

Morning Star School, Tampa

Student/Parent Handbook

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MORNING STAR CATHOLIC SCHOOL, TAMPA

History and Philosophy

Morning Star School, a Catholic Diocesan school, is dedicated to providing a successful learning environment for the student with learning disabilities and related difficulties. The school was established in August, 1958 by Archbishop Joseph P. Hurley. In partnership with parents, the student is encouraged to develop spiritually, academically, socially, emotionally and physically.

Morning Star students are encouraged to develop a personal active faith, through prayer and worship. The school strives to develop students who will become witnesses to the principles of the Gospel. As a member of a vibrant faith community, the students are encouraged to reach out to others in service following the example of Jesus.

The student with unique educational needs must have them met on an individual basis in order to achieve his/her maximum potential. A credentialed faculty (with a minimal Bachelor's level degree in special education, or related field, and State of Florida certification in Special Education) provides these educational needs. Opportunities for growth and success are presented within a structured setting, so that each student can learn to value himself/herself and his/her accomplishments.

The Florida Catholic Conference first accredited Morning Star School in 1980. On site visits, self-study and school improvement plans continue to maintain this accreditation. The FCC Accreditation is valid through 2022. Morning Star School was incorporated by the Diocese of St. Petersburg, July, 2009. The corporation is a not-for-profit, 501 C(3) organization. Morning Star is a member of the National Council for Private School Accreditation and has been cited as one of the exemplary programs in the Southeast. Morning Star School was recognized as a School of Excellence by the National Association of Special Education (NASSET) in 2018.

Mission Statement of Morning Star School

Morning Star School is a Catholic Diocesan school which challenges students with learning disabilities and other related difficulties to succeed at their optimal level while creating readiness for growth, service, and sharing God's love in the global community.

Morning Star School is an environment where each student's uniqueness is valued. The student's self-esteem is enhanced in a nurturing, supportive setting that provides opportunities for students to grow spiritually, academically, socially, emotionally, and physically.

Morning Star School Motto:

“Morning Star: A safe and caring school where each student is valued and his or her uniqueness is celebrated.

*“I, Jesus, sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches.
I am the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star.
Revelations 22:16*

Objectives

Spiritual

- To promote student’s spiritual and moral growth within a vibrant faith community that is responsive to and supportive of individual needs
- To develop a sense of morality to enable the student to witness to the word of God through lifestyle decisions and service in the community
- To develop a respect for each individual’s differences, limitations, and talents as a child of God
- To provide opportunities for service to others

Academic

- For students to adopt a work ethic that reflect the virtues of honesty, sincerity, responsibility and perseverance
- For the student to achieve his/her full potential in academic areas.
- For the student to acquire an understanding of his/her own potential and to develop skills which will help ensure success
- For the student to acquire learning strategies which facilitate the acquisition of knowledge
- For the student to understand the strengths/weaknesses and nature of the disability so he/she can learn to advocate for themselves

Physical

- To develop the student’s motor skills while promoting fitness
- To promote appropriate competitive behavior, knowledge of sports and lifetime leisure skills

Social/ Personal

- To develop the student’s cultural, social, and community awareness
- To develop a sense of pride and responsibility within the student for the school environment and personal and public property
- To provide directed peer counseling wherein the student has the opportunity to discuss concerns and participate in problem-solving and conflict resolution situations

- To provide social skill training in which particular areas of social development are emphasized
- To find, nurture and develop special talents/skills of students as a means of developing “islands of competence”.

Professional

- For teachers to continue the search for and acquisition of strategies, knowledge, materials and techniques, in order to be better able to provide opportunities for student growth.
- For teachers to meet the student's individual and unique educational needs which may require additional assistance to help him/her succeed.
- To offer professional consultation to families as needed.
- To offer the student the opportunity to receive needed ancillary services.
- To provide opportunities for parents to broaden their education, interact with other parents, and develop advocacy skills through planned meetings.

General Information

School Hours – 7:55 a.m. – 2:45 p.m. Junior High is dismissed at 3:00.

Morning Supervision begins at 7:15 a.m. - Any student arriving earlier than 7:15 AM will be charged \$1.00 per day.

Lunches: Lunches are not provided. Students are to bring their lunch from home to school, in addition to a snack and drink for morning break time. Healthy choices are encouraged. Soft drinks are not permitted. A “Cold” lunch is preferred over those that need to be microwaved.

Uniforms: School uniforms can be purchased from Risse Brothers School Uniforms located @ 4228 N. Armenia Ave.; Tampa, FL 33607; Phone 813-282-8338. Refer to the pages regarding the dress policy for more details.

An Extended Day Program is available on the School grounds until 6:00p.m. The rate is \$50.00 weekly or \$15.00 daily. A penalty is charged for late pick up. (\$10 for every 15 mins. past 6:00 p.m.). ALL students will be sent to Extended Day at 3:15 (NO EXCEPTIONS). If picked up by 4:15p.m., the charge will be \$5.00. Refer to the pages regarding the Extended Day policy for more details.

Organization of School

Morning Star School is a non-graded Catholic school for students of ages 6 to 16. Students are grouped together based on ability and age levels for academic subjects. Classrooms are grouped as departments for developmental and instructional purposes. When placing students in classes, both the academic level and the social maturity of each student is considered. Students are placed and grouped at their functional levels rather than their chronological levels.

School Community Operations

Morning Star School operates under the direction of the Office of Catholic Schools and Centers of the Catholic Diocese of St. Petersburg. According to the Diocese of St. Petersburg, the mission of Catholic Schools is to provide a faith-filled community where students can grow spiritually, academically, and socially. All members of the school community uphold this mission. In addition to the Diocese, the community consists of the following:

Administration – Provides governance and leadership to the school

Faculty – Develops/delivers curriculum aligned instruction; meets educational needs & goals

Staff - Supports various aspects of the school's daily operations

Student Body – Acquires and applies provided knowledge; models the virtues taught to them

Advisory Board – Supports school development with the provision of guidance and support

Parent Board – Supports/plans school fundraising and hospitality events

Families - Actively participate as partners of the school by supporting the school, attending parent meetings/conferences and volunteering at school fundraisers/events

Service Hours and Financial Support

Families of students enrolled at Morning Star School are expected to be actively involved in the activities of the Morning Star community. The outcome of students and the fund-raising activities that support educational programs within the school are successful because of the enthusiastic and consistent involvement of parents. See Appendix for Diocese of St. Petersburg Catholic Schools Parent, Volunteers, and Visitors Code of Conduct.

Each family is required to serve at least 20 hours working on specified projects or tasks that directly benefit the school, including the tournaments (golf or tennis) or working at two Morning Star Sundays, and/or public awareness events. The deadline for completing service hours is May 1st. Each family is also responsible for arranging donations of cash or prize merchandise, totaling a value of at least \$100.00, for one or the other tournament. The sponsorship is due by May 1st. See Morning Star School & Parent Group Partnership Agreement.

Tuition

Morning Star School tuition will be collected by FACTS Management, a tuition management company. Tuition for the school year is paid to FACTS Management in 10 equal payments. The first payment is due in August, and the remaining nine payments are due monthly, on the date chosen by you, September through May. They also accept an annual payment or payment by semester at a reduced processing fee. Refer to the "Contract for Fees" for specific details.

NOTE: Students will not be allowed to take final exams if the tuition account is not current. Students will receive an "I" for incomplete for the course on the Report Card and Final Transcript.

Registration Process

Re-registration of students presently enrolled for the upcoming school year takes place each February which includes an annual re-registration fee. Parents are required to verify and update their demographic information through an online process. In June, an Academic/Activity fee is charged to cover book rental, consumable texts, materials, art supplies, achievement testing, student insurance, a technology fee, library fees, yearbook, activity fees and various consumable student supplies.

Conditions for Admission and Re-Admission

Admission/re-admission to Morning Star School is subject to the following conditions:

- Support of the rules and policies of Morning Star School.
- All students must have up-to-date state-required immunizations
- All financial obligations must be fulfilled and up to date.
- Contribution of at least 20 hours of service to the school during the school year.
- Support of all mandatory fund-raising efforts.
- Each family is expected to raise a minimum of \$100.00 for mandatory fund-raising activities during the School year.

Health Records

New students need a recent Physical (within the last 12 months) in addition to the Certificate of Immunization that was to be turned in with the application for admission. A valid Certificate of Immunization must be received before you child may start school. If you have just moved here from another county, state, or country, you will be exempt from this requirement for 30 days from the first day of school. Religious Exemptions for immunizations are not accepted.

Students entering 7th grade (Junior High) will need a recent Physical and a signed Certificate of Immunization showing their 7th grade Tdap (Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis) booster vaccination. This form must have Part A - Code 8 box checked, the doctor's signature and the date.

Students participating in afterschool sports must complete a sports physical packet in order to participate. The Physical Education teacher will distribute and collect these forms for eligible students.

Any student enrolled in school, must show either proof of immunization or Temporary/Permanent **Medical Exemption**. The exemption must be indicated in either Part B or Part C, of the DH-680 Immunization Form and signed by the Doctor, showing an expiration date (if Temporary). An explanation must be written on the form.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS WITHIN THE DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG

Catholic Schools within the Diocese of St. Petersburg require enrolling students to submit a Florida Department of Health Certificate of Immunization (DH-680) as provided for in Florida Statute 1003.22, as a condition precedent to acceptance. Catholic Schools in the Diocese of St. Petersburg do not recognize a Religious Objection to this immunization policy. Therefore, the Religious Exemption form signed by a Health Department representative is not accepted in lieu of the DH-680.

Medication and Medical Needs

All parents are required to sign a Prescription Medication Authorization Form, Medical Alert Form, Emergency Card, and Emergency Treatment Form. For student with allergies, parent are required to sign an Epi-pen Form. For students with diabetes, parents are required to sign a Medical Release Form – Diabetic Students. Any changes in medical conditions should be reported, in writing, to the Office immediately.

Any medication, whether prescription or over the counter, for students needing to self-administer during the school day MUST be done in the School Office/Health Room.

Students may not take prescribed or over-the-counter medication without adult supervision while at school. All medication for students must be brought to the office in the original container with the **CURRENT PRESCRIPTION ON IT.**

Any changes in dosage/type should be reported, in writing, to the Office immediately. Please provide a bottle of headache or cough medication (or throat lozenges/cough drops) to the School Office/Health Room (with your child's name on it) if your child will be in need of it anytime during the school year. Parents will receive a notice of any Office/Health Room visits and care their students received during the school day.

Allergies

The significant increase in allergies poses a difficulty within the school environment. It is very important that parents keep the teachers and office aware (in writing) of any allergy that a child may have. In particular, food and environmental allergies should be known.

HEALTH AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

In order to provide care for your child in case of injury or illness, many of our staff members have been trained in First Aid and CPR.

The following communicable diseases have been specified as diseases for which a child may not be admitted to or remain at school:

- Chicken Pox (all lesions crusted over)
- Whooping Cough
- Lice (treated and nit free)
- Tuberculosis
- German Measles
- Vomiting
- Impetigo (treatment & dry lesions)
- Measles
- Giardia Lamblia (after 3 negative stool cultures)
- Shingella
- Hemophilus Flu (symptom free)
- Diarrhea
- Mumps
- Temperature over 98.6 degrees (fever free for 24 hours)
- Strep Throat (24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment)
- Conjunctivitis (treatment and clear eyes)
- Scabies (treatment; 24 hours after initial treatment)
- H1N1 Virus

Children who have been ill with a communicable disease, will not be readmitted to class until reception of a note from the child's physician stating that the child no longer presents any danger to others. In addition to these communicable diseases, children will be excluded from school if they exhibit green or colored discharge from the nose, fever, vomiting, or diarrhea. We will also notify parents if their child has expressed lethargy, pain, or discomfort during the school day. Children should not be sent to school if they have fever or have been sick during

the night. Children who have been ill with a fever must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. If a child becomes sick during school or is injured, parents will be notified by phone to pick up the child. Please ensure you're your child is picked up within one hour of notification. For this reason it is essential that any change in home or work phone number be communicated to the teacher and the school secretary.

Attendance, Arrival, Tardy, and Dismissal Policies

Success in any field requires a continuous daily effort. Nowhere is this truer than in education. The quality of learning for any student reflects the regularity with which he/she attends classes. Our attendance regulations have been formulated as a means of helping our students develop habits, which will serve them best while in school and in later years. State of Florida law requires those children between the ages of 5 and 16 attend school. Regular attendance and punctuality have a marked influence upon scholastic achievement. Attendance is an essential element to good progress in school.

Early Arrival Policy

Any student who is "dropped off" to the school grounds between 7:00 AM and 7:15 AM will be charged \$1.00 a day. Supervision by the staff of Morning Star School begins at 7:15 AM. **In the event of injury, harm, or the abduction of students resulting from their early arrival on the school grounds, the responsibility rests with the parents or guardians.**

Homeroom Class begins at 8:00 AM. At that time, the central front gate will no longer be open and your child will be marked TARDY. Homeroom Class is an important structured time that fosters organization, independence, and sets the school day to a good start with important matters such as attendance, duties, instructional readiness, and school announcements.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR TARDY ARRIVAL

- **STUDENT REPORTS TO THE OFFICE**
- **OFFICE ADMINISTERS TARDY SLIP TO STUDENT**
- **STUDENT WITH TARDY SLIP IN HAND WILL INDEPENDENTLY REPORT TO HOMEROOM TEACHER**

Communication Policy for Absences & Planned Late Arrivals

Parents/guardians must notify the school office of a child's absence at 813-935-0232 prior to 9:00 a.m. As a safety procedure, if a child is absent and the parents have not called, the school will attempt to contact the parents. When a student is absent, the school must receive communication from parents/guardians explaining the reason for the absence, either voice message or electronic. The communication must include 1) the child's full name, 2) dates of absence, and 3) the nature of illness or reason for absence.

In the case of prolonged medical absence, three or more days, parents should call or email the office before 9:00 a.m. for missed class work and homework, so the work can be prepared and be ready for pickup at dismissal time. Due to teaching schedules it may take up to 24 hours to have materials prepared for pick up in the school office. Based on the number of days absent and the amount of work missed, a reasonable amount of time will be allowed for its completion.

- **Ten (10) tardies in a trimester are considered excessive.** A notification will be sent home on the tenth tardy. A conference with Administration will be mandatory.
- **Six (6) absences in a trimester are considered excessive.** A notification will be sent home on the sixth absence. A conference with Administration will be mandatory. If your child is going to be out for any length of time due to a family commitment, please send a note to the school office at least a week in advance.
- Students should not be permitted to return to school unless well enough to participate in school activities. Students must be present for at least four (4) hours of the school day to be considered present that day. In order to participate in any after school activities, including the extended day program, students must be present on that day. **Students who are absent more than 20 school days during the year may be under administrative review for academic retention and may be asked to withdraw from Morning Star Catholic School, Tampa.**
- Students who are absent are required to make up work missed in each class. If a student is out for only one or two days, upon return to school, the student should meet with the teacher about the work missed. The student will be given a deadline by the teacher to complete and turn in these assignments. It is the responsibility of the student to see that the work is completed. **In the Morning Star Programs using the IEP/Student Support Plan as guidance, teachers will model, guide and use gradual release of responsibility to developing a plan for students to make up work during an absence.**
- Any student who is absent on the day of a scheduled summative assessment will be expected to make it up upon his/her return to school. For every day a student is absent, he/she has that number of days to make up the summative assessment (Ex. 1 day missed = 1 day for summative assessment.) It is the student's responsibility to speak with his/her teacher regarding missed assessments. In the event of multiple-day absences, the teacher will determine when all assessments will be taken. **In the Morning Star Programs using the IEP/Student Support Plan as guidance, teachers will model, guide and use gradual release of responsibility to developing a plan for students to make up a formative or summative during an absence.**

Dismissal from School

No student is permitted to leave the school grounds during the school day unless he/she is "signed out" at the school office by his/her parents, guardian or approved adult. Parents should contact the office to notify the office about a planned early sign out for an appointment, but the **parents are always required** to come to the Office to "sign out" his/her student in order for the student to be called to the office, where they will meet the parent to leave. **DO NOT GO TO THE CLASSROOM TO PICK-UP YOUR STUDENT.**

All students must be picked up promptly after the 2:45 p.m. Dismissal bell (3:00 p.m. for Junior High) and no later than 3:15 p.m. Parents of Junior High students need to delay their pickup until 3:00 p.m. For the safety of your child, it is extremely important that you arrive at the dismissal time (2:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.). If you are going to be late for pick-up, you must notify the office. Any child not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will be brought to the Extended Day program and the parent will be billed.

Parents must notify the school in writing, email or phone call should a change in transportation be necessary. Students will only be released to those adults authorized in writing. Unless engaged in an organized school sponsored activity or enrolled in the Extended Day Program, no student should remain on school grounds after 3:15 p.m. Only authorized adults will be allowed to pick up students from Extended Day. At any time, if an authorized adult comes to the school grounds and is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, students will not be released to that person, and instead, authorities will be informed immediately by the school principal.

Extended Day Program

For your convenience an Extended Day Program is available on the school grounds. Hours begin at 3:15 PM and ends promptly at 6:00 PM. The program is in operation only on the days school is in session. On selected days of early dismissal days the Extended Day Program begins at dismissal time. Please refer to the Extended Day Program Agreement for details.

At 3:15 p.m. **ALL** students remaining on campus will be placed in the Extended Day Program. You are financially responsible for the time your child is in the Extended Day Program. The Extended Day Program is a service to families and a privilege for students to attend. School rules about behavior, consequences, and personal property are followed during Extended Day. No personal electronic devices are allowed. **Students with repeated behavior problems in Extended Day will not be allowed to attend.**

Parent Communication

Communication between the school and the home takes place through a variety of ways:

- Student Agendas and the “Take Home” folder are the main source of communication between parents and teachers. Please **check both daily.**
- Electronic communication is another avenue for communication. Please feel free to email the Office or teachers with questions, comments, or concerns. Please consult your child’s teacher for other forms of electronic communication they use.
- Parent Meetings: Attendance will be taken at each meeting; parents may receive one service hour for attending meetings.
- Parent-Student Handbook: The Handbook contains the rules and regulations of Morning Star School. It is the responsibility of both the parents/guardians and students to read and adhere to the contents of this handbook.
- Yearly/Monthly Calendar: An Annual calendar and Google calendar of events is posted on the website.
- Each month parents will receive, by e-mail, a Monthly Newsletter sent by the Office via Homeroom Parent. Other notices and flyers will be communicated by Homeroom Parent emails.
- Other: Special events are posted on the signboard at the entrance of school.

Best Practices for Grading

The Diocese of St. Petersburg has adopted Standards Based Grading (SBG). It is a research based best practice that measures evidence of specific academic criteria directly related to learning standards. ****See Appendix for this policy and the Morning Star School Addendum.**

Grade Reporting Procedures

An Interim Report is sent home midway through the first trimester grading period for all students, so parents can be informed of the student's adjustment early in the year.

A Progress Report Card is issued every trimester (12 weeks). Students receive grades based on his/her individual performance, according to their ability and functional grade level, in each particular subject area as well as marks for Citizenship and Approaches to Learning. Rubrics will be used to assess progress in these areas.

Mid-trimester Reports will be issued only for students whose grades indicate declining progress. This report should be signed and returned the following day to the Homeroom Teacher.

The Academic Report, a more detailed report of progress on standards and skills, is issued to the parents in early February. It presents the instructional grade level, level of teacher support, and comments concerning the student's strengths and weaknesses in each subject area. A social behavior grade is reported assessed using a rubric.

A Student Support Plan is edited annually for all students. This plan includes information on the student's learning needs, priority goals, testing information as well as the ancillary services and accommodations/modifications the student receives.

Conferences

Conferences with teachers are scheduled twice a year. A Conference Log and/or Student Support Plan is shared with parents at these conferences. Students in 8th grade will have a transition conference with the principal in the beginning of their 8th grade year.

Homework

Homework is assigned to students for the purpose of:

- A) providing additional drill and practice
- B) developing responsible behavior by returning the assignment
- C) studying or reviewing information presented
- D) independently presenting an assignment, project or speech
- E) acquiring responsibility in managing study time
- F) developing organizational skills
- G) building an understanding that effort surpasses ability

The homework is assigned TO THE STUDENT. Parents are asked to encourage and support students in their home assignments, but are requested not to become involved as a teacher in the project. If conflict develops regarding the assignment, please contact the teacher regarding the problem.

MANDATORY SCHOOLWIDE DAILY HOMEWORK POLICY: PARENTS CHECK and SIGN the student's planner DAILY to verify completion of assignments. An unsigned planner implies homework incompleteness. Reasonable explanations for incomplete assignments should be noted by the parent in the planner. Otherwise, a consequence may be given for repetitive incompleteness, and/or un-signed planners.

Discipline

Attending Morning Star School is a privilege. Students are expected to abide by school rules and regulations and exhibit Christian values that are becoming of a Morning Star School student at all times. Students who engage in hazardous/dangerous or inappropriate behavior will receive consequences appropriate to the misbehavior. These consequences occur to encourage students to learn more appropriate ways of behavior.

Daily positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior by rewards (social, material, awards and privileges) is standard procedure. Students who exhibit inappropriate behavior are subject to the withholding of the reward(s), and/or disciplinary action(s). Activities every Friday are earned by students whose behavior is appropriate and who complete their assigned work.

A student's inappropriate behavior will result in his/her being asked to leave the class/group and report to the Room 10. Some examples of infractions that will result in a student being asked to leave include but are not limited to: failure to follow a teacher's instructions or directions, aggressive acts, disruptive acts/comments that interfere with instruction, physical or verbal abuse or harassment, property damage, repeatedly being unprepared for class or other conduct unbecoming of a Christian student. See the Diocese of St. Petersburg Office of Catholic Schools and Centers Anti-Bullying Policy in the appendix.

The objectives of disciplinary procedures are:

- To stop improper action;
- To give students the opportunity to explain and reflect on action and cause;
- To modify and/or teach appropriate behavior;
- To keep concern parties informed

A student who continues to have problems with behavior, or who does not regain control, or relinquish the problem behavior will be suspended, or potentially expelled. The length of the suspension will be determined by the Administration, according to the seriousness of the situation. In-school suspension is an alternative disciplinary measure that may be employed if it is deemed appropriate. The Administration is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and reserves the right to issue an immediate suspension or expulsion of a student for a serious infraction.

Harassment/Sexual Harassment

Morning Star Catholic School strives to establish a Christian, professional, and supportive educational community for administrators, faculty, staff, parents, and students. The Diocese of St. Petersburg has adopted and promulgated a harassment policy for its schools that addresses behaviors that interfere with fulfilling the school's mission.

We, at Morning Star School condemn any form of harassment. Concerns should be reported directly to the school administrator. All credible allegations will be addressed according to Diocesan policy. Sexual harassment is any unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Due Process Policy

Although the Constitutional requirement of due process does not legally apply to the private school system, Catholic schools, as a faith community, should impart fairness and a sense of justice in all actions and judgments made by administrators and teachers in dealing with their students. While it is important to protect and maintain the rights of the students and their parents, it is also important that the students and their parents be made aware of their respective responsibilities which arise from and complement these rights.

Students and parents shall have the right to be informed either orally or in writing of the major infractions of school rules and the specific grounds for disciplinary action. Upon failure of a good faith effort by all concerned parties to resolve the matter by a conference between the principal, student and parents, the student shall be entitled to a full, fair and impartial hearing before a selected panel of the school. Students and their parents are advised that they have the right to appeal if not satisfied with the action or decision rendered at this hearing.

The policy pertains only to due process for serious disciplinary matters and not for academics.

Acceptable Technology Use for Students

The purpose of Internet access is to enhance instruction and support learning in a manner consistent with the mission of Catholic schools. The Internet offers unique resources to students that allow them to access electronic libraries, search topics in almost any field, and obtain information otherwise not available on a local, immediate level/format. Student usage of the Internet shall only be for educational purposes consistent with the curriculum of the school.

All parents and students must read the Diocese of St. Petersburg Student Internet Use Policy and sign the handbook acknowledgement before your student is allowed to utilize the Computer and/or Internet in the classroom (**See Appendix**).

Personal Property

Classroom rules to ensure the safety of students' and teachers' personal possessions will be established and strictly enforced. Students will **not wear or bring valuable items to school**. This includes toys, games, magazines, photos, or **any inappropriate items** that are unrelated to or unsafe for school activities. Unauthorized use of technology devices such as: **Cell phones, tablets, games, headsets or fidget spinners will be confiscated** by the Administration. Cell phones are to remain in backpacks. No laptops are allowed at school. No electronic devices allowed at drop-off or dismissal time. **No electronic devices allowed at Extended Day.**

Students carry regulation folders, binders, notebooks, and an assignment calendar. These materials should be taken home, Monday through Friday. Girls may carry a purse. Students may bring a clear or mesh backpack to carry books to and from school. No rolling backpacks allowed, unless an accommodation for the student's physical needs.

Search and Seizure

Morning Star School reserves the right to search students, their desks and personal belongings if there is a suspicion of weapons, drugs or other inappropriate items. No adult or student may enter the campus with any object that can be used with the intent of causing bodily harm or destruction to another person or school property. Parents will be notified and the object will be confiscated. The school reserves the right to involve legal authorities if necessary.

Custodial Arrangements

Please make the school principal and class teacher aware of any particular custody arrangements that are in effect. For the safety of the children and in order to maintain our compliance with any legal documentation, the school needs to have, on file, a copy of specific custodial arrangements. Morning Star Catholic School is only responsible for implementing what is part of the written custodial agreement.

We request that any transfer of a child from one parent's custody to another parent's custody be done off school grounds. This school abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the right of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide non-custodial parents access to academic records and other school-related information regarding their child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parents to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

Reporting Of Child Abuse and Neglect

Occasionally it comes to the attention of a teacher or the Principal that a student is physically bruised or injured to such an extent that the school personnel suspect that it could be the result of physical or sexual abuse. THE STATE OF FLORIDA MANDATES US TO REPORT ALL SUSPICIONS IMMEDIATELY TO THE BUREAU OF CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES. Under the directives of the State and the Diocese of St. Petersburg, we fully comply in the reporting of suspected child abuse.

Field Trips

The field trip is a component of the academic program and have an educational purpose. Diocesan permission forms must be properly completed by the parent or guardian for each trip and must be turned in by the deadline. Only students with properly executed permission slips will be allowed to participate.

It is important for students to participate in field trips. However, a student may be denied participation in a particular field trip if he/she fails to meet academic or behavioral requirements. If a student does not attend a field trip, for reasons established either by the decision of the administration, or the parent, then the child should STAY HOME.

Parents who are available to assist in the transportation of students must complete the necessary forms: Volunteer Application and Proof of Insurance. These forms can be obtained at the School Office and on the website. Evidence of Completion of the Safe Environment

Training and Level II Background Screening through the Diocese of St. Petersburg, must also be provided.

Reception of Sacraments

“...The saving words and deeds of Jesus Christ are the foundation of what he would communicate in the Sacraments through the ministers of the Church. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the Church recognizes the existence of Seven Sacraments instituted by the Lord. They are the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist), the Sacraments of Healing (Penance and the Anointing of the Sick), and the Sacraments at the Service of Communion (Marriage and Holy Orders). Through the Sacraments, God shares his holiness with us so that we, in turn, can make the world holier...”

United States of Catholic Bishops “Sacraments and Sacramentals

Generally, there should be two years of systematic religious education prior to the year of immediate preparation for these sacraments: Penance, Eucharist, and Confirmation. Many parishes recognize the Christian Formation courses students attend at Morning Star to meet this requirement.

The family has an essential role in preparation for the celebration of a sacrament. A family's approach, actions, values, and experiences of prayer and worship help to teach about sacraments. Therefore, families need to be involved in the catechesis, preparation, and celebration of sacraments.

It is the canonical right and obligation of pastors to administer the Sacraments to their parishioners. Further, it is the right and obligation of the pastor to ensure that those who seek the community's sacraments be instructed in such a manner that they may be properly disposed to celebrate the rites. Thus, immediate preparation for the sacraments is done in and by the parish in which they are to be celebrated.

If your child has not received the Sacraments of Penance or Eucharist and you feel that he/she should be prepared to participate in the celebration of these Sacraments you should:

- 1) contact the Pastor of your parish,
- 2) notify your child's teacher or the School Office, and let the teacher know that your child is in a sacramental preparation program.

The school will assist you in any way we can to assure that the preparation for and reception of the Sacraments is a meaningful experience for your child. Certain parishes have developed sacramental preparation programs for students with special needs. Parents may inquire in the office for this information.

Spirit T-Shirt Days

Spirit T-shirt Days are every Friday. Morning Star School "spirit shirt," properly fitting jeans/pants or shorts (appropriate length) and sneakers may be worn on these specially designated days. The regular uniform must be worn if the student does not have or chooses not to wear a Morning Star School "spirit shirt". Otherwise, the student is considered to be “out of uniform” and could be subject to disciplinary actions.

Dollar Dress Day Dress Code

Throughout the year, Student Council will sponsor Dollar Dress Days for fundraising purposes. Please follow the dress code listed below on those days or other “dress down” days.

NO short shorts, oversized or ragged jeans or shirts; tank tops, spaghetti strap tops, tube tops, tops exposing the midriff, shirts with objectionable decals or slogans; flip-flops.

UNIFORM DRESS /HAIR CODE

All uniform clothing must be purchased from Risse Brother School Uniforms

BOYS:

- Khaki uniform pants - **Not permitted: cargo style pants**
- Khaki uniform walking shorts – **Not permitted: cargo style shorts**
- Black or brown belt must be worn with pants and walking shorts
- Navy or lt. blue knit shirt **with Morning Star logo**
- Solid white, brown, navy or black socks; crew, low-cut or quarter socks are acceptable (**Not permitted: no-show socks**)
- Leather-like shoes or sneakers that are solid black or solid brown and properly tied
- Navy blue **Morning Star School** hooded or fleece jacket

GIRLS:

- Plaid uniform skort from Risse Brothers – **Not permitted: Khaki skorts**
- Khaki uniform slacks – **Not permitted: Stretch, jegging style or super fitted pants**
- Khaki uniform walking shorts
- Navy or lt. blue knit shirt with **Morning Star logo**
- Black or brown belt must be worn with slacks and walking shorts.
- Solid white, brown, or navy socks; crew, low-cut or quarter socks are acceptable (**Not permitted: no-show socks**)
- Leather-like shoes or sneakers that are solid black or solid brown and properly tied
- Navy blue **Morning Star School** hooded or fleece jacket

ALL STUDENTS

- The PE Uniform shorts and shirts must be purchased from Risse Brothers School Uniforms.
- **Please put student's name or initials inside ALL uniform attire & tennis shoes, to avoid lost items.**
- Hair should be clean, properly thinned and neatly groomed. Conservative hair styles that are not distracting are appropriate. Hair should be its natural color (no highlighting, tinting).
- Only Junior High girls may wear **Light** makeup; No nail polish.
- Jewelry will be limited to appropriate size watches and appropriate size chains with a religious symbol. No bracelets of any kind.
- Small **non-dangling** earrings for girls are acceptable. Earrings are **not** allowed for boys.
- Uniforms are to be worn in traditional style, e.g., shirts buttoned and tucked-in, shorts & skorts knee length.
- Tight fitting and over-sized or baggy clothing is **NOT** acceptable.

Students of Morning Star School should take pride in wearing their school uniform and be neatly dressed and well-groomed at all times. The school reserves the right to determine whether a student's uniform and appearance satisfy the regulations. The administrators and faculty will be the judges in these matters. Teachers will inspect regularly to see that students are in compliance

with the dress code. Repeated or flagrant violations will result in the parents or guardians being contacted and arrangements for student to be in proper uniform.

P. E. Uniforms for All Students

- The PE Uniform shorts and shirts must be purchased from Risse Brothers School Uniforms.
- Tennis shoes/sneakers for PE can be any color
- Tennis shoes, P.E. clothes and drinking cup are required, and are left at School in the P.E. locker for the week. Friday the students will take P.E. clothes home to be laundered
- **Student's name or initials MUST be inside all uniform clothing items and tennis shoes**
- In the event the P.E. Uniform cannot be brought to School on Monday, a pair of shorts & a shirt should be brought, TEMPORARILY

Emergency Procedures

Safety Procedures: Morning Star School is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all students. To this end, the following safety procedures are in place on the campus:

- All visitors to Morning Star School must report to the school office to sign-in and obtain a visitor's badge. Only visitors with Safe Environment Training (SET), background check, may visit classrooms for activities, lunch, or parties. Visit must be approved by Administration
- No parent may attend a field trip or other such event without authorization from the school office.
- In a weather-related emergency, Morning Star School follows the school closing guidelines from the Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools.
- Safety procedures such as fire drills, lock downs, and hurricane drills are routinely conducted throughout the course of the school year with the students.
- Morning Star School abides by the U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, which mandates training for individuals who come into contact with children and youth and to help recognize, report and prevent child abuse, including sexual abuse.
- As directed by the Diocese of St. Petersburg, Morning Star School has a school wide Safe Environment Curriculum for students. The School Counselor oversees the Safe Environment Curriculum.
- A complete Emergency Operations Plan has been completed in accordance with the Diocese of St. Petersburg policies. Emergency communication, chain of command, release policy, etc. are all implemented in this Plan. Each class is equipped with emergency communication, as well as, emergency supplies such as food, water, and medicines.
- In the event that a crisis or emergency should occur on campus, the Diocesan Crisis Team will be available on site to speak with students, faculty, parents, and staff as needed.

Asbestos Management Plan

Morning Star School, Tampa, maintains an Asbestos Management Plan, which is available for review upon request. The 3-year re-inspection was completed in September 2016.

APPENDIX

Best Practices For Grading Office of Catholic Schools and Centers Diocese of St. Petersburg

For questions regarding any of the policies listed below see the local school handbook.

**Addendum for students in Morning Star Schools is found at end of this document – see asterisks that apply*

A. Philosophy*

We believe ...

- Students should have a clear understanding of the learning objectives
- Our system of grading should be timely, specific, fair and accurate
- Grades should be based on a well-defined set of standards
- Grades should be an accurate measure of a student's ability to demonstrate understanding
- Criteria that are not a direct measure of student learning, such as work habits and behavior, should be reported separately from the academic grade
- Assessments are critical to the teaching and learning process

B. Purpose of Assessment*

An assessment is defined as any instrument that is able to indicate or provide feedback on student achievement or performance. The purpose of an assessment may be summarized as follows:

1. To provide information to students in regard to their progress towards mastery of a learning standard(s). In addition, it provides information for self-evaluation and the incentives to learn.
2. To provide information to teachers on the individual student's level of mastery of the content/skill.
3. To allow teachers to use assessment data to plan instruction that will meet the needs of students.
4. To communicate information to parents about student achievement and performance in school.

C. Types of Assessments

While assessments will take many forms and types, they will be grouped under two broad categories.

Formative

Whenever a student learns new material, he or she needs time to practice and gain familiarity with the material. It is expected that the student will make mistakes during this learning process. Any work done during this learning period is considered *formative*. The purpose of a *formative* assessment is not to judge a student's final competency on a topic or unit, but to evaluate where he or she is in the learning process, diagnose any problems, and motivate and help the student learn the

material. Formative assessments also inform the teacher of learning areas that may need reinforcement or re-teaching.

Summative

After a student has had sufficient instruction and practice on a topic, including assessments of a formative nature, it is then reasonable to judge mastery of understanding, content or skills. The purpose of a summative assessment is to evaluate how well a student knows and understands the material after sufficient engagement and practice with it.

Assessments are *Formative* or *Summative* based on their intended use and purpose and not by form. A quiz for example, may be formative if the teacher is having the students use new concepts to ascertain their level of understanding. A quiz would be a summative assessment if used at the end of a learning section or curriculum chunk after the students have had adequate instruction and practice. In the same way, a trial test is formative, while an end of chapter test is summative. Projects contain both formative and summative elements. They include the ongoing nature of practice, reflective thinking and reworking, before the final summative rendition. Homework is mainly formative in nature as students get familiar with or reinforce what was learned in the classroom

D. Purpose of Grades

A grade is a recorded score derived from an assessment or assessments. The purpose of grades may be summarized as follows:

1. To provide information to students with regard to their performance relative to the learning standard(s).
2. To provide information to teachers on the individual student's level of mastery of the content/skill.
3. To communicate information to parents about student achievement and performance in school.
4. To document student performance for transcripts and to evaluate the effectiveness of school programs

E. The Grade Composition*

In order to represent an accurate measure of what a student knows, understands and is able to do, the academic trimester/semester grade needs to be based primarily on work that is evaluated for appropriate content, understanding and correctness, at a time when the student has had sufficient instruction and practice to be responsible for the material. Summative assessments will therefore be the primary constituent of the trimester grade. They will account for no less than 80% of the trimester grade. Formative assessments will account for no more than 20% of the trimester grade. **See addendum for Morning Star Schools***

Criteria that are not a direct measure of student learning will not be included in the academic grade. These attributes will be reported separately. Please see *Section G: Reporting Conduct and Approaches to Learning*

F. Reporting Grades

Individual assignments will be either assessed traditionally or by using a rubric. When traditional grading is used, 50% will be the lowest failing grade recorded. The following generic achievement descriptors will serve as a scoring guide.

SCORING GUIDE

Letter Grade	Descriptor	% Score
A	The student provides evidence of deep understanding and fluent application of the target standard(s).	90-100
B	The student is close to meeting the target standard(s).	80-89
C	The student meets part of the target standard(s).	70-79
D	The student is just beginning to address the basic ideas of the target standard(s).	60-69
F	The student provides little to no evidence of addressing the target standard(s), including missing or incomplete work.	50-59

At the end of the marking period (trimester or semester), the mean of all assessments (with appropriate weights) is matched to the scoring guide for a final letter grade and the awarding of corresponding quality/grade points (if applicable).

G. Reporting Conduct and Approaches to Learning

The Diocese recognizes that the cultivation of good behavioral and learning habits and behaviors support learning in the long run.

Conduct

While schools may create their own rubric for Conduct, the principles of Respect and Responsibility should be the focus for conduct behaviors. The following are the indicators of Respect and Responsibility.

Respect

- Demonstrates a good attitude
- Is respectful to adults and peers in speech and action
- Maintains positive peer relationships
- Respectful of personal, peer, and school property

Responsibility

- Exhibits self-control
- Follows directions and does not need constant reminders
- Socializes only at appropriate times
- Takes ownership for behavior

The following is an example of a rubric for the reporting of *Conduct*.

	Respect	Responsibility
4 Exceeds	Consistently respectful, kind and cooperative.	Consistently follows school/classroom rules and directions.
3 Meets	Frequently respectful, kind and cooperative.	Frequently follows school/classroom rules and directions.
2 Developing	Occasionally respectful, kind and cooperative.	Occasionally follows school/classroom rules and directions.
1 Rarely	Rarely respectful, kind and cooperative.	Rarely follows school/classroom rules and directions.

Approaches to Learning (ATL)

While schools may create their own rubric for ATL, the principles of Organization, Communication / Collaboration and Reflective Thinking should be the focus for all ATL behaviors. The following are the indicators of Organization, Communication/ Collaboration and Reflective Thinking.

Organization

- Prepared for class
- Punctual with homework and in-class assignments
- Completed homework and in-class assignments

Collaboration & Communication

- Participates in class

- Attentive and engaged during instruction
- Demonstrates helpfulness and teamwork

Reflection & Personal Initiative

- Open to teacher help and correction
- Makes effort to improve behavior/performance by seeking help when needed
- Makes time for personal study and improvement

The following is an example of a rubric for the reporting of ATL.

	Organization	Collaboration & Communication	Reflective Thinking
4 Exceeds	Consistently displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality and task completion.	Consistently attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Consistently open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.
3 Meets	Frequently displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality and task completion.	Frequently attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Frequently open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.
2 Developing	Occasionally displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality and task completion.	Occasionally attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Occasionally open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.
1 Rarely	Rarely displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality and task completion.	Rarely attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Rarely open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.

H. Other Matters on Assessment and Grades*

1. Honor Roll

Honor Roll is awarded to students who encompass merit and integrity that results in academic and behavioral success.

Students can earn Principal's Honors or Honors. Eligibility requirements follow:

Principal's Honors

- All A's
- 3 or 4 in ATL's
- 3 or 4 in Conduct

Honors

- All A's and B's
- 3 or 4 in ATL's
- 3 or 4 in Conduct

2. Make-Up of Academic Work during Absence

Students who are absent are required to make up work missed in each class. If a student is out for only one or two days, upon return to school, the student should meet with the teacher about the work missed. The student will be given a deadline by the teacher to complete and turn in these assignments. It is the responsibility of the student to see that the work is completed. The student may log on to the portal to check the homework missed. If work is not made up by the deadline specified by the teacher, the grade for work missed will be recorded as a 50.

In the case of prolonged absence, three or more days, parents should call the office before 8:30 a.m. for missed class work and homework so that the work can be prepared and be ready for pickup at dismissal time or sent via e-mail. Based on the number of days absent and the amount of work missed, a reasonable amount of time will be allowed for its completion.

Homework assignments for extended absences should be arranged with the teacher. Parents may pick up textbooks, if necessary, at the end of the school day but should email the teacher by 10am to arrange this. Requests for homework should be made by contacting the classroom/subject teacher. Due to teaching schedules requests may take up to twenty-four hours to be completed.

3. Make-Up of a Scheduled Summative Assessment during Absence

Any student who is absent on the day of a scheduled summative assessment will be expected to make it up upon his/her return to school. For every day a student is absent, he/she has that number of days to make up the summative assessment (Ex. 1 day missed = 1 day for summative assessment.) It is the student's responsibility to speak with his/her teacher regarding missed assessments. In the event of multiple-day absences, the teacher will determine when all assessments will be taken.

4. Retakes

The focus of the Office of Catholic Schools and Centers of the Diocese of St. Petersburg is to always encourage and support the learning process that leads to mastery. This retake policy supports this emphasis on learning and relearning.

*Teachers have the discretion to refuse retakes to students who do not fully engage in the learning process prior to the summative.**

The following retake policy is designed to encourage relearning on the part of the student.

Criteria for Retakes - See addendum for Morning Star Schools*

Grades K-5

1. The retake process will be initiated by the teacher. The teacher will communicate with the parent when a retake is necessary. A student may retake a summative once.
2. Students may be required to participate in additional practice in order to qualify for a retake.

Grades 6-8

1. The retake process **must** be initiated by the student.
2. A student may retake a summative once.
3. The Application for a Retake should be completed by the student (with parent, if needed), signed by student and parent, and returned to the examining teacher no more than five (5) school days after the grade has been posted.
4. On the Application for a Retake, the student will identify the deficient standards/topics and include a clear learning plan and timeline to close the learning gap.
5. Students may be required to participate in additional practice in order to qualify for a retake.

Limitations and Deadlines

1. Only one retake will be allowed per summative.
2. All graded formative assessments must be completed prior to the original summative.
3. The retake for any summative in a unit must be completed before the date of the first summative of the following unit.
4. Semester/Trimester exams and summatives that are extended projects with ongoing feedback and clear completion deadlines do not qualify for retakes.
5. The student will forfeit the retake opportunity if either the scheduled retake date or a scheduled teacher required additional practice is missed, unless excused or rescheduled by the teacher.

Teacher Facilitations (K-12)

1. Teachers will group summative assessments around specific learning standards to help the student identify deficiencies and plan a successful retake. Teachers will post retake dates when the summative assessments are returned.
2. The retake will only assess the deficient standards, allowing the student to focus on closing the learning gap and improving the assessment score. The higher grade (out of the retake or the original grade) will be recorded for credit in the grade book.

3. Teachers have discretion and may require that a student complete missing ungraded assignments correlated to the deficiencies before the retake is administered.
4. Teachers have discretion over the format of the retake assessment.

*Teachers reserve the right to deny a student from a retake before, during, or after the retake form is completed if the teacher can show due cause as to why there should not be a retake. This may include, but is not limited to, situations that involve academic dishonesty.

5. Zeros

Missing work and the use of zeros. Teachers understand that a zero (on the 100-point scale) on an assignment is a disproportionate penalty that places the student at a disadvantage when it comes to making up the grade deficit. A score of 50 represents the lowest failing score. Any assessment that is not turned in on the due date, the student will receive an automatic 50.

Addendum for Morning Star Schools Diocese of St. Petersburg Special Education schools Grading Policy for students receiving modifications and accommodations

A. Philosophy

For students in the Morning Star Programs, a fair grading system:

- provides an opportunity for high grades to be earned
- provides meaningful grades that reflect a student's experience in the classroom
- includes flexibility as needed to meet individual needs of students

For students in the Morning Star Programs an equitable grading system:

- maintains high student accountability even when a grading system is individualized
- accurately matches grades to performance, even when accommodations/modifications are implemented

B. Purpose of Assessment

For students in the Morning Star Programs: to provide information to students in regard to their progress towards mastery of a learning standard(s) or access points.

E. The Grade Composition

For students in the Morning Star Programs, the length/complexity of summative assessments and the grade composition will be adapted to be aligned to the information in the student's IEP/Student Support Plan.

H. Other Matters on Assessment and Grades

Make-Up of Academic Work during Absence

In the Morning Star Programs using the IEP/Student Support Plan as guidance, teachers will model, guide and use gradual release of responsibility to developing a plan for students to make

up work during an absence.

Make-Up of a Scheduled Summative Assessment during Absence

In the Morning Star Programs using the IEP/Student Support Plan as guidance, teachers will model, guide and use gradual release of responsibility to developing a plan for students to make up a formative or summative during an absence.

Retakes

Grades 1-8:

1. In the Morning Star Programs using the IEP/Student Support Plan as guidance, teachers will model, guide and use gradual release of responsibility to developing a plan for students to retake a formative or summative assessment.
2. Using the IEP/Student Support Plan, the number of retakes taken is flexible.
3. Students will be required to participate in additional practice in order to qualify for a retake

DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG Office of Catholic Schools and Centers ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The Office of Catholic Schools and Centers of the Diocese of St. Petersburg (herein referred to as the “DOSP”) and each school within the DOSP (herein referred to as the “School”) are committed to promoting a safe, healthy, caring, spiritual, and respectful learning environment for all of its students. The DOSP and each School is committed to protecting its students from bullying and/or harassment. As such, bullying and/or harassment is strictly prohibited, will not be tolerated and shall be just cause for disciplinary action. Therefore, this anti-bullying policy prohibits any unwelcome physical, social, electronic, nonverbal, verbal or written conduct directed at a student by another student that has the effect of:

- (1) physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student
- (2) damaging, exhorting or taking a student's personal property
- (3) placing a student in reasonable fear of emotional or mental harm
- (4) placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property
- (5) creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities of the Catholic mission of the school
- (6) disrupting the orderly operation of a School.

I. Definitions

a. Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying results in physical hurt or psychological distress of an individual. Bullying is unwanted purposeful written, verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior and/or actions, including, but not limited to, teasing, name-calling, slurs, rumors, jokes, false accusations, intimidation, threatening, stalking, innuendos, demeaning comments, pranks, social isolation, gestures, public

humiliation, theft, destruction of personal property, physical violence, cyber-bullying and cyber-stalking.

b. Harassment means to engage in a course of conduct directed at a specific student, which causes emotional distress to that student and serves no legitimate purpose.

c. Cyber-stalking means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific student, causing emotional distress to that student and serving no legitimate purpose.

d. Cyber-bullying is the willful and repeated harassment and intimidation of a student through the use of digital technologies, including, but not limited to, email, blogs, texting on cell phones, social websites (e.g. Facebook, My Space, Twitter, etc.) chat rooms and instant messaging. Cyber-bullying includes the following misuses of digital and/or electronic technology: teasing, intimidating, or making false accusations about another student by way of any technological tool.

e. Course of conduct means a pattern of conduct composed of a series of acts over a period of time, however short, which evidences a continuity of purpose.

f. The definitions hereunder apply to any student who either directly engage in an act of bullying and/or harassment, or who, by their behavior, actions and/or conduct, support another student's act of bullying and/or harassment.

II. Scope/Expectations:

The DOSP and each School expects students to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and the educational purpose underlying all School activities. As such, the DOSP and each School prohibits bullying and/or harassment of any student:

- i. that occurs on school premises at any time;
- ii. during any educational program or activity conducted by the DOSP or the school
- iii. during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity
- iv. that occurs on any bus or vehicle as part of any school activity
- v. through threats and/or other communications made outside of school hours, which are intended to be carried out during any school related or school sponsored activity or program
- vi. though an incident of alleged bullying and/or harassment may occur off of the school's campus and may not entail threats of acts to occur during school hours, if a student's ability to receive an education or a School's ability to provide an education is significantly impaired, as determined by the School and/or the DOSP, disciplinary sanctions may be issued.

III. Reporting Complaints

- a. Each student, parent and/or any other members of the School's community has a duty to immediately report any incident of bullying and/or harassment to the School administrator. The administrator will provide the reporting party with the Bullying

Complaint Report Form which must be completed, dated, and signed by the reporting party so that the School may initiate further inquiry and investigation, when appropriate.

IV. Disciplinary Action

- a. Concluding whether a student's action, conduct, behavior or a particular incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on the facts and circumstances of each complaint, followed by the determination of disciplinary sanctions. Any student found to have violated this anti-bullying policy will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action, which may include, but is not limited to, temporary removal from the classroom, loss of privileges, detention, counseling, parent conference, suspension, expulsion, and/or notification to appropriate authorities. The disciplinary action may be unique to the individual incident and may vary in method and severity based on the School's and/or DOSP's sole discretion. False reports or accusations of bullying and/or harassment also constitute a violation of this anti-bullying policy and will subject the offending party to appropriate disciplinary action.

Students Code of Conduct

The first premise of this code is that children and youth function best when behaviors and expectations are clearly defined. It is accepted that parents are the first and foremost educators of their children in all aspects of their development. This experience aims at developing upright citizens and good Christians, following the new commandment Jesus gave His disciples, "A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another." (John 13:34-35)

In Timothy 4:12, we read "Let no one have contempt for your youth, but set an example for those who believe, in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity." Timothy is urged to rely on the gifts he has received from God. This code urges our children and youth to rely on God's gifts to them, especially charity, chastity and purity. This calls the young person to acknowledge and promote one's personal dignity and the rights that go with it.

It becomes important for children and youth to know the difference between "right" and "not right" relationships. "Right" relationships foster personal, spiritual, and emotional growth, e.g., the ability to communicate, to forgive, to show affection, to be honest, vulnerable, dependable, etc. "Not right" relationships become harmful and hurtful, and even abusive. Abuse occurs when someone does not respect another's boundaries, uses power, tricks, threats, or violence to cross or change another's boundaries, or inflicts hurtful or unwanted behavior (physical, verbal, emotional, or sexual) on another person.

This code is used in conjunction with existing local or diocesan policies, protocols or other codes and is not intended to supersede them. When engaging in formal and informal activities, functions, and programs, children and youth are expected to behave appropriately at all times, respecting the rights of others.

- Christian behavior is expected at all times.
- Respect for individuals, the community and facilities being used is required.
- Cooperation and self-control are necessary when participating in programs and activities.
- Dress must be in accord with the activity and appropriate for a Christian environment.

- Acceptable behavior and lack of cooperation will not be tolerated, but will be addressed appropriately. Examples of unacceptable behavior are as follows, though not limited to:
 1. disrespect for adults and peers
 2. use of vulgar language or gesture, use of racial slurs
 3. damaging of property
 4. fighting or intent to injure others
 5. constant disturbance of others at work or in an activity
 6. cheating
 7. Possession of weapons, possession, sale or use of alcohol or drugs are forbidden.

No child or youth has the right to treat another in any manner that will cause physical or emotional pain. Therefore, harassment of any kind is unchristian and unacceptable.

Coercion or threats to do something physically hurtful or for the purpose of exposing someone or something about another is unacceptable behavior.

Chastity is a virtue to be held in high esteem and promoted in practice. Sexual abuse of any sort, coercing a person to engage in sexual acts against her or his will, physically touching the sexual parts of another's body, treating a person like a sexual object are unacceptable and abusive behaviors.

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 - Diocese of Orlando, FL (2002). Code of Conduct, Bishop Moore Catholic High School. Code of Conduct, Annunciation Catholic Academy.
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 - McCarthy, Robert J. (2002). Protecting Young People, National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministers, Washington, D.C.
 - 23rd General Chapter of the Salesians of Don Bosco (1990). Educating Young People to the Faith.
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Code of Conduct for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of St. Petersburg

“Search Me, O God, and Know My Heart”

-Psalm 139

This **Code of Conduct** applies to all parents, guardians, caregivers, volunteers, and visitors who interact with our schools and Catholic Education in the Diocese of St. Petersburg. It also applies to all parents, guardians, caregivers, volunteers, and visitors who are present at school and school sponsored activities, meetings, and/or functions within and outside of school hours. As parents, guardians, caregivers, volunteers, and visitors, there is an expectation of support for the Vision and Mission of Catholic Education in the Diocese of St. Petersburg.

The school is a multifaceted organization comprising a diversity of populations that have distinctive relationships to one another. Relationships are at the very core of our Catholic Christian belief in our Triune (three persons in one) God. The Holy Trinity is God in relationship! This beautiful doctrine inspires all of us in Catholic Schools, to attempt to be a living Christian community in relationship with God and others. It is essential in such a community that all members recognize and respect not only their own rights and responsibilities but also the rights and responsibilities of other members of the community and those of the school itself. “All rights have to be balanced by responsibilities because we are in relationship” (Putney, 2005).

The responsibility for promoting and upholding these core values of the school community must fall on all those with the greatest capacity to reason and control their actions. Therefore, it is the expectation of the school that all parents/guardians/caregivers/volunteers and visitors model acceptable behavior always within the school setting, at school sponsored activities or when the school can be involved in any social or professional media. “It is incumbent upon parents to cooperate closely with the school teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated; and in fulfilling their duty, teachers are to collaborate closely with parents who are to be willingly heard and for whom associations or meetings are to be inaugurated and held in great esteem” (*The Code of Canon Law*, Canon 796, Para. 2).

As a parent, celebrate that you play a foundational role in the development of your child's sense of justice, equity, and worth of all members of the school community. You are one of the most instrumental role models within your child's life. “Since parents have given children their life, they are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their offspring and therefore must be recognized as the primary and principal educators” (*Gravissimum Educationis*, 1965, para. 3).

This Code is designed to guide all stakeholders in their dealings with staff, other parents, students, and the wider school community. All staff and students at our Catholic schools are guided by similar codes. The Code is written in line with the school's values and expectations. The Code stands beside, but does not of course exclude or replace, the rights and obligations of individuals under common law. All Catholic schools are private property owned by the Roman Catholic Diocese of St. Petersburg.

The Gospel and Our Values:

We are called to emulate Jesus' call to love God and to love each other. We look to the values taught to us in scripture and the Christian belief to guide us, including: **Love** (1 John 4:7-19); **Promoting Life in Abundance** (John 10:10); **Inclusion** (Luke 19: 1-10); **Reconciliation** (Luke 15: 11-32); **Compassion** (Luke 10: 30-37); **Justice** (Matthew 25: 31-460); **Liberation** (Luke 4: 16-21); **Community** (John 15); and **Hope** (Luke 24: 13-35).

In living out these Gospel values, we strive to develop the following:

1. An inclusive approach including a non-judgmental and welcoming attitude towards all people
2. An ability to appreciate the situation of others
3. A cooperative attitude in working with others
4. Open, positive and honest communication
5. The ability to work civilly with other people
6. Reverence for Creation
7. Trusting relationships
8. Responsible actions

As a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and/or Visitor, we ask that you:

Support in words and actions the philosophy of Catholic Education

Work in trust with the school for the common goal of achieving what is best for all

Support your child/ren in all educational endeavors by giving praise and showing interest in school activities

Help your child/ren to discover that it is more the process that is experienced, rather than the end-product, that makes it all worthwhile

Model flexibility – encourage healthy problem solving

Respect the decisions made by the administration, even if you disagree with them.

Help your child/ren to understand that ‘giving of your very best’ is what matters rather than always comparing yourself against the capabilities or achievements of others

Listen to your child/ren, but remember that a different version of the event may be interpreted by others

Understand the importance of a healthy parent/teacher/child relationship and communicate any concerns to your school in a constructive and appropriate manner

Validate that both parents and teachers work together for the benefit of the child/ren

Observe the school’s policies, as outlined on the school webpage and/or the school’s handbook and endeavor to support them in the home

Cooperate where your child’s behavior has overstepped accepted school standards, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, and follow specified protocol for communication with faculty/staff members

Support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment

Cast off gossip and hearsay by communicating with the school and always model good manners for your child/ren

Sustain a positive and co-operative attitude and interact positively with other parents and members of the school community

Encourage community building with other parents in your year, level, and across the school

Value the school community and its reputation especially when engaging with social media

Do not smoke or use offensive language on school premises

Rights of a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and Visitor:

To be treated with respect and courtesy by staff, students and other parents

To be listened to, and clearly communicated with by the school, regarding your children's education and development

To have confidentiality over sensitive issues respected by faculty/staff

To be treated in a caring and polite manner

To have a timely response to concerns raised, usually within 24-48 hours

To be treated with professionalism by all faculty/staff members

Responsibilities of a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and Visitor:

Value and advocate for your school and its reputation. Be mindful of the hurt and damage social media may cause to faculty/staff members and other parents

Under no circumstances approach another child while in the care of the school to address, discuss or reprimand them because of actions towards your own child/ren

Respect the rights of faculty/staff members and other individuals

Respect the reputation of teachers and be mindful of communications especially social media; e.g. tone of emails

Follow the correct procedures to resolve a grievance or conflict, as outlined in the school's handbook

Respect teachers' preparation time before, during, and after school. Make an appointment for long discussions at a mutually convenient time. If you wish to speak to a teacher, please do not expect a meeting unless pre-arranged

To protect our children do not discuss any grievances or perceived failings in front of them regarding the school

On excursions, helping in class or on campus, parents must follow the instructions and directions of the teacher. A parent may remind students of the rules but at no time issue consequences and should refer the student to the teacher if the behavior continues

As valued members of the school community attend and participate appropriately in school liturgies or special events including athletics, concerts, academic and cultural events

Grievance Process for a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and Visitor:

Our Catholic schools want to work in partnership with our families. If anyone has a **current complaint, criticism, or concern**, it is expected the following steps be followed in the first instance:

1. Speak to the appropriate school person involved (e.g. class teacher) first and try to resolve the concern with mutual respect and clear communication. Where/if possible make an appointment with the relevant person. Follow the chain of command.
2. If for some reason this is not possible, then make an appointment to see an administrator, or other designated leadership personnel
3. The Administrator (or designee) should attempt to mediate and find resolution in the presence of both parties.
4. If, having followed Steps 1-3 with no satisfaction, you may complete the online form found on the website of the Diocese of St. Petersburg - Office of Catholic Schools and Centers for further facilitation.

It is important to note that criticism regarding a faculty/staff member will only be heard if it is related to their professional conduct.

Deliberate breaches and inability to respect the Diocese of St. Petersburg – Office of Catholic Schools and Centers Code of Conduct for Parents, Guardians, Caregivers, Volunteers, and Visitors, or exasperating complaints, may result in exclusion of a parent, guardian, caregiver, volunteer, and/or visitor from a school, and/or possible termination of enrollment of their child/ren.

If your complaint relates to Sexual Abuse by a faculty/staff member towards a child in both an historical or current matter, you should, contact the statewide toll free abuse and neglect registry at 1-800-96ABUSE (1-800-962-2873) and/or law enforcement.

Diocese of St. Petersburg Student Internet Use Policy

This document sets forth the rights and responsibilities for students under the Diocese of St. Petersburg Student Internet Use Policy. This Student Internet Use Policy is, by reference, a part of the Student Internet Account Agreement which must be executed by each Student and each Student's Parent or Guardian.

A. EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE:

1. The School Internet system has been established for a limited educational purpose. Educational purposes include classroom activities, continuing education, professional or career development, and high-quality, educationally enriching personal research.
2. The School Internet system has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. The Diocese and school has the right to place restrictions on the material you access or post through the School Internet system. You are expected to follow the rules set forth in this policy, the student disciplinary code, and the law in your use of the School Internet system. The student disciplinary code will govern any violations of this policy.
3. You may not use the School Internet system for commercial purposes. This means you may not offer, provide, or purchase products or services through the School Internet system.

B. ACCESS TO ONLINE MATERIALS:

1. The material you access through the School Internet system should be for class assignments or for personal research on subjects you study in a class or would otherwise research in the school library. Use for entertainment purposes is not allowed.
2. You are not allowed to use the School Internet system to access inappropriate information, which includes, but is not limited to, the following: obscene material, child pornography, material which depicts or describes in an offensive way violence, nudity, sex, death, or bodily functions, material designated as for adults only, material which promotes or advocates illegal activities, material which promotes the use of alcohol or tobacco, school cheating, or weapons, or material advocating participation in hate groups or other potentially dangerous groups.
3. If you mistakenly access inappropriate information through the School Internet system, you are required to immediately report this access in the manner specified by your school. This will protect you against a claim you have intentionally violated this policy.
4. The school has installed filtering software to attempt to prevent access to inappropriate material.
 - a. If you feel filtering software is blocking your access to an appropriate site, report this to your teacher.
 - b. You are not allowed to seek to bypass the filtering software by using a proxy site or some other technology.

C. PRIVACY AND COMMUNICATION SAFETY REQUIREMENTS:

1. "Personal contact information" includes your full name, together with other information which would allow an individual to locate you, including

your family name, your home address or location, your work address or location, or your phone number.

2. If you are an elementary or middle school student, you are not allowed to use the School Internet system to disclose your full name or any other personal contact information online for any reason.

3. If you are a high school student, you may disclose, through the School Internet system, personal contact information to educational institutions, companies or other entities for continuing education, professional or career development purposes with specific staff approval.

4. You are not allowed to disclose names, personal contact information, or any other private or personal contact information about other students. You are not allowed to forward a message sent to you privately without documented permission from the person who sent you the message.

5. You are required to promptly disclose to your teacher or other school staff member any message you receive through the School Internet system which is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable. You should not delete such messages until instructed to do so by a teacher or other staff member.

D. UNLAWFUL, UNAUTHORIZED, AND INAPPROPRIATE USES AND ACTIVITIES:

1. Unlawful activities:

a. You are not allowed to attempt to gain unauthorized access to the School Internet system or to any other computer system through the School Internet system or go beyond your authorized access. This prohibition includes attempting to log-in through another person's account or to access another person's files.

b. You are not allowed to disrupt or attempt to disrupt the School Internet system or any other computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses, or by any other means, using the School Internet system.

c. You are not allowed to use the School Internet system to engage in any unlawful act, including but not limited to arranging the sale or purchase of drugs or alcohol, engaging in criminal gang activity, or threatening the safety of any person.

2. Inappropriate language:

a. Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to all speech communicated through the School Internet system, including public messages, private messages, and material posted on Web pages.

b. You are not allowed to use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language on the School Internet system.

- c. You are not allowed to post information which could cause damage or a danger of disruption to your school or any other organization or person on the School Internet system.
 - d. You are not allowed to engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks on the School Internet system.
 - e. You are not allowed to harass or bully another person on the School Internet system.
 - f. You are not allowed to post false or defamatory information about a person or organization on the School Internet system.
 - g. You are required to promptly disclose to your teacher or another school employee any message you receive on the School Internet system in violation of the restrictions on inappropriate language.
3. Plagiarism and copyright infringement:
- a. You are not allowed to plagiarize works you find on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others, and presenting them as if they were yours, without proper attribution.
 - b. You are required to respect the rights of copyright owners in your use of materials found on, disseminated through, or posted to the Internet. Copyright infringement occurs when you inappropriately reproduce a work that is protected by a copyright.
4. Specific Activities prohibited:
- a. Inappropriate activities subject to discipline under this policy include but are not limited to:
 - i. The transmission of material, information or software in violation of school policy, or local, state and federal law,
 - ii. Changing of Windows/Mac platform settings (desktop, screensavers, etc.),
 - iii. Downloading software or plug-ins into the School Internet system,
 - iv. The use of web-based email accounts,
 - v. Online chatting or any instant messaging,
 - vi. Making purchases via the internet,
 - vii. The installation of any software on the system by a student. Software can only be installed by the School, using software purchased by the School and appropriately licensed by law for use on School computers,
 - viii. Violating copyright or other laws,
 - ix. Accessing personal files belonging to others,
 - x. Accessing areas of the network which are not designated for your use.
5. Limited Privacy:
- a. You are notified by reading and signing this document that you have only a limited expectation of privacy in your files on the School Internet system and in the records of your online activity. All student

use of the School Internet system may be supervised and is subject to being closely monitored at all times. You are notified that the school's monitoring of Internet usage can reveal all activities you engage in using the School Internet system.

b. Routine maintenance and random monitoring of the School Internet system may disclose information indicating you have violated this policy, the student disciplinary code, or the law. A detailed search of your individual School Internet system account, and its historical activity, may be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion you have violated this policy, the student disciplinary code, or the law.

E. SYSTEM SECURITY AND RESOURCE LIMITS:

1. System security:

a. You are responsible for your School Internet system individual account and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use your account. You should not provide your password to another person.

b. You are required to immediately notify a teacher or the system administrator if you have identified a possible security problem involving the School Internet system. However, you are not required to look for security problems; this may be construed as an unlawful attempt to gain access.

c. You are required to avoid the inadvertent spread of computer viruses by following the school virus protection procedures.

2. Resource limits:

a. You are required to use the School Internet system only for educational, professional or career development activities and limited, high-quality personal research.

b. You are not allowed to download large files from or to any computer on the School Internet system unless absolutely necessary, and then only with approval of a teacher or another school employee. If necessary, and allowed, you may download large files when the system is not being heavily used; you are required to immediately remove the file from the School Internet system computer as soon as possible after appropriate copying or use.

c. You are not allowed to use Diocesan, school, or personal distribution lists or discussion groups for sending irrelevant messages.

F. DISCIPLINE

Violations of this Student Internet Use Policy can result in termination of the student's account, denial of access to the School Internet system, suspension, expulsion, or referral of matters to the appropriate law enforcement agency, depending on the severity of the actions. Such determination is within the sole discretion of the School and the Diocese.

G. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY:

Neither the Diocese nor school guarantees the functions or services provided through the School Internet system nor will its internet service provider be without error. The Diocese and/or school will not be responsible for any damage you may suffer, including but not limited to loss of data, interruptions of service, or exposure to inappropriate material or people. The Diocese and/or school will not be responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through the School Internet system. The Diocese and/or school will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the School Internet system. Your parents can be held financially responsible for any harm resulting from your use or misuse of the School Internet system. You may use the School Internet system only if your parents have signed a disclaimer of claims for damages against the school and Diocese.



Morning Star School
210 E. Linebaugh Ave.
Tampa, FL 33612

Please remove this form from this booklet and sign it
AFTER reading the entire Handbook.

**THEN RETURN THIS SIGNED ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
TO SCHOOL TOMORROW**

YOU KEEP THIS BOOKLET FOR REFERENCE

We the _____ Family acknowledge
(Student's Name and Parent(s) Name)

that **BOTH PARENT(S) AND STUDENT(S) HAVE READ** the Morning Star Catholic School, Tampa, Handbook, the attached Diocesan Policies in the Appendix, and will comply with the rules and regulations of Morning Star Catholic School, Tampa

Student's Name: _____
(Print)

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Student's Acknowledgment)

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Parent's Acknowledgment)