

Juan Diego Academy
Parent / Student Handbook
2025-2026

School Directory

President

Sandra Bitner

Principal

Patricia Masso

Accounting Assistant

Aldo Bertini

Guidance Counselor

Edna Garcia

Student Enrollment Specialist/Registrar

Monico Rodriguez

Athletic Director

Roy Gonzalez

School Secretary

Graciela Salmeron

Math

J. O'Brien

Science

E. Rodriguez

English/ Spanish

D. Pallais

Social Studies/Athletics

R. Gonzalez

P.E./Athletics

K. Rodriguez

Creative Writing/College Transition

E. Garcia

Religion

M. Aldaz

Faculty: To contact a faculty member not listed above, use the first initial of their name and their last name, followed by @juandiegoacademy.org. A telephone message may also be left for a faculty member by calling the school secretary.

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Part I:

Juan Diego Academy

Vision

Juan Diego Academy is a Christ-centered, Catholic learning community forming young men and women to answer the call to lead and actively participate in their Church and community.

Mission

As a Catholic Regional High School, Juan Diego Academy:

- Offers a quality, comprehensive academic curriculum
- Utilizes the latest in technology and innovation
- Educates the whole person: mind, body, and spirit
- Instills a sense of Christian responsibility and service to others
- Trains leaders to meet the current and future challenges of society

Statement of Philosophy

Juan Diego Academy is dedicated to giving students a Catholic-based, holistic education.

Religious and Spiritual Formation

Education in the doctrines, customs, and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church challenges students to see and appreciate the dignity of all persons as children of God. Catholic values are reflected throughout the curriculum: in daily prayer, religious instruction, weekly Mass, Christian ministry, and periodic retreats. In this environment of prayer and reflection, students are challenged to internalize their Christian beliefs and put them into practice. The centrality of religion to life is foundational.

University Preparation

Rigor, relevance, and relationship are hallmarks of a thorough, comprehensive, college-preparatory program for the 21st century. Students are academically challenged with courses that emphasize developing critical thinking skills, integrating technology, and understanding the relevance of what is being studied to life and career goals while forming relationships between ideas and concepts across the curriculum.

Students are equipped with the tools needed to be successful college students and lifelong learners.

Educating the Whole Person

In addition to the religious and the intellectual, a truly Catholic education: builds character based on gospel values, promotes physical fitness and health, allows students to exercise their aesthetic, kinesthetic, and artistic abilities, and involves them in competitive activities designed to foster growth of self-image, the importance of teamwork sportsmanship, and the pursuit of excellence. These essential concepts are addressed in various forms across the curriculum, particularly in competitive sports, fine arts, and extracurricular clubs and organizations.

A Christian Learning Community

Educating the whole person requires more than excellent classroom instruction. For this reason, Juan Diego Academy continually strives to build a Catholic Christian community where each student is offered love, acceptance, discipline, and challenge. The witness of faculty, with the care, attention, and respect shown to students, contributes significantly to this atmosphere. In turn, students are expected to treat faculty and each other in a similarly loving and respectful manner, responding to the Gospel mandate to "...love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12).



“The Shield”

Designed with the help of the 2011 Eighth Grade class of Our Lady of Sorrows School in McAllen, the “Shield” features four quadrants, each depicting an important aspect of our school.

The upper left quadrant pays tribute to St. Juan Diego, our patron saint. His devotion to the Eucharist and humble, courageous faith in the face of poverty and injustice are our inspiration. The roses around the chalice symbolize those that fell from Juan Diego’s tilma with the imprint of the Virgin Mary, reminding us that we go to Jesus through Mary, our Blessed Mother.

The upper right quadrant depicts the St. Peter Oblate Novitiate, the first institution of learning established on La Lomita. The Oblates of Mary Immaculate have spread the Catholic faith throughout the Rio Grande Valley for over 150 years.

The lamp of knowledge over an open book is in the lower left quadrant. These symbols of education and enlightenment are constant reminders of the purpose of Juan Diego Academy as an institution of learning. The lamp is lit, challenging us to be light to others in a world so often filled by the darkness of ignorance and indifference.

Finally, the lower right quadrant features our school monogram and the initials of the virtues that form our school motto.

The “Shield” is green and white: Our School Colors. Chosen by the eighth-grade class of Immaculate Conception School in Rio Grande City, these colors symbolize the life and lushness of the Rio Grande Valley (Green), and Mary, who plays such an essential role in the faith life of the people of America (White)



“The Lion”

Our lion was initially designed in the early 1970s by Judy Klepfer as the school mascot of Cardinal Stritch High School in Keokuk, Iowa (the school attended by Juan Diego Academy President Sr. Marcella Ewers, who was also a principal there).

Mark Salinas, a 2011 student intern at Juan Diego Academy, gave “Diego” a facelift from the original design to take on its present form. The idea for lions came from input from Catholic school eighth graders in the Upper Valley. An online voting process selected the lion from four finalists as Juan Diego Academy’s mascot.

Lions live and travel as a pride—a community. We seek to instill a sense of community and school pride in our students as they journey together at Juan Diego Academy.

School Motto: Justice, Devotion, and Action

These virtues, inspired by the 2011 eighth-grade class of St. Joseph Catholic School in Edinburg, signify what a Juan Diego Academy Education is all about. We are a community of learners who are passionate about justice and the right relationship with all of God’s creation. Like St. Juan Diego, we are devoted to Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, who points the way to her son, Jesus. And we are a community of action: living out our baptismal calling to serve others, especially those most in need. Justice, Devotion, and Action are our motto and way of being at Juan Diego Academy.

Introduction

The Student and Parent Handbook is published to provide information on Juan Diego Academy students and their parents. Parental support of our school's policies is essential, as is parental cooperation with the total school program.

Parents must see themselves as active partners with the faculty in guaranteeing that their children observe and adhere to school rules and regulations. This way, we all contribute to a safe and wholesome learning environment for the entire student body.

When violations of school policies occur, it is likewise important that parents remain in active partnership with school authorities. For discipline to be effective, students must know with certainty that their parents and faculty hold them accountable and implement consequences.

By contrast, it is unfortunate for all parties when a parent defends or excuses a child's transgressions or attempts to shield a child from the consequences of a mistake. Not only is this harmful to the child in that it interferes with the healthy learning process necessary for his/her development, but it also disrupts the effective operations of the school.

Parental feedback, including disagreement, is always welcome. However, when parents are unable to support the school either in general policy or in a specific decision, the principal reserves the right to ask the parents to withdraw their child from school for the good of all.

The principal may amend any part of the Parent/Student Handbook. Parents will be notified in writing of any changes. This Handbook and its contents have been adopted by the Juan Diego Academy School Board effective July 2023.

Accreditation

Juan Diego Academy is accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department (TCCBED)

Nondiscrimination Policy

Juan Diego Academy admits students of any sex, race, color, nationality, ethnic origin, and religion to share in all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The school does not discriminate based on sex, race, color, nationality, ethnic origin, or religion in admission policies, the administration of its educational policies, financial aid assistance, and other school-administered programs.

Part II:

Admissions

Admissions

The offer of admission is based upon the student's performance on an entrance examination, an evaluation of his/her total scholastic record, and a personal interview conducted by two or more members of the Administrative Team with the prospective student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s).

For students seeking admission as transfer students, the following number of high school credits is required:

- Sophomores: 7 credits
- Juniors: 14 credits
- Seniors: 21 credits

In addition, the credits must be in areas that will meet Juan Diego Academy's graduation requirements. Therefore, before sitting for the entrance examination, a student seeking admission to the sophomore level or higher should:

- Present a copy of their academic record for review by the Administration
- Be interviewed (along with the student's parent/guardian) by two or more members of the Administrative Team

Admission of Immigrant Students

Juan Diego Academy will comply with Immigration and Naturalization Service requirements regarding Immigrant F-1 students. Such students entering the United States to study must hold passports with a U.S. student visa. Principals or other authorized school personnel will complete all information required using the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) – Batch Process Registration. J.D.A. will conform to all policies issued by SEVIS, and all student information will be kept current

Tuition and Fees

Juan Diego Academy is a private, self-supporting Catholic School that depends on the timely payment of tuition and fees to meet its financial obligations. Parents and guardians, upon enrolling their child at Juan Diego Academy, agree to make prompt payment of tuition and fees.

Non-Refundable Fees: *New and Returning Students: \$1300.00, and Seniors: \$1500.00*

Payments

Juan Diego Academy does have payment plans available. It is essential to note that the payment is due on the 10th of each month, unless otherwise stated. Payments received after the 20th of each month will be subject to a \$50 late charge per month. Tuition past due 20 days or more may lock online accounts, and the student may be ineligible to remain at Juan Diego Academy.

Type of Payment: Payments may be made in cash, by check, by money order, or direct debit from a checking or savings account (monthly or semi-annual plan only).

Insufficient Funds: We regret having to assess a \$35.00 fee when the bank returns a check for insufficient funds. At the administration's discretion, it may be necessary to require all future payments for the current academic year to be in cash, money order, or cashier's check.

Acceptance of Checks: Checks cannot be accepted for past due tuition balances after the 3rd of December through Christmas Vacation or after the 6th of May through final exams.

Parent/Guardian Annual Contribution

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) agree to participate in and support all school activities, including fundraising events. **Parent(s)/Guardian(s) agree to make an annual fundraising contribution of \$250.00 per semester (\$500 annually).**

Accounts in Arrears (past due 14 business days or more)

Report Cards

Report cards cannot be issued to students whose accounts are in arrears.

Suspension

Students whose accounts are in arrears may be suspended from all classes until the account is paid up to date, or arrangements have been made with the Administration.

Withdrawal

If a student withdraws from school voluntarily on the opening day or thereafter, advance tuition payments will be refunded less \$500.00. All other fees are nonrefundable.

If a student withdraws from school with an account in arrears, no grades, transcripts, or other records can be released until all financial obligations are satisfied.

Testing Fees

PSATs are covered as part of the student's registration fees. Advanced Placement fees (per test) are based on the fees set for the current year by the College Board. Parents will be notified of these fees every year when test registration nears. It has averaged 100.00 per test in previous years.

Refund Policy

Suppose a student withdraws from Juan Diego Academy for any reason before school opens in August. In that case, all advanced tuition payments paid before the withdrawal date will be refunded to the payer. **Registration fees, school apparel orders, and lunch fees are nonrefundable.**

If a student withdraws from school voluntarily on the opening day or thereafter, advance tuition payments will be refunded less \$500.00. All other fees are nonrefundable.

All refund requests should be made in writing and addressed to the principal.

Financial Assistance

In consultation with the Board of Trustees, the Principal of Juan Diego Academy will establish a Financial Aid Committee each year to review applications for financial assistance and determine tuition scholarship recipients. The committee's decision is final in all matters of financial assistance. The application for financial assistance is an annual process. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to apply for financial assistance online by going to:

<https://sssandtadsfa.force.com/familyportal/familylogin> in January or February and submit all required documents by the deadline. Only one application is needed per family.

Scholarships

Juan Diego Academy provides limited tuition scholarships to qualified students with financial needs. Tuition scholarships are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis based on the needs of the student's family and the financial resources available to the school.

Juan Diego Academy awards two merit scholarships to incoming freshmen each year. The award in a given year is based solely on information received in that year.

Juan Diego Academy does not award athletic scholarships.

Criteria for Determining Eligibility for a Tuition Scholarship:

- Financial need as demonstrated by the information provided on the Financial Aid website. Please note: The Financial Aid Committee may request additional information. All information will be held in strict confidence.
- Returning students must have satisfactory records of academics, discipline, and attendance. Students requesting financial assistance need to maintain a 2.5 GPA. Application must be made at the time of re-registration.

Financial Aid Application Procedures

Parents/Guardians should obtain a Financial Aid Application Form from the school office or the website. This process must be completed along with submitting a signed copy of the most recent IRS form 1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ and copies of their most recent W-2 forms from all employers and/or privately owned.

Part III:

Graduation Requirements

Graduate Success

To be successful in university studies, as well as in life, graduates of Juan Diego Academy will be able to:

- Participate in the faith life of their church—particularly in service to the least favored—in an active and informed manner
- Apply Roman Catholic teaching to the critical analysis of personal and social issues
- Speak and write English clearly and fluently for formal and informal communication
- Listen to and read English critically and thoughtfully, evaluating the validity of spoken and written arguments
- Utilize available technologies (computers, calculators, and other data devices, the internet) as tools for research, word processing, data management, multimedia presentations, and reference.
- Communicate (orally and in writing) in a language other than English
- Use critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, and scientific methods to form conclusions and apply them in real-life situations
- Apply a comprehensive understanding of our world - its geography, cultures, histories, and the natural and social processes that govern it - to the analysis of current events
- Conduct research, synthesize it, and evaluate it across disciplines
- Lead productive lives marked by respect, generosity, and compassion, develop effective planning & decision-making skills, fruitful collaboration with others, and functional processes for solving personal, interpersonal, and situational problems
- Model the principles and techniques of proper fitness, wellness, teamwork, and good sportsmanship

Academics

Requirements for graduation from Juan Diego Academy include a minimum of 28 credits to meet the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and Texas Education Agency guidelines:

Foundation High School Program with Endorsement in Multidisciplinary Studies
(Multiple endorsements, including STEM and Arts & Humanities, are available)

English 4.0 Credits*	Math 4.0 Credits**
Science 4.0 Credits***	Social Studies 4.0 Credits****
Religion 4.0 Credits	Electives 3.0 Credits ^
Spanish 2.0 Credits	Fine Arts 1.0 Credit
Physical Education 1.0 Credit	Health 0.5 Credit
Communication Applications 0.5 Credit	

* Required: English I, II, English III, and English IV

**Required: Algebra I, II, Geometry, Pre-Calculus

***Required: Biology, Chemistry, & Physics, 4th Science

****Required: AP Human Geography or World Geography, AP World History, AP U.S. History, AP Government, AP Economics

^may include online courses for high school or college credit (S.T.C.) with prior approval from the principal

Endorsements Offered by Juan Diego Academy

Stem Endorsement
A coherent sequence or series of courses selected from one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CTE courses with a final course from the STEM career cluster• Computer science• Mathematics• Science• A combination of no more than two of the categories listed above

Multidisciplinary Studies Endorsement*
A coherent sequence or series of courses selected from one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Four advanced courses that prepare a student to enter the workforce successfully or postsecondary education without remediation from within one endorsement area or among endorsement areas that are not in a coherent sequence• Four credits in each of the four foundation subject areas, including English IV and chemistry and/or physics• Four credits in AP, IB, or dual credit selected from English, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, languages other than English, or fine arts

Arts and Humanities Endorsement
A coherent sequence or series of courses selected from one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The same language in languages other than English• Two levels in each of two languages other than English• Courses from one or two categories (art, dance, music, and theater) in fine arts• Social studies• American Sign Language (ASL)• English electives that are not part of Business and Industry

* All students earn the Multidisciplinary Studies Endorsement as part of meeting JDA graduation requirements

Advanced Placement Courses

Juan Diego Academy is proud of its rigorous curriculum in the arts and sciences and offers opportunities for students who seek advanced study through our AP courses. Specially designated courses developed according to the College Board's *Advanced Placement Program* prepare qualified students to take the nationally administered *Advanced Placement Tests* for college credit. Our *Advanced Placement* courses could include the following courses:

- Biology (Seniors)
- Calculus AB (Juniors and Seniors)
- Macroeconomics (Seniors)
- English Language and Composition (Juniors)
- English Literature (Seniors)
- Government (Seniors)
- Human Geography (Freshmen/Sophomores/Juniors/Seniors)
- Spanish Language & Culture (Freshmen/Sophomores/Juniors/Seniors)
- Spanish Literature & Culture (Sophomores/Juniors/Seniors)
- United States History (Juniors)
- Environmental Science (Juniors/Seniors)
- World History (Sophomores)

Students in an Advanced Placement class may elect to take the AP® exam that is given in May. There is a fee for each exam of approximately \$100.⁰⁰. Students can also challenge any AP exam, even if they are not enrolled in the course. Students may earn college credit for these courses at some universities, depending on passing grades. No refunds will be given.

Quarterly Honors

Honor Roll students are recognized quarterly. *All A Honor Roll* is awarded to students who, in a given quarter, have earned a grade of **93** or higher in every course. The *A & B Honor Roll* is awarded to students who, in a given quarter, have earned a grade of **90** or higher in every course.

Graduation Honors

At graduation, the graduating class's **Valedictorian** and **Salutatorian** are honored. To qualify for this honor, a student must have attended Juan Diego Academy for **THREE** consecutive years (in their entirety). The **Valedictorian** is the student with the highest cumulative grade point average in the class; the **Salutatorian** has the second-highest cumulative grade point average. The selection of these students is determined based on all courses taken and recognized by Juan Diego Academy during the four years of high school, up to and including the third quarter of senior year. In cases where there is a tie, co-valedictorians or co-salutatorians will be honored. If a tie for valedictorian exists, there will be no salutatorian honored unless the student's grade point average is 4.0 or higher. A JDA Honor Cord is awarded to each graduate with a 3.5 grade point average and who has successfully completed seven (7) or more measures consisting of any combination of the following achievements:

- Earn an additional endorsement as part of the school's graduation plan (one measure per endorsement, not counting the Multidisciplinary Studies Endorsement that all students receive)
- Receive a score of three or higher on an AP Exam (one measure per AP exam with a score of three or higher)
- Earn a grade of B or higher on a dual enrollment course taken at JDA or on an approved college course taken for elective credit—online, or in person (one measure per course taken and passed with a B or higher—prior administrative approval required for taking college credit courses).

Ranking

Juan Diego Academy's policy is not to rank students in any grade. Verification for those students who fall in a particular position (such as top 10-15%) will be provided individual documentation if needed in applying for a scholarship or to the college of their choice.

Transfer Credit

Acceptance of Credit

Occasionally, new upper division students will enter Juan Diego Academy having taken courses for high school credit while they were in the 7th or 8th grade. To ensure that all of our students have the solid foundation necessary for academic success, Juan Diego Academy reserves the right to withhold credit for high school courses taken in junior high school and require that students re-enroll in those courses at Juan Diego Academy if it is deemed that the student would benefit from this course of action. Such decisions will be made by the school administration, in consultation with the appropriate faculty, and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). *High school courses taken in middle school will grant credit for high school graduation requirements but will not count toward GPA.

Assignment of Grades

Appropriate credit will be recorded on the Juan Diego Academy permanent record for any student who enrolls after his/her first semester from an accredited academic institution. Grades transferred as numeric values from accredited schools in the United States will be accepted at face value. Grades transferred as "passing" will be awarded credit, but these grades will not be used in determining the student's cumulative average. Grades transferred as letter grades will be assigned numeric values as follows:

A = 100 B = 92 C = 84 D = 76 F = 65

The following will be used to assign value to grades earned in the Mexican school system:

10 - 7 = P (Passing)

6 - 1 = F (Failing)

Academic Eligibility/Probation

Interscholastic activities

Participation in interscholastic activities conforms to the current guidelines of the *Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS)*. To be eligible for participation, a student must:

- Carry a full course load (at least seven courses through Juan Diego Academy)
- Have no failing grades during the current marking period (no grades below 70).

Eligibility is determined on the day report cards are issued, or at the beginning of the tenth day after report cards are issued, with the approval of the Administration.

Ineligible students may attend scheduled practices but not participate in competitions until eligibility has been restored. An ineligible student remains ineligible until the following progress report or on the tenth day following the date the following progress reports are issued; if progress reports indicate that the student is passing **all classes**, eligibility is restored.

If eligibility is not restored in the progress reports, it will be reviewed on the next report card.

Passing summer school courses may remove a student's ineligible status incurred during the previous school year. Eligibility would begin ten days following the date report cards are issued.

Other extra-curricular activities

Participation in other extra-curricular activities is governed by the same rules as interscholastic activities, excluding service and spiritual-growth activities sponsored by the religion department and/or campus ministry. In deference to the value placed on religious and moral formation at Juan Diego Academy, eligibility for participation in these activities is subject to the discretion of the Administration.

Academic Probation

Juan Diego Academy administration may place a student on academic probation for a pattern of poor academic performance (typically over at least one semester). The parent or guardian will be notified of the student's probationary status and the attached conditions. If the student fails to meet the probation conditions during the specified time, the student will be required to withdraw from school.

A student who gives evidence of consistently poor performance during the school year (as reflected, for example, in quarterly grades), and whose performance gives little indication of probable improvement, may, in the student's best interest, be asked to withdraw from Juan Diego Academy.

Failing Academically

A student who fails more than two full-year courses (or the equivalent) must complete these courses in summer school before being readmitted in the fall. Students who fail more than two full-year courses (or the equivalent) may be asked to withdraw from Juan Diego Academy.

Shortage of Credits

Students are required to make satisfactory progress toward graduation in order to remain enrolled at Juan Diego Academy. Suppose students are found to be short of the number of credits for graduation, either because they have failed a course or transferred to Juan Diego Academy. In that case, they are responsible for making arrangements to make up the credit loss through a summer program or other arrangements. Any arrangements to make up credit deficiencies must be approved in advance by the Administration.

Incompletes

A student may be assigned an incomplete grade at the end of a marking period. Typically, this is done when the student has been unavoidably out of school due to illness or inability to complete school work due to unusual circumstances. *School policy requires that students make up incompletes within the first two weeks of the next marking period.* If the student does not make up the incomplete work within the time allowed, the missing work will be assigned a grade of zero, and the course grade will be averaged accordingly. The principal must approve any exception to this policy.

Homework

Homework is assigned to reinforce daily objectives and course outcomes, as well as challenge students to synthesize and apply classroom learning using higher-level critical thinking and reasoning skills. All homework assignments are posted on Google Classroom.

Grading

Numeric grades are based on a 100-point scale. The grading scale at Juan Diego Academy is as follows:

- A = 93-100
- B = 85-92
- C = 77-84
- D = 70-76
- F = 69 and below

The minimum passing grade is a 70. To pass a course, a student must earn a minimum of a 70 as the final grade in that subject. The highest grade that a student may receive for a quarterly, semester, or yearly course grade is 100.

A grade, whether a test grade or a report card grade, may be contested by a student, parent, or legal guardian no more than five days after the grade has been delivered to the student or posted on Gradelink—whichever comes first.

Progress Reports

In the middle of each quarter, progress report grades will be sent to all students electronically and on paper. If a student's progress report indicates that the student is failing a course, a progress report will be mailed to the parent, and the subject teacher will make a follow-up phone call. Because it is possible that a student may perform satisfactorily up to the middle of the quarter in a subject, but may do poorly in the second half of the same quarter, a progress report grade does not guarantee a passing grade in a course for the quarter. Refer to the school calendar for a list of progress report dates.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued four times each year. The first report card is issued following the first nine-week quarter. The second report card is issued following the second nine-week quarter, followed by the first semester average. The third report card is issued following the third nine-week quarter. The final report card lists the results of the fourth quarter. It also lists the semester grade for the second semester and the final grade for the year. (Refer to the school calendar for the weeks that report cards will be distributed)

Semester Grades

Semester grades are derived as follows:
The average of the two quarters averages and the semester average.

Final Grades

For full-year courses, final grades are the average of the two semester grades. For one-semester courses, the semester grade and the final grade are identical.

Absences

Absences impede academic success, resulting in lost instruction and missed work. While absences due to illness are understandable, avoidable absences should not occur.

- Assignments, tests, or quizzes missed due to absences before progress reports may NOT be made up at the end of the quarter, and grades of 0(zero) will be recorded.

- Students who exceed the allowable number of absences per semester will lose credit for the course, regardless of the actual grade.
- Students placed on probation due to absences will be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities, including athletics.

Absence during a Qtr final exam: Absences during Qtr final exams are not permitted. Exams missed due to an absence may be given a 0 (zero)

Missed Work

Students are responsible for knowing and adhering to each teacher's policies on absences for tests, absences on days when tests are announced, and on work missed. During an absence, students should check their teacher's Google Classroom, contact the teacher by phone, or contact a classmate to learn of assignments given. All missed work must be made up within the guidelines set by the teacher. If a student desires special arrangements with a teacher regarding deadlines for missed work, etc., it is the student's responsibility to request such arrangements. Teachers, at their convenience, may assist students in making up missed work.

*** Unexcused absences will be assigned zeroes.**

Parental Contact

J.D.A. teachers will report to parents regularly, during every nine-week grading period, if needed, concerning the progress of their child(ren). Teacher contact with parents may be formal or informal. Discretion should be used to determine whether to include the student in such a conference.

The school will arrange for formal parent-teacher conferences for every student at least once, but preferably twice a year. Progress Reports are distributed to the parents during the nine-week grading period. The school's academic calendar displays a schedule of dates when Progress Reports and Report Cards are sent to parents.

After-School Tutoring

Teachers at Juan Diego Academy are available for after-school subject-specific tutoring on days and times arranged by the student needing assistance and the availability of the subject area teacher. Each faculty member is required to post tutorial times in the course prospectus.

Senior Electives

Seniors must take a full course load and attend all daily class periods. This means that seniors must enroll for a minimum of 7.0 credits. Seniors may complete their credit requirements from the electives listed in the course bulletin or take an approved online course. The principal must approve any exceptions to this policy.

Awarding of Graduation Diploma

Diplomas are granted to those students who have successfully completed the graduation requirements of Juan Diego Academy. Suppose a senior is short of the requirements at the time of graduation. In that case, the student will be allowed to participate in the commencement exercise, but will not receive a diploma until the student achieves full credits before the start of the following school year.

Release of Student Information

Release of Student Grades

Juan Diego Academy will send to colleges, scholarship programs, and other entities an official transcript of the student's courses and the grades received in those courses, with the parent's written permission.

Per Texas State law, neither parents nor students may deliver an official transcript. Regulations require that official transcripts be sent directly from the school. However, parents and/or students may provide unofficial transcripts.

Release of College Entrance Test Scores and AP Test Scores

Consistent with the policy of The College Board and the ACT, students are responsible for ensuring their standardized test scores are forwarded from the testing agency to the college or university of their choice.

Release of Disciplinary Information to Colleges

Students and parents should understand that teacher and counselor recommendations are confidential documents and waive access to them during the college applications. Juan Diego Academy's policy is to inform colleges, if requested, of serious disciplinary matters that result in probation, out-of-school suspension, or dismissal from school. It is the student's obligation to be honest with the college counselor and with the colleges to which the student is applying if there are serious academic or behavioral misconduct incidents.

PSAT

Tenth and eleventh-grade students will sit for the PSAT during October. This test provides scores predictive of later performance on the SAT. For juniors, the PSAT also serves as the qualifying test for the National Merit Scholarship Program and other scholarship programs administered by the College Board.

SAT/ACT

Students in Grade 11 are encouraged to register and sit for the fall or spring administration of the SAT and ACT college entrance exams. The Counseling Department provides registration information and other test information. It is the responsibility of the student to register for the tests, meet associated deadlines, pay the test fees, and make arrangements with the testing agency to submit the scores to the colleges and universities of his/her choice.

TSI (Texas Success Initiative)

Students planning to attend a Texas public college or university, including those who desire to participate in the Dual Enrollment program while attending Juan Diego Academy, must register and sit for the TSI unless their SAT/ACT scores exempt them from this requirement. The Counseling Department provides the registration information.

Career Testing

To help students determine possible career goals and the corresponding college major fields of study, Juan Diego Academy will conduct a computer-based career assessment at the discretion of the counselor/administration. This assessment will take place during the freshman year.

ACRE Assessment

Students in Grade 11 will participate in the Assessment of Children/Youth Religious Education. This Assessment will be administered only in the Spring semester.

Standardized Testing/Student Services

Grade 9

Freshmen take the NWEA tests and the PSAT (Pre-SAT), sign up for a College Board account to take an interest inventory, and begin matching career interests to potential colleges and universities. By assessing an array of academic competencies, these tests provide each student and their parents with an objective, nationally normed measure of scholastic progress. Additionally, it provides Juan Diego Academy with valuable data for evaluating our instructional program.

Grade 10

Sophomores also take the NWEA tests and PSAT (Pre-SAT). These tests provide scores predictive of later performance on the ACT/SAT. For juniors, the PSAT also serves as the qualifying test for the

National Merit Scholarship Program and other scholarship programs administered by the College Board.

Grade 11

Juniors will take the NWEA tests and PSAT/NMSQT during the fall semester, and are advised to register and sit for the spring administration of the SAT and ACT college entrance exams. The school counselor provides registration information and other test information.

It is the responsibility of the student to register for the SAT/ACT tests, meet associated deadlines, pay the test fees, and make arrangements with the testing agency to submit the scores to the colleges and universities of his/her choice. The school will offer one of the tests on campus in the spring, and students must register in advance.

Part IV:

Academic Policies

Gradelink

Parents and students can access Gradelink to view grades and other pertinent information. School communication also comes through the Gradelink system. As a result, parents must maintain their most current contact information to ensure easy communication with school personnel. Students and parents have different login information – please contact the front office to recover your account information.

Academic Honor Code/Academic Integrity

Education in a Catholic school is both a privilege and a responsibility. It requires students to submit to a rigorous academic program in preparation for university studies. It also involves specific ethical demands regarding academic integrity.

Academic Honor Code

At Juan Diego Academy, honesty and integrity are fundamental in a community dedicated to learning, personal development on all levels, and the search for understanding. We reserve these values and hold them essential in promoting individual responsibility, moral and intellectual leadership, and pride in ourselves and the academy.

Juan Diego Academy is a small community in which trust and honesty are of the highest value and in which any form of cheating or dishonesty creates undercurrents of distrust among the students and faculty. Juan Diego Academy is an institution of learning and moral development, intellectual growth, and ethical awareness. Dishonesty and cheating impede and work against the creation of trust and the practice of Gospel Values.

- Honesty is a value that holds each person to the truth, to tell and defend the truth.
- Honesty results in fairness for each member of Juan Diego Academy
- Integrity is firm adherence to our Catholic Values, with or without the presence of others
- Respect is treating others as we would like to be treated

- Respect is being mindful when speaking only Spanish, not to isolate/exclude those who are monolingual English speakers
- In an environment of respect, the work we turn in as our own is our own
- Responsibility is the quality of being accountable for our actions and accepting the consequences of our actions

The purpose of the academic honor code is to help students develop habits of moral character. Each student is an essential member of Juan Diego Academy and must make an ethical and moral commitment to **act honestly and encourage other students to act in the same manner.**

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement

Parents are expected to support Juan Diego Academy's goal of helping students grow in moral values by encouraging academic honesty, reading the honor code, and accepting the consequences for students' failure to abide by the code.

Academic grades are awarded based on merit, achieved through hard work, and the exchange of original thoughts and ideas. The following behaviors are forms of personal dishonesty and contradict this understanding :

- Copying homework or other assignments for or from another student, including study guides.
- Allowing another student to copy homework or assignments.
- Having, using, or attempting to use unauthorized aids (books, notes, "cheat sheets," calculators, and other electronic aids or persons) on tests, quizzes, homework, papers, or projects.
- Writing formulas, notes, codes, or answers on desk, paper, hands, clothing, etc., in an attempt to or for actual use on an assignment or test.
- Using a cell phone or other non-approved electronic device during a testing session.
- Copying answers from other students during a test, with or without the students' knowledge.
- Giving unauthorized assistance to other students before or during a test.

- Plagiarizing: representing in writing the thoughts or ideas of another as if they were one's own, without giving credit to the original author; the wholesale copying of an author's work into one's own without citation (evidence of plagiarism may be determined through Turnitin.com, Safe Assign, or by other provable means).
- Unauthorized possession of a test copy, answers to a test, or other teacher materials.
- Distribution of unauthorized copies of tests, answers to a test, or other teacher materials
- Attempting to deceive by changing a test paper that was previously graded.
- Forgery in connection with academic endeavors or school procedures. Any other related behaviors that contradict the spirit of academic integrity.

All of these activities are violations of academic integrity. They are grounds for both academic and disciplinary penalties. Any student suspected of cheating will be referred to the Principal for disciplinary action.

Through enrollment at Juan Diego Academy, each student promises as a matter of personal honor to act at all times by the highest standards of academic integrity.

To further expand, forms of academic dishonesty are as follows:

Plagiarism

Plagiarism includes someone else's words, ideas, images, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work for credit that consists of the work, ideas, or data of others, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific references and, if verbatim statements are included, through quotation marks. By placing their name on work submitted for credit, the student certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified as appropriate acknowledgements. When in doubt about rules concerning plagiarism, students are urged to consult with individual faculty members or recognized handbooks in that field. Plagiarism covers unpublished as well as published sources.

Fabrication

Fabrication is the use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings. Fabrication includes but is not limited to:

- Citation of information not taken from the source indicated, which may consist of incorrect documentation of secondary source materials
- Listing sources in a bibliography that are not directly used in the academic exercise
- Submission in a paper, thesis, lab report, or other academic exercise of falsified, invented, fictitious data or evidence, or deliberate and knowing concealment of the true nature, origin, or function of such data or evidence
- Submitting any academic exercises as your own, prepared totally or in part by another person.

Cheating

Cheating is an act or an attempted act of deception by which a student seeks to misrepresent that he/she have mastered information on an academic exercise that they have not learned.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the simulation of human intelligence in machines programmed to think and learn. It can perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as understanding language, recognizing patterns, solving problems, and making decisions. In the educational context, AI can support personalized learning experiences. As AI technologies evolve, it's imperative to establish clear guidelines to leverage these tools effectively and ethically within our school.

Academic Integrity & the Use of AI

Academic Integrity is demonstrated by students when the ideas and the works of others are appropriately cited and respect for the learning process is maintained. When used responsibly and appropriately, AI can become part of the learning process. However, when using these resources, students must maintain transparency and honesty in their work. Students are expected to use AI technologies ethically, respecting copyright laws, privacy norms, and the intellectual property of others.

- DO NOT use AI tools to complete assignments without specific permission and instructions from the teacher.
- AI work must NOT be submitted in the place of student work

- Using any AI tools during an exam is NEVER permitted
- AI should NOT be used to engage in plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty in academic work.
- Never enter any personally identifiable information or other relevant information into AI tools.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is any act that disrupts the educational process or gives a student an academic advantage over another student.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Juan Diego Academy's computer facilities provide excellent learning opportunities by exploring and using various educational resources, including computer programs, USBs, and access to the internet.

To be granted permission to use the school's computers, the student must have the 2025-2026 Technology Use Agreement on file in the office, which is provided in the appendices of this handbook. The Agreement must be signed and dated by both student and parent.

We recognize that the Internet's greatest strength, largely unregulated and unregulable access to virtually limitless sources of information, also poses a hazard. Some internet sites contain materials that are sexually explicit, offensive, or contrary to our educational mission. We supervise wherever computers are in use and place primary responsibility on the student to use our computer facilities for appropriate means only. Failure to meet any of these expectations may result in revocation of the student's permission to use the school's computers and/or other disciplinary action.

Specific Expectations of students who use or access Juan Diego Academy's Computers/Network

**Adapted from NCEA's From the Chalkboard to the Chatroom.*

As a computer user, I agree to follow the rules and code of ethics in all of my work with computers while attending Juan Diego Academy:

- I recognize that all computer users have the same right to use school-owned equipment; therefore, I will not use computer resources for non-academic purposes. I will not waste or

take supplies that the school provides, such as paper, printer cartridges, flash drives, etc.. I will keep my work area clean and free of food and liquids when using an electronic device.

- I recognize that copyright laws protect software; therefore, I will not make unauthorized copies or give, lend, or sell copies of software to others. I understand that I will not be allowed to bring software applications or games from home to be used on school equipment without proof of licensure and prior approval from my teacher or an administrative team member.
- I recognize that the work of all users is valuable; therefore, I will protect the privacy of others by not trying to learn their password; I will not copy, change, read, or use files from another user without prior permission from that user; I will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to system programs for computer equipment; I will not use computer systems to disturb or harass other computer users or use inappropriate language in my communications.
- I will honor my school's procedures for storing information, including using Google Classroom, Gradelink, and the school's website. I realize that after prior notice has been given to me, files may be deleted from these systems to protect the integrity of the network and the individual, or because of space limitations.
- Each student who receives Internet access will be instructed on proper network use. Internet use must support education and research and be consistent with the school's educational objectives. Students using network or computing resources must comply with the appropriate rules for that network or resource.
- As a network user, I will not use any of the Juan Diego Academy resources for a non-educational purpose. In addition, I will not reveal my personal information, home address, or personal phone number, or those of students, teachers, or other staff members. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secrets. Using school computers and networking resources for commercial

activities is not permitted. Their use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.

- Parents must realize that their students may encounter material on a network/over the Internet that they do not consider appropriate (vulgar jokes, statements of belief that some might consider immoral, etc.) The student is responsible for not pursuing material that could be regarded as offensive or immoral.
- Computer use is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of these privileges. Vandalism or intentional modification of system settings will result in cancellation of privileges and/or school disciplinary action. The school reserves the right to seek financial restitution for any damage caused by a student or other user. The school will deem what is inappropriate use, and their decision is final. The administration, faculty, and staff of Juan Diego Academy may deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges. Violating the rules and code of ethics described above will result in serious disciplinary consequences.

To be granted permission to use the school's computers/Internet domain, the student must:

- Sign the *Technology Acceptable Use Agreement* (Form C in the back of this handbook)
- Obtain his/her parents' signature(s) on the same *Technology Acceptable Use Agreement* copy.
- Submit the signed *Technology Acceptable Use Agreement* to the front office.

Disclaimer: Juan Diego Academy makes no guarantee about the quality of the internet services provided and is not responsible for any claims, losses, damages, costs, or other obligations arising from the network use or accounts. Any additional charges a user accrues due to the use of Juan Diego Academy's network are to be borne by the user. Juan Diego Academy also denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through user access. Any statement accessible on the computer network or the internet is understood as the author's point of view, not that of Juan Diego Academy, its affiliates, or employees.

Technology Concerns

Vlogs: Engagement in online vlogs such as, but not limited to, Facebook®, Instagram®, Tiktok®, Pinterest®, Snapchat®, etc., may result in disciplinary action if the content of the student's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, or other students.

Sexting: Students involved in possessing or transmitting inappropriate photos on their cell phones or other electronic devices face suspension and/or dismissal.

Texting: Students should not be involved in texting during the school day. Students engaged in texting at school face detention, suspension, and/or dismissal.

Virtual Reality Sites: Virtual Reality Sites such as, but not limited to, www.there.com® and www.secondlife.com®, pose a developmental and moral risk to a student's life. Parents are cautioned to be aware of the online sites visited by their children, knowing that predators often do not live in a neighborhood but are present in the home via a computer. Students whose avatars depict other students, teachers, or staff in a defamatory light face detention, suspension, or dismissal.

Cell Phones/All Electronic Devices Policy

Students' use of cell phones and other electronic devices is not always conducive to a serious learning environment. Therefore, the use of these items in the classroom is prohibited. Students are to follow the distribution and collection procedures defined by JDA Administration. The use of any camera to take unauthorized pictures is likewise prohibited. Students are encouraged to be vigilant of expensive belongings at all times. It should be understood that the school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal electronic items. Parents should not call or text students during school hours, nor should a student have to call or text their parents.

Failing to Adhere to the Cell Phone/All Electronic Policy

- **First offense:** Device confiscated, parent notified, and the device will only be returned to the parent or guardian. A behavior contract may be required.
- **Second offense:** Device confiscated, parent notified, detention assigned, and a fine of \$20 to retrieve the device.
- **Third offense:** Device confiscated, parent meeting scheduled, and further disciplinary action as per the Student Code of Conduct.

Student Success

The responsibility for school success lies principally with the student. Students must be well organized, aware of, and abreast with each course's short-term and long-term requirements. To achieve their full potential, students should dedicate a minimum of two hours every school day to home study. Completing the next day's homework assignments may comprise only a part of those two hours of study. The balance of time should be spent reviewing for upcoming tests, preparing extended assignments, and working on long-term projects.

Part V:

Attendance

Attendance

The Texas State Law requires students to be in attendance 90% of the school year. T.C.C.B.E.D. mandates that schools are in session for 180 days. Promotion or credit may be jeopardized if a student misses more than 10%, excused or unexcused, of the school year. Absences impede academic success, resulting in lost instruction and missed schoolwork. While it is assumed there will be absences due to illness or emergency, absences for any other reason should be avoided.

Juan Diego Academy operates on an 8-period day. Our students attend class for 180 days in one year. Students will need to make up these absences in order to regain their credit when they exceed the 10%. The methods students use to make up absences will need to be during the student's own time. Example: After School, Saturdays, or Summer School.

Texas State Law only grants the following as legitimate reasons for school absence: sickness, death in the family, health treatment, quarantine, religious observance, and required court appearance. In addition to fulfilling the statutory requirements of Texas Law, regular attendance is essential to guaranteeing a continuous, uninterrupted instruction program as a basis for academic success. Therefore, Juan Diego Academy cannot condone or approve absence from school for vacations or other nonessential reasons. The Administration reviews all absences.

Liturgy, Retreats, & Religious Celebrations

As a Catholic school, Juan Diego Academy is dedicated to the total formation of its students. Hence, attendance during its monthly liturgy, grade-level retreats, or religious celebrations is mandatory for all students. Students wishing to participate in extracurricular activities, be elected to leadership positions, or be selected for special programs must be present for those events. **Please do not schedule appointments that conflict with these days already designated on the school calendar.** The front office will be closed during liturgy/prayer services so all staff members can

attend. Therefore, students will not be allowed to leave campus, and business matters will not be conducted until the conclusion of our services.

Reporting an Absence

When a student is absent, the parent or guardian should phone the school at 956-583-2752 before 10:00 AM on the first day of absence. If the length of the absence is definitively reported on the first call (e.g., "my child will be absent for two days"), no further calls are necessary. If the length of the absence cannot be definitively reported on the first call, a call must be made by the parent or guardian on each day of the absence. If no call is made, the school will call the home by 11 AM.

Excessive Absences

The parents of students who have accumulated five absences (excused or unexcused) in any one class during the current semester will be notified, by letter or email, that the student has been excessively absent. Should the student accumulate additional absences in the class in the same semester, a conference must be scheduled between the principal and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). Hereafter, additional absences can result in potential credit loss and may result in probation.

Absenteeism Consequences

Once the student has exceeded nine absences per semester in a class, the student will lose credit for that particular class and be placed on probation. The student will be required to continue attending the class, and lost time will be made up at the administration's discretion, thus having an opportunity to recuperate credit for the class. The probationary status will remain for the duration of the school year.

A student placed on probation for excessive absences may lose the privilege of attending any dances, and/or the Senior Prom, and may not participate in extracurricular activities, including athletics.

A continued pattern of excessive absences by a student on probation may result in suspension, withheld registration, or immediate dismissal. Students placed on probation for excessive absences **must** present a signed physician's note for each absence over nine per semester.

Returning to School Following an Absence

When returning to school following an absence, a physician's documentation of an illness must be submitted to the front office on the day the student returns. If a student is absent from school for three or more days, a physician's note is required to be readmitted to classes. This note must contain the number of days absent and the reason for the absence. If a student does not have a signed physician's excuse, a signed note from the parent or guardian should be presented at the main office no later than 8:10 AM on the day the student returns to school. Students who do not bring a note on the day they return will be given a grace period of one day to produce the note.

- **Only three handwritten excuses (from a parent/guardian) will be allowed throughout the school year.**

Obtaining an Admit to Class Pass

Before 8:10 AM on the day the student returns to school from an absence, the student must procure an *Admit Pass* at the Main Office. This pass will be presented to each teacher by the student during the school day for the teacher's signature.

Extracurricular Participation on Days of Absence

Students who arrive after the beginning of fifth period are considered to be absent for half a day. Students who are absent, half-day absent, or go home sick on a given day are not allowed to attend or participate in any after-school or evening activity sponsored by the school. Absence on a Friday will prevent a student from participating in weekend events. Students failing to adhere to this policy could jeopardize their future participation in that activity.

Excused Absences

- Physician's excuses
- Only three handwritten parental/guardian excuses
- TSI Testing
- Approved School Activities
- Approved College/University Visits
- Approved Religious Holidays

Student Dismissal during the School Day

Illness during the School Day

A student who becomes ill during the school day should report to the Main Office. The school will contact the parent or guardian, who may then come to the school to sign the student out. *No ill student will be released from school unless signed out by a parent or guardian. To ensure student safety, ill students will not be released from school based on a phone call from parents. An ill student who leaves campus without being signed out by a parent or guardian is considered truant.*

Professional Appointments

Students required to leave school for a professional appointment must present a note, signed by the parent/guardian, stating the nature of the appointment and the time of departure from school. Parents may be called to verify the note. All notes must be presented *before 8:10 AM*. Failing to do so, the student will be issued a late slip. For the safety of our students, only those students whose cars are registered in the Main Office may be dismissed based on this note alone. All other students (those who do not drive) must be signed out by a parent/guardian. Parental permission for early dismissal may not be sent to the school via e-mail. For verification purposes, all requests must contain the signature of a parent, adult relative, or guardian and a current phone number. All students must check in at the Main Office before leaving for the appointment. Students returning from an appointment must check in at the Main Office to obtain an admit slip. The student must return with a signed physician's excuse to be noted as an excused absence.

Due to school traffic and other safety considerations, we request that students not be signed out of school after 3:30 PM.

College Visits

Helping students choose an appropriate college or university is integral to Juan Diego Academy's mission as a college-preparatory school. In keeping with our mission, the school allows two absences during the junior year and two absences during the senior year, for the purpose of visiting college campuses. The Principal must approve all such absences before the visit, and supporting documentation from the university must be provided for the visit to qualify as an excused absence. Students should understand that they

will be responsible for making up all school work missed during college visits. Any more than two days taken for college visits in the junior or senior year will be considered unexcused absences.

Tardiness

Regular and timely attendance is essential for student learning. We expect our students to be in class and on time, except when they are ill or have academic activities outside the classroom/school buildings. **Students must be in class by 8:15 A.M. Any late student must report to the Main Office to sign in.**

When Late to Class/School. A student who is not in class, at Morning Prayer (8:20) by the designated time on the daily schedule is considered tardy. The student is marked tardy by the appropriate faculty member, responsible for reporting the tardiness to the school office via Gradelink. Only the Principal may excuse a tardy. Students are not to dispute tardiness with faculty. Excessively tardy students may be placed on probation or asked to submit a doctor's excuse for subsequent lateness.

- Morning Prayer is counted as part of the first period.
- Students will be excused for five tardies per semester; this allows ten tardies per school year (this includes late arrivals to school or between classes). Allowed tardies will not roll over between semesters.
- Students arriving 10+ minutes late to class will be considered absent and will NOT have the absence changed to a tardy (NO EXCEPTIONS)
- NO TARDY after the 5th tardy will be excused for any reason, even if the parent calls in the student late.
- Students are required to serve their tardy detentions ON THE DAY THEY ARE TARDY. Students cannot attend extracurricular activities/athletic practices until they have fulfilled this obligation.
- Teachers may require students who are tardy to class to report to their classrooms to review any missed instruction/collect assignments.

Disclaimer: If a student is more than 10 minutes late. It will become an unexcused absence.

Detention

The Principal or Guidance Counselor will supervise school detention, which may take place during lunch or after school. Detention will be served primarily by those students who are tardy in the morning, but detention can be assigned for other reasons. Students are required to serve their tardy detentions **ON THE DAY THEY ARE TARDY.**

*Students assigned to After School Detention will report the day after the parent has been contacted. The detention assignment will be for thirty minutes during lunch or after school.

Students who are athletes or members of clubs or organizations that practice or meet after school must remember that a detention will keep them from attending practice or meetings, and additional consequences may result.

Unexcused Absence

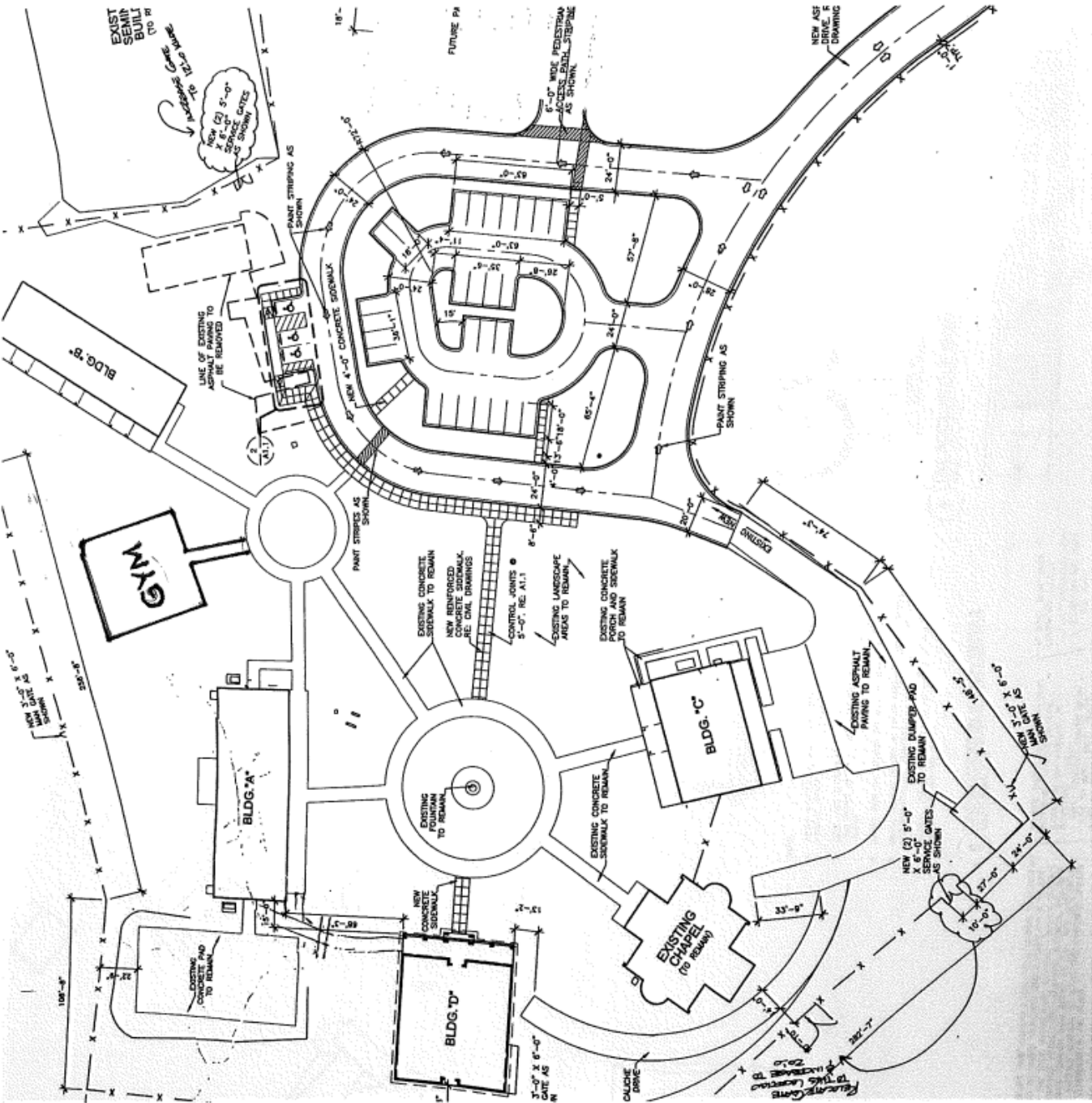
Absences judged by the administration to be unexcused carry the following academic consequences in addition to the above absence policies:

- A zero (0) grade must be assigned to the student for any classwork on the day of unexcused absence, including in-class assignments, quizzes, tests, and presentations.
- Consequences for failing to turn in homework or assignments due are handled per the teacher's course syllabus.

Cutting a Class

Any student who is found to be absent from class without the permission of the class period teacher or other designated member of the staff or administration may be considered to have cut a class. Likewise, a student who cannot verify their presence in class during a given period (by providing a note or pass to the Office) may be considered to have cut a class.

Part VI: General Regulations



Student Drop-off and Pick-up at JDA

Students should not arrive on campus before 7:30 A.M. Once students arrive on campus, they are not permitted to leave campus until student dismissal at the end of the school day, unless granted permission by the front office. At dismissal, students must be picked up by 4:15 PM unless involved in an after-school activity. Students in an after-school activity should be picked up within thirty minutes of the activity's conclusion. Students who consistently remain after school beyond the time allowed will be consulted. A parent conference will be conducted if this does not remedy the situation.

For the safety of students, if parents find themselves consistently unable to pick up their child within thirty minutes after evening events, it may be necessary to discontinue participation in these activities.

Vehicles & Driving on Campus

A Privilege

The right to drive onto school property and utilize school parking is a privilege extended to students by the school.

Parking Permits

Any student wishing to drive to school must have a parking permit. To obtain a permit, a student must have a valid driver's license and proof of insurance and must register their vehicle(s) at the main office. The **parking permit** is to be displayed on the vehicle windshield. The fee for a parking permit is \$25.00 for the first and \$15.00 for each additional permit. Replacement of a lost parking permit is \$10.00. Students who do not purchase parking permits may not park at school. Violators will be ticketed, and cars will be subject to towing at the owner's expense.

Rules for Student Driving and Parking on Campus

- The safety of all students, faculty, and staff is of primary importance.
- All traffic control signs on campus must be observed.
- All drivers' use of cellphones is prohibited when driving on school grounds.
- The school is not responsible for damage to vehicles while on the campus.

- Students must obey instructions given in the form of verbal commands or hand signals by faculty or security personnel.
- The maximum speed limit on campus is 10 mph.
- Students may not loiter in the parking lot before or after school.
- Students are not permitted to return to their cars/parking lots during the school day for any reason without the permission of school staff and knowledge of the security personnel.
- Loud car stereos are not permitted.
- Cars illegally parked are subject to a \$25.00 fine and may be towed at the owner's expense.
- Cars with bumper stickers or paint designs displaying inappropriate language or gestures will not be permitted on campus. These vehicles must be removed immediately.
- Cars may not be left on campus overnight without the permission of school security or the Principal.
- **The school reserves the right to search any vehicle if reasonable cause exists.** Students have complete responsibility for the security of their vehicles. Students will be held responsible for any prohibited objects or substances, such as alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, and weapons, that are found in their vehicles and will be subject to serious disciplinary consequences. Searches may be conducted whenever there is reason to do so, with or without the student present.
- Students are strongly encouraged to keep their cars locked and valuables in their vehicles are to be left out of sight.

**Students found to violate these regulations, particularly operating an automobile on campus in a manner dangerous to self or others, are subject to revocation of school driving privileges and other disciplinary action.

Birthdays

On the morning of a student's birthday, the entire school community prays for the intentions of that student. **Please do not bring gifts or cakes to the student at school.** Please have such items sent to the student's home.

Cafeteria and Lunch Procedures

Throughout the entire lunch period, students must remain in the designated areas, such as the Cafe building or outdoor Cafe benches.

(Students are not to gather in the Office Lobby area anytime. This area is designated for visitors to the campus.)

Students are expected to keep the cafeteria and school grounds clean and are responsible for cleaning up after themselves; they are not to leave garbage or debris behind them. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action and/or being asked to clean up the grounds. If lunchtime trash is left in the plaza, students may be required to eat in the cafeteria. Garbage is to be disposed of in the receptacles provided.

Students may either bring their lunch to school or purchase meals in advance through the school's vendor. **Students are not permitted to have food delivered to them during the school day by anyone, nor are they allowed to leave school to have lunch with parents or other persons.**

Contacting Faculty

By Telephone

During school hours, telephone calls will typically be answered by office personnel who will route your call to the faculty member to whom you wish to speak. Juan Diego Academy's phone number is (956) 583-2752

By E-Mail

The use of e-mail to contact school personnel is strongly encouraged. A directory of staff emails is located on the school's website and the second page of this handbook. Individual faculty email addresses are also included on the course syllabus for every subject taught at Juan Diego Academy.

(Parents and students should not attempt to telephone or text message faculty members at their homes or on their cell phones unless invited to do so).

Asbestos Management Plan

In compliance with the EPA Asbestos Emergency Response Act (AHERA), passed in the Fall of 1988, all schools, private and public, were required to have an inspection of buildings for asbestos-containing materials (ACBM). Based on a report prepared in October 2015 by a licensed asbestos contractor

from CHEMICAL RESPONSE AND REMEDIATION CONTROL, there is no asbestos-containing material in the buildings on the Juan Diego Academy campus. In compliance with Federal Law, a school management plan containing this survey is available in the administrative office. These are available for review upon request during regular school hours.

Emergency Drills

During an emergency announcement, students are to follow the teacher's directions. Teachers will activate the immediate response emergency plan. Students are to remain silent until directions are given by their teacher, the administration, or the police.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are conducted with and without prior notice. The last person to leave the room closes the door and turns off the lights. Students are to move quickly and silently. Running is forbidden. Absolute silence is to be maintained throughout the fire drill. Violating these fire drill procedures can constitute a serious hazard to the safety of others.

Emergency School Closings

In the event of an emergency or weather-related school closing, information will be released via the school's website, by text message, twitter®, facebook®, and on one or more of the following news services: Channel 4, Channel 5, K-TEX 100.3, or KVLV 107.9.

I.D. Cards

An I.D. card is the student's official identification for school and school-related activities and should be carried by them at all times. Failure to produce an I.D. card on request of a faculty or staff member will result in disciplinary action. The fee to replace a lost I.D. card is \$10.00.

Injuries

All injuries sustained on campus at any time, or in school-sponsored events off-campus, should be reported immediately to the office/to the Principal. Injuries attended to by the school staff are reported to the office using the Incident Report. If necessary, the Principal, Coach, or other school personnel will call an ambulance.

*Disruptive students will be dismissed and referred to the principal's office.

Parental Complaint/Concern: Procedure/ Chain of Command

Juan Diego Academy is committed to fostering an environment that promotes a positive relationship between parents, students, teachers, and the Administration. It strives to have a mutual understanding of the school's mission, goals, and values as a center of Catholic Christian education and formation. The relationship of parent, student, teachers, and the Administration is contractual; therefore, it is binding to all parties. As in all human relationships, misunderstandings, conflicts, and concerns regarding the quality of life at Juan Diego Academy may occur. For this purpose, a Parental Concern Procedure has been developed, allowing for a systematic process for handling complaints. The primary purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible administrative level, equitable solutions to problems that may arise occasionally. A *concern* is perceived based on any alleged violation or inequitable policy application. Before allowing concerns to become formalized into complaints, every effort should be made to resolve disputes through a free and open discussion between the parties. Without exception, an informal settlement between the parties shall be attempted before formal complaint proceedings. If the concern cannot be settled satisfactorily, the parties shall present the *complaint* following the procedures outlined herein.

Informal Action: Resolution/Conciliation Level

Level One – Presentation by Parent/Student to staff member involved (i.e., teacher, counselor, coach, moderator, staff member, custodian, etc.)

Level Two – Presentation to the appropriate administrator (i.e., counselor)

Formal Action: Reporting of Complaint (in writing to the Principal)

Level Three – Presentation to the Principal

For the protection of both parties, if a satisfactory resolution is not reached at the resolution/conciliation level, the complainant shall state his or her complaint in writing. This documentation should be submitted to the Principal within five (5) working days following the Formal written Action. The Principal should then schedule a conference with the parties involved at a mutually agreed-upon time. This meeting should be scheduled within two weeks after the written complaint is presented. The Principal serves as the final authority regarding all concerns.

Parent/Guardian Harassment

Under normal circumstances, a student will not be deprived of a Juan Diego Academy education as a result of attitudes or behaviors of the student's parents, guardians, or relatives. Nevertheless, a situation could arise where the uncooperative, defiant, or disruptive parent, guardian, or relative could hinder the school's educational environment and jeopardize a student's continued education here. Such situations include, but are not limited to, a statement, series of statements, action, or actions by a parent, guardian, or relative that insults, threatens, or abuses any teacher, staff member, coach, or other staff member of the school, this includes the posting of comments to online vlogs such as, but not limited to, Facebook®.

Prayer Over the Public Address System

All students are expected to be attentive and reverent in class when the school community pauses each morning to join in prayer, which is led over the P.A. system. If a student is not in class when prayer is led over the P.A., the student must stop, become silent, and listen respectfully until the Prayer and Announcements are completed. Stopping for prayer is not an excuse for being tardy in the morning. Students should arrive before the beginning of the day announcements and prayer.

Public Displays of Affection

Hand-holding, kissing, clinging, and other displays of romantic affection are inappropriate in the academic setting. Repeated reminders in this regard will result in a parent conference and possible disciplinary action.

Medications at school

The school's policy is that students should not carry drugs or medication except prescription and non-prescription inhalers, EpiPens, and Insulin syringes. All medicines are to be administered by office personnel only. If a student must take medication during school hours, it must be in the original container. Medications must be accompanied by a school medical form completed by the parent/guardian specifying the time for the medication to be given. Medications not accompanied by the proper medical form completed and signed by the parent/guardian will not be administered.

Non-Custodial Parents

In the absence of a court order to the contrary, Juan Diego Academy, in compliance with the provisions of the Buckley Amendment, will provide non-custodial parents with an unofficial copy of the child's report card and other school mailings upon request. To ensure the safety of all students, individuals may be asked to show a form of ID and custodial parent notification before being allowed to interact with any student on campus. Prearranged meetings between students and non-custodial parents are highly recommended to be arranged apart from the school campus. The custodial parent is responsible for informing the school of any legal arrangements concerning the custody or visitation of enrolled students.

Lost and Found

Students who find lost items must immediately turn them in to the office, because lost articles are the property of someone; finding and keeping a lost article constitutes a form of theft and will be dealt with accordingly.

School Property

Students must exercise good stewardship in caring for the school campus, buildings, and property. They exercise this responsibility primarily by keeping the buildings and grounds free from litter and refraining from writing on desks, walls, etc. Any accidental damage to school property resulting from student actions must be repaired at the student's expense. Textbooks issued to students must be kept covered (textbooks). School-owned property damaged or lost while in the possession of a student will be replaced at the student's expense.

Field Trips

Students invited to participate in school-sponsored field trips will be given a Parent Permission Form. No student will be allowed to participate in a trip unless the form has been appropriately signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the designated school official by the agreed-upon due date. Permissions by telephone or other verbal permissions cannot be accepted. Emailed permission forms are acceptable. Field trips are a privilege offered to qualified students in good standing.

Travel-Interscholastic & Co-Curricular Events

All students involved in co-curricular activities or interscholastic sports are expected to travel utilizing Juan Diego Academy transportation. If the school does not provide transportation for a particular event, students may be allowed to travel independently with written permission from their parents. The school must approve this permission.

Visiting Campus During School Hours

Parents or guardians who need to visit campus during school hours are asked to follow these guidelines:

Make an Appointment

If you are coming to see the Principal or a Staff Member, please call to make an appointment in advance. If you wish to make an appointment to see a teacher, please email the teacher directly or leave a message with the receptionist, and the teacher will return your call, usually within one 24-hour workday.

Check in at the Office

When you arrive on campus, please report directly to the Office to sign in on the Visitor's Log and for a visitor badge.

Proof of Identification

If you are asking to see your son or daughter, you may be required to show identification, due to safety measures intended to protect our students.

All exterior doors are locked for the safety of all students, faculty, and staff members.

For the safety and security of our students, anyone seen on campus without a visitor badge will be reminded to obtain one or asked to leave campus.

Student Visitors

The administration is open to accepting student visitors who are interested in the possibility of studying at Juan Diego Academy. Students who request permission to bring a visitor must obtain it from the Administration at least one day in advance. Student visitors must check in at the Office no later than 8:15 AM. Visitors are expected to obey the school's policies and are the petitioning student's responsibility. The host student is responsible for ensuring the visitor is dressed properly and behaves appropriately.

School Guidance Counseling

Juan Diego Academy has a counselor available to students, staff, and their families for personal, educational, and spiritual counseling/support.

Christian Ministry Program

Christian Ministry (Community Service)

"...whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." (Mt 25, 40)

Christian Ministry "is the public activity of a baptized follower of Jesus Christ flowing from the Spirit's charism and an individual personality on behalf of a Christian community to witness, to serve, and realize the kingdom of God" (Thomas F. O'Meara, Theology of Ministry)

The call to serve others, especially those less fortunate than ourselves, can be found in every major religion's literature and sacred texts. As Catholic Christians, we are called to service by our Baptism as followers of Jesus, the perfect example of loving service.

The Christian Ministry program at Juan Diego Academy allows students to become involved in direct service to the Church and the wider community.

Elements of Juan Diego Academy's Christian Ministry Program

The Spirituality of Service

Christian Ministry is the freely offered gift of one's time, talents, and personality. We can be Christ for others in many ways. While some agencies where we carry out our ministry are not directly tied to the Church, we consider the student's contribution to be Christian because faith is the motivation, prayer is the source of strength, and service in imitating Jesus is the goal. We acknowledge, however, that there should always be an element of evangelization in Christian service.

The Opportunity to Learn

Christian Ministry is an opportunity to learn and grow outside the traditional classroom environment. Through Christian ministry, students may discover their gifts, values, limitations, and perhaps, realize their personal vision/mission for the future. They will develop a new awareness about others and justice issues in our neighborhoods, communities, and the world.

The Choice of Ministry

As Christians, we believe in the prayerful discernment of our important choices and decisions. The Holy Spirit can guide our selection of ministries if we let it. Students are challenged to prayerfully examine their gifts and interests and listen to the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's call may often be to do something more challenging than we are comfortable with. Risk is an essential element of human growth. When we stretch beyond our "comfort zone," we often gain the most from an experience.

The Commitment to Serve

It is one's investment that makes for a rewarding ministry. While there are many short-term ministry opportunities, it is recommended that students make a long-term commitment (a semester, a summer, a year) to one ministry. This commitment will allow them to develop relationships, become experienced in the field, and witness changes or growth in those they serve. The agency also benefits because it can count on the student's continued service. Students are reminded to ensure their ministry conforms to the guidelines of the Christian Ministry program.

The Action/Reflection Process

Students will reflect regularly upon their ministry through journaling and periodic conversations in their religion classes. This opportunity to reflect on and share ministry experiences with others is where much of the learning takes place.

Requirements for the Christian Ministry Program

Hours

Students must perform a minimum of 100 hours of Christian Ministry beginning with the first day of classes in the fall of their freshman (or first year) at Juan Diego Academy and concluding by the deadline set during the student's senior year. Because this is an ongoing experience that will be reflected upon throughout one's time at JDA, Students must complete at least 25 hours by the end of each academic year. Five (5) *must be earned through service in the student's home parish/church*. Students should contact their pastor, religious education coordinator, or youth minister to help fulfill the home parish/church requirement. **Diplomas may be withheld if hours are incomplete.**

Criteria for Ministry Sites

A list of suggested ministry sites will be discussed through their religion classes at the beginning of the academic year. This list will always include the student's home parish, any Diocesan ministry, and Juan Diego Academy. A student may perform service at a site not on the suggested list, so long as it meets the criteria listed below:

- The ministry must involve direct service to or with people
- The ministry must be voluntary (no monetary or other goods may be exchanged for service rendered)
- The ministry must be supervised by an adult (age 21 or over)
- The organization must not publicly endorse a position or value that contradicts the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Students should check with the Christian Ministry Coordinator for approval before performing any service if there is any doubt about the ministry site or the service.

Documentation of Ministry

The student is a Christian minister. The Christian teacher is responsible for reporting the hours of service on the approved CM Form. Only complete, original, readable copies of the form, signed by the student and the ministry supervisor, can be accepted. A parent signature may not substitute for the signature of the ministry supervisor, who must be an adult (21 years or older). A parent/guardian may not supervise a student in performing their ministry. Students are required to make a copy of each form they submit for their records and verification, and keep track of their hours. It is not the responsibility of the Christian Ministry Coordinator to make these copies.

During the school year, CM forms should be turned in to the Christian Ministry Coordinator within **30 calendar days** of the completion of the work being documented, or by the deadline set by the Coordinator at the end of each semester, whichever comes first. For service performed during the summer months, completed forms must be submitted no later than 30 days from the first day of classes for the fall semester.

Any service hours not adequately documented and submitted by the required deadline will not be accepted.

What counts as hours?

Simply put, all time spent in direct Christian ministry to others, including any required orientation at an agency. For fairness and consistency, any ministry done as part of Mass or another prayer/worship experience (lector, extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, altar server, cantor/choir member, etc.) is counted as one (1) hour of Christian Ministry.

What doesn't count?

You are not allowed to count transportation time to and from the ministry site, breaks, or meal times. Babysitting (unless for a parish/agency in a group child care setting with supervision) and working for family/friends do not count. Donations of goods do not count, regardless of the donation site's policy. However, time spent gathering the goods can count. Work done at home, even with parental and/or adult supervision, cannot be counted. Remember that parents may not supervise your Christian ministry hours.

Senior Recognition

Seniors performing **150** or more hours of Christian Ministry are eligible to receive a special service cord to wear at graduation.

Consequences for Incomplete Hours

Towards the end of the spring semester, there will be a final due date for hours to be counted toward that school year. The date will be published, and students will receive periodic reminders. Any student not completing the required service hours by this date may be placed on academic probation with the approval of the Principal. The student will remain on probation until the required hours are completed. While on academic probation, a student is not allowed to participate in any of the school's extracurricular activities, clubs, or organizations.

Special Projects and Initiatives

Juan Diego Academy will endeavor to support new and creative student initiatives aimed at serving those less fortunate than ourselves. Therefore, the Christian Ministry Coordinator (in consultation with the Principal) may grant an exception to specific reporting and documentation requirements for students involved in a project or activity where the standard program guidelines would hinder the development or completion of the project or activity. These exceptions will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Part VII:

Dress Code & Grooming Regulations

Purpose

Juan Diego Academy maintains a dress and grooming code consistent with its character as a private, Catholic, college-preparatory school. This code contributes to a seriousness of purpose, a constructive learning atmosphere, and developing sound personal habits and a positive self-image.

Parents are expected to support this policy by ensuring their children wear only the approved school uniform.

Students' failure to comply with dress and grooming regulations may result in disciplinary action.

Repeated failure to comply with regulations may result in disciplinary action and/or being sent home.

Students are expected to be in proper uniform when they arrive on campus.

Boys

- Choice of uniform pants in khaki or navy blue with a black or brown belt
- Choice of Oxford shirt (long or short sleeves) in white
- White or green school polo
- All boys should have at least one shirt and pants of each color/style, as a specific color/style combination will be required on special occasions.
- **Shirts must be tucked into trousers.**
- T-shirts worn under uniform shirts must be WHITE

Hair Styles & Grooming

Students must always be clean-shaven and are not permitted to wear mustaches or beards. After the third time a student is sent to shave, he may be assigned to In-School Suspension (ISS). Students will be charged \$1.00 for a razor if needed. Hair is to be neat and well-groomed, with no Mohawks or spikes. Hair styles must be short. Any hairstyle is subject to administrative approval. The following is NOT permitted:

- Bangs longer than the eyebrow
- Pinning hair behind the ears
- The use of gel, water, or hairspray to disguise the length of hair

- Hair should not touch the collar or hang over the eyes, and should be groomed around the ears
- Dyed hair
- Sideburns must not extend farther than the mid-ear in length or be excessive verticality.
- Ponytails are not allowed
- Face is to be cleanly shaved of hair. No beards or mustaches are allowed
- Earrings and other visible piercings are not allowed
- Make-up and other cosmetic products, including nail polish, are not allowed

Girls

- Choice of uniform skirts in navy or gray; uniform slacks in navy blue or khaki
- Skirt length is subject to the administration's discretion but must reach the back of the knee. Students in skirts whose lengths are deemed inappropriate are subject to disciplinary consequences, including loss of privilege to wear skirts.
- White or green school polo shirt
- All girls should have at least one blouse/polo and a skirt of each color/style, as a specific color/style combination will be required on special occasions.
- Oxford blouse (long or short sleeve) in white.
- **Oxford blouses must be tucked in**
- T-shirts worn under uniform blouses must be WHITE
- Colored undergarments must NOT be visible through the uniform blouse
- Boots or heels of any type are not permitted
- Solid white, black, navy blue, or gray tights may be worn during cold weather.
- Appropriate makeup is permitted
- Hairstyles must be neat and well-groomed
- Dying hair in unnatural colors (pink, purple, blue, green, maroon, orange, etc.) is NOT permitted.

Boys and Girls

- All buttons on shirts and blouses must be buttoned except the top (collar) button.
- **All pants with belt loops require a black or brown belt**
- Only School-approved *uniforms* are allowed
- Only school-approved vests, cardigans, blazers, sweaters, or jackets may be worn over the school uniform shirt/blouse.
- No hoodies will be permitted on campus during the school day. Uniform polos must always be worn under school-approved sweaters/vests.
- In freezing weather, an overcoat or other winter jacket may be worn outdoors, but must be removed when entering the classroom, cafeteria, chapel, or gym. Students will be notified of these special days.
- Sweaters and jackets may not be worn around the waist
- Long-sleeved undershirts may not be worn under short-sleeved uniform shirts
- Hairstyles must be neat, well-groomed, and appropriate. In case of doubt, the Principal will decide whether a particular style or hair color may be worn

Liturgy/Prayer Service Days

ALL students are expected to wear their white Oxford shirts with the green Juan Diego Academy Blazer

Never Allowed:

- Visible body piercing or tattoos
- Clothing that is torn or tattered
- Caps or hats of any kind
- Flannel shirts
- Studded belts, wrist bands, and other non-uniform accessories
- Yoga pants, leggings, or jeggings
- Sandals, rubber flip-flops, or Crocs
- Slogans or writing on T-shirts worn under shirts or blouses
- Backless shoes, backless tennis shoes, or clogs
- Any apparel, fashion accessory, jewelry, haircut, or hairstyle deemed inappropriate by the administration.

Dress Down/ Spirit Days

- Students can wear blue jeans and any approved shirt bearing the school's name/mascot/logo on Spirit Days.

- Students who choose not to participate should be dressed according to standard dress code.
- While other regulations may apply on specific "dress-down" days, students must always dress in good taste.
- The administration will determine the acceptability of dress on dress-down days.

The following are **always prohibited**:

- Sandals, flip-flops, boots, capri pants, shorts, sweat pants, wind pants, pajama pants, yoga pants, leggings, sleeveless shirts, halter tops, crop tops.
- Clothing that is tattered, ripped, torn, or with holes
- Clothing that exposes the midriff or lower back to any degree at any time, including with arms raised
- Clothing displaying slogans or graphics that are offensive, violent, vulgar, obscene, or inappropriately suggestive
- Clothing displaying promotions for drugs, tobacco, or alcoholic beverage products
- Students not dressed according to the guidelines for dress down day will be required to change into appropriate clothing

Dress Code Violation

Students found violating the dress code are subject to disciplinary consequences.

Part VIII:

Disciplinary Regulations, Procedures, & Measures

Drug-Free School Policy

Definition of “Drugs”

The term “drugs” as used in these policies includes but is not limited to controlled substances and controlled substance analogues (as defined by Section 481 *et seq.*, of the Texas Health and Safety Code) and any abusable glue or aerosol paint (as defined by Section 485.001, *et seq.*, of the Texas Health and Safety Code).

Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, & Vape Pens of any type

To maintain a safe, healthy, drug-free environment at Juan Diego Academy, the following policies have been established for all members of the Juan Diego Academy community.

Use of Alcohol and Drugs Before Attending School and School Events

The use of alcohol, marijuana, or other drugs before attending school or any other school-sponsored event (including school-sponsored events that take place off-campus) is also forbidden.

Use, Possession, and Distribution of Alcohol, Drugs and Vape Devices of any type The use, possession and/or distribution of alcohol, marijuana or other drugs or drug paraphernalia, including Vape Pens of any kind on school grounds, vehicles, or at school sponsored activities (including school sponsored events which take place off-campus) is forbidden. Infractions against this regulation are considered grievous and dangerous to other students.

Use of Alcohol and Drugs Before Attending School and School Events

The use of alcohol, marijuana, or other drugs before attending school or any school-sponsored event (including school-sponsored events which take place off-campus) is forbidden.

Use, Possession, and Distribution of Tobacco, including Vape Devices with Nicotine

Smoking and the use, possession, or distribution of tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes or Vape Pens with Nicotine, are prohibited in all areas of the school building, on the school grounds, buses, or at school-sponsored activities (including school-sponsored events which take place off-campus).

Students violating any of the above regulations are subject to immediate suspension or dismissal. In compliance with Texas State Law, all students found to be in possession of drugs or alcohol will be remanded to the custody of the local police department.

Suspension for Substance-Related Incidents

The American Psychiatric Association specifies that when the use of alcohol or other substances interferes with a student’s fulfillment of school obligations, a *Substance Abuse Disorder* may be indicated. Substance-related suspensions in particular are cited as an example. For this reason, when a student is suspended from school as a result of an incident involving the use of alcohol and/or other substances, Juan Diego Academy requires that:

- The student must undergo, at their own expense, a complete substance abuse assessment performed by an appropriately credentialed substance abuse counselor approved by the Principal.
- The student and their parents must sign an authorization allowing the service provider to release to the Principal and/or the Principal’s designee the results of the substance abuse assessment.
- The student must show compliance with these requirements (e.g., show that an appointment has been made) within one week of the suspension.

Compliance with these requirements is a condition of reinstatement to Juan Diego Academy following the suspension. ***Failure to comply may lead to dismissal.***

After reviewing the results of the substance abuse assessment, the Principal may require the student to undertake further professional treatment, at their own expense, as a condition of continued enrollment at Juan Diego Academy. As a part of this stipulation, the student may be required to undergo periodic urine surveillance. In consultation with the approved treatment provider, only the Principal may determine when treatment may be discontinued.

Deterrence

As a deterrent to the sale, distribution, possession, and use of alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, including Vape Pens of any type, and tobacco by Juan Diego Academy students, the following measures can and will be employed by the school:

- Unannounced inspections of students, lockers, automobiles, schoolbags, purses, and school facilities with and without trained drug-detection dogs.
- Drug testing of any student the Principal selects (with or without probable cause) at the student's expense, including on-site testing.
- Soft drinks are not permitted.
- Water bottles are permitted and available for sale at the main office vending machine.
- Containers of liquid are subject to inspection at any time.
- Positive drug test results will be reported to parents and may result in disciplinary measures.

(Parents and students agree to submit to these deterrence measures by enrolling at Juan Diego Academy.)

Outcry

Any student who voluntarily seeks the assistance of any school official concerning a substance abuse problem will be referred for professional help and **will not be subject to disciplinary measures, provided that no violation of school policies has occurred or subsequently occurs. Students will be placed in a drug counseling program to include urine surveillance until discharged by the program director and by agreement with school administration.**

Role of Parents

The appropriate role of parents is to require their children to comply with school policies and cooperate fully with deterrence measures. Parents also bear responsibility for ensuring that their children are protected from unchaperoned parties or any social setting where drug, alcohol, and tobacco use is likely. It is unrealistic to expect that Juan Diego Academy can regulate students' behavior at parties and other gatherings held off-campus and not sponsored or supervised by the school.

Notice

Upon admission to Juan Diego Academy and as a condition of matriculation, students and parents will give written consent and approval to the school's policies regarding drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

Co-Curricular Activities

Students will be allowed to continue participating in co-curricular activities as long as they are complying with the requirements of the substance abuse counseling program. Should the student fail to comply with any of the requirements of the substance abuse counseling program, the student will immediately be prohibited from continuing with any co-curricular activities, and further corrective action will be put into effect.

Detention

Detention is a disciplinary measure for students who violate school rules or expectations. School Detention may occur during lunch or after school and will be supervised by a faculty or staff member. Detention time is designated for students to use for reflection and/or complete assignments. We aim to foster a positive learning environment by reinforcing expected behavior, encouraging students to reflect on their actions, and deterring future misconduct.

Students are required to serve their tardy detentions on the day they are tardy. Students assigned detention must arrive on time and adhere to all standard classroom rules. Students must work quietly during detention.

The day the student receives the detention counts as day one. Students who do not serve detention on day one will serve detention during the lunch period on day two. Students asked to leave detention due to misconduct will not receive credit for attending the detention and may be issued an additional detention

or other consequence per disciplinary policy. Parents should not disrupt detention to look for their children.

Tardy Detention: Students who arrive late or between classes will receive a detention notice from the office staff or the teacher.

In the meantime, the student serving detention cannot attend extracurricular activities, athletic practices, or games until they have served their detention, and all extracurricular moderators and/or coaches are expected to comply with this policy.

Disrespect

Disrespectful behavior toward a member of the faculty or staff, another student, or a school guest is destructive to the community of love, acceptance, and the Catholic Education Spirit that Juan Diego Academy strives to build upon and project. Disrespect includes, but is not limited to, the use of abusive or vulgar language or comments or actions of an inappropriate nature. Students who act disrespectfully are subject to serious disciplinary consequences, including but not limited to expulsion from school.

Fighting & Physical Assaults

As Christians, we are committed to resolving conflicts without resorting to physical or emotional violence. Fighting undermines the Christian community of love and acceptance that Juan Diego Academy strives to build and presents a hazard to the safety and well-being of others. Students involved in fighting are subject to suspension and/or more serious action. Students found to have physically assaulted a member of the faculty or staff, or to have threatened such persons with physical assault, will be subject to immediate dismissal, and the incident may be reported to the local police department.

Harassment

Juan Diego Academy is committed to maintaining a learning atmosphere free from violence, personal abuse, or harassment and/or intimidation, where students, staff, and faculty can work and study comfortably together. Juan Diego Academy forbids any form of harassment, violence, bullying, or intimidation occurring in school, outside school, or at school-sponsored events. Such conduct is immoral and illegal and will not be tolerated. It is forbidden to harass a student or employee through conduct or communication described in this policy.

Juan Diego Academy maintains the right to report any criminal actions or behaviors to the appropriate authorities to ensure a safe environment for its students.

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether expressed verbally, physically, visually, and/or electronically, that is based on a person's gender, race, ancestry, national origin, age, physical disability, mental condition, marital status, veteran status, or citizenship status. Harassment can originate from a person of either sex against a person of the same or opposite sex, and from students or employees. Threats of violence and other abusive expressions, physical harassment, corporal punishment, use of inappropriate sexual words, actions, or innuendos, and/or comments directed at a person's gender are all inappropriate. Juan Diego Academy will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects tangible job benefits, interferes unreasonably with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment. Violations of this policy will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

Sexual harassment deserves special attention and is prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct, or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when any of these conditions exist:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education,
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis of employment decisions or the awarding of a grade,
- Any conduct of a sexual nature is committed between an employee and a student,
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Some examples of such behavior include (but are not limited to):

Written contact – Sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, invitations, drawings, computer messages, text messages.

Verbal contact – Sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, jokes (including jokes about racial and gender specific traits), foul or indecent language or gestures, any sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, comments about another’s body, or sexual characteristics which may be construed as embarrassing to another.

Physical contact – Any intentional patting, squeezing, touching, pinching, brushing up against another’s body, assault, blocking movement, or coercing sexual intercourse.

Visual contact – Suggestive looks, staring at another’s body, gesturing, displaying sexually explicit or suggestive or obscene objects, pictures, magazines, printed or visual material.

Sexual blackmail – Sexual behavior to control another person’s actions.

Juan Diego Academy will swiftly investigate all complaints, including formal or informal, verbal or written, of sexual harassment, and will discipline any student or employee who is found guilty of sexual harassment. To the fullest extent practicable, complaints, investigations, and terms of their resolution will be kept confidential unless evidence indicates that a criminal investigation is warranted. In this case, information will be forwarded to the proper authorities. Any person who reports in good faith any behavior that they perceive as sexual harassment will be protected from retaliation of any type.

Reporting Procedures

Any person who believes that he/she has been the victim of sexual harassment or sexual violence by a member of the Juan Diego Academy community, or any person with knowledge or belief of such conduct, should report alleged acts, either orally or in writing, immediately to the Principal.

If the Principal is the individual who is believed to be harassing the employee/student, the employee/student should notify a member of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will appoint an individual to conduct an investigation.

The school shall promptly convene a review panel of administrators and professional consultants to conduct an investigation to be completed as soon as practical. During this process, investigators will gather and document all relevant specific information, such as dates,

times, places, witnesses (if any), and nature of misconduct, by:

- Interviewing the student(s) involved
- Interviewing the suspected employee (if applicable)
- Interviewing any witness(es)
- Preparing or obtaining signed statements from the parties involved
- Collecting and maintaining any relevant physical evidence, such as photographs, letters, e-mail correspondence, diary or journal entries, or presents
- Referring the victimized student(s) for medical treatment or counseling when necessary
- Coordinating investigation with law enforcement officials when necessary

During the investigation, the investigators will make every attempt to keep the names of the parties involved and the nature of the investigation confidential.

The investigators shall draft a report describing the investigation steps and summarizing the information gathered. This report shall be filed with the Principal within fifteen (15) days of the investigation’s completion. The results of the investigation of each report filed under this policy will be reported to the student(s) involved and/or parents, and the school employee in question, if applicable, by the Principal.

If, after the investigation is complete, the Principal (with the assistance of the school’s designated legal counsel and advice) determines that the suspected sexual misconduct constitutes child abuse, he/she shall report that conduct to the appropriate law enforcement officials, as required by state law. If the Principal has already notified the appropriate officials about child abuse, he/she shall report any additional information the investigation uncovers.

Juan Diego Academy considers acts of sexual harassment to be contrary to the Church’s teaching on the dignity of the human person. Consequently, the school will investigate all complaints promptly and aggressively. Where acts of sexual harassment are found, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, which may include warnings, parent conferences, suspension, or dismissal.

False charges

Each person has the right to a good reputation. Anyone who purposefully does anything to damage the good reputation of another has committed a serious moral wrong. False and malicious sexual harassment complaints (as opposed to complaints which, even if erroneous, are made in good faith) will result in appropriate discipline, up to and including dismissal.

Hazing

Hazing and other acts of initiation of students during athletic or extracurricular events are not condoned by the school and are strictly forbidden. Before school activities and events, students will be advised of the school's policies to ensure the safety of all participants and maintain the personal dignity of each student and the school's reputation.

Bullying

The term Bullying includes cyberbullying and means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by an adult or student, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonable interference with the individual's school performance or participation; and may involve but is not limited to:

- Teasing
- Exercising threatening behavior
- Intimidation
- Stalking
- Cyber-stalking
- Assault
- Theft
- Sexual, religious, or racial harassment
- Public or private humiliation
- Destruction of property
- Social exclusion

Cyber-bullying is defined as bullying via the Internet, interactive and digital technologies (such as computers, tablets, etc.), and/ or mobile phones. The use of any school computers or electronic devices for cyberbullying is strictly prohibited. Cyber-bullying using home-based or off-campus devices that result in a substantial interference with a student's educational performance or rights will constitute grounds for

investigation as to whether or not the use violates the applicable law or school rules. Refusal to cooperate with such an investigation may subject the student to additional discipline. Should misuse be determined, the student may receive disciplinary consequences appropriate for the severity of the violation.

Multi-Media Use

Students who engage in inappropriate multimedia use shall be subject to discipline if such conduct occurs on Juan Diego Academy property or at a Juan Diego Academy event, disrupts school operations, substantially interferes with a student's educational performance, or otherwise has a nexus to school activity.

Inappropriate multimedia use includes sexting, sending sexually explicit text, and nude or partially nude images of minors; these images are classified as child pornography in some instances and may have profound criminal implications and permanent consequences, regardless of the offender's age. Consent or permission by the subject of the image or the recipient of the message or media is irrelevant. Inappropriate multimedia use may also include the possession or storage of sexually explicit electronic media on electronic devices such as cell phones, computers, or an electronic storage site on the internet. Suppose the school is presented with information that depicts a student engaging in conduct described above or any other illegal, unsafe, or inappropriate behavior. In that case, the school may, at its own discretion, exercise disciplinary measures or report such behavior to law enforcement authorities if the severity of the conduct warrants them.

Insubordination

Juan Diego Academy strives to establish an atmosphere of mutual respect among students and faculty. Students who fail to comply with the faculty's legitimate directions or treat faculty disrespectfully are subject to serious disciplinary consequences. Repeated disregard for policies may result in withdrawal from the Academy.

The school will not accept responsibility for personal items, books, etc., that are lost, stolen, or vandalized in a backpack. Students should take care to secure all valuables.

Obscenity

Obscenity is defined as any materials or actions that depict or describe sexual conduct or nudity in a manner that a reasonable person would find offensive. Such materials and behavior run contrary to the Catholic Church's understanding of the dignity of the human person. As such, they are prohibited.

Theft

Stealing undermines the trust and respect on which Juan Diego Academy strives to build a Christian community. Any student who is found to have committed or aided in the theft of school property or the property of an individual is subject to disciplinary action and/or prosecution.

Trespassing

A person trespassing is defined as entering into, remaining on property, or entering any campus building or facility without effective consent or permission, with that person having notice, either posted, verbal, or written, to depart and failing to do so. Students found trespassing are subject to disciplinary actions and/or prosecution.

Vandalism

Destroying, damaging, or defacing school grounds or property is a criminal act and results in unnecessary financial costs passed on to the Juan Diego Academy community. Vandalism against the property of any faculty or staff member may also constitute a criminal offense. Students found to have committed vandalism will be subject to severe disciplinary action and possible criminal prosecution. Vandalized property will be replaced at the expense of the student's expense.

Weapons and Dangerous Materials

Firearms, air guns, paintball guns, knives, and other lethal instruments, or other objects or materials deemed by the administration to be dangerous, are banned on school grounds, buses, or at school-sponsored activities, including school-sponsored events which take place off-campus. Infractions of this regulation are considered grievous and a danger to other students and are subject to grave disciplinary consequences, including immediate expulsion.

Under Section 30.06, Penal Code of the State of Texas (trespass by license holder with a concealed handgun), a person licensed under Subchapter H, Chapter 411, Government Code (handgun licensing

law), may not enter the Juan Diego Academy campus with a concealed handgun.

Disciplinary Review Board

The Disciplinary Review Board consists of three or more members of the Administrative Team and faculty of Juan Diego Academy, as appointed by the Principal.

The Principal convenes the board and acts as the board's chair, or delegates this responsibility to one of the other members. The board is convened to review the cases of students who have seriously and/or continuously violated the school's policies and procedures.

The student's parents will be notified of the board meeting and are expected to attend the meeting with the student. The Principal or one of the other review board members will meet with the student and parents before the board meeting to explain the meeting format and answer questions. No other persons may attend this meeting unless approved in advance by the Principal.

Following the meeting, the board will deliberate and recommend either exoneration (whereby the student is determined not to be in violation of school policies and procedures) or appropriate disciplinary measures. The Principal will notify the student and parents of the final decision.

Disciplinary Measures

Probation

The Principal may place a student on disciplinary probation. The parent or guardian will be notified of the student's probationary status and the attached conditions. If the student fails to meet the probation conditions during the specified time, the student will be required to withdraw from school.

Suspension

Suspension (out of school) is a grave penalty imposed for serious offenses. Suspension revokes the rights and privileges typically extended to Juan Diego Academy students for the duration of the suspension. Suspended students are responsible for all class work and assignments missed during suspension. Students may not participate in or attend any school athletic or social event on the day(s) they are suspended. Students suspended for a second time during the same school year may be asked to withdraw. All suspensions are considered unexcused absences (*see unexcused absence policy on pg. 24*).

Home Study

For any reason deemed necessary by the Principal, such as the arrest of a student, the Principal reserves the right to place the student on home study until the matter is resolved to the satisfaction of the school. Students placed on home study for disciplinary reasons may not participate in any school activities during this period. Students placed on home study are responsible for all class work and assignments missed during home study.

Voluntary Withdrawal from School

The parents of a student in a serious disciplinary situation may consider voluntary withdrawal from school. Voluntary withdrawal does not, in any way, secure a student's ability to regain admission at Juan Diego Academy. In especially grievous cases involving law violations, where students are withdrawn voluntarily, it is unlikely that readmission will be offered in the future.

Dismissal

Dismissal may result from grievous cases of misconduct, including but not limited to the following:

- Abusive language, obscenity, violence, threats of violence, or disrespectful behavior towards a member of the faculty, a fellow student, or a guest of the school
- Acts of theft or vandalism against the school, school property, or the personal property of a teacher or student, including cheating.
- Excessive absence from school, whether or not it detracts from the student's academic performance
- Repeated truancy
- The possession, use, and/or distribution of

alcohol, marijuana, other controlled substances, or drug paraphernalia, including Vape Pens of any type, ie. Nicotine, THC Oil – Hybrid, Sativa, etc., on school grounds or at (or before) school-sponsored events (including those that take place off campus)

- Violation of the *Standards of Academic Integrity* published in this handbook
- A second suspension in one year, whether or not the student has been placed on disciplinary probation
- The possession or use of firearms or any other lethal instrument on school grounds or at school-sponsored events (including those that take place off campus)
- Conduct inside or outside of school that is detrimental to the school's reputation or demeaning to the individual.
- Words or actions of a seriously unethical nature

Students in violation of a grievous misconduct case, including but not limited to the items listed above, will be automatically suspended off-campus for three days. Prior to the three-day off-campus suspension, the parents will be notified of the infraction and the reason for suspension. The Disciplinary Committee will convene to determine the final punishment, including dismissal from school. The parents will meet with the Principal and Disciplinary Committee in the morning after the three-day off-campus suspension for the final decision.

Under certain circumstances, an alternative disciplinary measure (Christian Ministry project, In-School Suspension) may be administered.

History of Juan Diego Academy

The families of the upper Rio Grande Valley have long dreamed of being able to send their children to a Catholic high school. In 2003-2004, the Office of Center Operations and Community (CoSERVE) of the University of Texas-Pan American conducted a market feasibility study. The report concluded that the community wanted a Catholic high school and that the school would be viable. A Steering Committee composed of community and church leaders was established to prepare the groundwork, establish the expenses and projected costs to construct the school, and develop a plan to fund the project. The Committee also commissioned a financial feasibility study. That report supported the market feasibility findings, and the Committee began planning for a Capital Campaign.

A milestone was reached in 2006 when 40 acres of land in Edinburg were donated to the project to construct a Catholic High School in a new residential and business community.

The Capital Campaign was launched in spring 2007 with the land in place. A Board of Trustees was established in November 2007 to provide leadership and governance and oversee the school's construction and establishment, named San Juan Diego Catholic Regional High School.

The Capital Campaign successfully raised \$2.6 million in pledges; however, fundraising efforts were measurably slowed as the U.S. economy experienced a decline. The donation of land in Edinburg contained a requirement that construction must begin by July 1, 2010. To do this, more funds were needed.

In February 2010, the Most Rev. Daniel E. Flores was installed as Bishop of Brownsville. Bishop Flores has stated a priority for evangelizing youth and a strong commitment to Catholic schools. After consulting his finance council and priests, the Bishop pledged \$1 million to the High School project. As an alternative site for the school, he also offered the valuable and historic property located in Mission, which served as the site of St. Joseph and St. Peter Seminary. This offer included 40 acres of land and the use of the four buildings making up the seminary campus.

The Board accepted the Bishop's generous offer. Monies raised from the capital campaign were used to renovate existing buildings and construct a new Science & Math building. With the help of many volunteers, the campus was ready for the school opening in August 2011. Teachers were hired, and the school opened its doors to its first freshman class on August 22, 2011.

In August 2012, a second class was added, additional teachers were hired, courses were added, and the number of athletic and extracurricular activities increased. A nearby gymnasium (Granjeno Community Center) was rented to accommodate the sports program. A significant gift campaign was initiated to raise funds for the completion of the next phase of the Master Plan.

On November 8, 2012, Juan Diego Academy held a groundbreaking for the new multi-purpose/gymnasium. Bishop Flores blessed the building on September 5, 2013. Additional classrooms were added to the building during the summer of 2014.



ALMA MATER

**Humble servant, noble Saint
Hail thee, Juan Diego.
Guide our school that bears your name
Hail thee, J.D.A!
Proudly join the chorus:**

**Service, love, devotion
May our hearts forever sing
Hail thee, J.D.A.!**

**Make us one community.
Hail thee, Juan Diego
Brothers, sisters, and family
Haile thee J.D.A.!**

**Proudly join the chorus:
Service, love, devotion
May our hearts forever sing,
Hail thee, J.D.A.!**

**JUAN DIEGO ACADEMY
Catholic Regional High School
P.O. Box 3888 (5208 S. FM 494)
Mission, Texas 78573**

JUAN DIEGO ACADEMY

Catholic Regional High School

2025 - 2026

Academic Calendar

July 2025							August 2025							September 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5						1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				
							31													
October 2025							November 2025							December 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4							1		1	2	3	4	5	6
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31			
							30													
January 2026							February 2026							March 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
25	26	27	28	29	30	31								29	30	31				
April 2026							May 2026							June 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3						1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				
							31													
Holidays							Staff Development (8)													
September 1	Labor Day						First Day of Instruction	Aug. 11			August 4 - 8; January 5; February 16; May 29									
October 13	Bad Weather Day						Last Day of Instruction	May 28			Diocesan Teacher In-Service (2)									
Nov. 24 - 28	Thanksgiving						180 Days of Instruction				Sept. 2 & Feb. 13									
Dec. 22 - Jan. 2	Christmas						Grading Periods				Early Release Days									
March 16 - 20	Spring Break						1st Semester - 87 Days	2nd Semester - 93 Days			Nov. 21; May 8; May 22									
April 2	Holy Thursday						Progress Report Dates	Sept. 11; Nov. 6; Feb 5; Apr. 23			New Employee Orientation (2)									
April 3	Good Friday						Testing Windows	Sept. 8-26; Jan. 12-30; Apr. 6-24			August 6 Secretaries (10 - 12) Marx Center									
April 6	Bad Weather Day						April - Prom				August 9 ACE Student Workshop (4-6 pm Marx)									
†	Mass Celebrant Bishop						May - Athletic Banquet				August 9 New Employee (9-1:00) Marx Center									
Dec. 9	Feast of Juan Diego						Quarter Exams	October 7-10 December 16-19			Major Fundraisers									
Feb. 18	Ash Wednesday						March 10-13 May 25 - 28				Mon., October 13 Golf Tournament									
Diocesan Events							Baccalaureate/Commencement							Sat., Feb. 21 Noche de Rosas Gala						
Fri., Jan. 23	Spirit Awards						Friday, May 22 Time: TBD				Justice + Devotion + Action									
Fri., March 27	Walkathon													Calendar subject to change with notice						

Updated 5/1/25

Appendices

Appendix I:

Dance Procedures

- Students must arrive no later than one hour after the announced start of the dance. Starting/Ending times may vary. This information will be made clear to students before the dance date.
- Students who arrive late will not be allowed admission at reservation-only dances (e.g., Homecoming, Prom). Parents will be called and notified upon the student's late arrival.
- Each Juan Diego Academy student will be allowed one (1) guest from another school to attend the dance. The guest must present a school picture ID to be admitted. The Juan Diego student is responsible for the dress and conduct of their guest while at the dance.
- Students who, on the day of a dance, are absent, half-day absent, or sent home early from school, may not attend the dance. The Principal may make exceptions under certain circumstances (e.g, early dismissal for a doctor's appointment).

If a faculty chaperone encounters a student who was absent from school or was dismissed early from school, the chaperone should dismiss the student from the dance and inform an administrator immediately. If the student is "stranded" without transportation, their parent/guardian should be called.

- All students attending the dance must sign in upon arrival.
- Students may not be readmitted once they leave.
- Students may not leave the designated area for the dance (e.g., the cafeteria) while in attendance. Limited exceptions may be made only if a sponsor supervises the student.
- Possession of drugs/alcohol at a dance or use of drugs/alcohol before attending a dance is a serious violation of school policy. Students who violate this policy can expect severe disciplinary consequences.
- Students are to dress appropriately for dances. Policies regarding inappropriate dress/appearance are in effect at all school functions, on or off campus.

- Before reservation-only dances, dance policies will be reviewed with both students and parents. All students who plan to attend such dances must be present for a meeting conducted by the sponsors and the Administration to review dance policies. The sponsors will prepare a letter reviewing dance policies, which will be signed by the Principal and sent to the parents of these students.

Appendix II:

Organizations & Extracurricular Activities

The administration of Juan Diego Academy approves all organizations listed below to operate using the school's name, use school facilities to conduct meetings, and hold fundraising activities on behalf of the organization. All school organizations must have an adult sponsor/liaison to the group who is a member of the school's faculty/staff/Board of Trustees. The organization has a written set of bylaws and, in some cases, membership requirements.

Requests to establish new organizations must be written and submitted to the Principal, who has the authority to establish, suspend, or abolish an organization in consultation with the Administrative Team.

Parent Organizations

Juan Diego Academy has a Mother's Club and a Booster Club, allowing parents to become more actively involved in the school's vision and mission. Additionally, committees/chairpersons are formed for the school's major fundraising events (Gala, Spring Festival).

Student Organizations

Participation in student activities is an integral part of school life. Students are encouraged to be involved in ways consistent with their talents and interests. Enthusiasm generated in student activities often overflows into academic diligence. Student activities and organizations will be formed based on student interests.

The following organizations currently serve the students of Juan Diego Academy:

- Book Club**
- Class Officers**
- Liturgical Guilds**
- Robotics Club**
- Student Council**
- History Club**
- Spanish Honor Society**
- National Honor Society**

Each organization will maintain its regulations governing membership.

Interscholastic Athletics

Juan Diego Academy abides by the rules and regulations of the *Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools* (TAPPS).

Interscholastic athletics are another opportunity to enhance a student's complete educational experience, further developing body, mind, character, and a spirit of fair play and good sportsmanship. Sports teams will be formed based on student interest and include options such as volleyball, basketball, soccer, tennis, and track.

Appendix III:

Juan Diego Academy Standard Permission Form

The following page provides you with the standard permission slip form. If and when the students should turn one in, parents or guardians are to fill out the form, sign it, and send it to school with the student. Permission via phone will not be accepted; ONLY this standard permission form may be used.

Appendix III:

Juan Diego has provided the following forms that Parent(s) / Guardian(s) must sign, date, and return to school. Each form must be on file for each student; therefore, each student must turn in their own individual form.

- From A: Student & Parent / Guardian Handbook Contract Form
- Form B: Juan Diego Academy Photo-Video Release
- Form C: Technology Acceptable Use Agreement
- Form D: Release of Student Academic Information
- Form E: Lunch Agreement



JUAN DIEGO ACADEMY STANDARD PERMISSION FORM

Name of Event: _____

I, the parent/guardian of _____, request that Juan Diego Academy
(student name)

allow my child to participate in _____
(name of event)

from _____ to _____.
(date & time event begins) (date & time event ends)

I understand that the faculty of Juan Diego Academy will supervise my child, and that my child will be responsible for: (Please check the appropriate box for this specific event)

His/Her own transportation to and from this activity

OR

Will be provided with transportation to and from this activity

By signing this, I understand and agree that Juan Diego Academy and its employees are absolved from all liability for any and all harm to my son/daughter as a result of this trip.

**NOTE: Permission via phone will not be accepted.*

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Emergency Information

If an emergency arises, we can be reached at the following telephone numbers:

Cell 1: _____

Cell 2: _____

For Items A, B, & C, please write "None" where applicable.

A.) Please be advised that my child must take the following prescription medications:

B.) In the event of an accident or medical emergency, please be aware that my child has the following allergies to medication(s):

C.) In the event of an accident or medical emergency, please be aware that my child has the following special medical condition(s):

**** Please return this form by the Deadline announced in order to participate in this event****

FORM A: Student & Parent /Guardian Handbook Contract 2025-2026

Student Name: _____ ID#: _____ Grade Level: _____

School & Parent / Guardian Partnership

As the primary educators of their children, parents/guardians freely choose a Catholic education for their children. Registration and acceptance at Juan Diego Academy constitute an agreement by the parent/guardian to accept and abide by the policies and procedures of the school. A signature of this contract is an agreement to support the mission and philosophy of Juan Diego Academy.

All Juan Diego Academy school community members, including parents/guardians, will be held to a standard of respect in all communication and interaction. If a parent/guardian refuses to abide by the policies outlined in this handbook or, by word or action, is unsupportive of the school's goals or otherwise fails to meet their obligations to Juan Diego Academy, the principal may require the parent/guardian to withdraw their child from the school.

We have received the 2025-2026 Juan Diego Academy Student/Parent Handbook and have familiarized ourselves with its contents. We understand that these policies are applicable for the 2025-2026 school year, unless otherwise notified of the changes by the Principal.

I, the undersigned student, promise as a matter of personal honor to act at all times in accordance with Juan Diego Academy's Honor Code as outlined in this Handbook.

Student Signature

Date

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date

**FORM B: Juan Diego Academy Photo & Video Release
2025-2026**

Student Name: _____ **ID#:** _____ **Grade Level:** _____

I consent to having my child, _____, photographed or recorded while at
(Student Name)
Juan Diego Academy or at any of its events. I am aware that such actions may be used for informational
or educational purposes regarding the programs or curriculum at Juan Diego Academy.

Juan Diego Academy is given full permission to publish, upload, and utilize photographs and videos in
which my child may appear, in any school publications or platforms, including but not limited to the social
media pages, newspapers, magazines, and the JDA website.

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date

FORM C: Technology Use Policy

2025-2026

**Adapted from NCEA's From the Chalkboard to the Chatroom.*

As a computer user, I agree to follow the rules and code of ethics in all of my work with computers while attending Juan Diego Academy:

- I recognize that all computer users have the same right to use personal or school-owned equipment; therefore, I will not use computer resources for non-academic purposes. I will not waste or take supplies that the school provides, such as paper, printer cartridges, flash drives, etc.. I will keep my work area clean and free of food and liquids when using an electronic device.
- I recognize that copyright laws protect software; therefore, I will not make unauthorized copies or give, lend, or sell copies of software to others. I understand that I will not be allowed to bring software applications or games from home to be used on school equipment without proof of licensure and prior approval from my teacher or an administrative team member.
- I recognize that the work of all users is valuable; therefore, I will protect the privacy of others by not trying to learn their password; I will not copy, change, read, or use files from another user without prior permission from that user; I will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to system programs for computer equipment; I will not use computer systems to disturb or harass other computer users or use inappropriate language in my communications.
- I will honor my school's procedures for storing information, including using Google Classroom, Gradelink, and the school's website. I realize that after prior notice has been given to me, files may be deleted from these systems to protect the integrity of the network and the individual, or because of space limitations.
- Each student who receives Internet access will be instructed on proper network use. Internet use must support education and research and be consistent with the school's educational objectives. Students using network or computing resources must comply with the appropriate rules for that network or resource.
- As a network user, I will not use any of the Juan Diego Academy resources for a non-educational purpose. In addition, I will not reveal my personal information, home address, or personal phone number, or those of students, teachers, or other staff members. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited, including, but not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secrets. Using school computers and networking resources for commercial activities is not permitted. Their use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.
- Parents must realize that their students may encounter material on a network/over the Internet that they do not consider appropriate (vulgar jokes, statements of belief that some might consider immoral, etc.) The student is responsible for not pursuing material that could be regarded as offensive or immoral.
- Computer use is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of these privileges. Vandalism or intentional modification of system settings will result in cancellation of privileges and/or school disciplinary action. The school reserves the right to seek financial restitution for any damage caused by a student or other user. The school will deem what is inappropriate use, and their decision is final. The administration, faculty, and staff of Juan Diego Academy may deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges. Violating the rules and code of ethics described above will result in serious disciplinary consequences.

In order for the student to use the computers provided at Juan Diego Academy in the 2025-2026 school year, the Technology Use Agreement (found on the next page) must be signed by both student & parent /guardian and returned to JDA.

**FORM C: Technology Use Agreement
2025-2026**

Student Name: _____ ID#: _____ Grade Level: _____

I have read and understand Juan Diego Academy's Technology Acceptable Use Policy and Agreement. I promise to meet the expectations of this policy. I understand that failure to do so may result in revocation of my permission to use the school's computers or network, and/or other disciplinary action, including legal action for criminal offenses.

Print Student Name

Student Signature

Date

My child and I have read and understand Juan Diego Academy's Technology Acceptable Use Policy and Agreement. I am satisfied that my child understands the expectations that this policy entails. I give my child permission to use Juan Diego Academy's computer facilities in a manner consistent with this policy. I understand that failure to meet any of these expectations may result in revocation of my child's permission to use the school's computers and/or other disciplinary action.

Print Parent / Guardian Name

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date

FORM D: Release of Student Academic Information 2025-2026

Student Name: _____ **ID#:** _____ **Grade Level:** _____

As a parent/guardian of a Juan Diego Academy student, it is with my full knowledge and consent that my child and I authorize Juan Diego Academy to release and/or share transcripts or other academic information of the high school to officials of colleges, universities, organizations, or foundations and their representatives. This information, relevant to my child's college/university admissions, financial aid, and/ or scholarship application process, will be solely used for educational planning and placement purposes. I further understand that under Texas state law, official transcripts may only be submitted directly from Juan Diego Academy to colleges and universities.

By signing below, my child and I consent to releasing the academic information as stated above.

Print Student Name

Student Signature

Date

Print Parent / Guardian Name

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date

FORM E: Lunch Account Agreement 2025-2026

Student Name: _____ **ID#:** _____ **Grade Level:** _____

In collaboration with a catering business, Juan Diego Academy will give the students the option of purchasing warm and delicious daily meals. In an effort to protect our planet, we have gone green and digital! JDA Administration will provide the students and their parents/guardians with the link to access the Lunch menu and ordering system. No physical copies will be provided, nor will physical menus, cash, checks, or ACH payments be accepted. Additional funds can be deposited into the student's Lunch account in the event they want to order add-ons or water at the time of receiving their lunch.

I, _____, am hereby agreeing to pay lunches to Juan Diego Academy for my child's meals at the time of submitting the lunch order. I understand that all orders will be placed online and have a deadline, which is provided in our monthly Lunch email and on the Lunch Time order page.

If my child withdraws from Juan Diego Academy with a balance in their account, a refund will be issued within 10 days, upon my request. If this account is depleted, my child will not be denied lunch for three days. However, if the student's account is not brought to current within three days, we reserve the right to deny lunches.

My signature below states that I understand the lunch account capabilities and what this agreement entails. I will be responsible for monitoring the balances and adding money as necessary. If this balance should fall in arrears, I will pay for any pending credit balance.

Print Parent / Guardian Name

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date