



# **Notre Dame High School Family Handbook**

**2022-2023**

Notre Dame High School  
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## Table of Contents

<b>General Information</b>	
• History and Background	1
• Mission Statement	3
• School Location	3
• School Organization	3
• House System	5
• School Calendar	6
<b>Spiritual Life</b>	
• Retreats	6
• Counseling	6
• Mass	6
• Mass Choir	6
• Sacrament of Penance	6
• Search for Christian Maturity	6
• Special Activities	6
• Service Programs	7
• Volunteer Program	8
<b>Parent/Student Information</b>	
• Admissions	9
• Non-Discrimination Policy	9
• New Students	10
• Foreign Exchange Students	10
• Enrolment of Students with Special Needs	10
• Academic Policies and Procedures	10
• Athletic Academic Policy	10
• Student Academic Support Services	10
• Accreditation	11
• Class Rank	11
• Computer Usage	11
• Acceptable Use Police	11
• Bring Your Own Device	14
• Conferences	14
• Course Levels	14
• Course of Study	15
• Course Placement	15
• Course Scheduling	16
• Course Schedule Changes	16
• Credits	16
• Communication of Student Progress	17
• Exams	17
• Grade Point Average	17

• Grading Scale	17
• Homework	17
• Honor Roll	17
• Report Cards and Progress Reports	17
• Standardized Testing Program	18
• Summer School	18
• Wellness	18
<b>Financial Policies</b>	
• Continuous Enrollment	18
• Cost of Education	18
• Tuition	18
• Tuition Replacement Program	19
• Late Registrations	19
• Non-Admission of Students Due to Tuition Delinquency	19
• TSSAA Delinquent Tuition Policy	19
• Student Accident Insurance	19
• Fund Raising	21
<b>Attendance Policy</b>	
• Student Absence	21
• Absence from Weekly All-School Mass	22
• Notifying the School of Student Absences	22
• Off-Campus Appointments During the School Day	22
• Early dismissal	23
• Checking Out	23
• College Visit Days	23
• Cutting Class	23
• Illness During the Day	23
• Tardy Policy	23
• School Closing Due to Inclement Weather	24
• School-Sponsored Outings	24
• Senior Final Exam Exemption	25
• Transferring	25
<b>Textbook Information</b>	
• Rental Policy	25
• Returning Books	25
• Student Withdraws	25
<b>Discipline Policy</b>	
• School Rules and Regulations	26
• Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices	26
• Disciplinary Records	27
• Dishonor to School	27
• Guidelines for Specific Infractions	28
• Hall Passes	29

• Hazing and Harassment	29
• ID Cards	29
• Keeping Kids Safe	29
• Substance Abuse Intervention Program	30
• Alcohol Use Prevention	31
• Alcohol Violation	31
• Tobacco Violation	31
• Events Management	31
• Personal Integrity Code	32
• Public Display of Affection	32
• Senior Pranks	32
• Weapons	33
<b>School Uniform Requirements</b>	
• Girls' Uniform Requirements	33
• Boys' Uniform Requirements	34
• Additional Policy Information	34
• Skort Policy	34
• Outerwear Policy	34
• Footwear Policy	35
• Uniform Disciplinary Action	35
• Out of Uniform	35
<b>Student Health Services</b>	
• Health Services	35
• Emergency Information	35
• Medication Policy	35
• Injury Sustained During School Activities	36
<b>Student Activities</b>	
• Athletic Information	36
• Awards	37
• Band	38
• Cheerleading Team	38
• Clubs	38
• Dance Team	39
• Dances	39
• Drama/Theater	39
• Green & Gold Ambassadors	39
• Homecoming King & Queen Court	39
• Mr. & Miss Notre Dame	39
• Honor Societies	40
• House Leadership Council	
<b>Graduation</b>	40
• Senior Activities	41
<b>Miscellaneous Information</b>	

• After School/Before School Supervision	42
• AHERA/Asbestos	42
• Bell Schedule	42
• Change of Address and/or Telephone Number	42
• Fire/Safety Drills	42
• Food Service	43
• Library	43
• Lockers	43
• Messages for Students	43
• Parking Privileges	43
• Pregnancy	44
• Parties at School	44
• Schoolcast Emergency Notification System	44
• Telephones	44
• Visitors	44

## **Diocese of Knoxville Catholic Schools**

### ***Mission Statement***

The Catholic schools of the Diocese of Knoxville prepare scholars, leaders, and saints.

### ***Vision***

Empowered by the Holy Spirit and recognizing the vital ministry of Catholic education to the future of the Church and nation, we will provide a learning environment that emphasizes quality education and spiritual growth for all.

### ***Core Values***

**Catholic Identity**—Our schools are family-centered communities where all decisions, traditions, and teachings originate from our membership in the Catholic Church and are visible as we serve, pray, encourage, and support each other. We collaborate and problem-solve in positive ways while respecting the view and needs of others.

**Service to God and Others**—Our schools serve God by placing our personal needs second to the service of others. We believe that work has dignity and contributes to the community.

**Dignity of Individual Persons**—Our schools believe that God created each person with dignity and love. We believe that this God-given life should be supported and cared for from conception to natural death.

**Honor and Integrity**—Our schools are open, honest, and trustworthy. We seek to be fair and loyal to our calling, to those we serve, and to those who serve us. We seek to overlook the faults of others and continue to strive to love them as our Lord has asked.

**Excellence**—Our schools strive to do their very best in all endeavors. We prepare, support, and assist our students to glorify God and to be successful members of society.

**Leadership**—Our schools bring out the best in others through leadership and guidance in a collaborative community-based environment. The love of God helps the growth of leadership.

### **Notre Dame High School**

Notre Dame High School is Catholic, co-educational college-preparatory high school located in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Originally founded by the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia, Notre Dame is operated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Knoxville.

#### ***Mission Statement***

The mission of Notre Dame High School is to share the Catholic faith in an environment which fosters spiritual growth and academic excellence and embraces religious, academic, cultural, and economic diversity.

#### ***Vision***

Notre Dame High School is dedicated to the total formation of our students. As a faith community, Notre Dame provides a learning environment that leads students to form a life of vocation that includes sound moral judgment and spiritual growth. Notre Dame students will also embrace scholarly pursuits and develop the desire to be lifelong learners. They will also embrace servant leadership with a commitment to peace and justice, and a willingness to provide service to others.

#### ***Goals***

##### **Teaching the Gospel**

- Develop knowledge of the faith that leads to a deeper relationship with Christ and service to others
- Develop an abiding sense of Christ's presence in self and others
- Promote an active faith community
- Model Gospel Values

## **Igniting Love of Learning**

- Provide a curriculum that meets a broad range of abilities and interests
- Create an environment that opens minds to learning
- Provide the opportunity to acquire skills and knowledge for continued educational development

## **Nurturing Individual Growth**

- Recognize the unique God-given talents of all students
- Promote respect for self and others
- Develop self-discipline, self-esteem, and self-confidence
- Foster wellness and wholeness
- Encourage fulfillment of individual potential

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Notre Dame High School admits students of any race, color, national origin and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship program, athletic and other school-administered programs.

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

## **Academic Policies**

**Credits:** To earn a Notre Dame diploma, a student must attend four years of high school. Also, students should take eight classes per semester unless otherwise advised. Over a four-year period, students can earn a total of 32 credits. A minimum of 28 credits are required for graduation unless other arrangements have been agreed upon with the Administration. Credits should be earned in the following distribution:

<b># of Credits</b>	<b>Subject</b>
4.0	Religion (or 1 unit for each year at Notre Dame)
4.0	Math
4.0	English
3.0	Science (4 are recommended)
3.0	World Language (2 are allowed with permission of the Administration)
1.0	U.S. History
1.0	Modern World History
1.0	Wellness
0.5	Physical Education (Or TSSAA-sanctioned sport)

1.0	Ancient World History
0.5	Economics
0.5	Personal Finance
1.0	Fine Arts
1.0	Freshmen Seminar (beginning with the Class of 2025)
2.0	Academic Electives (more than 2 electives may be taken)

Seniors must pass all academic classes taken during the senior year to complete graduation requirements. Failure of courses required for graduation must be made up in a summer school program before the student is allowed to enroll for the fall semester. To gain credit for a one-semester course a student must pass the course with a grade of 70 or higher; to gain credit for a two-semester course, a student must pass the second semester of the course and have a year-end average of 70 or higher. Students who fail Religion must make up the course in a summer program.

Any classes taken outside the normal school structure must be approved in advance by the Asst. Head of School /Academic Coordinator. Approved classes (online, summer school, etc.) will be awarded a Pass (P) or Fail (F) credit. This credit will not be calculated into GPA or class rank. The only exception to this is for transferring students who need required credits to come into alignment with NDHS semester requirements. (i.e., transferring from block schedule to NDHS semester classes).

Students who transfer into NDHS will have their transferring credits evaluated to ensure that they are aligned with Notre Dame's college preparatory curriculum. Credit may not be awarded for certain classes that are determined not to be college preparatory level courses. All transfer credits will be listed on transcripts sent to colleges and universities.

**GPA:** GPA is computed on a standard unweighted 4.0 scale (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1) and a weighted 5.0 scale. Honors and Dual Enrollment courses are given an additional 0.5 points and AP courses are given an additional 1.0 points. For graduation, a student's unweighted GPA is used to determine if the student will graduate with honors.

Cum laude—with honors and is awarded to student earning 3.7-3.79

Magna cum laude—with great honors and is awarded to students 3.8-3.89

Summa cum laude—with highest honors and is awarded for students earning 3.9-4.0

The two seniors with the highest cumulative grade point averages will be awarded valedictorian and salutatorian.

**Grading Scale:**

A	100-93
B	92-85
C	84-75
D	74-70

F 69 and below

**Academic Dismissal:** Academic performance is subject to review by the Asst. Head of School. Failure to demonstrate adequate academic progress can result in an academic probation. Failure to make appropriate progress during this probationary period may result in dismissal from Notre Dame High School.

### **Honor Code Policies**

Students and staff at NDHS strive to create a Christian environment wherein all work to uphold the ideals of honesty and integrity. It is the right, privilege, and responsibility of each student and staff member to contribute to and work toward an atmosphere of honor and trust.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to , giving or receiving homework to be copied; giving or receiving aid on a test or attempting to do so; plagiarism; forgery.

**Personal Integrity Code:** The community of Notre Dame High School, in light of the teachings of Jesus Christ and in accordance with the school mission statement, expects all students to always display the highest standards of personal integrity. Lying, cheating or any other activity that conflicts with these standards and undermines the integrity of the community cannot be tolerated. Actions that violate the Personal Integrity Code will result in serious consequences, including possible expulsion.

To major components of the Notre Dame Personal Integrity Code include:

- Lying—includes any intentional misrepresentation of facts in order to deceive or obscure the truth in any school related situation.
- Cheating—includes using or taking credit for the work of another person, whether the material is used directly or superficially disguised (plagiarism). Cheating also include the divulgence of any information without the expressed consent of the teacher regarding the contents of an assignment, homework, or test.

The intent of the Personal Integrity Code is to reinforce a sense of moral responsibility within each of our students. It is the expectation of Notre Dame High School that each member of the school community assumes responsibility for his or her own actions and continues to develop intrinsic values of personal integrity. Students who witness a violation of the code are expected to report immediately such violations to a teacher or administrator. Failure to do so can be considered a violation of the code.

### **First Offense Consequences**

Normally, students receive a zero for the assignment or test involved in the infraction. *In considering the student's best interest, the teacher may meet with the Dean of Students and/or the Asst. Head of School to discuss a make-up option on a case-by-case basis.* For example, a student who

copy/pastes a paper from the internet could be required to complete an original essay, though he/she will likely not be able to earn full credit for the make-up assignment.

Student will receive 5 discipline points issued by the office of the Dean of Students.

### **Second Offense Consequences**

Student will receive a zero for the assignment or test.

Student will receive a 10-point reduction of the 9-week grade for the course in which the violation occurred.

Students will receive 10 discipline points issued by the office of the Dean of Students.

### **Third Offense Consequences**

The Administration will review the case. A Third violation of the Personal Integrity Code is subject to possible expulsion.

*Violations of Academic Dishonesty are cumulative over a student's career at Notre Dame High School. A student's Honor File is transferred each succeeding year of attendance at Notre Dame.*

**Any violation of the NDHS Honor Code may jeopardize a student's admission to leadership positions in the school including National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta, and House positions.**

## **Discipline Policy**

*The discipline policies of Notre Dame High School foster an environment that promotes the total Catholic education of the student. With the cooperation of parents, students, and faculty, the discipline system serves as a positive element in providing such an environment.*

**Disciplinary referrals:** Teachers who believe that a student has demonstrated inappropriate behavior will submit a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students who will determine the consequences.

**School detentions:** School detentions are assigned following a school discipline referral by the Dean of Students. Detention is held for one hour after school in Seminar Room 2 and takes precedence over all non-academic activities. After-school detentions will be held each week.

**Discipline points:** The school's rules will be enforced by a discipline point system administered by the Dean of Students. The number of points assigned as a consequence for inappropriate behavior is subject to the judgment of the Dean of Students.

**Disciplinary probation:** Students who are experiencing discipline difficulties are subject to review at the year's end by the Administration and the Director of Counseling to determine if the student will be placed on disciplinary probation for the upcoming school year. Failure to comply with the strict guidelines established by the probation will result in dismissal from school. Students may be placed on probation as the result of one serious violation or an excessive number of discipline points. The school considers the implementation of disciplinary probation for any student who receives more than 15 discipline points during the year. The Administration will determine the terms of the probation.

**Expulsion:** Students who accumulate 30 discipline points during a single academic year or demonstrate behavior that is judge to be detrimental to the school community will be expelled from Notre Dame High School and may not apply for readmission. If a student is expelled or asked to leave the school for disciplinary reasons, he or she may not participate in or attend school-sponsored activities without the Head of School's permission.

**Guidelines for specific infractions:** The Dean of Students can use discretion in assigning consequences for inappropriate behavior. Although the following list is not exhaustive, it does provide guidelines that are considered when making such decisions.

### **Discipline Violations and Consequences**

- Dress code violation—2 points
- Gum chewing—2 points
- Food/drink in non-designated areas—2 points
- Lying/deceit—up to 10 points
- Accessing a car on campus without prior permission –3-5 points
- Having a cell phone or other electronic device out during class time or church-related activities
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Offense—teacher confiscates phone/device and give to the Dean of Students for the remainder of the school day or subsequent days—3 points
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense—teacher confiscates phone or device and give to the Dean of Students for the remainder of the school day or subsequent days—5 points
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense—teacher confiscates phone/device and give to the Dean of Students for the remainder of the school day or subsequent Days—7 points, loss of cell phone privileges, and possible suspension.
- Violation of acceptable computer use policy—5-10 points
- Skipping a class—7 points, possible suspension
- Leaving school without permission –10-15 points and suspension
- Absent from school without permission –10-15 points and possible suspension
- Driving violation –5-10 points and loss of driving privileges
- Possession of obscene materials—10-15 points
- Stealing—20 points, suspension, or expulsion
- Threats to other students—15+ points, suspension, or expulsion

- Possession or use of tobacco products—15 points, suspension
- Defacing school property—15 points, suspension, or expulsion
- Fighting with or striking a fellow student—10-20 points, suspension, or expulsion
- Serious insubordination, verbal or physical abuse toward a staff member—20 points, suspension, and possible expulsion
- Possession or use of alcohol or controlled substance—20 points, to be dealt with according to Substance Abuse Policy #3160
- Possession of a weapon—30 points and expulsion
- Selling or distribution of alcohol or other controlled substance—30 points and expulsion

**Tobacco products:** Students are not to be in possession (including in one's car) of any tobacco products or related paraphernalia while on campus or at any school-sponsored activity.

### **Substance Abuse**

Notre Dame High School seeks to have a safe and drug free environment. To achieve this, the school may use, but is not limited to, multiple method drug testing for cause of concern for students.

An outside agency performs random hair follicle testing at NDHS. Due to the random nature of the testing, there is a distinct possibility that a student could be tested more than once during the school year. The NDHS Administration is committed to the confidentiality of the results of any student tested, regardless of the outcome of the test. A "positive" test result entails that a student's parents be called, and that the student possibly be referred to an outside drug and alcohol counselor for an assessment. The cost of the assessment will be the family's responsibility.

The possession, use, or distribution of any quantity of illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia is unacceptable on school premises, vehicles parked on school property or off-site school-sponsored activities. School discipline will be enforced, including possible dismissal, with notification of state law enforcement officials. **(DSP #3160)**. NDHS reserves the right to perform probable cause testing on any student in attendance.

**School related incidents:** The use of or possession of alcohol or other drugs by an NDHS student on school property or at any school event is strictly forbidden and a violation of the school's alcohol and drug policy. Conveying information to other students about the sale or distribution of alcohol or drugs could be a violation of this policy. When a student has violated this policy but is not expelled from school, he/she must strictly adhere to the school guidelines to remain a member of the student body. Depending upon the nature of the offense, any combination of the following conditions may be applied:

- The student will receive discipline points and be suspended from school.

- The student must complete a professional assessment, including a drug test. The results of the assessment must be provided to the school along with a report of any recommendations for follow-up counseling or rehabilitation activities.
- To remain enrolled, the student must adhere to these recommendations.
- For any second offense or second positive test prior to graduation, the student will be forced to withdraw from school.

Any student involved in the sale or distribution of alcohol or other drugs will be immediately expelled. The administration reserves the right to search any person, book bag, locker, phone or vehicle when the presence of alcohol or other drugs is suspected.

**Drug Use Identification:** To assist students who may have illegal substance use/abuse issues, every student will be randomly tested for drug use throughout the school year. A computer will randomly generate a pool of students to be tested. Each family will be assessed \$50 per student, which is included in the annual fees, and these funds will be placed in a designated fund to support the testing program. The random testing will begin 14 days after the start of the school year and will conclude on the last day of the school year. A hair follicle test, which is very reliable and will show drug use traces for 90 days, will be used. The collection of a hair sample is very simple and will be sent to a third-party lab for independent verification.

Students who show no trace of illegal substance use will have their name placed back into the pool and are subject to another random test if their name is generated in the testing pool again.

The following actions will be taken for students who show traces of illegal substance use:

1. All actions will be confidential to protect the identity of the student and no information will be released or discussed.
2. A parent and student conference with the school administration and/or support team will be held to discuss the findings. Parents can request a retest at their own expense if they feel it is necessary. The Head of school or Asst. Head of School must approve any retesting.
3. Student will be required to have a professional substance use assessment from an entity approved by the school to determine the extent of the abuse issues and to recommend a course of action to deal with these issues.
4. Student will be required to attend a minimum amount of counseling/intervention sessions as required by the evaluation to break the use/abuse cycle.
5. Parent and student will sign a substance use contract agreeing to stay substance free.
6. After 100 days, the student will be retested at the parent's expense. This will establish that the student is substance free. If the test shows that the student is free of substance use, he/she will be returned to the testing pool with all other students and will be subject to random drug testing.
7. If after 100 days the student again tests positive for illegal substances, he/she will be dismissed from school.
8. If a student who has tested positive for illegal substances is returned to the pool for additional random testing, and again tests positive for illegal substance use within a 24-month period,

he/she will be dismissed from school. If a student tests positive for illegal substance use after the 24-month period, he/she will again be given the intervention opportunity listed in these guidelines.

Note: Any student who refuses to be tested will be in violation of the requirements agreed to in their contract. Parents will be notified of the insubordination/refusal to comply with the testing requirements. The student will have 24 hours to comply or be dismissed from school.

### **Student Attendance**

Tennessee state law requires the attendance of each student on all days and hours that school is in session. In the opinion of the NDHS Administration and Faculty, more than 5 days absent in a class per semester impedes the ability to succeed in that class. *Therefore, on the 6<sup>th</sup> and subsequent class sessions missed per semester for any given class, the individual class teacher will deduct 2 points from the student's ongoing quarter grade with no limit to the amount of point deductions a student may incur.*

**Example:** A student with a 94 for his 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter average for a given class who has missed 6 days of class, will receive 92 quarter average. If he has missed 7 days, he will receive a 90, 8 days, an 88, etc. The same student will continue to accrue 2-point deductions for additional absences accrued during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.

The administration may review this policy in cases of excessive absences due to emergency circumstances. Students who have emergency circumstances are expected to initiate contact with the Attendance Office and Administration regarding the situation within one week of the absence to register a petition to receive extenuating circumstance status. NDHS Administration is anxious to work with families with true extenuating circumstances.

It is the responsibility of each individual parent and student to check RenWeb for absences and possible point deductions. Teacher gradebook records will serve as parent notification of absences. Absences incurred due to events sponsored by NDHS (i.e., participation in sporting events or field trips) *do not* count against the student.

Bereavement absences incurred due to the loss of a parent, sibling, or grandparent are not included in the 5-day rule but must be documented by the Attendance Office upon the student's return to school.

**Absence:** All absences require a note from parents. The Attendance Office will be available to receive notes pertaining to absences or tardies at 7:45 a.m. each morning. Failure to bring a note upon return to school will result in 2 discipline points and 2 detentions.

In the case of an absence or tardy, the parent must call the Attendance Office at (423) 624-2618 (extension 1000) before 9:00 a.m. each day the student is absent or tardy.

In accordance with expectations outlined via course guidelines, it is the responsibility of the student to contact the teacher in advance of a foreseen absence concerning all work that will be missed and to plan for completing the work. Failure to comply with the standard in its entirety will forfeit the opportunity to make up all work missed during the absence.

Any illness or accident which will keep a student out of school for an extended period of time should be reported to the Attendance Office as early as possible.

**Early Dismissal:** If a student needs to be excused before the end of the school day, a note to that effect should be presented for approval to the Attendance Office by 8:00a.m. the morning of the early dismissal. Early dismissal notes may be turned in as early as one month in advance. Failure to comply with the early dismissal standards will forfeit the opportunity to make up any missed work for credit. The student's name will be added to the Early Dismissal portion of the Daily Absentee list. It is the student's responsibility to report to the office at their early dismissal time. Calls will NOT be made to the classroom as to not disrupt classroom instruction. The office will verify appointments as it deems necessary. Parents are asked to make every effort to schedule appointments outside of school hours.

**Illness:** At the present time, there is no one on duty in the clinic on a daily basis, Therefore, if a student is feeling ill, the teacher may send that student to the office. Upon determining the seriousness of the illness, the Dean of Students (or his designee) may call the parent to arrange the student's dismissal. In case of early dismissal during regular school hours due to unforeseen illness, the Assistant Head of School, Dean of Students or Attendance Office must speak with the parent by phone or in person for the student to be dismissed early.

**Signing Out:** After arriving on campus, students are not to be excused from classes or leave the school building/grounds for any activity without permission from the attendance office. This includes going to the parking lot to retrieve forgotten items. Students leaving campus must go to the office and sign out when leaving and must sign in upon returning.

**College Visit Days:** In addition to the five absences per class, per semester, Juniors and Seniors only are allowed two properly documented college visit days per year. For absences due to college visits to be considered, students must:

- Notify the Attendance Office and the classroom teacher at least one day in advance of the visit.
- Submit to the Attendance Office "Proof of Visit" documentation from the admissions department of the college upon the day the student returns to school.

It is encourage that all college visit days be taken before May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Cutting Class:** A students who cuts or skips class will not be allowed to make up any work missed that day for credit. They will receive zeros for any work missed and discipline points and detentions will be issued.

**Tardy Policy:** The term “tardy” is used exclusively to refer to a student who is late to school.

Very rarely is there sufficient reason for repeated tardiness to school. The term “late to class” is used to refer to a student who has already arrived at school for at least one class, but did not arrive to class on time.

Students who arrive more than 30 minutes late in any class are marked as absent. Therefore, a student who checks in at 9:01 is counted *absent* for his A-Block class.

Every student who is tardy must sign in with the Attendance Office before they report to class. No student is admitted to their first class of the day without a tardy form from the Attendance Office. The teacher uses the form to ensure the student has signed in with the Attendance Office and returns the form to the student.

Each student is allowed 8 tardies per semester before disciplinary referrals are written. Tardies accumulate regardless of whether they are valid or invalid. For each tardy to school, parents will be notified by email. It is up to the parent to keep track of the number of tardies their student accrues. For every tardy after 8, the student will receive detention and 2 discipline points.

The Administration reserves the right to waive all students’ responsibilities in the case of tardies resulting from an unusual amount of inclement weather, a major traffic problem, etc., that unexpectedly delays/halts normal travel.

**Late to Class:** Individual classroom teachers are responsible for keeping an accurate tally of “late to class” incidents and may, at their discretion, refer students to the Dean of Students.

**Late to or Absent from Weekly All-School Mass:** Weekly school Mass attendance is mandatory. Students who frequently miss Mass will be referred to the Dean of Students.

**School-Sponsored Outings:** When going off campus as a member of a school group, the student must return a permission form signed by a parent or guardian. Students who do not return signed permission forms will not be allowed to participate in the off-campus activity.