when conducting these students, although teachers and parents are notified that these services are taking place, and parents may opt-out of having their children participate.

Student Health and Welfare

Student Health Records and Immunizations

Proof of a health examination and current immunizations are mandatory for the students to be enrolled in our school in accordance with the regulation of the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The necessary form is available from the student's personal physician. No student will be allowed to attend classes after September 15, until his/her updated health form has been turned into the appropriate school office.

Student Illness

Please do not send a child to school who shows signs of illness. A student who becomes ill at school must request permission from his/her teacher to report to the office. If the illness is serious, the family/guardian will be contacted. No student will be released from school with anyone other than the family, guardian, or responsible adult designated by the family/guardian. The responsible adult may be asked to provide identification before signing the student out at the appropriate school office.

Please remember: Students with a fever of 100° or higher, vomiting or diarrhea will be sent home. Students are required to remain at home until fever- and symptom-free for 24 hours. Students recovering from pink eye (conjunctivitis) must be on medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Families of students with chronic medical problems should report their illness to the administration, school nurse and the classroom teacher(s).

Medication

The Prescription Drug and Medicine Authorization (MED-1) form must be completed by a physician before any prescription or over-the-counter medication will be dispensed from the office. This form is available at school. **We cannot keep medicine in the school without this form.** All medicines or refills must be delivered by a family or guardian to the school. All medications must be in the original container. Students may **NEVER** carry medicines on school grounds unless directed by the school nurse for emergency purposes. Any student with medication in their possession is subject to disciplinary consequences.

Medical Emergencies/Accidents/Injuries

Accidents on school property shall be reported immediately to the principal. A report shall be written describing the accident and follow up care. A copy of the report shall be kept permanently in the school. If professional medical services are required, a copy of the report shall be sent to the IMS Central Office.

Food Allergies

Students with food allergies will be accommodated to the extent practical for the school. The family or guardian should notify the school in writing of the student's condition.

Student Activities

Athletic Teams

St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School will offer CYO basketball and track for students, as well as football through the neighborhood football league. In addition, your child can participate in any CYO sport. All students participating in sports and spectators of any athletic events are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner at all times and practice good sportsmanship. To participate in school sponsored sports teams, students must meet prerequisites in attendance, behavior & grades. All students will have to be cleared by their pediatrician in order to participate on a team. Additionally, families must be current on tuition & school fees.

Learning Excursions (aka Field Trips)

Field trips are educational activities that are an outgrowth of class instruction and are designed to enhance the classroom or developmental learning experience. Permission slips must be signed by a family or legal guardian and returned to school prior to the event in order for the child to attend the field trip.. While we understand the desire of families/guardians to participate in field trips with their children, student safety is the school's priority. **It is now a state requirement that all adults attending a field trip must have all required clearances.** Please consult the school office for clearance requirements.

A field trip is a privilege. We reserve the right to exclude from field trips any student whose conduct in school or on previous trips has been unsatisfactory. Students' participation in field trips can be denied if they fail to meet academic, behavioral, or financial requirements. If a family/guardian does not wish a child to attend the trip for any reason, the School must be notified. The student must attend school on the day of the trip or be marked absent.

Fundraisers

All fundraisers must be approved by the principal. No outside sales of merchandise may take place without approval from the principal.

Parties/Birthdays

We enjoy celebrating our students' birthdays. Students may be permitted to share cupcakes with classmates in their celebration. Families should check with their child's teacher to confirm any allergies of classmates. Please do not send snacks or food beyond cupcakes. Little gift bags with pencils or stickers, etc. are permitted to celebrate your child's birthday. There must be a bag for each child in the class and bags will be distributed by the teacher.

Invitations for parties may not be sent to school unless an invitation is being given to every student in the class.

Parties or dances sponsored by families off-campus are not sanctioned by the school and the school's name may not be used.

Service Opportunities

At St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School, we have these service opportunities for our students: Student Council, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, Altar Servers, Liturgy speakers/readers.

Seventh Grade High School Visitation

Each spring, our local Catholic high schools host a visitation day for seventh grade students. With their families/guardians, students select an archdiocesan high school to visit. Families must provide transportation to and from the high schools and students will not come to SFC on the visitation day. As the visitation day is a school day, attendance will be recorded at the high school and reported to Cabrini. Students who choose to not visit an archdiocesan high school on the visitation day must not come to school that day and will be marked absent.

Special Events

Meet & Greet held in August and Back to School Night held in September is the best time to meet teachers and learn what the year will hold for your student and family.

We are looking forward to having a holiday concert in December. This is an opportunity to celebrate the birth of Jesus with our school family and see our children perform.

Catholic Schools Week is held the last week in January and is filled with special activities for the students, teachers, and families.

Spiritual Activities

Our students can participate in a variety of spiritual activities, including: Mass, prayer services, retreats, service projects, and community outreach.

Student Clubs/Extracurricular Activities

St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School has a Chess Club, Debate Team, Student Council, Civics Fair and a Science Fair. We will also continue sponsoring boys' and girls' basketball, boys' and girls' track, & supporting the neighborhood football team. We hope to establish a cheerleading team & golf team. Please note, we are consistently looking for family volunteers & coaches. Contact the main office or see Mr. Rose (aka Coach Kyle) if you can assist.

Memory Book

St. Frances Cabrini Catholic School memory books are issued to students upon eighth grade graduation.

A Prayer for Catholic Schools

Almighty God,

You sent forth your Son as a beacon of hope for all people.

As a Teacher, He has given us the prime example of the importance of education. As disciples, we look to him for inspiration and strength.

Thank you for the many people who have dedicated their lives in service to our Catholic Schools.

Thank you for the teachers and administrators who sustain our schools.

Thank you for the parents who have given support and witness to the importance of Catholic education.

Thank you for the students who work hard to further their education. Bless all our Catholic Schools and the many people who advance our mission.

May our schools be a home for those who seek to grow in openness, faith, love, intellect and commitment to justice.

In your name, we pray. Amen.

- from *The National Catholic Education Association*

Parent Guardian Acknowledgement

I, as a member of the St. Frances School community, acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the Student & Family Handbook for the current school year. The handbook will be available on the school website throughout the school year. My family & I will do our best to adhere to the school policies & procedures. I understand that if I have questions or concerns, I can reach out to school personnel for clarification and or assistance.

Student Name

Grade

Parent's/Guardian's 1 Name (printed)

Date

Parent's/Guardian's 1 Signature

Date

Parent's/Guardian's 2 Name (printed)

Date

Parent's/Guardian's 2 Signature

Date

Please return this signature page back to your child's teacher by the end of September. If forms are not signed & returned, it will be noted in our student's file.