



# **Pope Francis Global Academy**

## **Family Handbook**

### **2023-2024**

*The school policies and procedures contained in this handbook must be placed in the proper perspective. The education of each child is the joint responsibility of the home and the school. Recall the words you as a parent heard when your child was baptized: "You will be the first teachers of your child in the ways of the faith. May you be the best of teachers by what you say and do." Continuous and respectful communication and cooperation between the school and home will best assure a quality education for each child enrolled at Pope Francis Global Academy School.*



August, 2023

Dear Pope Francis Global Academy Family,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the Pope Francis Global Academy family for the 2023-2024 academic year. As the newly appointed principal, I am excited to embark on this journey of learning and growth together.

At PFGA, we are dedicated to creating a nurturing and inspiring environment where each student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Our commitment to excellence is reflected in every aspect of our educational approach, from our dedicated faculty to our engaging curriculum.

This handbook is designed to be a comprehensive guide that will help you navigate the various aspects of our school community. It outlines our policies, procedures, and expectations, all of which are intended to create a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for everyone - which helps us to maintain a vibrant and faith-filled community at Pope Francis Global Academy.

As partners in your child's education, we value open communication and collaboration. We encourage you to stay actively engaged in your child's learning journey by attending school events, parent-teacher conferences, and volunteering opportunities. Together, we can ensure that your child receives the support and encouragement they need to excel and reach their fullest potential.

Please read through the handbook carefully, share pertinent information with your children, and then sign and return the Handbook Acknowledgement and Agreement Form to the office by September 5, 2023.



Should you have any questions or need further clarification on any matter, please don't hesitate to reach out to our dedicated administrative team or your child's teachers.

I am thrilled to be a part of the PFGA community and look forward to getting to know each of you better. Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education. Let us work hand in hand to make this academic year a memorable and successful one.

Warm regards,

Nilma Osiecki

Principal

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>SCHOOL INFORMATION</b>	<b>9</b>
Pope Francis Global Academy 2023-2024 Faculty & Staff	9
School Hours	10
Mission Statement	10
Philosophy	10
Non-Discrimination Statement	10
<b>SPIRITUAL STEWARDSHIP</b>	<b>11</b>
Pastor	11
<b>SCHOOL GOVERNANCE</b>	<b>11</b>
PFGA School Board	11
<b>ADMISSIONS POLICY</b>	<b>12</b>
General Information	12
Age Requirements	12
Admission Status	12
Priority of Admission	12
Waitlist	12
<b>FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS</b>	<b>13</b>
Tuition for 2023-24	13
K-8 Tuition	13
Pre-K Tuition	13
Registration Fee	13
FACTS Fee	13
<b>REGISTRATION AND FACTS TUITION PAYMENT</b>	<b>14</b>
FACTS Payment Process	14
Prorated Tuition	14
Tuition Delinquency	14
Additional for 8th grade	15
Financial Assistance	15

<b>ADDITIONAL OBLIGATIONS</b>	<b>16</b>
Parent Service Hours	16
<b>PARENT/TEACHER/SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<b>17</b>
School Messenger Blasts and Weekly News Updates	17
Individual Email	17
Parent-Teacher Conferences	17
Legal Issues/Child Custody	17
<b>GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNICATING WITH MINORS</b>	<b>18</b>
Archdiocesan Guidelines	18
Cell Phones/Text Messaging	18
Email	19
<b>REQUIRED SCHOOL FORMS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>STUDENT MEDICAL AND HEALTH INFORMATION AND FORMS</b>	<b>21</b>
Immunizations and School Physicals	21
Dental Examinations	21
Eye Examinations	21
Archdiocesan School Medication Procedures	21
Sudden Illness or Accident	22
Medical Treatment in School	22
Medication	22
Administration of Medication at School	22
Self-Administration of Medication	23
Appropriate Containers	23
Storage of Medication	23
Returning to School After an Illness	24
Physical Education and Recess Exemption	24
Head Lice	24
<b>FOOD ALLERGIES</b>	<b>25</b>
School Guidelines for Food Allergies	25
Family’s Responsibility Regarding Allergies	26
School’s Responsibility Regarding Allergies	26
Student’s Responsibility Regarding Allergies	27
<b>DROP-OFF AND PICK UP SAFETY</b>	<b>28</b>
Arrival Times and Procedures	28
Drop-off Procedures	28
Pre-K and Kindergarten Student Drop-off	29

Dismissal and Pick-Up Procedures	29
Walking Home from School	30
Bicycles	30
Dogs	30
<b>COVID-19</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>ATTENDANCE</b>	<b>31</b>
Late Arrival	32
Absence	32
Excused Absences From School May Include:	32
Partial Absence	32
Sudden Illness or Accident	33
Early Dismissal	33
Special Appointments	33
Extended Absence/Vacations	33
<b>SCHOOL SAFETY/EMERGENCIES/DISASTER PLANNING</b>	<b>34</b>
Emergency Notification	34
Pick-up Authorization Form	34
Sudden Illness or Accident	34
Lockdown Drills	34
Fire and Tornado Drills	34
Tornado Warnings	34
Snow	35
Weather Recess Policy	35
Asbestos Content Notification & Management	35
Reporting Child Abuse	36
<b>UNIFORM DRESS CODE</b>	<b>36</b>
Uniforms	36
Footwear	36
Hairstyles/Makeup/Jewelry/Tattoos	36
Uniform Violations	37
Non-Uniform Day Examples	37
Non-Uniform Day Guidelines	38
Physical Education Uniform (K-8)	38
<b>BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE</b>	<b>39</b>
Discipline Policy	39
Classroom Rules	39

Major Incidents	39
Bullying	40
Search and Seizure	41
Sexual Harassment	41
Cell Phone Policy	41
Technology Use Outside of School	42
Behavior Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities, Athletics and Field Trips	42
<b>ACADEMICS AND CURRICULUM</b>	<b>43</b>
Mathematics	43
English Language Arts	43
Social Studies	44
Science	44
Religion	45
Practical/Fine Arts	46
Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement	47
Use of Technology Outside of School	48
Homework and Late Work Policy	49
Student Assessment	49
Grading Scale	50
Reporting Student Progress	50
Honor Roll	50
Inclusive Education/Learning Resource Program	51
Testing	51
Academic Dishonesty	51
Academic Policy	52
Academic Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities, Athletics and Field Trips	52
Promotion/Retention	53
<b>SPECIAL SERVICES</b>	<b>53</b>
Lunch Program	53
Extended Day Program (EDP)	53
Field Trips	54
After School or Enrichment Activities	55
Student Council	55
Shadow Days	55
Classroom Celebrations	55
Toys/Electronic Devices	56
Bringing Money to School	56

<b>ATHLETICS</b>	<b>56</b>
Guidelines and Rules for Participation	56
PFGA Philosophy of Athletics	57
<b>PARENT EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>57</b>
Parent Service Hours Commitment/Volunteer Hours	57
Parent Volunteer Hour Log	58
Virtus Training and Compliance	58
Archdiocese Requirements for any Volunteers Over the age of 18	58
Room Parents	58
Parent Volunteers for Lunch and Recess Supervision	59
Field Trips	59
Other Volunteer Opportunities	59
Parent Conduct	59
<b>HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT FORM</b>	<b>60</b>



## **SCHOOL INFORMATION**

### **Pope Francis Global Academy 2023-2024 Faculty & Staff**

Pastor .....	Fr. Michael O'Connell
Principal .....	Nilma Osiecki
Assistant Principal .....	Victoria Scott
Director of Communications, Admissions and Advancement .....	Gigi Ybarra
Parish Director of Operations.....	Tony Lopez
Administrative Assistant.....	Maria Teruel
Administrative Assistant .....	LaVerne Johnson
Athletic Director .....	Wanda Fleming
Parish Bookkeeper.....	Donna Quevedo
Pre-Kindergarten .....	Maria Riesco
Pre-Kindergarten .....	Margie Campbell
Pre-Kindergarten Aide .....	Laura Skiba
Pre-Kindergarten Aide.....	Debby Aguayo
Kindergarten .....	Julie Marchant
1st Grade .....	Michelle Trigo
2nd Grade .....	Nancy Widlowski
3rd Grade .....	Astrid Cortes
4th Grade .....	Adriana Resendez
5th Grade, Jr. High ELA.....	Vincent Mancuso
6th Grade, Jr. High Math.....	Katrina Cook
7th Grade, Jr. High Science.....	Dennis Conley
8th Grade, Jr. High Social Studies/ Religion.....	Toni Gambino
Middle School Aide.....	Diana Perez
Physical Education .....	Patty Samborski
Fine Arts.....	TBA
Spanish (PreK-Kdg ECLIP) .....	Maria Riesco
Spanish (1st-2nd ECLIP) .....	Michelle Trigo
Spanish (3rd-8th).....	Elsa Garces
EDP.....	Julie Molenda
EDP.....	Matthew Molenda
EDP/FSP Lunch .....	Juana Roback
Building Maintenance.....	Louie Masella

## **School Hours**

- Full Day Students – 8 am - 3 pm
- First Bell is at 7:50 am; Tardies issued beginning at 8:05 am
- Early Release - 1st Wednesday of the month at 1:30 pm for Faculty Meeting
- Early Dismissal - 11:30 am
- Half-Day Pre-K – 8:00 am – 11:20 am

## **Mission Statement**

Pope Francis Global Academy is committed to reaching out through prayer, service, and education to the needs of the community. In this supportive atmosphere, students are encouraged and challenged by the partnership of parents and teachers to use their unique abilities to be lifelong, contributing Catholic Christians. Note: there is a planned review of the mission statement during the course of this school year by the administration and staff.

## **Philosophy**

At Pope Francis Global Academy, we believe that education stimulates the natural inquisitiveness of children and focuses their desire to learn. We believe that each student is a unique individual who must be encouraged to act positively as part of the Christian community and society in general. We believe that through an enriched prayer life, an awareness of the needs of others, and study of our faith, the student will grow in his/her Catholic life. Our ultimate goal is to involve the students in the mission of Jesus, love of God, and love of their neighbor, and to promote in each of our students a healthy self-concept, and respect for society at large. To reach this goal, we set the following objectives:

- To assist parents, who are the primary educators of their child's growth.
- To develop spirituality through daily prayer, the study of the Lord's work in Scripture, and liturgical celebration.
- To assist and guide parents in the preparation of their children for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation.
- To recognize all aspects of student growth: spiritual, moral, emotional, physical, and intellectual.
- To design a curriculum that meets the diverse needs of children with provisions for different styles and modes of learning.
- To create an atmosphere where learning is fostered by creative methods encouraging the child to be a self-initiated learner.

## **Non-Discrimination Statement**

Pope Francis Global Academy does not discriminate based on race, color, sex, or national or ethnic origin in the admission policies, hiring practices, administration of educational policies, loan programs, athletics, or other school-administered programs.

## **SPIRITUAL STEWARDSHIP**

### **Pastor**

As the pastor of our Parish, Our Lady of the Rosary, Fr. Michael O'Connell is our primary spiritual leader and the leader of our parish community. We shall seek his guidance on all matters of faith.

## **SCHOOL GOVERNANCE**

### **PFGA School Board**

In the fall of 2020, Pope Francis Global Academy began the Renew My Church process, along with the parishes of St. Constance, St. Pascal, St. Robert Bellarmine and St. Bartholomew. At the end of the process, Cardinal Cupich determined that St. Barts, St. Pascal, and Our Lady of Victory would come together to form a new parish, Our Lady of the Rosary, with Pope Francis Global Academy becoming the unified parish's school.

This transition from a regional school to a parish school, requires a new form of school governance. Prior to the change, Pope Francis Global Academy was governed by a Board of Specified Jurisdiction.

In July, 2023 Pope Francis Global Academy merged with its sister school, St. Bartholomew School. The school will begin the process of forming a School Advisory Board.

The PFGA School Advisory Board shall provide feedback in the development of policies that govern the operation of the school. All such policies must be in accordance with those established by the Archdiocesan School Board and subject to pastor and principal approval, under the guidelines provided by the Office of Catholic Schools.

## **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

### **General Information**

Pope Francis Global Academy is operated under the auspices of the Catholic Bishop of Chicago, a corporation sole, in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Pope Francis Global Academy admits students of any race, color, sex, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of this school. Registration for students is ongoing as well as formally held during Catholic Schools' Week.

### **Age Requirements**

The State of Illinois September 1st cut-off date will be observed. A child entering our 3 and 4-year-old Pre-Kindergarten program must be three by September 1st or four by September 1st. A child entering kindergarten must be five by September 1st. A child entering first grade must be six by September 1st.

### **Admission Status**

Admission will be determined by a combination of factors including the resource capacity of the specific classroom and of the school to meet the child's needs, space in the roster of the specific classroom, and a comprehensive review of the student's academic standing (for grades 1-8). Applicants must be in good academic, disciplinary and financial standing in their current school for their application to be considered. Once all of the necessary materials are submitted, applications and materials will be reviewed by the PFGA Admissions team.

Classroom spaces will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

### **Priority of Admission**

1. Currently enrolled students of families whose fee and tuition payments are up-to-date.
2. Siblings of currently enrolled students of families whose fee and tuition payments are up-to-date.
3. Children of parishioners, not currently enrolled.
4. Students transferring from other Catholic schools and/or students whose current parish has no school.
5. Children from non-parishioners families.

Students who transfer in from another Archdiocesan school must have all outstanding debt to that institution paid in full.

### **Waitlist**

A waitlist will be created for those who have not been accepted in the first round of admissions due to limited space in the applicable classroom. Families will be notified if placed on a waitlist and again if/when a space becomes available for their children.

## **FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

### **Tuition for 2023-24**

Tuition rates are evaluated and revised each year. Because tuition and fees only cover a portion of the cost of educating each child, we rely on fundraising and other contributions to make up the difference. In compliance with Archdiocesan Policy 1400 and to assure best practices, parents/guardians will be required to sign a tuition and fee agreement annually. Tuition increases average 2-6% annually. Tuition for the 2021-2022 school year is as follows:

#### **K-8 Tuition**

1st Child = \$6,735 annual tuition

2nd Child = \$4,960 (\$1,775 savings 2nd child discount) \$11,695 total

3rd Child = \$3,660 (\$4,850 savings 3rd child discount) \$15,355 total

4th Child = \$3,660 (\$7,925 savings 4th child discount) \$19,015 total

#### **Pre-K Tuition**

In order to support the school's Pre-K sustainability given the higher costs of education and care for these students, *a multi-sibling discount does not apply to Pre-K students.*

3 half-days per week (M, W, F 8 am - 11:20 am) = \$3,735 tuition annually

5 half-days per week ( 8 am - 11:20 am) = \$4,668 annually

3 full days per week (M, W, F from 8 am - 3 pm) = \$5,165 annually

5 full days per week (from 8 am - 3 pm) = \$6,998 annually

### **Registration Fee**

There is a \$200 annual non-refundable fee per family which is drafted upon completion of the Enrollment process on the FACTS portal. This fee is typically discounted for a month each year at the beginning of the re-enrollment process.

### **FACTS Fee**

FACTS, Management charges each family \$50 for their services and this is typically taken one week after the family enrolls on FACTS.

## **REGISTRATION AND FACTS TUITION PAYMENT**

### **FACTS Payment Process**

PFGA uses FACTS Management, an online tuition management system, for all student billing. FACTS provides flexible payment options (automatic deduction from checking and statement savings accounts, credit card or e-payment), and 24-hour account access and web support.

Tuition may be set to either be paid in full in advance or over eleven monthly installments. The first payment (Fees) is due in July and the last payment is due by May 15th. If the payment is made in full by August 15 there is a \$100 savings on tuition.

The July Fee bill includes Resource/Book Fee and Fundraising Fee and via your FACTS account.

Billing for late enrollees will be started upon completion of FACTS enrollment and the final payment will be in May. Students may not begin the school year until the Fee Bill has been paid.

### **Prorated Tuition**

Late enrollment: Students enrolling any time in the first month of the school year will pay the full-year tuition rate. After the first four weeks of school, tuition may be prorated by week.

Early withdrawal: For students on the monthly payment plan, no refunds will be made because the payment plan is essentially pay-as-you-go. Upon notification of withdrawal, the Business Office will cancel future FACTS drawdowns. Fees and raffle tickets cannot be prorated and are non-refundable.

### **Tuition Delinquency**

Paying tuition on time is important to the financial operation of the school. All tuition payments are expected to be made in accordance with stated deadlines. Pope Francis Global Academy understands that at times, families may encounter unforeseen circumstances that temporarily make timely payment difficult. We are willing to work with families who find themselves in this situation. The family should contact either the Bookkeeper or the Principal to discuss adjusting payment options.

- **If a FACTS payment fails** or is returned, FACTS will make up to 2 more attempts to process the payment. Each returned check/debit incurs a \$30 fee to the family. If an account remains unpaid after 3 attempts by FACTS, the school Bookkeeper will contact the family to attempt resolution.
- **Accounts that become 30 days past due** will receive a delinquency notice from the Bookkeeper. Within 5 days of the notice, parents must contact the Bookkeeper to make arrangements to pay. If parents fail to respond to the 30-day delinquency notice, at 30 days + 2 weeks, students will be restricted from participation in extracurricular activities and athletic programs until parents contact the Bookkeeper and make arrangements to

pay.

- **If an account becomes 45 days past due**, the family will receive a delinquency letter from the Principal stating that student(s) will continue to be excluded from extracurricular activities and that if acceptable arrangements are not made, the student(s) will be excluded from school. The parents will be required to meet with the Head of School to make agreeable payment arrangements.
- **If an account becomes 60 days past due**, the student(s) will be excluded from school until appropriate payment arrangements are made.

### **Additional for 8th grade**

- Tuition payments and arrangements must be current to participate in any graduation activities, including the graduation ceremony, and for a student to receive her/his cap and gown.
- Diplomas will not be awarded until all financial obligations are paid in full.
- Official student records will not be sent to high schools until all financial obligations are paid in full.

No students may register for the following school year unless their tuition account is current and no student will receive a classroom placement or be permitted to attend for the following year until the current year's financial obligations have been paid.

### **Financial Assistance**

Financial assistance may be available for families who qualify based on financial need. To be considered for any type of financial assistance, you must submit a FACTS Grant and Aid Application, upload all required supporting (tax) documents, and pay the online application fee to FACTS through your FACTS account. This must be done every year that you would like to be considered for aid. The deadline to apply for financial aid for the next school year is usually mid-March of the current year.

The major portion of aid for PFGA families has come through the Archdiocese's Caritas program. This program was initiated in the Archdiocese in order to expand opportunities for Catholic education to qualifying families entering the Catholic school system for the first time between kindergarten and eighth grade. If your family currently has a Caritas Scholar, your student awards are not guaranteed from year to year and you must submit a new application each year to be considered.

Additional financial assistance may occasionally become available through outside/private scholarships or at the local level.

The Illinois Invest in Kids Act funds scholarships through the Empower Illinois and Big Shoulders Fund Scholarship Granting Organizations. Information on applying is distributed each year in December for the following year.

## **Monthly Money Raffle**

Each family is required to purchase \$400 (40 tickets at \$10) in fundraising raffle tickets. Families with only one half-day Pre-K student will be charged only \$200 (and receive 20 tickets). This will be charged as the "Fundraising Fee" in the July FACTS Fee Bill. Cash prizes will be awarded through monthly drawings during the school year (September - April.) When a family enrolls after July, the fee bill will be charged as soon as possible after enrollment. Once the total fundraising fee has been paid via FACTS, tickets will be distributed and families may begin selling their allotted tickets, turn in completed ticket stubs (the part with seller's name, etc.) and keep monies from the raffle tickets sold to friends and family, as they have already been paid for by that point. Families may also choose to complete them and submit them as their own tickets for chances to win the cash prizes. Or, they may do any combination of those.

## **Books and Resource Fee**

A significant outlay for curricular materials including, but not limited to books, electronic resources, online subscriptions, etc. is made by the school from year to year to support much of our curriculum. Therefore, we charge \$250 to cover the costs each year for each K-8th grade student. The fee for Pre-K students is \$125.

## **ADDITIONAL OBLIGATIONS**

### **Parent Service Hours**

The goal of the Parent Service Challenge is to encourage a spirit of shared commitment among all families for the benefit of the school, students, and community of Pope Francis Global Academy. Each family is required to complete 20 hours of service between April 1st of the current school year and March 31st of the following year. Parents will be sent login information to set up an account on trackitforward.com. Parents are responsible for logging all of their hours. Families will be assessed \$15/hour for each hour not completed AND logged by April 5.

## **PARENT/TEACHER/SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS**

### **School Messenger Blasts and Weekly News Updates**

Communication between home and school is essential to the effectiveness of the school



program; most communications between school and home will be delivered electronically. *The Howler* will be sent home weekly via our School Messenger notification system and all items included in the weekly mailing will be accessible through the *Howler* link on our website. A reminder of school events is issued in *the Howler* so that parents will be adequately informed as to current happenings in the schools. Some notifications will also go home as paper flyers in the Thursday folders.

ALL LETTERS OR NOTICES FROM PARENTS/PARENT GROUPS/OUTSIDE GROUPS GOING HOME THROUGH THE SCHOOL REQUIRE PRIOR AUTHORIZATION. THE LETTERS OR NOTICES SHOULD BE SUBMITTED IN A WORD OR PDF FILE FORMAT NO LATER THAN 8:00 AM TUESDAY OF THE WEEK THE INFORMATION IS BEING SENT HOME. SEND YOUR INFORMATION TO [mteruelpfgacademy.org](http://mteruelpfgacademy.org). Please note that all planned activities can change. School administration will do their best to advise parents of changes.

### **Individual Email**

Faculty and staff members have a PFGA email that will be used for contact purposes. Email addresses are posted on the school's website. Teachers will respond within 48 hours during non-class time.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher Conferences are held twice a year. Fall conferences are held for all students and are an opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss the progress of their student(s). Spring conferences are by request of either parent or teacher.

### **Legal Issues/Child Custody**

Pope Francis Global Academy abides by the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Primary Act concerning parents' rights of access to their child's school records. The school also abides by the provisions of the Illinois law regarding the right of access of a non-custodial parent to his or her child's records. Release of copies of school records to the non-custodial parent is granted unless there is a court order to the contrary on file in the school office. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the Principal with the official copy of the court order. Unless informed in writing with adequate evidence that a parent is not permitted to have unqualified access to the child(ren), the school may release a child to a non-custodial parent. Pope Francis Global Academy will give a non-custodial parent the opportunity for a Parent-Teacher conference upon request, at a time other than that of the custodial parent. If Pope Francis Global Academy has on record a court order indicating limited visitation rights or non-visitation rights, and a parent makes an application to volunteer service in the school, this application will not be accepted.

## **GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNICATING WITH MINORS**

### **Archdiocesan Guidelines**

The Archdiocese of Chicago formulated the following Guidelines for Communicating Electronically with Minors. Electronic communication includes (but is not limited to) the use of cellular phones, webcams, email, text messaging, instant messaging, and electronic publication of content on websites, message boards, blogs, and social networking sites. All decisions related to the means used to communicate electronically with minors should be made by the Administration, rather than by individual employees or volunteers.

Teachers, catechists, coaches, youth ministers, and others should not collect student personal email addresses and phone numbers from students; this information must be provided, in writing, by parents if they have agreed to do so. In the event minors are contacted directly by employees or volunteers, parents must be carbon copied (cc'd) on the content of all messages (although duplicate messages need not be sent using the same means of communication used to contact the minor). The content of electronic communication should be brief and on topic.

When communicating with a minor, teachers will write or speak as if they are also communicating with parents; the boundaries that must be respected in oral communication extend to electronic communication. All communication must conform to Archdiocesan Safe Environment Training and the Code of Conduct.

Communication that violates the Code of Conduct will not be tolerated, regardless of the medium used to convey it.

### **Cell Phones/Text Messaging**

- Whenever possible, teachers will use school or office lines to conduct ministry/school-related conversations with families.
- The school will not call minors directly (e.g. on a minor's cellular phone)
- Staff will not communicate with minors via text messages or through social media sites.

### **Email**

Teachers will contact parents or respond to e-mail messages during non-instructional time only. All teachers and staff members have assigned PFGA email accounts. Although teachers are often able to respond quicker, please allow 48 hours for a response.

- Staff will contact minors through their parent's email address provided or if available a school email address. Only official Archdiocesan or parish staff accounts should be used for communication with a personal email.

- If possible, staff will copy parents on emails sent to minors.
- The school will not add minors to the personal electronic mailing list (e.g. When sending or forwarding an email unrelated to educational or ministry-based activities, staff will not add minors to the list of recipients.)
- Employees or volunteers should not use personal social networking site accounts to contact minors. Instead, a parish or school can create a group or organization page used strictly for education or ministry-related communication. These accounts must be registered to the school or parish, and not to individuals within an organization. All group pages or ministry/education-related accounts should be titled to reflect their official nature. Passwords to such accounts should be accessible to at least two employees.
- No personal contact information should be listed in the profile fields. Only official email addresses, office phone numbers, and job titles should be listed.
- Account settings should be set to maximize privacy.
- While schools and parishes are free to publicize their presence on social networking sites, minors should not be sought out as “friends” (i.e. individually invited via site communication tools to associate with the group or page).
- The school will not post pictures of minors with full names or “tag” pictures of minors (i.e. label photos to increase their accessibility or visibility on a site).
- Schools will not use instant messaging programs (e.g. Facebook chat).
- Official walls and pages will be frequently monitored for inappropriate posts. Inappropriate posts will be promptly removed/deleted. A specific individual will be responsible for monitoring sites and removing inappropriate content.
- If third parties create unofficial groups or fan pages about our school, staff will periodically review them for inappropriate content (e.g. unauthorized use of logos, bullying, harassing or defamatory language, etc.). You may report these pages/groups/users to the hosting site and ask that they be removed.
- All content posted by employees and volunteers must reflect Catholic teachings and values.

## **REQUIRED SCHOOL FORMS**

Each year, every family must complete and return several school-related forms to ensure important information and records are up to date. These forms include:

- [\*\*Medical and Emergency Notification Form\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Pick-Up Authorization Form\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Neighborhood Walking Permission Form\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Family Directory Form\*\*](#)

- [Technology Acceptable Use Agreement](#)

## **STUDENT MEDICAL AND HEALTH INFORMATION AND FORMS**

### **Immunizations and School Physicals**

All students new to PFGA, plus all returning rising kindergartners and rising 6th graders will need a new **Child State of Illinois Health Exam Form**, as required by the Illinois Department of Public Health. Because many physicians require that a school physical appointment be made two months in advance, parents are encouraged to call their child's doctor to make an appointment as soon as possible.

The Illinois Certificate of Child Health Examination form is due in the school office the first week of school for students in grades Pre-K through 8. Incomplete forms will be returned to you for completion and will not be considered as part of your child's permanent health file until they are properly completed and returned.

If, by October 1 the Child State of Illinois Health Exam Form has not been provided to the office, students will be excluded from classes. At least one warning will be given. Before you leave your doctor's office, please check the dates of all immunizations because state law requires: DPT - four or more doses at the appropriate intervals with the last being given on or after the fourth birthday. OPV/(Oral Polio) - three or more doses administered at appropriate intervals with the last being given on or after the fourth birthday. MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) - given at 12 months of age or later. Measles, second dose one month after the first dose. K-12 students must show evidence of having received two doses of the measles vaccine.

HIB - children entering school below kindergarten level only. Hepatitis B - three doses of vaccine with the first two shots occurring at least four weeks apart. The interval between the first and third doses must be at least four months. Chicken Pox Vaccine (Varicella) - dose of varicella vaccine at one year or later for children entering at the kindergarten level and below for the first time.

If a parent or physician chooses not to give a child any of the above immunizations, a note written on a prescription blank or the physician's office stationery is required to be attached to the physical form. Please have the physician specify why immunization has not been given. If non-immunization is due to allergy, please state the child's allergy. This information will be reviewed by the principal and pastor.

Physical exam requirements for all ages are height, weight, BMI (body mass index), B/P (blood pressure), and Diabetes Screening. In addition, a Lead Risk Questionnaire must be completed and a blood test performed if indicated, for all students six years of age or younger. All of the child's health problems should be noted on the physical form. The physician must sign and date the immunization and the physical portion of the form. The demographic information and the child's health history portion must be filled out and signed by a parent or legal guardian.

## **Dental Examinations**

State law requires new dental examinations for all students entering Kindergarten, second, or sixth grade and students transferring in from other states or countries. **Child State of Illinois Dental Exam Form**. Illinois State law requires these children to have a new dental examination completed within 18 months before the May 15 deadline of that school year. Please have a Dental Examination Record completed by your dental provider and return this completed form to the school office. An incomplete form will be returned to you for completion and will not be considered as part of your child's file until they are returned and properly completed. Failure to submit a completed form may cause your child to be excluded from school and all school-related activities.

## **Eye Examinations**

Diagnosing eye and vision problems and providing timely treatment ensures that students maximize their academic performance. To accomplish this goal of the students of Illinois, the law requires comprehensive eye exams for all students entering Kindergarten and any students transferring in from other states or countries. [Child State of Illinois Eye Exam Form](#). These students must have an eye examination performed only by qualified eye doctors-such as optometrists and ophthalmologists by October 15th. The Eye Examination Report must be returned to the school office by October 15th. Incomplete forms will be returned to you for completion and will not be considered as part of your child's file until they are properly completed and returned.

## **Archdiocesan School Medication Procedures**

All families should read the **School Medication Procedures Explanation**.

## **Sudden Illness or Accident**

Parents will be notified of sickness or if there was an accident at school. An incident report will be filled out if a student is seriously injured at school. A second phone number must be on file for emergencies only. Names and phone numbers of family physicians should also be recorded on the emergency form.

## **Medical Treatment in School**

In the event a student shall become ill or injured or otherwise need immediate medical attention that is not contained in the **Medication Authorization Form** on file with the school, the school shall attempt to contact the student's parent/guardian utilizing the information provided on the student's Medical Information and Emergency Notification Form.

If the student's parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the school shall attempt to contact the person identified by the parent/guardian as the student's emergency contact.

In either event, such contact shall be made to advise of the observed illness or injury or need for medical attention and to obtain further instructions from the student's parent/guardian or emergency contact. Therefore, it is important to have school emergency forms filled out completely and to be updated throughout the year as needed. The Principal or other certified school personnel may call local emergency medical services before or after attempting to call the student's parent/guardian or emergency contact if, in the exercise of school-related supervision of the student, the student's illness, injury, or need for immediate medical attention is perceived to require emergency medical care.

## **Medication**

Parents/guardians have the primary responsibility for the administration of medication to their children. The administration of medication to students during regular school hours and school-related activities is discouraged unless necessary for the critical health and well-being of the student. Teachers, administrators, and administrative staff shall not administer medication to students except as provided in the School Medication Procedures and parents must provide a **Medication Authorization Form** and also a Doctor's Order specific to that medication. Compliance with the School Medication Procedures established for the administration of medication is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

## **Administration of Medication at School**

No school personnel shall administer any prescription or non-prescription medicine unless the school has the student's current and complete **Medication Authorization Form** and a Doctor's Order approved and signed by the Principal.

A Medication Authorization Form is distributed for each student at the beginning of each school year or the enrollment of a new student during the year. Copies of the Medication Authorization Forms are available in the school office.

The School retains the right to deny requests to administer medication to the students provided that such denial is indicated on the Medication Authorization Form. If the school denies a request and authorization for the administration of medication, parents/guardians must make other arrangements for the administration of medication to students, such as arranging for medication to be administered before or after school or having the parent/guardian or designee administer the medication in school.

## **Self-Administration of Medication**

A student may self-administer medication at school if so ordered by his or her licensed prescriber per the student's current and completed **Medication Authorization Form** and a

doctor's order specifying the student is capable and allowed to self-administer the medication. Students who suffer from asthma, allergies, or other conditions that require the immediate use of medication shall be permitted to carry such medication and to self-administer such medication without supervision by school personnel only if the School has on file for the student a current and completed Medication Authorization Form and a Doctor's Order specifically indicating self-administration. Otherwise, such medication must be stored in a locked cabinet under the control of the School and the self-administration of medication shall be under the supervision of the School if there is a current and completed Medication Authorization Form and a Doctor's Order on file for that student and that specific medication.

### **Appropriate Containers**

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide the School with all medication in appropriate containers that are: a. Prescription-labeled by a pharmacy or licensed prescriber (displaying Rx number, student name, medication, dosage, direction for administration, date, and refill schedule, pharmacy label, and name/initials of a pharmacist) or b. Manufacturer-labeled for non-prescription over-the-counter medication.

### **Storage of Medication**

Medication received by the School in accordance with a completed Medication Authorization Form and an appropriate container shall be stored in a locked cabinet. Access to the locked cabinet shall be limited to the Principal, his/her designees.

Medication requiring refrigeration shall be stored in a refrigerator that cannot be accessed by students and shall be kept separate from food items.

At the end of the school year, or the end of the treatment regime, the student's parent/guardian will be responsible for removing any unused medication from the school. If the parent/guardian does not pick up the medication by the end of the school year, the School will appropriately discard the medication.

### **Returning to School After an Illness**

Per the Office of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Chicago, any student who is absent from school for three consecutive days or more must be examined by a medical professional and obtain a note from the caregiver giving the date that the student will be well enough to return to in-person learning. That note must be turned into the office before the student returns to his/her classroom.

Any student who is absent due to a contagious illness that must be reported to the local health authority will not be allowed back in school without a physician's note. These illnesses are Chickenpox (varicella), Chlamydia, E. coli 0157:H7, Giardiasis, Gonorrhea, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV or AIDS, Measles, Meningitis (bacterial or viral), Mumps, Pertussis, Polio,

Rubella, Salmonellosis, Shigellosis, Syphilis, and Tuberculosis. Parents are responsible for asking the doctor for a note. If these children return to school too early, they may not have fully recovered and may place their classmates and teachers at risk of contracting the disease.

Note that current COVID-19 protocols will apply when returning to school after illness.

### **Physical Education and Recess Exemption**

All students must participate in physical education classes and outdoor recess unless they have a written exemption/excuse from their physician.

### **Head Lice**

Head lice is not a disease but is a nuisance. Infestation caused by head lice occurs in students of all ages. Most commonly, head lice are directly transmitted through close contact from a person who is infected or indirectly transmitted through contact with an object that has been contaminated with the lice (hairbrushes, combs, shared clothing, or towels). The symptoms of infestation include an itchy scalp as well as evidence of nits that adhere to the scalp. The period of communicability lasts as long as lice or eggs remain alive on the infested person or clothing.

Exclusion from school: Those who have become infested with head lice are to be excluded from school. Parents are advised to seek treatment for their child/ren from either their family physician or through over-the-counter medicated shampoo recommended by a pharmacist. The student may return to school when the parent/guardian presents either a box label or note from the physician indicating that the child(ren) has been treated. Students are re-checked for head lice before readmission to the classroom.

Advice to Parent/Guardian: Parents/guardians are advised to check other family members and disinfect combs and brushes with medicated shampoo. Disinfect contaminated articles such as clothing and bedding by machine washing the articles in HOT water and detergent or having items dry-cleaned. Thoroughly vacuum rugs, upholstered furniture, mattresses, or other articles that cannot be laundered or dry-cleaned. School families will be notified when a case of head lice occurs in their child's grade.

## **FOOD ALLERGIES**

### **School Guidelines for Food Allergies**

To provide the most appropriate care for students at Pope Francis Global Academy, it is imperative to have the most up to date information regarding every student's medical needs,



allergies. Parents must ensure all medical forms are provided to the school each year.

Avoiding food-allergic reactions requires the committed efforts of parents, students, teachers, and administration. While it is impossible to guarantee an allergen-free environment, Pope Francis Global Academy policy provides a framework for partnering with all families to build a safe and supportive environment for children suffering from life-threatening food allergies and their classmates.

The following precautions are in place at Pope Francis Global Academy:

1. Every family is required to fill out a MEDICAL AND EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION INFORMATION form at the beginning of every year and indicate any allergies or health concerns.
2. Up-to-date medication is to be provided to the school, preferably a supply for the school office and another for the classroom, in original packaging.
3. Students with food allergies may wear medical identification bracelets.
4. Pope Francis Global Academy encourages a “no food sharing” policy to discourage all students from sharing food.
5. Procedures are in place to attend to the cleanliness of the classrooms and lunchroom, including wiping down tables before and after food is consumed and having all children wash their hands or use wipes before or after eating.
6. We encourage families with children having food allergies to bring approved lunches and snacks from home and to maintain a student-specific box of approved treats in their homeroom. For parents wanting a dedicated allergen-aware table in the lunchroom for their students, a designated lunchroom space has been made available.
7. Teachers are not allowed to share their food with students, and should not use packaged candy or treats as a reward.
8. Teachers may provide students with food as part of a class lesson, or as a whole class activity, but only with parental authorization prior to the event when the food is distributed.

### **Family’s Responsibility Regarding Allergies**

Allergies can be life-threatening. The risk of accidental exposure to foods can be reduced in the school setting if schools work with students, parents, and physicians to minimize risks and provide a safe educational environment for food-allergic students. Parents are encouraged to help their children with food allergies to be advocates for themselves and to be aware of their allergies. To help further mitigate risk, we ask that parents do the following:

- Educate the child in the self-management of their food allergy including safe and unsafe foods, strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods, symptoms of allergic reactions, how and when to tell an adult they may be having an allergy-related problem, and how to read food labels.
- Notify the school of the child’s allergies.

- Work with the school team to develop a plan that accommodates the child's needs throughout the school, including in the classroom, the lunchroom, after-care programs, during school-sponsored activities, and on the school bus.
- Work with the child's physician to develop a Food Allergy Action Plan. Submit this plan to the school.
- Complete necessary written medical documentation as required by the Archdiocese include Medication Authorization Form, Parent/Guardian Permission and Authorization Form, Physician Request for Self-Administration of Medication Form, and Medical Information and Emergency Notification Form.
- In coordination with the homeroom teacher and Administration, develop a letter to be sent home to families in the same grade, describing the child's allergies and any foods that should be restricted in class or at school-sponsored activities.
- Replace medications after use or upon expiration.
- Review policy/procedures with the school staff, the child's physician, and the child (if age appropriate) after a reaction has occurred.
- Provide the child with a safe snack to be eaten at snack time.
- Provide a fanny pack (labeled with the child's name) containing the Food Allergy Action Plan sheet, and EpiPen/Benadryl (if necessary). The child may wear this fanny pack during lunchtime or when food is consumed. In the classroom, the fanny pack should be given to the teacher, or be kept in the school office(s).

### **School's Responsibility Regarding Allergies**

- Be knowledgeable about and follow applicable federal and state laws and any district or Archdiocesan policies that apply.
- Review health records submitted by parents and physicians.
- Coordinate a meeting, to establish an individualized prevention and management plan. Attendees should include but are not limited to, the Head of School, all teachers that will be in contact with the student, lunchroom supervisors, the parents, and the student (if age appropriate).
- Assure that all staff who interact with the student regularly understand the food allergy, can recognize symptoms, know what to do in an emergency, and work with other school staff to eliminate the use of food allergens in the allergic student's meals, educational tools, arts and crafts projects, or incentives.
- Create a separate table in the lunchroom/classroom for those students with food allergies to reduce the possibility of accidental exposure. This table should be appropriately cleaned before each use.
- Practice the emergency treatment prescribed by the student's physician pursuant to the Food Allergy Action Plan.
- Ensure that all medications are appropriately stored.
- Notify all faculty and staff of those students who have food allergies.

- Designate school personnel who are properly trained and authorized to administer medications in accordance with Archdiocese policies, State Nursing, and Good Samaritan Laws governing the administration of emergency medications.
- Be prepared to handle a reaction and ensure that there is a staff member available who is properly trained to administer medications during the school day, regardless of time or location.
- Review policies/prevention plan with the appropriate staff, parents/guardians, student, and physician after a reaction has occurred.
- Discuss field trips with the family of the food-allergic student to decide appropriate strategies for managing the food allergy. Allow the parent/guardian to attend the field trip.
- Ensure that substitute teachers understand the food allergy, can recognize its symptoms, and know what to do in an emergency.
- Follow federal/state/district laws and regulations regarding sharing medical information about the student.

### **Student's Responsibility Regarding Allergies**

- Should not trade food with others.
- Should not eat anything not provided by the home.
- Should be proactive in the care and management of their food allergies and reactions based on their developmental level.
- Should notify an adult immediately if they eat something they believe may contain the food to which they are allergic.
- Should wear their fanny pack to any place outside the homeroom.

Circumstances can vary for any student with a diagnosed food allergy. Faculty and staff work with students, teachers, and families, and their physicians to address accommodations that consider the health and well-being of all Pope Francis Global Academy students.

## **DROP-OFF AND PICK UP SAFETY**

### **Arrival Times and Procedures**

- Students will enter the building through the back parking lot, behind the school.
- The first bell of the school day will ring at 7:50 am, at which time the three designated school entry points will be opened, and students will be allowed in.
  - PK-1st grade will enter and exit through door #4 (across from the church)
  - 2nd-4th grade will enter and exit through door #7 (south doors)

- 5th-8th will enter and exit through door #10 (southeast doors)
- After the first week, school staff will not be in the parking lot before 7:50 am, and parents should not leave their children unsupervised before the first bell of the school day.
- Upon entering the school building, the students should remain quiet and orderly and should go directly to their classrooms, where their teachers will be waiting.
- **New:** at 8:05 am, the entry doors will close.
- Students that arrive after 8:05 am, should enter the building via the main entrance on Irving Park but will be marked tardy.

NEW Following are **some updates and new procedures** to help us have a safe and successful school year.

### Drop-off Procedures

For grades 1-8, "Kiss and Go" traffic will continue to be allowed. However, this requires the cooperation of all families for this to be successful. Should this procedure be deemed unsafe for children, parents, and the surrounding neighborhood, then a reconfiguration of the drop-off and pick-up procedures will take place.

- Assigned traffic monitors will be onsite to ensure the safety of all students.
- Please drive slowly and safely and express patience, empathy, and kindness.
- "Kiss and Go" traffic will flow from East to West on Dakin Street, where there will be cones set up for a drop off lane to free up traffic on Dakin Street.
- Pull as far up the lane as possible before the children exit your vehicle.
- All children must exit through the car's passenger side door.
- The children should never cross between cars.
- Drivers must stay in their car at all times.
- Parents who need extended time to drop off their students, **must not** drop their students off via "Kiss and Go". Designated parking is available in the Dakin parking lot. Parents needing more time may also park their cars in any available legal parking spots, or our two parish parking lots located on Irving Park & Melvina and Irving Park & Moody, across the street from the school (between the Transmission Shop).
- **ABSOLUTELY NO PARKING OR STANDING IS ALLOWED ON IRVING PARK ROAD IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING.**

### Pre-K and Kindergarten Student Drop-off

Our youngest students must be brought to door #4 - between the church and school for a hand-to-hand delivery to the teacher or aide. Parking for this is available in the 2 lots on Irving Park across from the church and school, designated parking spots on Dakin, or on adjacent or nearby streets.

**ABSOLUTELY NO PARKING OR STANDING IS ALLOWED ON IRVING PARK ROAD IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING.**

**Dismissal and Pick-Up Procedures**

- Regular dismissal is at 3:00 pm for 1st-8th grade, and 2:50 pm for PK and Kdg.
- **New:** Early release is at 1:30 pm the first Wednesday of the month.
- Students will exit the school via the exit doors in the back parking lot, behind the school.
- Students are not allowed to exit the school building from any other area of the school.
- Teachers will exit the school building with their students and will wait with them until 3:05 pm.
- At 3:05 pm, any students who have not been picked up will be sent directly to EDP.
- Please note that parents of students sent to EDP will be charged for their services.
- Please drive slowly and safely and express patience, empathy, and kindness.
- The parking lot on Dakin will be open at 2:50pm for pick up. Families are encouraged to park and proceed to their student(s)' designated dismissal zones to retrieve their students.
- Traffic will flow from East to West on Dakin Street, where there will be cones set up for pick up.
- Pull as far up the lane as possible and then stop and put the car in park while waiting for your student/s.
- All children must enter through the car's passenger side doors.
- The children should never cross between cars.
- Drivers must stay in their car at all times.
- Parents who need extended time to pick up their students, **must not** use the pick up line.
- Parents needing more time may park their cars in any available legal parking spots, or our two parish parking lots located on Irving Park, across the street from the school.

**[See new procedures](#)**

Parents are not allowed to enter the school through the side doors when they are dropping off or picking up their children. If parents need to come into the school, they must enter through the main entrance. All parents and visitors must sign in and out at the main office.

Under normal conditions, students are not allowed in the building after 3:05 pm unless they are registered for EDP or an official after school activity. If a child stays with the teacher after school hours for tutoring or a specific project, advance notification is given to parents.

**Walking Home from School**

Older students are permitted to leave the school unattended only if the [Unsupervised Release](#)

[Permission Form](#) has been signed by both the student and the parents. Students must agree to observe the regulations governing this privilege.

## **Bicycles**

Older students are permitted to leave the school unattended only if the [Unsupervised Release Permission Form](#) has been signed by both the student and the parents. Students must agree to observe the regulations governing this privilege.

No "wheels" (skateboards, scooters, in-line skates) are to be ridden on the school property. Helmets are strongly encouraged, as the school accepts no responsibility for students who ride bicycles.

- Bicycles are to be kept in the rack provided near the rear entrance.
- Each student is expected to have a lock for his/her bicycle.
- The school accepts no responsibility if bicycles are damaged and/or stolen from the premises.
- All bicycle traffic rules and regulations are to be observed.
- All bicycles must be walked on and off school grounds.
- Students may not ride a bicycle on school property.

## **Dogs**

An animal's behavior may be unpredictable when placed in a confusing or frightening situation. Because of the inherent activity of hundreds of children and adults around the school buildings at arrival and dismissal times, dogs are not permitted on school property.

## **COVID-19**

The fight against COVID-19 is one that is still evolving. As conditions around the country change, so do the various rules, protocols, and procedures that help us prevent and combat the virus. The school will update parents and guardians in a timely fashion as the guidelines which impact our school change. Documentation of these changes can be found on the school website at [www.pfgacademy.org/covidprotocols](http://www.pfgacademy.org/covidprotocols).

## **ATTENDANCE**

Students are required to attend school regularly and on time. Absentees miss valuable class instruction, discussion, and continuity of work. Regular attendance is necessary if one is to be successful in school. Consequently, parents should consider it a serious obligation to have their children attend school daily.

## **Late Arrival**

In order to begin the school day promptly and in an orderly manner, all students are expected to be in school when the school bell rings at 8:05 am. At that time, the back entrance doors will be closed, and students arriving late will be marked tardy.

Tardy students who arrive after 8:00 am must be brought around to the front of the school so that they can enter the school building through the main entrance.

From time to time situations arise that can cause a student to arrive late to school. In those cases school work can easily be made up, and the impact on student learning is minimal. Unfortunately, chronic tardiness does negatively impact student learning, which can have long term ramifications for the students involved. For example, students who are late by just 10 minutes every day, can expect to miss a minimum of 30 hours of instructional time, in a single school year.

Furthermore, excessive tardiness can have a negative impact on a student's high school application, which may lead to a loss of potential scholarship money or possibly even resulting in a student not being admitted to their school of choice.

## **Absence**

### **STUDENTS WHO ARE ILL IN THE MORNING SHOULD NOT BE SENT TO SCHOOL.**

If a student is absent, the parent must call the school office before 9:00 am to report the reason for the absence. If a call is not received, the parent will be called, even if the parent is at work. For long-term (3 days or more) absence from school, a physician's note is required before a student may return to school.

The child/children have one day to make up work for each day they are absent. If a student is out for one week, he or she has one week to finish missed assignments. Make-up work is the responsibility of the student. If you would like to pick up homework for the student, you must inform the office at the time of your call.

If a student is absent from school, the student will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities that day and students are responsible for any missed classwork and homework.

Students should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school or a release from a medical doctor. NOTE: **CURRENT COVID PROTOCOLS WILL SUPERSEDE ANY OTHER GENERAL HEALTH POLICY.**

Excused Absences from school may include:

1. Illness (verified by the parent/guardian; if more than 3 consecutive days, verified by a physician;
2. Death in student's immediate family; other emergencies beyond the control of the student's family: fire, flood, natural disaster, accident, or mandated court appearance for which documentation is required;
3. Extraordinary educational opportunity for the student pre-approved by the principal (e.g., state science or history fair finals; debate team finals, etc.)

Unexcused absences from school are defined as an absence without a valid cause.

### **Partial Absence**

Any absence, at any part of the day, is disruptive to the homeroom and/or classroom setting. A partial absence is defined as missing less than half a day of school. This can result from arriving late, leaving for special appointments, or leaving early. Any student absent part of the day must check-in or out at the office. A parent must sign the student out if leaving early for any reason. The student may sign him/herself back in at the office if they arrive late or return to school after an appointment.

### **Sudden Illness or Accident**

Parents will be notified of sickness or an accident at school. A second phone number must be on file for emergencies only. Names and phone numbers of family physicians should also be recorded on the emergency form.

### **Early Dismissal**

Early dismissal is considered a partial absence. Under no circumstances may a child be released to anyone, other than the parents or guardians as listed on the child's emergency form, without parental authorization. Parents are asked to pick up their child and sign them out.

### **Special Appointments**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to make doctor/dental appointments after school hours in order to prevent a disruption of the student's school day. If this is not possible, children must have a written request to be excused and must be signed out by the parent/guardian. This will



be considered a partial absence. Since our schedule calls for 3:00 pm dismissal, we urge you to make dental and medical appointments after school hours. The parent must come to the school office to identify himself/herself before the student will be permitted to leave the building. All students must be signed out at the time of early dismissal by a parent or guardian.

### **Extended Absence/Vacations**

Vacations during school time should be avoided. The school should be informed and permission granted by the Principal at least two weeks in advance if you find it necessary to take vacation time during the school year. No work will be given in advance. The work must be made up when the student returns.

If parents/guardians wish to take their children out of school for a period of time because of family plans, the parents/guardians, and teacher shall discuss the possible effect of the absence on the student's schoolwork. The recommendations shall be documented. The final decision, however, shall be the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Vacations are strongly discouraged when classes are in session. However, if the vacation is unavoidable, when the student returns, he/she will be given missed class assignments. No homework/assignments will be given prior to an extended absence. The student will make up the missing work upon their return corresponding to the number of days absent.

## **SCHOOL SAFETY/EMERGENCIES/DISASTER PLANNING**

### **Emergency Notification**

Pope Francis Global Academy uses the Schoolmessenger notification system. At registration, parents/guardians are asked to provide three phone contacts and two email contacts. In the event of any emergency (for example-school closed due to snow) all three phone numbers will be called with the emergency message. Every attempt is made to both call and email notifications in a timely manner.

### **Pick-Up Authorization Form**

A Pick-up Authorization Form is kept on file in the school office. Students will only be released to individuals listed on that form.

## **Sudden Illness or Accident**

Parents will be notified of sickness or an accident at school. A second phone number must be on file for emergencies only. Names and phone numbers of family physicians should also be recorded on the emergency form.

## **Lockdown Drills**

Lockdown procedures are planned and practiced each year with the help of local police.

## **Fire and Tornado Drills**

Fire drills are conducted regularly and tornado drills are conducted throughout the year. Detailed escape plans are posted inside the door of each classroom. For fire drills, each class has an escape route to an outside area that is a safe distance from the building(s). Children are moved to these designated areas in a safe, quiet, and orderly manner. During tornado drills, each classroom goes to a designated area within the building(s).

## **Tornado Warnings**

If a tornado warning is in effect in the locality of Pope Francis Global Academy, students shall be taken to the designated safety area. Children shall not be released from the school building during a tornado warning. Parents/guardians waiting to pick up children during such a warning are encouraged to enter the school building and take cover with the students and staff.

## **Snow**

School closing information will be available through various local news stations, [www.EmergencyClosings.com](http://www.EmergencyClosings.com), [www.pfgacademy.org](http://www.pfgacademy.org), community and parent notification through the SchoolMessenger notification system.

Students have the responsibility of respecting the rights of individuals and property. Picking up or throwing snow or climbing on snow mounds on school property is forbidden. Students in violation will be referred to the principal for disciplinary action.

## **Weather Recess Policy**

It is the school's policy that during cold weather, the decision for outside recess will be based on weather factors such as wind chill, snow, rain, cloud cover, wind, etc. The administration will determine whether or not it will be beneficial for students to go outside. Extremely cold weather can be very dangerous. Parents should be certain that their children are appropriately clothed with mittens, hats, coats, and boots that are labeled so they can be comfortable outside.

Above 32 degrees F with or without wind chill: Recess should be outdoors. Between 28 degrees F and 15 degrees F with or without wind chill: Principal discretion. Below 15 degrees F with or without wind chill: Recess should be held indoors.

## **Asbestos Content Notification & Management**

In 1986, Congress passed the **Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act** (AHERA). That law requires all schools, kindergarten through twelfth grade, to be inspected and identify asbestos-containing building materials. The law further requires the development of a Management Plan, based upon the findings of the inspection, which outlines our intent in controlling the potential for exposure to asbestos fibers in our schools.

In the past, asbestos was used extensively in building materials because of its insulating and fire retarding capabilities. Virtually any building built before the late 1970s contains at least some asbestos in pipe insulation and structural fireproofing. We too have buildings that contain asbestos material. The primary concerns arise when these materials begin to deteriorate or become damaged.

Your school has been inspected and some asbestos-containing materials were identified in your building. The materials are distributed in various locations and include floor tile, pipe insulation, and mechanical areas not readily accessible to building occupants or students.

Your school's Inspection Report and Management Plan outline in detail the methods used to maintain the materials safely. In addition, as required by law, appropriate school staff members have been trained to administer this program.

A copy of the inspection report and the management plan is on file at your local school office for review if you so desire.

## **Reporting Child Abuse**

By law, the State of Illinois requires school personnel to inform the Dept. of Children and Family Services of any allegation/suspicion of child abuse.

Please note, this facility and program is not licensed or regulated by DCFS.

## **UNIFORM DRESS CODE**

### **Uniforms**

Students are expected to be in uniform on all school days unless otherwise noted. They are expected to be neat and clean in appearance at all times. It is the responsibility of the parent that your child is dressed according to the uniform code. This responsibility includes replacing uniforms that are no longer in good condition (faded, torn, or outgrown.) Shirts are highly encouraged to be tucked in. Hooded sweatshirts may not be worn during the school day.

Details of the uniform requirements can always be found on our school website:

<https://www.pfgacademy.org/uniforms-1>

### **Footwear**

Students are encouraged to wear soft-soled or athletic shoes. No heels above one inch, sandals, flip flops, shoes with wheels ("wheelies"), clogs, slippers, moccasins, Uggs® or boots are acceptable during the school day. The back of the shoes cannot be turned down and shoes must be fastened.

### **Hairstyles/Makeup/Jewelry/Tattoos**

**Girls:** Hairstyles must be age and school-appropriate, reflective of good grooming. Hair dyeing, tinting, or streaks are not allowed. Hair accessories should not be large and must match their uniform. The faculty reserves its right to determine whether a hairstyle is appropriate. Girls are not allowed to wear makeup or dangling earrings. Only one earring per ear is permitted- worn in the lobe, not the cartilage. Wearing expensive jewelry is not recommended. School personnel will not be responsible for lost or damaged jewelry worn by students. Clear nail polish only is allowed for girls. No tattoos, drawing on hands, or arms are permitted. Appropriate attire must be worn on Out of Uniform Days.

**Boys:** Boy's haircuts need to be traditional and appropriately outlined. Hair must be above the ear on the sides, above the eyebrow in the front, and above the shirt collar in the back. Hair dyeing is not allowed. Tails, mousses, etc. are not acceptable for school. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings while they are at school. Colored t-shirts should not be worn under uniform shirts. No tattoos, drawing on hands, or arms are permitted. Appropriate attire must be worn on Out of Uniform Days.

### **Uniform Violations**

The age of the student and the particular uniform violation will determine the consequence. The faculty reserves their right to determine uniform violations.

- **Grade K-3-** In most instances, students in K-3 will receive a verbal warning for the first infraction of a minor nature, such as wearing socks of an inappropriate color. Parents will be contacted if a second violation of the same nature occurs. In addition, a parent/guardian may be called to the school to bring the child home to correct the uniform violation (i.e. removal of nail polish). Repeated disregard of uniform regulations will result in disciplinary action, such as exclusion from participating in special activities/events.
- **Grade 4-8-** Once a student enters grade 4 she/he can make a conscious choice regarding responsibility for uniform requirements. Therefore, in most instances, uniform violations will be subject to immediate disciplinary action (i.e. detention). When uniform violations are considered severe or repeated, the student is subjected to other disciplinary actions, including, but not limited to, exclusion from participation in special activities, extracurricular sports, and suspension from school.

Students will wear appropriate clean clothing. Unacceptable clothing includes, but is not limited to, bare midriffs, spaghetti straps, and low-cut, tight, and short apparel. Hats, scarves, bandanas and ripped clothing, flip-flops, slippers, moccasins, and shoes without backs are unacceptable. Tight leggings or yoga pants are not allowed unless they are worn with long tops that come down to cover their buttocks. The Principal makes decisions on acceptable appearance. Detentions will be given for out-of-uniform infractions.

### **Non-Uniform Day Examples**

There are days during the school year when students are not required to be in uniform. These non-uniform days fall into two categories:

- **All-School “No Uniform Days”-** The school will sometimes declare a no uniform day in conjunction with a Student Council-sponsored event or because of a holiday observance or celebration.
- **“Spirit Days”-** Several days will be designated on the school calendar as “Spirit Days.” On these days instead of wearing the regular school uniform, students may wear any clothing that bears the Pope Francis Global Academy or Wolf logo. (i.e. gym uniform, PFGA sports team apparel, or any appropriate clothing reflective of the school colors, maroon and gold)

### **Non-Uniform Day Guidelines**

The purpose of no uniform days is to offer students a reward and a choice of clothing. However, in exercising the option to choose what to wear in place of the uniform (according to the categories described above), on special days when students are allowed to be out of uniform, they should wear clothes appropriate for school. Administration reserves the right to define acceptable. Students should follow these guidelines:

- Dress in a manner that exhibits Christian values and good sense. The general rule for student dress on non-uniform days is to be covered from “neck to knees” (i.e. no midsections exposed, short, etc.). If leggings or spandex are worn, the shirt must cover

the buttocks.

- Clothing worn must be clean and in good condition, fit properly, and reflect the current season and weather.
- The clothing should be free of slogans, characters, and pictures that are contrary to Christian attitudes or might be viewed as offensive to others. (Examples: Sports team shirts, those with Disney characters, etc. are appropriate. Concert t-shirts are acceptable **only** if they do not contain offensive slogans or images.)
- If a student comes to school in what is considered to be inappropriate, the student will be required to do one of the following:
  - Remove or alter the part of the clothing that is considered inappropriate (i.e. turn the t-shirt inside out).
  - Call home to have a parent/guardian bring a change of clothes.
  - A student who comes to school dressed inappropriately a second time will forfeit the privilege of being permitted to participate in any type of non-uniform day for the remainder of the school year

### **Physical Education Uniform (K-8)**

The Wolves gym uniform includes a gray t-shirt with gym logo and black athletic shorts with gym logo OR gray sweatpants with the gym logo. Sweatshirts are available for cold weather use. Shorts may not be worn after October 1 in the fall nor before May 1 in the spring.

## **BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE**

### **Discipline Policy**

Our philosophy for discipline is based on the gospel values of Jesus. Pope Francis Global Academy is a school community of individuals who have rights—to learn, to feel comfortable and safe, and to have opportunities to reach their full potential. We recognize the dignity and equality of all persons.

To function as a successful educational Christian community, each child has the responsibility to respect the rights of others. Our goals, as educators and parents, must be to consider the common good and to ensure that our actions and treatment of others will help create God's Kingdom on Earth.

The school and parents must share the responsibility for promoting positive student behavior at all times in all places. Administration and teachers must maintain a safe school atmosphere. While at Pope Francis Global Academy this supervision can be maintained as structured classroom management. Off-campus school-sponsored events are extensions of the school's

philosophy and therefore students' conduct must reflect earning the privilege to represent themselves as members of our Christian community.

When an individual's actions take away another person's rights and opportunities at school, age and grade appropriate disciplinary actions may be necessary. Your child's teachers will articulate and display the rules and expectations that are necessary for successful classroom management in their classes. Children will be made aware of the consequences of their chosen actions. Parents, teachers, and students must have a common commitment to ensure a peaceful and productive environment.

Our School places a strong emphasis on student discipline. The school and the parents must share the responsibility for promoting positive student behavior. The shared goal is to create a safe and orderly school environment in which teaching and learning are the highest priorities.

## **Classroom Rules**

At the beginning of each school year teachers and students work together to write their classroom rules. Students are allowed to have their voices heard and take ownership of their behavior.

## **Major Incidents**

Major incidents require immediate removal from the classroom or environment where the incident took place. These include Physical or Psychological Danger. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Fighting,
- Leaving school without permission,
- Possession, use, sale, or distribution of dangerous, noxious, or unlawful objects\*, including, but are not limited to, cigarettes, chewing tobacco, smoking materials, alcohol, cannabis, drugs or related paraphernalia, matches, lighters, knives, weapons, Chinese stars, fireworks or related items, razor blades, laser pointers, pornography, etc.,
- Tampering with protective fire equipment, violating fire codes or emergency services systems,
- Students shall not carry, possess, or use weapons in school, or on school premises. Weapons include, but are not limited to the following: knives, handguns, brass knuckles, "billy clubs," bats, pipes, sticks, and any other object that causes bodily harm. School authorities have the right to inspect and search lockers, desks, parking lots, and school property. Parents/Guardians of any students involved shall be notified as soon as possible. Students who violate these directives are subject to suspension and/or expulsion. School officials are required to report weapon violations to the local police. The weapon is turned over to the local police jurisdiction,
- Abusive tones, gestures, or language. Examples include any form of obscene or vulgar language, including racial, sexual, or ethnic slurs; physical contact. stealing; deliberate damage to school or personal property. wearing gang-related clothing or colors, or using

gang signs,

- Bullying,
- Chronic out of control behaviors, or an unwillingness to gain self-control despite a request to do so, examples include truancy, cutting classes, disrespect for teachers, chronic classroom disruptions, provoking behavior, unwilling to take direction, and failure to follow the terms of the Internet Access Policy.

## **Bullying**

Pope Francis Global Academy defines bullying as:

*any intentional, repeated, hurtful act or conduct (physical, verbal, emotional, or sexual) including communications made in writing or electronically, occurring on-campus or off-campus during a non-school time, directed toward one or more students by one or more students.*

Bullying can take many forms, including violence, harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, cyberstalking, theft, public humiliation, and retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. Cyberbullying can include all of the above as well as the use of electronic tools, devices, social media sites, blogs, and websites to harm a student or students with electronic text, photos, or videos. Bullying acts or conduct described above can include the following:

- **Physical** which includes, but is not limited to, punching, poking, stalking, destruction of property, strangling, hair pulling, beating, biting, spitting, stealing, pinching, and excessive tickling;
- **Verbal** which includes, but is not limited to, name-calling, teasing, taunting, gossip, and threats whether in person or through any form of electronic communication and the Internet;
- **Emotional** which includes, but is not limited to, intimidation, rejecting, terrorizing, extorting, defaming, humiliating, blackmailing, rating/ranking of personal characteristics such as race, disability, ethnicity, perceived sexual orientation, manipulation of friendships, isolating, ostracizing, and peer pressure;
- **Sexual** which includes, but is not limited to, many of the emotional acts or conduct described above as well as exhibitionism, voyeurism, sexual propositioning, sexual harassment, and abuse involving actual physical contact or sexual assault.

Students who feel that they are victims of bullying should report it to their teacher(s) and/or administration. Any student(s) who witness bullying should also report it.

## **Search and Seizure**

The school retains the right to search and seize drugs, weapons, and other contraband when there is a belief such contraband is in the possession of a student. Such possession violates the rules of Pope Francis Global Academy. The school will assist local government authorities by



reporting such possessions, and when requested by the authorities, the school will cooperate fully with the police and other government authorities. Desks and lockers are school property, which the school expressly retains the right to search at any time.

### **Sexual Harassment**

The Archdiocese of Chicago and Pope Francis Global Academy are committed to maintaining a school environment free of sexual harassment. Physical contact of a sexual nature, lewd or suggestive remarks and such conduct that serves to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment may be considered sexual harassment on the part of adults or children. If any individual believes that he or she has been subjected to conduct which may constitute sexual harassment, that individual is to immediately report the offensive conduct to the pastor or Head of School. Sexual harassment of any form, verbal, touching, etc., may result in detentions, suspension/expulsion.

### **Cell Phone Policy**

Any cell phone brought to school must remain in the student's locker or backpack and be powered OFF. Cell phones may not be used during school hours. This includes the hours that a class may be on a field trip unless specific directions are given by a teacher. If cell phones are used before or after school hours, calls must be made outside of the school buildings. **If a cell phone or any electronic communication device is confiscated for misuse of the above policy, the device must be picked up in the school office by a parent/guardian.**

### **Technology Use Outside of School**

Parents/Guardians are primarily responsible for the student's appropriate and ethical use of technology outside of school. However, the inappropriate use of technology outside of school may subject the student to disciplinary action. Inappropriate use of technology may include but is not limited to harassment of others, use of the school name, remarks directed to or about teachers and staff, offensive communications including videos/photographs and threats. Unauthorized costs incurred for online purchases charged to the school are the responsibility of the student and her/his family.

### **Behavior Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities, Athletics and Field Trips**

Poor student behavior in school may adversely impact the student's eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities, athletics and field trips.

Students who receive a detention, will not be allowed to participate in the next applicable practice, game or extracurricular activity. Students who receive a second detention will be placed on behavioral probation, and be prohibited from taking part in any practice, game, or

extracurricular activity for an entire week.

Students who receive a third detention, will be suspended from all sports and extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year.

At all times, students of Pope Francis Global Academy must remember that off-campus school sponsored events are an extension of the school day. Should any of our students not conduct themselves in a respectful manner that is befitting of our school and of our faith, they may be subject to school disciplinary action.

Furthermore, should any students at Pope Francis Global Academy take part in an incident during a school sponsored event, that is deemed to be of serious nature, and which disrespects the values of the school and/or parish community, it may result in detention, suspension, and possible expulsion from school.

At the beginning of each season, a roster of teams and clubs will be made available to school administration. Participation is understood as attending meetings, practices, and games. Teachers will review performance at the middle and the end of each trimester.

## **ACADEMICS AND CURRICULUM**

### **Mathematics**

#### **Grades K - 5**

*McGraw Hill's My Math* curriculum connects math to the real world in ways that take the fear out of math and builds student confidence and understanding of mathematical concepts. Students begin to build a strong foundation of mathematical concepts in ways that are developmentally appropriate. They can connect their learning to the real world, helping them make connections between classroom learning and their everyday lives.

#### **Grades 6 - 8**

The McGraw Hill's Reveal Math curriculum teaches Common Core Math in a way that engages every student and develops a classroom of critical thinkers. This program makes math real for students. It helps the students develop core conceptual understandings through the use of real-world problems giving the students a deeper understanding of the math in the world around them. With a strong conceptual understanding, students can learn to apply their thinking in new ways when it comes to higher levels of mathematics.

## **English Language Arts**

### **Early Childhood Language Intensive Program (ECLIP)**

The goal of the Early Childhood Language Intensive Program (ECLIP) is to provide high-quality bilingual instruction on a regular basis. Our PK - 1st grade students receive at least 30 minutes a day of Spanish language instruction - with the purpose of helping them become both bilingual and biliterate. Learning two languages at a young age builds a strong foundation for students to become bilingual.

### **Primary Grades**

#### **Wilson Foundations**

As a recognized leader in multisensory, structured language programs, Wilson brings more than a decade of systematic and explicit instruction to the K-3 classroom. Based on the Wilson Reading System® principles, Wilson Foundations® provides research-based materials and strategies essential to a comprehensive reading, spelling, and handwriting program.

Wilson Foundations makes learning to read fun while laying the groundwork for life-long literacy. Students in grades K-3 receive a systematic program in critical foundational skills, emphasizing:

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonics/ word study
- High-frequency word study
- Reading fluency
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension strategies
- Handwriting
- Spelling

The instruction aligns with states' rigorous college- and career-ready standards.

Although Foundations includes comprehension strategies, it must be combined with a core/literature-based language arts program for an integrated and comprehensive approach to reading and spelling.

For students who will be entering Foundations Level K in kindergarten, the Pre-K Activity Set introduces Foundations activities for learning letter-keyword-sound, alphabetic order, and letter-formation skills.

Foundations serve as a prevention program to help reduce reading and spelling failure. It is integral to a Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) or Response to Intervention (RTI) framework, providing research-based instruction in Tier 1 as well as early intervention (Tier 2) for students at risk for reading difficulties. To support the implementation of an MTSS or RTI

framework, progress monitoring is built into Foundations. This allows students requiring a more intensive program to be identified early before undergoing years of struggle.

### **Grades 3-5**

Teachers have received ***Words Their Way*** teacher resources to plan word study and spelling for grades 3 – 5. Based on a pre-assessment, the lessons will be differentiated to address students’ developmental levels. Students will be involved in word sorting, word games, and exercises to determine and learn spelling patterns. Eventually, students will study increasingly complex patterns, word parts (prefixes and suffixes), and derivational spelling.

### **Schoolwide Literacy Units for Grades 1-8**

Elementary classroom teachers and junior high school language arts teachers have been provided with Schoolwide Literacy Units for reading, writing, and grammar.

**Reading Fundamentals** Units of Study provide teachers with mentor texts to support teachers as they teach reading comprehension strategies and skills, shared texts for the gradual release of responsibility, and suggestions for students to apply the skills and strategies to books they read (at an appropriate level) in small groups and independently. The materials are aligned to the CCSS and improve students’ ability to identify key ideas, themes, and important information, to read closely, and to draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support and justify interpretation.

**Writing Fundamentals** Units of study for writing include 6 units per grade level and include mentor texts and support for teaching writing in a workshop format. The materials support student writing in a variety of formats and genres. The lessons provide teachers with step-by-step directions for teaching the writing process and for addressing the CCSS.

**Grammar Fundamentals** Units of study use the same format used for teaching writing. The grammar lessons are taught using mentor texts, student writing, and demonstrate the importance of understanding grammar as a means of communicating clearly and meaningfully in writing. Teachers model the conventions of standard-English grammar, usage, and mechanics in context.

Schoolwide provides teachers with online resources including sample lessons, sample student papers, and assessment suggestions.

### **GUM Grammar Usage and Mechanics**

It is essential for students to master the conventions of standard English to be prepared for high-stakes assessments, college, and careers. *Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics* cover everything students need to know to write for success. It’s a supplemental program that engages them in learning and reinforcing skills with increasing difficulty as they advance through grades 2–8.

## **Literacy Classes**

Pope Francis Global Academy tries to meet the needs of its students through its Literacy Centers. Pope Francis Global Academy's teachers help to facilitate and enrich all of the students' learning.

## **Classroom Libraries Grades 3 – 8**

Each teacher and classroom will receive a classroom library of anywhere from 160 – 200 books. Based on recommendations from the CCSS, the classroom libraries provide a true balance of literary (50 %) and informational (50%) texts. The collections include the newest and most popular titles, series, and authors as well as tried and true classics, favorites, and award winners. The libraries include texts at students' reading levels and texts with complexity levels that challenge and motivate students. Students will use the books to apply the comprehension and vocabulary strategies from the Schoolwide Fundamentals Units of Study for Reading.

## **Social Studies**

### **Grades K-2**

#### **Scholastic News Magazine**

A kid-focused, curriculum-connected current events newsweekly for elementary students and their teachers.

### **Grades 3-8**

Pope Francis Global Academy uses the TCI History Alive Social Studies program for grades 3 through 8. This program will ensure the delivery of important content while also addressing ELA common core standards for reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The TCI programs transform social studies classes into a multi-faceted learning experience. TCI lessons start with a big idea or essential question and incorporate note-taking, group work, and step-by-step discovery. Students are the center of instruction that taps a variety of learning styles, allowing students of all abilities to learn and succeed.

Students will not just be reading textbooks and answering questions, they will discover information for themselves. Through simulations, they will feel the emotions of historical figures, reason through problems, and debate complex issues. With TCI activities, students interact in pairs and groups so they are engaged in their learning. The interactive approach provides students with a variety of ways to experience content that helps them retain and recall key information. TCI's programs have been effective in raising student achievement and test scores while inspiring students and educators alike with a passion for learning. Online resources are provided for teachers. The grade level areas of study include:

Grade 5 – America’s Past  
Grade 6 – The Ancient Past  
Grade 7 – The Medieval World and Beyond  
Grade 8 - The United States Through Industrialization

## **Science**

Currently, publishers are working to align resources to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). These materials will be available in the future. Pope Francis Global Academy teachers have developed a scope and sequence for the Science curriculum that reflects the NGSS. Junior-high students display their skills through participation in the Illinois Junior Academy of Science Annual Fair, and other local Science competitions. Participation in the yearly science fair is **MANDATORY** for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

## **Religion**

Our religious program is rooted in the rich and diverse tradition of the Catholic faith. Our program provides an excellent foundation for a lifetime of faith. Our program invites the students to begin their journey of faith through an exploration of Scripture and tradition using research-based educational strategies and age-appropriate techniques. Our program helps form the whole student with cross-curricular activities and inquiry-based learning so each student is encouraged to encounter Christ, serve the Church, and become disciples in our digital age. The goal for the religion curriculum is to instill in students an enthusiasm for living the Christian faith, while providing an in-depth religious education, including experiences in prayer, the sacraments, and service. Religion is integrated throughout the curriculum. Students participate in liturgies, celebrating a variety of themes directly relating to everyday living, as well as special occasions such as feast days of saints. In addition, students are required to attend weekly School Mass.

**Christian Doctrine** - Each child shall be instructed in the truths of the Catholic faith according to guidelines set down by the Archdiocesan Religious Education Program. Through this instruction, the school makes known to the students, the person and the message of Christ, as well as an understanding of the Catholic Church.

**Sacramental Preparation** - In keeping with the most recent recommendations of the Archdiocesan Office of Religious Education, the children of Pope Francis Global Academy participate in a program of sacramental preparation which is based on parental involvement and responsibility. Instruction is provided in a group setting by the classroom teacher and the parents on an individual basis. The parents, teachers, and parish priests determine the readiness of the child for the sacraments.

Preparation for reception of Eucharist and Reconciliation takes place in second grade. Confirmation preparation and reception is a 2-year commitment and takes place in both 7th and 8th grade.

Sacramental guidelines are given at parent meetings. Meetings are announced by email to parents and on school calendars.

**Liturgical Involvement** - An important aspect of the Religious Education Program of the school involves participation in the liturgy of the Church. To make this as meaningful as possible, provisions are made for prayer services and liturgies at which the whole school participates.

Many opportunities are provided for the students to put into practice, on an individual or small group basis, the principles of Catholic Social Teaching that are discussed in school. Occasionally, the student body as a whole engages in special projects of an apostolic nature.

## **Practical/Fine Arts**

**Art** - The art program at PFGA allows students to gain an appreciation for the arts with a wide variety of projects and mediums. Students are also introduced to an array of artists and cultures from around the world through the lens of art history. Each week students have the opportunity to express their creativity with well-balanced cross-curricular units.

**Music** - The music program at PFGA allows students to gain a cross-curricular appreciation for music and the arts through singing, moving, playing instruments, learning how to read music, and listening to and studying a variety of musical genres. Students are introduced to music, composers, and instruments throughout all musical eras from numerous cultures around the world.

**Physical Education** - Grades K-2 work a lot on learning general and personal space through tag games. They also work on gross motor skills. They play cooperative games and learn about showing good sportsmanship. Grades 3-8 play a lot of team sports as well as continue to work on sportsmanship.

**Foreign Language Program** - Spanish language classes are provided daily for students in grades Kindergarten through 8th grade.

Spanish for You! Is a Spanish Curriculum for Elementary and Middle School Students that features year-long themed packages that are a fun approach to learning Spanish that is simple and effective.

## **Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement**

Pope Francis Global Academy believes that, while technology is essential to education, it is a privilege to receive access to computers and the Internet. Teachers, students, and parents will be required to agree to and sign an Acceptable Use Policy before entering Pope Francis Global

Academy.

Pope Francis Global Academy is providing computer networks and Internet access that represents wonderful opportunities for students. Since this is a privilege and not a right, students are to utilize the resources appropriately and in a responsible way that is consistent with our educational policies. Each student and guardian must read and sign the [Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement](#) each year. Following are the school's technology procedures and regulations. Any actions taken through the school network that are in violation of the school disciplinary code will be handled in accordance with the code.

1. Students are to use the computers and Internet access for educational purposes only, under the supervision and directions of teachers and/or staff personnel. Students must abide by all rules and regulations posted for computers and Internet use to retain the privilege of using the technology.
2. Students are to value and respect the work of others and view or use it only with that person's consent.
3. Students are to use only school-authorized software and media.
4. Students are to respect and obey all copyright and trademark laws.
5. Students are to practice Network etiquette.
6. Students will use appropriate language and material.
7. Students will keep their names, addresses, phone numbers, and passwords confidential. Students will treat information about others as confidential.
8. Students will view, search, and browse only appropriate sites. Students will notify teacher/staff personnel of any defamatory, offensive, or inappropriate material that violates school policy.

Consequences of Policy Violation: Students will be held accountable for their actions. A student's network or Internet access may be suspended or terminated for any violation or attempted violation of this policy. Violators will also be subject to disciplinary measures, such as suspension or expulsion, in accordance with the guidelines stated in this Handbook. Appropriate legal authorities may be contacted if there is any suspicion of illegal activity.

### **Use of Technology Outside of School**

Parents/Guardians are primarily responsible for the student's appropriate and ethical use of technology outside of school. However, the inappropriate use of technology outside of school may subject the student to disciplinary action. Inappropriate use of technology may include but is not limited to harassment of others, use of the school name, remarks directed to or about teachers and staff, offensive communications including videos/photographs and threats. Unauthorized costs incurred for online purchases charged to the school are the responsibility of the student and her/his family.



## **Homework and Late Work Policy**

At PFGA homework is assigned as extra practice for the material that is being covered in class. Missing assignments and late work policies vary by grade level/ teachers and are developmentally appropriate. If your child is having difficulty completing their homework assignments, please contact their classroom teacher to discuss any challenges they are having.

## **Student Assessment**

### Academic Procedures

1. It is the school's philosophy that parents, students, and faculty are partners in learning. Through our educational programs, we foster parent awareness of student progress, strive to create and enhance in each individual a positive self-concept, incorporate all aspects of quality and sound moral education, teach the basic skills, and augment the skills of critical thinking and self-direction to ensure that students will have the necessary tools to become contributing persons in society. Parents are the primary educators of their children with their teachers as their partners. To achieve this, communication and cooperation between and among students, parents, and staff are vital to a healthy Catholic school environment.
2. The teachers utilize a variety of instructional strategies to meet the individual needs of each student. We believe our purpose is to enhance and expand each student's interests and skills.
3. The students are expected to participate in the learning process appropriate to their developmental levels and take responsibility for their actions.

## **Grading Scale**

For students in grades 1-8 the following PowerSchool grading scale is used at Pope Francis Global Academy for the core subjects:

100-99 A+	78-77 C-
98-95 A	76-75 D+
94-93 A-	74-71 D
92-91 B+	70-69 D-
90-87 B	Below 69 F
86-85 B-	Incomplete I
84-83 C+	Not Graded NG
82-79 C	

## **Reporting Student Progress**

- Reports cards are reviewed by the principal and distributed on the 2nd and 4th quarter.
- Grades are recorded on PowerSchool and can be accessed by Gr. 1-8 parents at any time.
- A Parent-Teacher conference is scheduled at the end of the 1st quarter and the 3rd quarter.
- Every effort is made to keep parents/guardians informed of students' progress/deficiencies. (i.e. PowerSchool, emails, conferences, phone calls, and student work).

## **Honor Roll**

Students in grades 4-8 who meet specific criteria will be eligible for Honor Roll status. The following are requirements for all subjects - specials included.

- High Honors- A student must receive all A's or all A's and one B.
- Honors- A student must receive all A's and no more than two B's.

## **Inclusive Education/Learning Resource Program**

The academic success of students with different learning needs depends upon the collaborative efforts of school staff, parents, and students. Diagnostic testing can be completed on a student either privately or through the local public school (CPS). If through testing, a child qualifies for services, a Service Plan may be written and will outline the appropriate accommodations to be implemented as a result of the diagnostic assessment.

An on-site Learning Resource teacher will work cooperatively with classroom teachers to identify eligible students and to determine appropriate instructional modifications. In addition to working with classroom teachers on a consultative basis, the LR teacher may also be available to work with students on a pull-out or push-in basis.

## **Testing**

Some form of evaluation is essential to determine, as much as possible, the general scholastic ability of students, to ascertain the progress being made within the total education program, and as a tool for discerning areas in need of improvement. Achievement tests with national norms are given to students in grades 3 through 8.

Teachers administer assessments and use informal methods of evaluation as part of the regular school program throughout the year. Reassessing students who perform below grade level in an assessment is done at the discretion of the teachers. Reassessment can take various forms, a retest can be offered as well as reteach sessions or corrections for the assessment. Our goal is

to ensure students are proficient with the concepts taught in the content areas.

Tests and quizzes that are missed due to absences will be made up upon return within the testing windows. Students are required to take any test that was given during their absence.

## **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty by a student degrades his/her character and reputation, impedes the teaching-learning process, and is in opposition to the values inherent in the philosophy of Pope Francis Global Academy.

**Cheating:** Cheating is a serious offense. Cheating is personal dishonesty and is an injustice to others. Cheating will be dealt with in a swift and formative manner as is appropriate for the age and experience of the student involved. Continued or profound acts of cheating may result in dismissal from Pope Francis Global Academy.

Cheating includes the sharing of any class work including, but not limited to, homework, papers, and projects are considered cheating. In addition, sharing information, transmitting answers to a test, possessing testing materials, removing or sharing any testing material in any way is cheating. Coding answers or using technology in a way not sanctioned by the classroom teacher is also cheating.

**Plagiarism:** To copy the ideas or words of another person and to present the work as one's own constitutes plagiarism. Whether intentional or unintentional (for example, because of improper citation) plagiarism is a serious offense and detrimental to one's moral and educational development and must, therefore, be avoided at all times.

Because it does not represent one's work, work that has been plagiarized constitutes cheating and cannot be accepted for full credit. The student will redo the assignment and can earn a grade no higher than a C. A detention will be given, and parents and the principal will be notified.

## **Academic Policy**

Teachers, parents, and students, working in partnership throughout the course of the school year, will assist the students in achieving academic success in the following subjects defined as a religion, reading, mathematics, social studies, English, and science. A student who fails two (2) trimesters in a defined academic area must satisfactorily repeat the content of said trimesters in an approved summer program. Remediation of said content will be but is not limited to: before or after-school assistance, make-up assignments, assignment contracts, modified course work, outside tutoring, summer school, or a recognized independent tutoring center. Both the program and program criteria must be discussed with the content area teacher and Head of School before beginning remediation. Promotion to the next grade level will be contingent upon reassessment of the student in August.

## **Academic Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities, Athletics and Field Trips**

The student's academic success has priority at Pope Francis Global Academy. Extracurricular activities enhance the educational experience and give children opportunities to develop skills and experience achievement. However, extracurricular programs should not interfere with the student's academic work or inhibit his/her ability to achieve success in the classroom. Therefore, these are guidelines for extracurricular eligibility:

If a student has 3 missing assignments in a subject area or a grade lower than a C-, they will be placed on probation. If a student receives a detention, they are taken out of the next extracurricular practice/game. If a student receives more than 2 detentions, they are on probation. The third detention, and any that follow, will result in a week-long suspension from the activity.

Probation is a warning. Suspension means being taken out of practice and games until the administration approves the student's return. Students should turn in missing work within 5 days. A grade of C- must be raised within 2 weeks.

If these criteria are not met, students will be suspended from extracurricular activities, athletics, and participation in field trips. At the beginning of each season, a roster of teams and clubs will be made available to school administration. Participation is understood as attending meetings, practices, and games. Teachers will review performance at the middle and the end of each trimester.

## **Promotion/Retention**

While the decision to promote or retain a student generally shall be a cooperative one made by parents/guardians, teachers, and administration, nonetheless, the Head of School has the ultimate authority to make such a decision. Ordinarily, parents/guardians shall be notified of the possibility of retention in writing. The first written notice will be given before December 1, the second notice early in February, and the final notice on May 1. Pope Francis Global Academy will follow the Guideline for Retention established and approved by the Office of Catholic Schools.

## **SPECIAL SERVICES**

### **Lunch Program**

Students may bring their lunch or pre-order from our food service provider, FSP. Outside fast food or soda is not allowed. Students in Pre-K and Kindergarten will eat lunch in their classrooms. Students in grades 1-8 eat lunch in the cafeteria. Daily recess is in the parking lot off of Dakin.

Grade Levels	Lunch	Recess
PK-4	10:55-11:15	11:15-11:35
5-8	12:15-12:35	12:35-12:55

**Extended Day Program (EDP)**

Extended daycare is available for students in grades Pre-K through 8th, from 6:30 am to 8:00 am and from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm on all full-session school days. Registration information is available in the school office.

Families are invoiced electronically, monthly, in arrears, for use of the EDP program. Payment is due within 10 days of invoice receipt. If payment is not made in full by the end of the month following usage, the family will be excluded from further EDP attendance until the charges are paid in full.

**Field Trips**

Field trips enrich classroom learning and open new areas of interest for the student. Those field trips, which are educational and relate to the total curriculum, are encouraged and are part of the total school program.

Parent-signed permission slips, provided by the school, must be turned in by the designated date along with payment, if required, by the stated deadline before a student may go on a trip. Verbal permission is not acceptable. No other activity is planned for non-participating students since the field trip is considered part of the educational process.

**After School or Enrichment Activities**

Students can participate in a number of after-school activities. Call-outs for Clubs, Classes, and Sports teams will be announced through the Howler and students may register through the contact listed on the informational flyer. Many, but not all, of these activities, require written consent from the parent/guardian, and a fee per session or season. All students must be picked up after each meeting or practice at the assigned time. After two tardy pickups, the student will not be allowed to participate in the after-school activity for the rest of the trimester. Some sports activities will practice in the evenings and/or off-campus and parents will be responsible for getting their child to and from.

Off-campus school-sponsored events are extensions of the school’s philosophy and therefore, student’s conduct must reflect earning the privilege to represent themselves as members of Pope Francis Global Academy Christian community.

An incident that is of the most serious nature, as determined by the school administration, and is in direct contradiction to the school’s philosophy demonstrates that students have not earned

the overall privilege to represent Pope Francis Global Academy at school-sponsored off-campus activities. School administration is directed to provide notice that any serious incident that singles out a fellow student and/or disrespects the values of the school and parish community may result in suspending students from school-related events on or off-campus, outside of the school day. This suspension will remain in effect until there can be a period of time to evaluate student behavior, and the administration feels comfortable that these students' future conduct at school-sponsored events on and off of school grounds will reflect the school's values.

The following is a listing of the extracurricular activities commonly offered year to year to the students at Pope Francis Global Academy:

Chess Club .....	Grades K-8
Choir .....	Grades 3-8
Math Competition .....	Grades 7-8
Student Council .....	Grades 4-8
Rainbows .....	Grades K-8
Basketball.....	Grades 4-8
Soccer.....	Grades 4-8
Cheerleading .....	Grade 4-8
Cross Country .....	Grades 4-8
Soccer .....	Grades 5-8
Volleyball .....	Grades 4-8
Daisy Girl Scouts .....	Girls, Grade K-1
Brownie Girl Scouts .....	Girls, Grades 2-3
Junior Girl Scouts .....	Girls, Grades 4-5
Cadette Girl Scouts .....	Girls, Grades 6-8
Cub Scouts .....	Boys, Grades 1-5
Boy Scouts .....	Boys, Grades 6-8

**Student Council**

Student leadership is fostered through involvement in the Student Council. All students participate in the activities planned by the Council. These activities include service projects and spirit-building events. Participation as a leader or representative on the Student Council is contingent upon academic eligibility and behavioral appropriateness.

## **Shadow Days**

Before making that final decision about which high school to attend, parents may request that their children attend a Shadow Day at a particular high school. Those requests must be made in writing and submitted to the Administration at least three days before the visit. Since the student is not in attendance, it will be considered an excused absence. The student will be responsible for missed homework, tests/quizzes, and classroom work.

## **Classroom Celebrations**

Our Parents' Club plans and provides activities and treat bags for several holiday parties throughout the school year. Food treats are put into goody bags and are not eaten during the party but to be taken home and enjoyed later. Nut products and homemade treats are restricted in all of the goody bags.

In recognition of a child's birthday, with the teacher's permission at least a day in advance, students are allowed to bring individually **STORE BOUGHT** non-nut treats or non-food items (stickers, pencils, etc.) to share with their class provided that a treat is given to each member of the class, and no one is excluded. Treats must be in individual portions and ready to be handed out for easy distribution. Teachers will send these treats home with students to enjoy AFTER school at home.

## **Toys/Electronic Devices**

Students are prohibited from bringing toys or electronic devices to school unless given prior permission by school personnel. The school assumes no responsibility for these items. Regarding e-readers such as Kindles or Nooks, if a student brings an e-reader to school, he/she may read a book already downloaded. Students are prohibited from accessing the school's Wi-Fi connection without the expressed permission of the teacher. If a student is found to be using Wi-Fi without permission and/or inappropriately, the device will be held by the teacher to be returned to the parent. The student will lose the privilege of bringing the device to school.

If a student is granted permission to access the Wi-Fi, he/she will do so in accordance with the Pope Francis Global Academy Acceptable Use Policy and no social networking sites are to be accessed at any time.

## **Bringing Money to School**

Students should not carry large sums of money to school. Money for school-related fundraisers or field trips should be in a labeled envelope or baggie and handed in during the homeroom period, first thing in the morning. Money that a student must carry should be kept with the child or in the locker. The school is not responsible for lost money.

## **ATHLETICS**

### **Guidelines and Rules for Participation**

Generally, the Athletic Association sets the guidelines and rules for eligibility and participation in sports. Specific requirements are listed in the Athletic Handbook. School attendance is a prerequisite for school team participation. This also applies to day-to-day participation. Hence, a student who is absent from school, either full or partial day, is not eligible to participate in a school-sponsored event that occurs that same day/night. Each league sport falls within a local conference that sets the specific rules of the gameplay.

Further, poor academics or behavior at school, on a school sanctioned trip/outing/event, or during a game will jeopardize the student's eligibility to participate according to the Academic Eligibility and Behavioral Eligibility sections outlined above.

### **PFGA Philosophy of Athletics**

- The primary goal of our athletic program is as a means to further enhance Catholic values and teachings
- Aligned with the mission of Pope Francis Global Academy
- To instill in the student-athlete a sense of responsibility by demanding consistently high standards of behavior and making the student-athlete aware and respectful of the needs of others
- Our athletic program will promote and develop good sportsmanship, team play, competitive spirit, and school loyalty
- Athletics shall help students maintain good health through physical fitness
- We teach the proper attitude toward winning, losing, and competing with dignity



## **PARENT EXPECTATIONS**

### **Parent Service Hours Commitment/Volunteer Hours**

A private school cannot operate without volunteers. Each family is asked to commit to offering the full 20 hours of volunteer work asked in the Parent Service Commitment. The opportunities are plentiful and run the gambit from room parents, assisting teachers in specified tasks, work as a committee person on a fundraising or Parents' Club event, work on the School Board, Parents' Club Board, or on the Sports Committee or as a coach, and clerical help for the office, and many more. Parents are responsible for reading the Howler to find opportunities which are listed regularly. Families will have 12 calendar months to complete their hours for each school year; April 1 through March 31.

### **Parent Volunteer Hour Log**

It is the responsibility of each family to log their service hours into [www.trackitforward.com](http://www.trackitforward.com). The school office will communicate with parents how to log into their accounts. Parents must complete AND log their hours by April 1 each year.

### **Virtus Training and Compliance**

In order to volunteer directly with children, whether in the school, on an outing, or at any school sanctioned event, it is necessary for adults 18 and over to become and remain compliant with the Office of Child Protection of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Becoming compliant requires several steps and takes time. First, a volunteer must complete the Archdiocese of Chicago Form #7703 – Application of Employment/Volunteer Service. They must also attend a one time Virtus training session and then remain current on the email surveys sent out from the Archdiocese. They must also complete an online Criminal Background Check and out DCFS Code of Conduct forms. and to attend Virtus training. The CANTS form must be completed annually.

All volunteers need to sign in and out during their time at the school for their service. Volunteers are required to wear a visitor pass while inside the school building(s). While at Pope Francis Global Academy, volunteers are expected to adhere to school policies.

### **Archdiocese Requirements for any Volunteers Over the Age of 18**

#### **(SEE COMPLIANCE GUIDELINES CHART)**

1. Complete an online Criminal Background Check. All volunteers who work with children

must complete an online background check. No one may volunteer unless the criminal background check has been completed and approved. Volunteers are required to complete the eAppsDB form online.

2. Attend Virtus/Protecting God's Children for Adults™. All volunteers over 18 must pre-register online to attend this one time training before the first chaperone event or school volunteer activity is scheduled.
3. Archdiocesan Standards of Behavior: All volunteers who work with children must read, sign and date the Archdiocesan Standards of Behavior acknowledgement..
4. Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking System (CANTS): All volunteers who work with children must complete the Illinois Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking System (CANTS) paper form annually.
5. Mandated Reporter Training. All volunteers must complete the Mandated Reporter Training required by the State of Illinois.

### **Room Parents**

The Parents' Club organizes the room for parents to assist the teacher's in-class activities such as field trips, parties, telephone relays, etc.

### **Parent Volunteers for Lunch and Recess Supervision**

In normal years, parent volunteers are invited to assist students in the lunchroom and at recess. Limitations and restrictions may apply from year to year. NOTE: This year there are still COVID restrictions on who can come into the building this year for lunch supervision, however, recess supervision is still available as a volunteer opportunity. This volunteer position requires full Virtus compliance.

### **Field Trips**

When a field trip is planned, the teacher will reach out to the room parent to help line up a limited number of chaperones. This volunteer position requires full Virtus compliance.

No other (younger or older) children may accompany parent chaperones. All students participating in a school-sponsored field trip must ride on school-provided transportation only.

### **Other Volunteer Opportunities**

There will be many opportunities throughout the school year and even during the summers to earn service hours. They will be posted on the website and in the Howler regularly. Many of the opportunities do not require Virtus Compliance. These will be things like chairing a fundraiser, stuffing envelopes for the office, summer marketing projects, etc.

### **Parent Conduct**

Parents/Guardians in the local school community are expected to demonstrate respectful

behavior at all times with faculty, administration, support staff, students, volunteers, and parents, whether on or off school grounds, at school-related events, or online.

Unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to: harassment, verbal abuse, written abuse, a physical assault and threats of physical harm against a member of the school community, which includes the faculty, administration, staff, clergy, students, parents and any individuals who are working or volunteering of behalf of the school.



**POPE FRANCIS**  
GLOBAL ACADEMY

## **HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT FORM**

We have received a copy of the Pope Francis Global Academy Family Handbook for 2023-24. We understand that the handbook contains information that our family will need during the school year. We also understand that all students and parents will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in this document.

By signing below, we acknowledge that we, and our student/s, have read, understand, and agree to the terms of all items concerning the Handbook.

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_