

St. Patrick's Academy West

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PARENT - STUDENT HANDBOOK

Revised – August 2026

Dear Parents and Students,

This handbook has been prepared to be a source of information for you concerning the philosophy and operational policies of St. Patrick's Academy West.

Our most important concern is your child. In all we do, we strive to further each of our student's total educational development. Because we are a Catholic institution of learning, we are committed to strive for excellence, and above all, to provide an environment where Christian ideals are developed and lived. Our primary goal is to "teach as Jesus did" by word and example.

We feel that your choice of St. Patrick's Academy indicates your interest in developing the whole child. We accept the confidence you show in us by asking to join with you as a partner in your child's education. The work of preparing today's young people for the challenges of adult life is not an easy one, but it is certainly a most rewarding one. We need to work together to achieve our goals. Academic standards and principles, as important as they are, are not the only measurement of a productive school. A school's strength is also vitally dependent on the cooperation of parents and teachers in the educational process. Only by working together may we hope for success in the task before us.

We ask you to familiarize yourself, as well as share the information contained in this handbook with your child/ren. It is our hope that all parents will give full support to the policies and that it will serve as an aid in continuing the wonderful cooperation that exists between the home and the school.

May God be with us to strengthen and support us as we begin each school year. May He work through each of us – parents, teachers, students – and help us to grow in wisdom and grace.

Many Blessings,
The Administration,
Faculty and Staff of
St. Patrick's Academy West

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

St. Patrick's Academy is a parochial school of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Great Falls-Billings. It complies with those constitutional and statutory provisions, as may be specifically applicable to the school, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, marital status, disability, national origin, or citizenship in the administration of their educational, personnel, admissions, financial aid, athletic and other school administered programs.

This policy does not conflict with the priority given to Catholics for admission as students. This policy also does not preclude the ability of the school to undertake and/or enforce appropriate actions with respect to students who advocate on school property or at school functions any practices or doctrines which are inconsistent with the religious or moral tenets of the Catholic faith.

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

All parents and their students enrolled at St. Patrick's Academy West are required to sign the form at the end of this handbook stating they have read the rules and regulations outlined in it and that they agree to abide by those rules. The form must be signed and returned as soon as possible, but no later than two weeks from the first day of attendance. Failure to have a signed form on file will not prevent the school from enforcing its policies but may result in the student not being able to continue enrollment at the school until it is signed.

In light of the unique situations which may arise in the educational process, and because it is impossible to foresee all school issues that arise, the faculty and administration reserve the right to address and to take appropriate action for any such situations not specifically referenced in this handbook. In addition, in view of the religious mission of St. Patrick's Academy West, it is expressly understood that the school may take actions in cases where moral offenses occur which reflect adversely on the school, the Catholic Diocese of Great Falls-Billings or the Catholic Church, or which interfere with the ability of the school to perform its religious mission or to effectively maintain the intimate working relationship of the school and the Catholic Church.

This handbook may be modified by the school after reasonable notice to the parents/students of the effective date of any changes. Any section headings are for convenience of use, and shall not affect the interpretation of any provisions. If the school should elect not to take action in a particular situation, this shall not be construed or interpreted as a waiver or preclude the school from acting in a subsequent situation of the same or similar kind.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

We believe education must be focused on the Christian vision of the human person as exemplified in Jesus Christ and proclaimed by the Roman Catholic Church.

We believe in a pedagogical vision that strives to enkindle in students a lifelong love of learning.

We believe that by combining a challenging curriculum with this love of learning, our students develop the tools necessary to lead successful, rewarding lives as contributing members of society.

We believe in assisting parents in providing leadership to youth in developing the critical ability to distinguish the good, the beautiful and the true from their opposites and to remain objective and confident when faced with the many dehumanizing attitudes prevalent in today's society.

We believe the school must foster the growth of creativity, problem solving, and critical thinking across the curriculum.

We believe the parents, school, and community must cooperate to maintain a safe environment that nurtures physical, mental, social, and spiritual growth.

We believe that clear goals and clearly stated expectations for student achievement guide the development of curriculum and design instructional strategies and activities.

We believe in expressing the religious dimension of our school through the celebration of Christian values in word and Sacrament, sound religious instruction, service to others, respectful interpersonal relationships and a community spirit characterized by faith, hope, freedom and love.

ADMISSION AND ACCEPTANCE

A student entering Kindergarten must be five years of age on or before September 10 of that year. State birth certificates and certificates of baptism, where applicable, must be presented. The originals will be returned to you. Current immunization records must be kept on file in the school office. A current report card must be presented for new students in grades 1-8.

All students entering St. Patrick's Academy West are admitted on probation for the first quarter of their attendance. During this probationary period, the school will determine whether or not it can meet the needs of the student. The school reserves the right to extend the period of probation should it deem it necessary to do so.

In individual cases, some students may be accepted only after signing a contract detailing academic and behavioral expectations. If probationary students do not perform at acceptable levels academically, behaviorally or socially, it is understood that they will be asked to withdraw.

An established guideline for the acceptance of new students to St. Patrick's Academy West is followed. The school gives preference in admission to siblings, Catholic students that are within the Lourdes parish, members of other Catholic parishes, and then to non-Catholics. The school does not discriminate with regard to race, sex, or national origin.

NON-CATHOLIC STUDENTS

The presence of students from other faiths provides a wonderful diversity to the school. However, the presence of non-Catholic students in the school shall not alter the primacy of Catholic religious formation as an integral component of the educational program in the school. As such, non-Catholic students are expected to participate in the religious formation and educational programs of the school and must participate in school Masses, retreats and other religious activities. While Catholic teaching respects the various faith traditions of the students attending the Catholic school and their families, parents must be aware that it is the Catholic position on matters of faith and morals that will be taught.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

In grades K-5 artificial intelligence is strictly prohibited. In grades 6-8 AI is allowed on teacher instruction. AI should only be used in the classroom or on homework when explicitly instructed by the teacher. In these cases the teacher will give clear instruction on use of AI technology. When used, AI must always be used for good and must be properly cited. For the first offense of using AI without teacher permission, the student will be given a zero on the assignment. For a second offense, the student will be given a zero and receive two days of ISS. For a third offense, a zero will be given, plus two days of ISS, plus a conference with the student and students parents about proceeding at the school.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance has a direct correlation with learning and achievement. All students are expected to be present and punctual for school. Regular attendance is vital to the attainment of school objectives. Repeated absenteeism and tardiness negatively affect the continuity and depth of a child's learning. Regular absence or tardiness may contribute to the formation of poor work habits. Parents are respectfully requested to guide their children in forming habits of faithful attendance and punctuality.

St. Patrick's Academy West adheres to all relevant Montana State Law requiring children of school age to be in regular attendance at school. Parents are urged

not to keep their children out of school except for illness or emergencies. Parents are also encouraged to plan vacations during school holidays.

In order for students to participate in extracurricular activities, they must be in attendance for at least half the day with the absence being an excused absence. If the student goes home ill at any time during the day, they may not return for the scheduled activity.

SCHOOL HOURS

Grades K-3 7:50 a.m (tardy bell 7:55) until 3:30 p.m.

Grades 4-8 7:50 a.m (tardy bell 7:55) until 3:45 p.m.

Preschool/Pre-K Morning session – 8:00 until 11:00

Afternoon session - 12:00 until 3:00

Extended Care (Day Care) 7:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m.

DAILY SCHOOL ROUTINE

7:00 a.m.	Extended Care opens
7:30 a.m.	School office opens
7:45 a.m.	Doors to school open
7:55 a.m.	Tardy bell rings
9:40-10:00 a.m.	Recess for K-2 grade students
10:05-10:25 a.m.	Recess for 3-5 grade students
10:50-11:40 a.m.	Lunch/Recess for K-2 grade students and Extended Care children
11:25 a.m.-12:10 p.m.	Lunch/Recess for 6-8 grade students
11:50 a.m.-12:35 p.m.	Lunch/Recess for 3-5 grade students
1:30 p.m.-1:50 p.m.	Recess for K-2 grade students
2:00 p.m.-2:20 p.m.	Recess for 3-5 grade students
3:05 p.m.-3:20 p.m.	Recess for K-2 grade students
3:00-3:10 p.m.	Dismissal for Preschool/Pre-kindergarten Students
3:30 p.m.	Dismissal for K-3 grade students
3:45 p.m.	Dismissal for 4-8 grade students
*+1 Friday's dismissal is at 3:00 pm	for all grade levels
4:00 p.m.	School office closes
5:30 p.m.	Extended Care closes

EXCUSED ABSENCES

There are times when classes may legitimately be missed. These include:

1. Illness or injury
2. Health related appointments
3. Family emergencies or death in the family
4. Pre-arranged absences requested by the parents

Parents are asked to call the school office before 9:00 a.m. if a child is to be absent.

Permission must be obtained for prearranged absences from the principal and the teacher/s prior to the period of absence. Assignments from classroom teachers must be obtained and completed at the discretion of the teacher. Teachers are not obliged to give tests early or make up tests for students absent for reasons other than illness, injury, bereavement, or emergencies.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

There are absences that are considered unnecessary. Ordinarily any absences which do not relate to the four points above are unexcused. In cases such as these, a written note must accompany the student when he/she returns to school and:

1. A permit must be obtained from the office prior to re-entry to class.
2. At the discretion of the school, the student may or may not be permitted to make up work which has been missed.
3. A parent conference may be called.
4. If permission to make up work is granted, it must be made up within the number of days missed plus one.

TEN DAY RULE

In the event that 10 or more absences occur during any single semester course, the Principal will arrange a conference with the parties involved to make a determination regarding course credit. The Principal or the Principal's designee may extend the number of allowable absences in consideration of verified medical excuses, school-related activities, or other emergencies which are unavoidable and acceptable to the Principal.

TARDINESS

Tardiness is not to be taken lightly. It is a disruptive practice and inconsiderate of self and others. Whenever students are late for class they are sent to the office for an admit slip.

The school may take steps with those students who are consistently tardy. Consequences may include, but are not limited to: 1) loss of recess, 2) detention, and 3) loss of extracurricular activities. A parent conference may be scheduled if tardiness is a recurring problem.

Teachers have the discretion to implement additional classroom policies for tardiness.

BEFORE SCHOOL

All students may begin to enter the school at 7:45 a.m. The tardy bell rings at 7:55 a.m. Pre-Kindergarten through 4th grade students enter through the front doors of the school. Extended Care, Preschool, and 5th-8th grade students enter through the back doors of the church foyer. Families with multiple students, go through the entrance door for the oldest child in the family. For safety reasons, parents are reminded to stay on the school side of the street when depositing students. If students arrive before 7:45 a.m., they need to proceed to Extended Care where proper supervision will occur. Extended Care opens at 7:00 a.m.

AFTER SCHOOL

School is dismissed at 3:30 p.m. for students in kindergarten through 3rd grade. Students in 4th through 8th grades dismiss at 3:45 p.m. Following daily dismissal, students will:

- 1) **Be picked up by parent(s).** These students will exit through the playground doors. For the safety of all, pick-up areas are on the school side of 4th Avenue South and the school side of 13th Street and 14th Street. If it is impossible to park along these areas, parents are advised to park elsewhere and walk to the playground dismissal area. They can then meet their child(ren) and provide a safe escort to their parked vehicle. Students are asked to use the supervised cross walks. All students waiting to be picked up at dismissal time must remain within the playground area. Children not picked-up by 3:40 p.m. (K-3) and 3:55 (4-8) will go to Extended Care where proper supervision will be provided.
- 2) **Use the Extended Care Service.** Students of K, 1, and 2 will be escorted to the daycare area. Older students utilizing the service will immediately walk to the daycare area following dismissal from their classroom.
- 3) **Report immediately to a specified area** for extra-curricular activities.

The above procedures will also be followed when a shortened or half day of school is scheduled and students are dismissed at 12:00 p.m. (noon). On half-days, there will be no school lunch service. On days where Extended Care remains open, children will need to bring a sack lunch.

BICYCLES

Children may not ride bicycles on the school grounds during any part of the school day. Upon arriving at school, students traveling to school on bicycles must walk them to the rack on the playground and lock them during the school day.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are to care for school property in a respectful manner. Students who deface or damage school property or the property of others will make financial

restitution. If library books are not returned, students will be assessed an amount equal to the value of the book or its replacement, whichever is greater, as determined by the principal. If textbooks are lost or damaged, students are responsible for replacing or paying a fine to cover the loss.

Students will be expected to show respect for persons and property at all times. No running, pushing or shoving will be tolerated, as it may become an occasion for serious injury. Shouting or loud talking should be avoided. Out of consideration for all members of the St. Patrick's Academy West community, students are expected to keep the building, its furnishing, the fields, green areas, and parking lots in clean and orderly condition. Trash is to be disposed of in containers provided.

School property and equipment includes all school owned buildings and surrounding grounds.

Students' desks and lockers are school property and remain under the control and jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student.

Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of their assigned desk and locker. Eighth grade students must be certain that the locker is locked and that the combination or key is not available to others.

Searches of desks and lockers may be conducted on a random basis throughout the school or individually at any time the school, in its discretion, believes there is reasonable cause that they contain articles or materials prohibited by school policy, whether or not a student is present.

The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker. The parent will also be notified if law enforcement is involved.

CELL PHONES

In accordance with the school's mission to provide a positive, productive learning, and working environment, free from unnecessary interruptions and distractions, the use or possession of cellular phones, pagers, handheld electronic games, and personal music devices is prohibited during the school day. Use of such devices is grounds for immediate confiscation by school officials and/or classroom teachers. On the first violation the device will be returned to the student at the end of the day. On the second violation the school will retain the device for a period of time to be determined by the circumstances of the infraction, after which the device will be returned to the student's parent. Further violation(s) of this policy may result in the confiscation of the device for the remainder of the school year. Failure to turn over an unauthorized device to school officials and/or classroom teachers upon request, will result in disciplinary consequences for willful disobedience and/ disrespect. Students needing to use a phone during school hours, need to use the office phone.

CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO HANDBOOK

This parent/student handbook was compiled as a guideline for school staff, parents, and students. The school principal and school board have the right to update and/or amend data as needed. Changes and additions will be communicated promptly to the staff, parents, and students.

CLOSED CAMPUS

The campus of St. Patrick's Academy West is closed from the beginning until the end of the school day for students. This includes lunch and passing time between classes. If a student needs to leave the campus during the school day for outside appointments, written or verbal permission from the student's parent must be communicated to the main office prior to the students leaving campus and students need to sign out when leaving. Leaving campus outside of this guideline and without permission will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR

St. Patrick's Academy West in cooperation with Holy Spirit Catholic School, offers a varied program of co-curricular and extracurricular activities to aid students in their physical, social, emotional, and cultural development. However, the prescribed course of studies takes precedence over these activities. Students who are experiencing academic difficulty need to devote their time and energy to their studies, even if this means that involvement in activities is curtailed. The head coach or sponsor of the activity also has the right to expect certain behavior from all team/squad members. The standards of behavior will be given in written form to the candidates for an activity at the beginning of the activity season. All members of the activity will be required to adhere to the established standards for that activity. Parents are encouraged to keep the line of communication open at all times between school, coaches, sponsors, and the student. If a problem arises, please address it with the coach/sponsor immediately so that the problem does not escalate. If further discussion is necessary, please contact the athletic director or administration as soon as possible.

Extra-curricular activities offered at St. Patrick's Academy West consist of:

- Basketball (Boys and girls and grades 6-8)
- Track (Boys and girls in grades 6-8)
- Cross Country (Boys and girls 6-8)
- Football (Boys in grades 6-8)
- Volleyball (Girls in grades 6-8)

In order to participate in extracurricular activities at St. Patrick's Academy West, students must:

1. Maintain status as a participant;
2. Be in compliance with the academic requirements;
4. Be in attendance the day of a scheduled activity. Exceptions are: school activities, medical appointments or pre-arranged (prior day) excuses as determined by the Principal. Students that leave during the day due to illness may not return to participate in any extra-curricular activity. Any student not meeting the attendance policy and who attends a practice, game, meeting or performance, is subject to suspension from the next competition, meeting or performance.

Participation Policy

- 1) A physical examination (yearly) is required prior to any and all participation in sports. A physical form, provided by the school, with a doctor's approval and/or waiver signed by the parent(s) must be kept on file in the school office.
- 2) The grievance procedure for coaches and students would include a meeting with coach, student, principal, and parents.
- 3) Each coach will provide students and families with specific team rules.

Playing time Policy

The mandatory playing time for each player in each team sport is at least one quarter of each game for students competing in seventh and eighth grade sports. The philosophy for our fifth and sixth grade programs is participation. Each player will play at least one half of the game unless there are more than ten players.

Academic Requirements

In order to participate on an athletic team at St. Patrick's Academy West School, a student must have at least a 70% in each of their classes. Grades will be calculated at the end of each grading period.

1. There are eight (8) grading periods: one at each quarter and each mid-term report.
2. If a student is determined eligible at the end of a grading period, they are eligible to play without grade checks until the end of the next grading period.
3. A student will be deemed ineligible if they have a grade in any subject below 70%. This does include specials classes. If a student is determined to be ineligible at the end of a grading period, they are placed on probation.
4. Students who have grades between 60%-69% may continue to attend practices, but will not be allowed to participate in competition. Students who have grades below 60% will not be allowed to participate in practice or competition.

5. A student on probation will have weekly grade checks every Friday afternoon for the entire grading period.
 6. At the weekly grade check, if a student is deemed to be ineligible, they will be ineligible starting the next weekday (Monday) for one full week (through Sunday). For example, if a student's grades are checked on Friday, and the student is ineligible, that student will be ineligible starting the next Monday through Sunday.
 7. During the weekly grade check, if a student becomes eligible, they will be eligible until the next weekly grade check; however, they are still on probation and will continue with the weekly grade check through the remainder of the grading period.
 8. Probation lasts until the next grading period.
 9. *Students playing up in high school sports will be checked weekly during the high school sports season. These students will become ineligible if their grades fall below 70%. All other academic requirements are the same for these students.
- Probation does not carry over from year to year.

Sporting Event Rules

Students of St. Patrick's Academy West staying after school for a sporting event must be in Extended Care until one-half hour before the event, unless with their parent(s). When students attend or participate in a school sporting event, they are to remain inside the gym area at the event until departing for home. At no time are children allowed outside of the school/gym facility after arriving. Leaving the event and returning is not allowed unless accompanied by their parent.

Mascot Names

St. Patrick's Academy mascot name is the Wolfhounds.

COMMUNICATION

Families are asked to keep themselves informed of the school's activities and developments. Each Sunday, an email is sent to all families. The email will contain the "Sunday Scoop" and any other important communications. A calendar of school events and a lunch menu will be sent home prior to the beginning of each month. School information is also placed on our website: stpatricksacademyt.org; in the church bulletin; and the diocesan newspaper, The Harvest.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Complaints of students and parents should always go through proper channels. Discussing a problem with others who are not involved does not help to eliminate

the problem. On the contrary, it may only create more discontent and animosity between the parties who are actually involved. Always begin by holding a conference with the parties involved. Any problems about school can and should be solved by communicating with one another in a Christian manner. The following are procedures for dealing with complaints in a fair and just way.

If satisfactory adjustments or explanations are not made after conferencing with the teacher, hold a conference involving the principal.

If satisfactory adjustments or explanations are not made after conferencing with the principal, hold a conference involving the pastor.

If satisfactory adjustments or explanations are not made after conferencing with the pastor, hold a conference involving the diocesan office.

Again, let us always communicate with one another in a Christian manner. Remember that our mission is not only to teach as Jesus did, but to love one another as He did!

CHROMEBOOKS

Chromebooks in the classrooms and library are for student use. They are available for student use after school hours on a pre-arranged basis. The proper use of the computer network is the responsibility of the students and staff. All students at St. Patrick's Academy West shall conduct themselves while using the computer system in a responsible, ethical, and polite manner and must comply with all the regulations of the school's "Computer and Internet Use Policy" in this handbook.

DANCES

Each year, middle school students may have a few dances/social events. These evening events are chaperoned by at least one staff member and several parents. The general guidelines for these events are:

- 1) Dances will have designated hours that will be communicated to the parents
- 2) Students may not enter the dance later than 15 minutes after the start time unless arrangements have been made with the faculty chaperone
- 3) Unless picked up personally by a parent, a student must remain at the dance until its conclusion. A chaperone must be notified if a parent picks up a child early.
- 4) Non-disruptive behavior is expected.
- 5) The noise level at the dance must be tolerable.
- 6) At the end of the dance, all students are to be picked-up promptly by parents. Parents must enter the school and sign their child out.
- 7) Chaperones are to remain until all students have departed.

- 8) Students must have attended at least half of the school day in order to participate in the dance. Students that go home due to illness at any time during the school day, will not be allowed to return to the dance.

DISCIPLINE

The goal at St. Patrick's Academy West is to develop the whole child spiritually, mentally, physically, emotionally, and socially. We believe that in order for a child to meet the challenges that he/she will face in our society, the development of self-discipline and individual responsibility is essential. We strive to up-hold a Christian environment in which the rights and responsibilities of students, teachers, and staff are recognized and upheld. The purposes of good discipline are: 1) to help students not only do the right thing, but to ENJOY doing the right thing; 2) to maintain order and promote character development; 3) to enable the student to achieve maturity, self-control, and Christian attitudes towards authority, his peers, and his duty in life.

Discipline is maintained in the classrooms or school when there is evidence of a cooperative spirit between students, principal, teachers, and staff. However, good discipline originates in the home. The parents are the first teachers and should develop in the child good behavior habits and proper attitudes toward school. To help the child, parents should:

- Recognize that teachers take the place of the parents while the child is in school and teach the child to respect the teacher accordingly.
- Teach children respect for law, authority, the rights of others, and for private and public property.
- Show an interest in school by attending school functions and by taking part in Home & School activities, fund-raising projects, and other school-related activities.
- Stress the importance of being ready for school work by keeping up with materials, books, and other things necessary for good school work.
- Teach the child to be tolerant of teachers and classmates.
- Be familiar with school rules and encourage the student to comply with them and to cooperate with the school.

Close communication between teachers and parents enhances performance and promotes desirable behavior. School rules and expectations will be clearly communicated to students. Correct procedures will be taught and practiced in each classroom and all areas of the school.

To succeed in reaching this goal for each child, it is clear that parents, school staff, and students must work together to maintain a positive educational environment.

All parents are to be aware of the following:

- 1) Each classroom teacher has an individual set of rules and consequences for that particular classroom.
- 2) Smoking, or the use of tobacco, drugs, alcoholic beverages, intoxicants, and inhalants will not be tolerated.
- 3) Serious cases of insubordinate behavior may result in suspension or expulsion from school.
- 4) There are general situations which may lead to expulsion:
 - When the moral or physical well-being of the student body is endangered.
 - When there is prolonged and open disregard for school authority.
 - When cooperation between parents and school becomes impossible.
- 5) There is a procedure followed to address the future of the student in question when a pattern of repeated difficulties emerges three or more times in a grading period. *See **Student Conduct**

DRESS CODE

Students of St. Patrick's Academy West represent their school, their family, and themselves at all times. They are expected to display neat and clean habits of good grooming and good manners. St. Patrick's Academy West School strives to instill in students a sense of pride in their appearance as well as a sense of discipline that will serve them well in the larger world. The school reserves the right to set standards for the best interest of the student and the entire student body. With the cooperation of the home, the faculty and staff will encourage proper student attire. It is the responsibility of the parents and/or caregivers to ensure that students are arriving at school in approved school uniform attire. The school has the right to determine if the appearance of the student interferes with the learning atmosphere of the classroom, the classroom teacher/school office may provide appropriate clothing for the day, such as a belt or over-shirt, or the family will be called to bring appropriate clothing to school. If this happens repeatedly, the school will contact the family.

THE DRESS CODE IS AS FOLLOWS:

Please see the "Visual Guide" and Tommy Hilfiger Website for specific guidelines.

Other SPECIFIC GUIDELINES:

1. Length of skirts and dresses need to be no more than a hand width above the knee. Shorts must be modest and at least mid-thigh in length. Pants and shorts that are drooped or baggy are not allowed. Leggings are permitted if worn with a top or covering that is fingertip in length.
2. Tank tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, fishnet, or "see through" clothing are not allowed. Low cut shirts (no cleavage) and abdomen revealing tops are not allowed. Sleeveless shirts must have at least a two inch width of fabric over the shoulder.
3. No visible body piercing is acceptable other than earrings. Also, no visible tattoos are acceptable.
4. As a continued sign of respect, caps, visors, and any head-coverings must be removed upon entering the school building.

5. St. Patrick's Academy West athletic and cheerleading uniforms are the property of the school. They are not to be worn other than for athletic events or on pep assembly days.
6. If winter boots are worn, they are to be removed in the classroom and a pair of shoes put on and worn in the building.
7. Students in grades 5-8 are required to “dress-out” for Physical Education classes. On P.E. days, they are to bring a T-shirt, appropriate shorts, socks, and gym shoes (non-marking) to change into before P.E. class. Gym clothes should be laundered each week.

EXTENDED CARE

A day care facility is operated and staffed by St. Patrick's Academy West School. Located in the basement of the church, it is licensed by the State of Montana. This service, a Catholic-centered environment, is available to school and parish children beginning at age 2 and through eighth grade. Our Extended Care is not licensed for infant care. Extended Care is opened on all school days from 7:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. For fees and other information, please contact the school office.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are privileges planned by teachers and approved by the principal with educational purposes as the primary objective.

- Students will wear their uniforms when attending any off site activities, such as field trips.
- Field trips are considered an extension of the school day and the code of conduct will apply.
- A student must give to the sponsoring teacher a completed school permission form. Students who fail to submit a completed form prior to the event's departure time will not be allowed to participate.
- In the event private automobiles/vehicles of students, or other authorized adults are to be utilized to transport students on field trips, the drivers and/or the vehicle owners must have a valid driver's license and sufficient liability, medical, and uninsured motorist insurance coverage as defined by the school. Evidence to this effect must be presented to the school for review and approval prior to the use of such vehicles.
- The school shall have the right to prohibit for any reason a proposed driver from transporting students on a field trip.
- Parents have the right to refuse to allow their child to participate in a field trip.
- In case of serious disruption by the student, the school reserves the right to have the student removed from the group. The parent will be called and expected to make arrangements to pick the student up immediately.

FIRE DRILLS AND OTHER EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

At the beginning of the school term, students are instructed in fire drill and other emergency procedures. Practice drills are held regularly throughout the year. All staff members and visitors are asked to familiarize themselves with fire escape routes which are posted in every area of the facility.

FUND-RAISING

Any program of fundraising at the school must have the approval of the principal/administration. Fundraising activities should be organized and executed so that the school program is not interrupted. Students may participate in and cooperate with worthy collections and fundraising projects conducted by the school.

GRADING SYSTEM

The evaluation of student achievement is one of the important functions of the teacher. The accepted marking system in grades one through eight is as follows:

90% - 100%	-----	Superior - A
80% - 89%	-----	Above Average - B
70% - 79%	-----	Average - C
60% - 69%	-----	Below Average - D
Below 60%	-----	Failing - F

GUM CHEWING

St. Patrick's Academy West does not permit gum chewing. This includes before and after school, on the school buses, on the playground, during recess or P.E. classes, and in the lunchroom.

HARASSMENT POLICY FOR STUDENTS

St. Patrick's Academy West is committed to providing a learning environment for students and staff that is free from harassment in any form. Harassment of any student by any other student, lay employee, religious or clergy is prohibited. The school will treat allegations of harassment seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

A charge of harassment shall not, in and of itself, create the presumption of wrongdoing. However, substantiated acts of harassment will result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. Students found to have filed false or frivolous charges may also be subject to disciplinary action.

Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment. Harassment can occur any time during school or during school related activities. It includes, but is not limited to, any or all of the following:

VERBAL HARASSMENT: Derogatory comments and jokes; threatening words spoken to another person;

PHYSICAL HARASSMENT: Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement.

VISUAL HARASSMENT: Derogatory, demeaning or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, gestures;

SEXUAL HARASSMENT: Students are protected against sexual harassment by diocesan policy and federal law. It includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Specific examples of sexual harassment include but are not limited to:

1. Making unsolicited sexual advances and propositions;
2. Using sexually degrading words to describe an individual or an individual's body;
3. Displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures;
4. Telling inappropriate or sexually related jokes;
5. Making reprisals, threats of reprisals or implied threats of reprisals following a negative response to sexual advances.
6. Harassment can result from a single incident or from a pattern of behavior.

Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion. Staff whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. Third parties (for example, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors or others engaged in school business or organizations participating in cooperative work programs with the school and others not directly subject to school control at inter-school and intra-school athletic competitions or other school events) whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to appropriate sanctions as determined and imposed by the principal with the recommendation of the board. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials. Depending on the seriousness of the incident, the school may need to also report it to the police or other civil authorities.

REPORTING PROCEDURE:

Any student, either directly or through his/her parent or legal guardian, who believes that he or she has been a target of harassment in school, on school property or while participating in a school-sanctioned curricular or extracurricular activity, should report the incident to the school principal as soon as possible, preferably within three calendar days of the incident. This can be reported in writing or orally if the student or his/her parent is more comfortable with filing the report in this manner.

1. The school principal is responsible for investigating the allegation and will meet with the complainant within three calendar days unless other arrangements are made between the school principal and the complainant. In the event that the school principal is the one the student believes is responsible for the harassment or in some way involved in it, the report can be made to the diocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools. In all other cases, the incident should be reported to the principal who makes a decision concerning disciplinary action.
2. If the complainant is not satisfied with the principal's decision, the complainant may make an appeal to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools within 5 calendar days. The Superintendent will review the matter and make a decision. The decision of the Superintendent will be final.

Every reasonable effort will be made to maintain confidentiality during the investigation. Substantiated acts of retaliation against a complainant or any witness who participates in an investigation will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

It is the responsibility of St. Patrick's Academy West to make all faculty, staff, students, and parents aware of this policy and the commitment of the school toward its strict enforcement.

HEALTH POLICY

An emergency information card for each student is kept on file at the school office. The card is to be updated by parents each new school year. Any changes during the school year should be reported to the office promptly. The protection and welfare of each individual student is our highest priority. In an effort to enhance protection of students:

- No student may attend class without being in compliance with the school's immunization policy.
- Students with fevers and/or contagious or infectious diseases will be sent home promptly and will be excluded from school while in that condition. The school reserves the right to require a statement from the student's primary care provider authorizing the student's return to school.

In all proceedings related to this policy, the school shall respect the student's right to privacy.

Communicable Diseases

In the event that a student is advised he/she has a serious communicable disease, the student or parent should promptly inform the school of the diagnosis and the progress of treatment.

CHICKEN POX – Child should stay home until all scabs are gone or at least seven (7) days following the appearance of the last blisters.

COVID/FLU/COLDS– Child should remain at home during the acute stage when active symptoms are present even though the temperature is normal.

COUGH – Child should remain at home if the cough is persistent.

FEVER – Students should remain at home until the fever is gone and medication is no longer needed.

IMPETIGO – State law requires that children be excluded from school until all lesions are completely healed or child has been seen by physician and has been using the prescribed medication for 24 hours.

MEASLES – Child should stay out of school seven (7) days from the onset of rash. With the three-day measles, child should stay out for two (2) days after rash has disappeared.

MUMPS – Child should remain home about nine (9) days following first swelling.

PINK EYE (CONJUNCTIVITIS) – Child must be excluded from school at least 24 hours following a diagnosis by a physician and the start of prescribed medication.

STREP INFECTIONS – Child may return to school after 24 hours of treatment with physician-prescribed medications if he/she feels well enough.

To protect children from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. These conditions may include, but are not limited to any of the above. St. Patrick's Academy West will rely on the advice of the public health and medical communities in assessing the risk of transmission of various communicable diseases to determine how best to protect the health of both students and staff. The school reserves the right to require a statement from a primary care provider authorizing the student's return to school.

The Montana Immunization Law

Students attending St. Patrick's Academy West will be required to meet the following standards:

No person may enter a Montana school and no school may allow a person to commence attendance unless they meet the requirements of the law effective July 1, 1993. Parents and/or students need to present documentation of immunization against mumps, diphtheria, peruses (Not required for a person 7 years or older), tetanus, poliomyelitis, rubella and measles (rubella).

A. Immunization documentation of protection against measles and rubella with one dose of vaccine on or after the first birthday is required for all elementary school students. A second dose (MMR) is required for entry into middle and high schools as well as colleges and universities. **As of July 1, 2005 all children, prior to entering kindergarten, must have two MMR's separated by a least 28 days.**

B. Four doses of DPT, DT, or Td vaccine, at least one dose given after the 4th birthday, is required. If a student is 7 years or older, a total of three doses (at least one dose given after the 4th birthday) will meet minimum requirements. **Prior to school entry in 2006, children, at least 11 years of age, entering 7th grade must have a booster of tetanus and diphtheria containing vaccine if no tetanus or diphtheria has been given for 5 years.**

C. Three doses of live, trivalent, oral polio vaccine, at least one dose given after the 4th birthday is required.

Transferring students will not be allowed to enter St. Patrick's Academy West if they do not submit to the school office a current and valid immunization record. Personal exemptions are no longer allowed in Montana schools. The religious exemption is still allowed but must be reasserted annually by affidavit. The religious exemption can only be claimed if immunization is contrary to the religious tenets and practices of the signer. The person who signs the affidavit, which must be notarized, must be the parent or legal guardian who has the responsibility for the care and custody of the student seeking to attend St. Patrick's Academy West. Religious exemptions will be reviewed on an individual basis and do not ensure acceptance of the student into St. Patrick's Academy West. A person who falsely claims a religious exemption is subject to the penalty for false swearing. St. Patrick's Academy West will maintain a copy of the student's immunization record while the student is attending St. Patrick's Academy West and for one year following graduation. Students may obtain a copy of their immunization record prior to graduation.

MEDICATION

If a student is required to take prescribed medication during school hours or during school-related activities, the parent must inform the principal and/or administrative assistant as it is a matter of school record. No medication, including items such as aspirin, may be dispensed by anyone other than the school office personnel and then, only with the written permission from the parent. In the event that a child must take a prescription or “over the counter” medication, the parent must send the medication, instructions for its administration, and a parent signature to the school office. If the medication is a prescription drug, it must be in a container that is labeled with the needed information, including the name of the physician. Except for the exception of inhalers, students may not carry any type of medication. All prescription medication and completed medication forms must be checked in at the office immediately upon the student’s arrival at school.

HEALTH CHECKS

When available, students are provided dental, vision, and hearing screening at St. Patrick's Academy West School. Parents are informed of the screenings beforehand and later are given results/reports.

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

All parents are members of this organization which is considered a support group for the school. The group provides valuable service and is involved in one major fundraiser each year. All parents have the opportunity and responsibility to be active in the group.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an extension of a meaningful classroom activity to help the student master skills and subject matter, and to develop responsibility and independent study skills. Homework is required at all grade levels with a mix of mandatory and voluntary homework for extra credit. Parents are instrumental in encouraging good homework habits and establishing an atmosphere conducive to study. While it is the primary responsibility of the student to complete homework assignments, parents are encouraged to take an active interest in their child’s homework. Teachers will assign homework, which is an appropriate extension of class work. Each teacher’s homework expectations, policy for grading homework, and its effect on the final grade will be part of the class syllabus given to the students at the beginning of the class.

LIBRARY

The school library is available to all staff and students of St. Patrick's Academy West. Those borrowing materials are responsible for returning them, paying

overdue fines, and reporting losses. Those with overdue books will be notified. The fine for overdue books is two cents per school day. If a book is lost or damaged, the replacement cost of the book must be paid. All fines must be paid by the end of the school year during which the fine was incurred.

LIFE THREATS

Students must be discouraged from making life threats, even in jest. In such cases, the parents of the offending student will be notified. If threat warrants a suspension, students will not be readmitted without a parent/principal conference.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found articles will be held in the school office or displayed in the hallway for claiming. If unclaimed after a reasonable amount of time, the items will be donated to a local charity.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Students are expected to eat lunch at school. They may either purchase a hot lunch at school or bring a cold lunch. One carton of milk is provided with every hot lunch. Those who wish to buy an additional carton of milk or milk to go with cold lunch may do so. Parents must notify the school office if there is an occasion for their child to leave school for lunch.

The school lunch program is subsidized by the Federal government. Parents wishing to apply for free or reduced meals for their children need to complete an application. These applications are available at the school office. All children are treated the same regardless of ability to pay. Any questions or comments about the lunch program should be addressed to the school principal. Students are expected to conduct themselves properly at mealtime. They are to use good manners and moderate conversation. They must remain seated at the lunch table until dismissed by the adult in charge. Food is not to leave the area.

Lunch will be charged on FACTS monthly.

MONEY SENT TO SCHOOL

When it is necessary to send currency and/or checks to school, it should be placed in a sealed envelope marked with the following: 1) student's name; 2) student's grade; 3) the amount of money in the envelope; and 4) purpose of payment. Students are asked not to have large sums of money in their possession.

MOTOR VEHICLE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

In order to provide safety for all students no vehicles are allowed on the playground after 7:30 a.m. and before 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Vehicles needing to unload onto the back porch during school hours must contact the school office for permission during school hours.

PARENTAL CUSTODIAL ISSUES

The custodial parent has the responsibility to provide the school administration with all official court orders which affect the well-being of the student when she/he is in the care of the school. Non-custodial parents will not be permitted to use the school for child visitation. The school will not refuse the request of the non-custodial parent who requests to pick up a child at the end of the school day unless there is a court order that states otherwise. By the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of the non-custodial parent, in the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of that court order.

PARENT DRIVERS

A parent or other volunteer choosing to drive students to and/or from school related activities or extracurricular activities must sign required release papers. These will be made available through the school office.

PARENTAL ROLE

The Catholic Church recognizes parents as the primary educators of their children. In this handbook, the term parent refers not only to a student's natural or adopted parent, but to a student's non-parent legal guardian or to any person or agency authorized to act in place of parents. Parents are expected to display an attitude of respect and support toward the school, the staff, and the educational process by:

- Supporting the school's mission and commitment to Christian principles;
- Supporting the school policies as outlined in the school handbook and regulations;
- Ensuring their son/daughter has read this handbook;
- Participating fully in school programs that are developed to support the education of their children;
- Remaining informed about and involved in the religious instruction of their children.

A cooperative relationship between St. Patrick's Academy West employees and parents is essential for the overall education of the students. It is critical that a cooperative relationship be maintained through constructive dialogue.

In the event a parent desires to discuss a problem with his/her child's teacher, the parent should make an appointment for a private meeting with the teacher. Teachers welcome the opportunity to discuss a matter of concern with parents before it becomes an actual problem. Any parent who wishes to speak with the principal may do so, but after an initial meeting with the classroom teacher. If a parent repeatedly or seriously violates proper school protocol, displays inappropriate, disrespectful, disruptive or harassing behavior toward teachers or toward school, students, parish, or diocesan staff, the school may take corrective action. At the discretion of the principal, such corrective action may include but not restricted to the following: imposition of particular rules or procedures the parent must follow in interacting with the school and its students and staff; or dismissal of the parent's child(ren) from enrollment at the school.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES AND APPOINTMENTS

Conferences between parents and teachers are a valuable means of communication. One conference time will be scheduled for parents following the end of the first quarter of the school year.

Parents and teachers are encouraged to arrange informal conferences as the need arises. We are always happy to talk to you about your child. However, to assure that there is adequate time to meet with you and to assure the smooth operation of the school day, we do request that you make an appointment. Appointments can be made by sending a note or calling the school office.

PARTIES / CELEBRATIONS

PARTIES OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL – Invitations for birthday parties, slumber parties, and other child gatherings may not be distributed at school unless there is an invitation for each child in the class. Boys who are inviting only boys to a party may distribute invitations to boys as long as there is one for each boy. The same applies for girls.

TREATS AT SCHOOL – If a parent wishes to send treats to school on the occasion of a birthday or other celebration, it is necessary to confer with the classroom teacher at least one day in advance.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

The school is not responsible for a student's personal property. Cellphones, smart devices, Ipods, collections, and possessions of this sort are not to be

brought to school unless permission by a teacher is given, such as for “Show and Tell.”

PHONE USE

The school office and classroom phones are intended for the business use of the school staff. With the discretion and permission of office personnel, a child may use the phone under some circumstances.

PLAYGROUND RULES

1. Children are not allowed on the north side of the gym, behind the dumpsters or storage shed, or on the bike rack.
2. Students are to be courteous, kind, and respectful to all people at all times.
3. Foul language, name calling, and fighting are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
4. Snowball throwing or sliding on the ice will not be permitted during the winter months.
5. If students choose to bring play items from home, the school is not responsible for them. Only appropriate items will be allowed. The playground supervisor will make known to students any play items which would be considered inappropriate.
6. Limited snacks are allowed during recesses. Sunflower seeds and chewing gum are not allowed.
7. Students are to dress according to the weather conditions.

The playground area will be monitored by an adult supervisor during all recesses and lunch periods. Complete cooperation with the supervisor and knowledge of the following rules are important for all students, staff, and parents.

PRAYER

Our Catholic faith is a precious gift which will be shared daily in the classroom. One aspect of the Christian spiritual life in our school is prayer. Several times each day we, as teachers, pause with our students to lift up our hearts and minds to God. Each class is called to prayer at least three times each day; at the beginning of the day, before lunch, and at the close of the day. Teachers are encouraged to respond to any special or extraordinary events by calling the students to lift these up in prayer as they occur.

PRESCHOOL

St. Patrick's Academy West offers a preschool program which is staffed by a certified teacher. Two programs are offered with a choice of full or half day.

Students must turn the appropriate age on or before September 10 of the current school year. For more complete details and fees, contact the school office.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

The final decision to promote or retain a student is a co-operative one involving the student, parents, teachers, and administrators.

RECONCILING DIFFERENCES

At times, students are involved in misunderstandings, difficulties, or controversies which arise at school. It is important for these matters to be addressed promptly by parents. If a difficulty arises in the classroom, the parent should contact the classroom teacher. If it occurs elsewhere in/at school, the principal should be contacted.

RELEASE OF INFORMATION

St. Patrick's Academy West may release certain directory and personal information regarding students, except that which parents or guardians prohibit. Information is limited to name, address, gender, telephone number, photograph, parent's name, grade level, awards or honors received, and information regarding school sponsored activities.

Parents and guardians have the right to object to the release of this information. St. Patrick's Academy West will release directory information unless a parent objects in writing to the release of any or all of this information. This objection must be given to the school office within 10 days of receiving and signing off of receipt of the Parent/Student Handbook.

Specific directory information might include the following examples:

- Listing your child's name, address, and phone number for a birthday invitation list;
- Posting your child's birthday on a bulletin board;
- Printing your child's name and photograph in the school's yearbook;
- Publishing awards, accomplishments, or school activities in the Tribune, Harvest, Lourdes Link, or on the school or parish website;
- Photographing or interviewing your child by a local television station;
- Listing your child's name in the school's weekly newsletter;
- Listing your child's name in programs for concerts, holiday programs, or other special school activities.

RELIGIOUS POLICY

St. Patrick's Academy West works closely with each child in his/her religious formation. Religion is taught as a formal subject in all grades and all children are

required to participate in these classes and activities, regardless of their church affiliation.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

Student safety at school is a high priority. Although the school has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student is to remain alert and promptly report safety hazards, know emergency evacuation routes and signals, and follow the instructions of teachers and school staff who are overseeing them.

From time to time, students, teachers, and staff will participate in drills of emergency procedures. When alarms or signals sound, students should follow the direction of those in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner. All safety procedures are available for parents to look over. St. Patrick's Academy West four emergency procedures are:

- Room Clear is a situation when the adult in the room needs to send the students away from a potential threat or sensitive situation. Each classroom has a designated safe area to send the students to in such a situation.
- Evacuation is when everyone needs to leave the premises, such as a fire drill. The Emerson Building (Head Start) is the school's temporary shelter if evacuation of our students is needed to another location.
- Shelter in Place is a situation in which the students and teacher either stay in their room or go to the gym or church depending on the location of the outside dangerous area. Exterior doors are locked.
- Lockdown is a situation in which real and immediate danger is in the building and it is safer to stay in your area than to move through the building where the threat may be encountered. All internal doors will be locked.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

A group of individual parent and parish representatives of Great Falls Catholic Schools comprises the Advisory Council. The board develops such policies as are necessary to govern the operation of the school Great Falls Catholic Schools. Meetings are held monthly or if an immediate need arises.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Individual school pictures will be taken twice during the school year, in the fall and spring. Purchase of these pictures is the decision of the parent. All students will be photographed whether they are purchasing photographs or not. All students will appear in the school yearbook. The yearbook is published near the end of the school year and must be pre-ordered by those who wish to purchase one.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe and alcohol and drug free, school administration may from time to time conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as students and their personal effects. If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is in violation of school policy and/or civil law, such evidence may be seized and impounded by the school administration.

SMART WATCHES

Smart watches of any kind are not allowed to be worn on campus. If students bring smart watches to school, they must be kept in their backpack.

SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT

All Catholic schools in the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings are smoke free environments.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

St. Patrick's Academy West administers MAP standardized tests yearly in kindergarten through eighth grade.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Student Planned Liturgies
Student Council
Math Competitions
Fire Prevention Program
Science Fair
C.M. Russell Essay Contest

Dental Program
National Geographic Geography Bee
Catholic Schools Week Activities
Spelling Bee
P.E. Ski Trips for Grades 6 – 8
Electives in Middle School
Red Ribbon Week

STUDENT AWARDS

Christian Leadership K-8
Honor Roll for Grades 6 – 8
Improvement Recognition for Grades 6 – 8
Presidential Academic Award for Grades 5 and 8
Academic Excellence Award for Grade 8
Scholar Athlete Award for Grade 8

STUDENT CONDUCT

Students at St. Patrick's Academy West have the right to an education in an orderly and safe environment. Students are expected to take full advantage of their educational opportunities. Students, as they progress in school and advance in age and maturity, must learn to assume greater responsibility and accountability for their decisions. It is the duty of the administration to establish and enforce regulations that contribute to a productive, orderly, and safe school. St. Patrick's Academy West encourages students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members to work together in an atmosphere of respect, cooperation, and courtesy to ensure an effective educational program. The disciplinary process will be enforced in a professional manner that is:

- * Consistent from day-to-day and student-to-student
- * Appropriate to the student's prior behavior
- * Fair to student, parent, and others
- * Effective
- * Administered as an integral part of the education process

Students must recognize their responsibilities and abide by the rules and policies of St. Patrick's Academy West as well as State and federal law. Students who lack self-discipline or who violate the rights of others can expect disciplinary action. Each offense will be addressed on an individual basis according to the nature of the infraction and the severity of the case.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Students are asked to be respectful at all times. Students will speak and answer politely when spoken to or in conversation with one another. Students are asked to pass through the hallway with quiet voices. When classes as a whole need to stop and wait in the hallway, a zero noise level is expected. Students will conduct themselves in an orderly manner in the cafeteria. Students are expected to use good table manners, speak in a quiet conversation voice, and clean up after themselves when dismissing. When using the restrooms, a zero noise level is expected. Behavior on the playground needs to be respectful, courteous and kind towards one another.

The following are expected behaviors:

- Demonstrate respect and courtesy, even when others do not;
- Exercise self-discipline and behave in a responsible manner;
- Regular attendance at school;
- Be on time and prepared for class;
- Meet the school's Dress Code;
- Obey all school and classroom rules;
- Respect the rights and privileges of other students and school personnel;
- Respect the property of others;
- Cooperate with and assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order and discipline;
- And avoid the violations stated below.

The following list includes but is not limited to offenses for which students are accountable:

- Taking anything that does not belong to oneself, whether from other students, from teachers or staff;
- Threatening a teacher or any other person;
- Harassment of a teacher or any other person;
- Using violence, force, threats, intimidation, fear, or other comparable conduct toward anyone;
- Willful defacing of, theft of, or destruction of school, church, or personal property; the student and/or guardian will be required to pay the cost of repair or replacement;
- Possessing or using fireworks or other explosives;
- Initiating or participating in a fight;
- Refusing to comply with a reasonable request of any teacher or other school personnel while they are performing their official responsibilities;
- Committing an act of defiance, either in language or action, on school property;
- Leaving class or the school grounds without permission;
- Disrupting class while in session; misbehaving in classrooms, restrooms, halls, church, or assemblies;
- Habitual lack of effort leading to failure in classroom work;
- Habitual tardiness or absences;
- Possession of knives or other weapons, harmful instruments and matches;
- Possession of pornographic material;
- Violating our computer usage policy;
- Using language or behavior that is immoral, profane, vulgar or obscene;
- Possession, use or sale of any form of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs on school property.

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

The following are some disciplinary measures that may be employed by the staff and administration:

1. Counseling and/or conference with the student and family
2. Assignment of special tasks
3. Denial of privileges
4. Detention
5. Probation
6. Suspension
7. Dismissal
8. Expulsion

There is no requirement for progressive discipline. Any individual infraction may require the school to administer serious disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Additionally, the school may need to notify legal authorities and, in the case of a major violation, press charges. The school may utilize the assigned Great Falls Police Department School Resource Officer to investigate conduct violations.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Any reasonable and appropriate means, including the use of physical restraint, may be used by school personnel for the purposes such as the following:

- a. To quell a disturbance that threatens physical injury to any person
- b. To obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous objects within a student's control.
- c. For the purpose of self-defense or the defense of others
- d. For the safety and well-being of the student or other students
- e. For protection of property.

DISCIPLINARY DEFINITIONS

Disciplinary infractions include but are not limited to the following:

Alcohol or Drugs: The sale, distribution, use, possession or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal substances, or other mood-altering drugs.

Assault/Fighting: Intentional, unauthorized physical contact with another person that causes injury or threatens the safety of others. Any physical assault upon a staff member may bring an automatic recommendation for expulsion on the first offense.

Attendance/Ttruancy: Refer to the section on attendance and Discipline Code.

Cheating/Plagiarism: To steal and/or pass off the ideas or words on another as one's own.

Defiance of Authority: Refusal to follow the reasonable requests of school personnel or language that is used to cause disruptive, personal attacks.

Disorderly or Disruptive Conduct: Behavior, language, or dress, which is disruptive to the orderly educational procedures of the school (e.g., amplified music, profanity, beeper, cellular phones, etc).

Harassment: See "Harassment Policy" in this handbook.

Tardiness: Refer to the section on Attendance.

Tobacco: St. Patrick's Academy West is a tobacco-free building where the use and possession of tobacco in any form on school property or at school sponsored activities is prohibited and use or possession is penalized under the Discipline Plan.

Theft: Taking, giving, or receiving property not owned by the student

Vandalism: Willfully damaging, defacing, or destroying property owned or under the responsibility of the school, school officials, or others.

Weapons: Possession and/or use of a dangerous instrument, including but not limited to firearms, knives, clubs, explosives, (including fireworks), or any instrument which may inflict bodily injury on another person.

Definition of Disciplinary Actions

Disciplinary Probation: Students who manifest negative and/or non-cooperative behaviors may be placed on disciplinary probation for a period of time determined by the principal. The principal will notify the parents of the probation, the school's concerns, and the specific areas of improvement required. Should there be insufficient improvement in behavior, the school may decide not to readmit the student for the following year, or the school may dismiss the student. The administration may remove certain privileges during the probation. For example, a student placed on disciplinary probation may not be allowed to participate in school sponsored activities/athletics for the period of the probation. In situations where a student's behavior is affecting his/her academic performance, disciplinary record, personal well being or that of another student(s) the school reserves the right to require professional evaluations and/or on-going professional counseling as a condition for the student remaining at St. Patrick's Academy West. The school may require written feedback from this counseling.

Warning: Defined as a discussion between a student and teacher, counselor, or administrator to reach an agreement regarding acceptable behavior.

In School Suspension (ISS): ISS is defined as the temporary exclusion of a student from participating and/or attending a course of instruction or from participating in a school activity. In this case the student is allowed to remain in the school facility or premise in a location as directed by the principal or the principal's designee away from the normal cooperation of the school. Student's parents will be notified of the reason for the suspension.

Out of School Suspension (OSS): OSS is defined as a means through which the student is temporarily excluded from participating and/or attending a course of instruction or from participating in a school activity and is excluded from entering all school facilities and premises during the suspension period. OSS days are counted as unexcused absences in reference to the "10 day rule" and the student will not receive credit for assignments/tests missed. Prior to the suspension, the parent will be notified of the reason for the suspension, the time/length of suspension and the requirements for reinstatement.

Expulsion: Expulsion is the permanent removal of a student from attendance at St. Patrick's Academy West. The school principal, in consultation with the diocesan Superintendent of Schools, may make the decision to expel a student for any serious violation of the school's disciplinary code. If the decision to expel a student is made, the school will be notified of the decision promptly. There will also be notification to the student's parents. Parents are permitted to appeal the expulsion to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

Parent Notification: The parent will be notified by school personnel about an infraction via telephone or letter, and may result in a conference with appropriate individuals.

POLICY ON RESPECT

The good name, reputation, and personal safety of each student, faculty, and staff member are vitally important. In order to protect students, employees, and the institution itself, each student is expected to treat the good name and reputation of other students, school employees and the school with dignity and respect and not engage in any activity or conduct, either on campus or off campus, that is in opposition to this policy and/or inconsistent with the Catholic Christian principles of the school, as determined by the school in its discretion. Any derogatory, slanderous, hostile, or threatening remarks or actions directed toward any of the above by a student will be seen as a violation of this policy and will be viewed as an extremely serious matter, whether it is done physically, verbally, or electronically through the use of a home or school computer or by remote access during school time or after hours. Some examples include, but are not limited to, text messages, blogging, images, pictures, etc. Any individual found to have made or participated with others in making any such remarks or actions will be subject to disciplinary action by the school, up to and including expulsion/dismissal.

MISCONDUCT OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

To achieve the best possible learning environment for all of our students, St. Patrick's Academy West rules and discipline will apply:

- While the student is in school or on school premises.
- Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event.
- Anywhere, if the conduct may reasonably be considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a student or staff member and causes concern for safety.

Misconduct by students outside of the school may reflect negatively upon the reputation and/or integrity of the school. This misconduct may be considered grounds for disciplinary action by the school administrator in consultation with the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

STUDENT PERSONAL EFFECTS

School authorities may search the student and/or student's personal effects in the student's possession when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will produce evidence that the particular student has violated or is violating the law or the school's conduct rules.

STUDENT RECORDS

A student's school records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters St. Patrick's Academy West until the time the student

withdraws or graduates. A copy of this record moves with the student from school to school.

The only persons who have general access to a student's records are parents of a student and school officials with legitimate educational interests. Parent consent is required to release the records to another school or agency.

TEXT BOOKS

Students have full responsibility for the care of textbooks issued to them. All textbooks must be kept neatly covered and need to be handled with care. Students are asked to use backpacks to carry books to and from school. Textbooks should be kept free of ink or pencil marks. If a textbook is lost or damaged, the student will be expected to pay for its replacement. Teachers will check books for any damage at the end of each year.

TUITION

A well balanced education that addresses the total personality of a child is what St. Patrick's Academy West offers. This education includes a solid and integrated Christian, moral, and academic formation. A family, in choosing this option as an alternative to Public School, acknowledges this advantage and accepts the sacrifice that may come with it.

A substantial part of the school costs is shouldered by Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. Therefore, the tuition charge reflects an automatic scholarship extended to each student entering the school. This allows tuition to remain at an affordable level. As the parish accepts this considerable financial sacrifice, families are expected to willingly make an appropriate sacrifice when considering their children's tuition. The school will make every effort to make sure that financial considerations will not prevent families from enrolling their children in St. Patrick's Academy West. Tuition is expected to be paid in a timely manner. Tuition bills of excess overpayment may be turned over to collection agencies.

OTHER FAMILY COMMITMENTS

In addition to tuition payments, the total tuition commitment at St. Patrick's Academy West School includes: each family's active involvement in the Home and School Association, and participation in all of the following ways during the school year.

1. **SCHOOL FAMILY BUDGET OBLIGATION** - This obligation of \$350 can be met through our Lourdeswalk. Families may make a tax-deductible donation to the school office to meet their commitment instead of actively participating in the Lourdeswalk.

2. Adult Dinner/Auction Fundraiser: Our annual Lumen Christi Banquet will be held with the Great Falls Catholic Schools Community. This event will be a major fundraiser for the three schools and will occur near the beginning of each calendar year. This dinner includes a *live* and *silent* auction. **We encourage all to be involved.**

*Parents of children participating in any extra-curricular sporting activities are required to be active in the Lourdes Athletic Boosters (LABS). This support group makes possible our athletic programs. All parents of the LABS are required to buy or sell "Christmas Green" raffle tickets in the fall.

USE OF SCHOOL NAME, LOGO AND PICTURES

The use of the school name, logo, and pictures of school activities or of other students without the prior approval of the school is prohibited whether done in the printed word, through technology, or by any other means.

VISITORS

Parents are always encouraged and welcome at St. Patrick's Academy West. Appointments should be made to see a teacher, counselor, and administrator or to visit a student's class by calling the main office. All visitors must check in at the main office and get a visitor's pass. Everyone is asked to identify him or herself and state the reason they have entered the building. Out of courtesy and non-interruption of instructional time, permission from the classroom teacher and principal needs to be granted before visits to individual classrooms during instructional time. Trespassers who do not have legitimate business in the school or classroom area will be requested to leave the premises.

VOLUNTEER

All volunteers working with a student or group of students or chaperoning any school event must be in compliance with the Diocese of Great Falls/Billings Safe and Sacred program. Volunteers must complete the required Safe and Sacred course, sign a Code of Conduct, and have a background check.

WEAPON POLICY

All firearms are prohibited on school grounds with the exception of law enforcement personnel.

WITHDRAWAL

When a student from Lourdes transfers to another school, it is asked that out of courtesy, the principal of St. Patrick's Academy West be notified to ensure placement of another student in the classroom.

Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy for Students

Purpose

This policy serves to protect the security and integrity of the school's electronic communication and information systems by educating students about appropriate and safe use of available technology resources. Instructions will be given to students about how to appropriately interact with one another on social networking sites and in chat rooms, as well as cyber-bullying awareness and response.

The school MAY provide students with some or all of these privileges. The school reserves the right to monitor, retrieve, inspect, and review the data, electronic mail (e-mail), files, settings or any other aspect of a school-owned computer or related system and will do so on an as-needed basis as determined by the school administration.

All students are responsible for reading and following information that may be distributed from time-to-time by the school about appropriate precautions to protect the school's systems.

A student who violates any aspect of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action including revocation of certain system privileges, law enforcement notification, legal action, or expulsion. The school will make decisions regarding whether or not a user has violated this policy and may deny, revoke or suspend access at any time. These decisions are final.

Personal Use

All school-owned technology equipment is for the sole purpose of school work and not for the personal use of students. Students may not at any time play games, stream or play videos or music or any other activity that is not directly related to an assignment from an instructor.

Software and Hardware

Students are to care for and treat school hardware with respect. If it is evident that a student has purposefully damaged school equipment, that student will be responsible for replacing the equipment and may face disciplinary action.

Unapproved hardware, software, downloads (free or purchased), commercial software, shareware, freeware, toolbars, plug-ins, screensavers, games and music or other equipment that have not been specifically approved by the school

administration may compromise the integrity of the school's computer system and are prohibited.

Electronic Mail (e-mail)

Students may not have access to e-mail at any time unless to carry out a school assignment given by an instructor.

Internet (World Wide Web)

Staff members will supervise students while students are using school-operated Internet access, to ensure that the students abide by the Terms and Conditions of this policy.

The following considerations apply to all users of the Internet:

- There is no quality control on the Internet. All information found on the Internet should be considered suspect until confirmed by another source.
- Students may not at any time access inappropriate sites. Some examples of inappropriate sites include but are not limited to adult entertainment, pornography, sexually explicit material, or material advocating intolerance of other people, races or religions. If you are unsure whether a site may include inappropriate information, you should not visit it.
- No software may be downloaded from the Internet unless approved in advance by the school administration, or as allowed elsewhere in this policy. Prohibited downloads include but are not limited to commercial software, shareware, freeware, toolbars, plug-ins, screensavers, games and music.
- Students may not participate in any Internet chat or instant messaging.
- The school may monitor any student's use of the Internet without prior notice, as deemed appropriate by the school administration.
- Do not use the Internet in any way, which disrupts the service or its operation for others.

Unacceptable Uses of the Internet, E-Mail and Other Technology

School computer systems may not be used to transmit, retrieve or store any type of communication message, image or material:

- That is discriminatory, defamatory or harassing;
- That contains derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual's race, age, disability, religion, national origin or physical attributes or any other condition or status protected by federal, state or local law;
- That is obscene, x-rated, pornographic in nature or contains adult-only related materials;
- That is illegal;
- That violates any policy of the school and/or diocese, including, but not limited to, its policies regarding child abuse and harassment, or that is otherwise contrary to the religious mission and values of the school and/or diocese.

Violations

- Any use of the Internet or e-mail not in keeping with this Policy is not acceptable and will not be permitted. Users are required to immediately notify the school administration in the event that they become aware of security breaches (accidental or otherwise), viruses, “spam”, unsolicited obscene material, hate mail or otherwise potentially violent communications, or any other use of the school’s technical resource systems by anyone that involves a real or apparent unacceptable use as defined in this Policy. The failure to comply with this Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination, and the school may advise appropriate law enforcement agencies and officials of any illegal activities that involve school systems.

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