

NORTHERN CHAUTAUQUA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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PARENT /STUDENT HANDBOOK
Revised 2015-2016

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Faculty/Staff Letter

This handbook of practices and policies for Northern Chautauqua Catholic School of the Diocese of Buffalo is a readily available summary to increase your understanding of the basic principles of our Christian Education.

The regulations contained in this handbook are modeled after diocesan guidelines and school established policies, and are expected to be followed in our school.

After familiarizing yourself and your child with the pertinent information in the Parent-Student Handbook, please complete the compliance form which accompanies this book and return it to the school. Northern Chautauqua Catholic School appreciates your cooperation in this matter. We wish to take this opportunity to thank you for the privilege of assisting you in the total education of your child(ren). We welcome this responsibility.

Welcome to Northern Chautauqua Catholic School

Its mission is to provide a foundation for Christian living by integrating and nurturing faith through teaching and example and thereby becoming an extension of the teaching mission of the Roman Catholic Church. Northern Chautauqua Catholic School is a Christ-centered community which stimulates academic excellence and emphasizes family values and respect of self and others all in an atmosphere of kindness, love and understanding. We are committed to balancing physical, spiritual, intellectual and social growth for our students so that they mature into responsible, self-disciplined citizens, developing and supporting a dynamic faculty and staff comprised of dedicated professionals, providing a physical facility conducive to reaching our goals, encouraging parental involvement of time and talent, continually developing and evaluating decisions, options and actions consistent with this mission, these values and beliefs.

Northern Chautauqua Catholic School offers a high-quality education with a curriculum that adheres to both New York State and diocesan guidelines and offers excellence in Catholic education for children in grades pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. The core curriculum begins with reading, writing and mathematics, social studies, science and language arts are also offered at each grade. It is, however, the variety of special classes that makes the educational differences at Northern Chautauqua Catholic School: Spanish, music, art, physical education, technology and health. In addition, students in grades fifth through eighth have quarterly electives to choose from.

Religious education is also an integral part of our balanced curriculum at Northern Chautauqua Catholic School. Our religious education program provides for the spiritual growth and development of each child by emphasizing fundamental truths of the Catholic Faith, the understanding of Scripture, the celebration of the Liturgy and Sacraments, and daily experience of living as Christians. These are made possible through daily prayer and religion classes including a Christian Family Life course. The students actively plan and participate in liturgies, para liturgies, prayer and Reconciliation services. They are encouraged to develop community service projects and to be active in our Adopt-A-Parish program.

Our New York State certified faculty is dedicated to the total education of the young child. They take pride in creating a classroom atmosphere of love and mutual respect where learning can take place. Children can feel secure in their surroundings, knowing that the classroom is an extension of the values taught in the home. The dedicated faculty employs a wide variety of teaching styles to motivate and prepare their students for success in their future challenges.

Northern Chautauqua Catholic School students can participate in a variety of extracurricular events, ranging from sports to clubs. We offer a hot school lunch program and an after school program for those children who need supervised care until 5:30 p.m. weekdays. Free school bus transportation can be arranged for most families through their local school district.

Northern Chautauqua Catholic School — a school to believe in!

Our Mission

To provide a foundation for Christian living by integrating and nurturing faith through teaching and example and thereby becoming an extension of the teaching mission of the Roman Catholic Church.

To create a Christ-centered community, which stimulates academic excellence and emphasizes family values and respect of self and others, all in an atmosphere of kindness, love and understanding.

We are committed to balancing physical, spiritual, intellectual, and social growth of our students so that they mature into responsible, self-disciplined citizens; developing and supporting a dynamic faculty and staff comprised of dedicated professionals; providing a physical facility conducive to reaching our goals; encouraging parental involvement of time and talent; continually developing and evaluating decisions, options and actions consistent with this mission, these values and these beliefs.

Philosophy of Northern Chautauqua Catholic School

As a Christian institution, we are committed to the teachings of the Catholic Church, to prepare students to respond in faith to Jesus Christ and to understand His message, to follow moral standards of conduct, and to achieve integrity of character.

We intend to develop the uniqueness of each child by providing an atmosphere of learning and growth through spiritual, academic, aesthetic and social experiences in accordance with our mission statement. We strive to establish a Christian community among teachers, parents and students that will provide a warm, enjoyable learning atmosphere.

To this end, the following goals have been formulated for the students entrusted to our care.

To understand the religious and social teachings of the Catholic Church by:

- demonstrating command of the basic concepts inherent in Christ's teachings;
- learning the history of the Catholic church;
- integrating Catholic religious truths and values into everyday living;
- understanding the meaning and importance of prayer in daily life

To demonstrate good character and self-respect by:

- valuing self as a child of God with basic human rights and corresponding ethical responsibilities;
- disciplining self to work, study, and play constructively;
- obeying rules of society and where those rules are in need of change, endeavoring to bring about change;
- instilling an appreciation of the tradition of each ethnic culture and encouragement for unity in the diversity of these cultures.

To accomplish the academic goals of the curriculum by:

- demonstrating competency in challenging subject matter.

General Information

Attendance/Arrival

The Education Law of the State of New York requires minors between the ages of 6 and 16 to be in attendance at an approved school for a full time day instruction. Regular, punctual attendance is fundamental to all school programs. Parental cooperation is requested so that only illness or an emergency will prevent attendance. The following procedure must be followed when your child will be absent and/or tardy:

1. Parent notifies the school of the absence/tardiness.
2. Students who are tardy MUST report to the office.
3. A written excuse MUST be completed by the parent giving specific reason for absence/tardiness within 2 days of the actual occurrence. If an excuse is not received within the 2 days, the absence is recorded as unexcused.
4. All absences/tardies are recorded in the student management system, eSchooldata.
5. A note must be submitted to the school office when a student is going to be released early. The parent or guardian must come to the school office and sign out the student.

Punctual and regular attendance is very important. New York State Education Law requires student attendance each school day, except for the following reasons:

1. Sickness
2. Medical appointment w/ excuse
3. Death in Family
4. Inclement Weather (Please listen to radio station WDOE 1410 AM or 96.5, 102.5, 98.5 FM for closings or televisions stations 2, 4, and 7)
5. Religious Observance
6. Required Court Appearance

Doors will be opened at 7:30 a.m. Students are to enter into the gym either by the Fourth Street doors or the Courtyard doors. **Except for Pre-school and PreK4, no students should enter through the front doors, unless the student is tardy.** Students should report to their assigned places. Students will obey school rules of conduct, show respect and obey adult monitors. Prep school students (Grades 5 — 8) will be sent to their homerooms at 7:45 a.m., as their day begins at 7:55 a.m. All students should bring a book to read in the morning. Prep school students are considered late if they arrive after 7:55 a.m. Pre-Kindergarten students are picked up in the gymnasium between 7:45 and 7:50a.m. by their teacher, after that time they report directly to their classroom. Students in grades Kindergarten through Fourth will be escorted to their classroom at 8:00 a.m. All students, PreK — 4th grade, must be in their classroom by 8:00 a.m. or they are considered late. When dropping off students at the Fourth Street doors, please do not park in front of the school (from approximately the edge of the parking lot to just past the doors) and bring your child into school. If you need to enter the school, please park in the lot behind the school or at the meters.

Due to the amount of material that is covered during the school day, we stress the need for students to be present on a daily basis. Extended vacations during the academic year are considered illegal absences. Students will be required to obtain missed assignments **upon their return**. Hands-on activities missed and covered on tests are still the responsibility of the student.

Dismissal

1. All students will be dismissed in an orderly fashion, after signing out, by the Homeroom teacher at 2:35 p.m. Any students not picked up by 2:45 p.m. will be escorted to the front entrance to be picked up.
2. Buses park in front of the school. The children will exit the front doors to board the buses.
3. Concerning the drop-off or pick-up of students from the building: In an effort to provide a safe environment for our students, we request the following:
 - a) Please pick up students in the gym — students will not be allowed to stand outside and wait for a ride. All students must be signed out by their parent/guardian (or designated parent) using the sign-out sheet.
 - b) Walkers must sign the form before leaving the building, on days when they are walking home.
 - c) Use the crossing guard and crosswalks on the corner of Fourth Street and Washington Avenue.
 - d) Students not picked up by 3 p.m. will report to the after school program room.
4. If for a legitimate reason, you must leave school before dismissal, parents/guardians must write a note for this excuse. The note is given to the homeroom teacher before school begins at 8:00 a.m. You must come to the office where the parent/guardian or authorized person must meet you and sign you out.
5. If you become ill in school, you may not leave school without a parent/guardian or authorized adult. You will meet this person in the office where he/she will sign you out.
6. For the above reasons and your general safety and protection, please make sure that all phone numbers, both home and emergency, are up-to-date and on file with the school. Be sure to notify the school of any change in telephone number(s).
7. If there is any permanent or temporary change in a child's transportation arrangements the school must be notified in writing (e.g. not taking the bus).

Registration/Release of Students:

It is imperative that divorced or separated parents file a court-certified copy of the custody section of the divorce/separation decree with the principal's office. The school will not be held responsible for failing to honor arrangements that have not been made known or changes that may occur to the original decree.

Emergency Forms:

Parents will be asked at the beginning of each year to fill out Emergency Procedure information forms and return them promptly. These list the names of persons to be contacted in case of an injury or sudden illness. Under the law, schools may give nothing more than first aid treatment.

Immediate notification of parents may be necessary when hospitalization or emergency medical care is required, or the school nurse is not on the premises.

Visitors:

ALL visitors are to report to the main office upon entering the building and sign in.

1. Students are not permitted to have visitors on the school property at any time during the school day, unless visitors have permission from the principal.
2. Students are not permitted to call home for forgotten items. If forgotten items are brought to school, they are to be left in the office for pick up, not taken to the classroom.
3. Parents are not to escort children to their classroom, even if they are late. This can be disruptive. Please bring the child to the office. Large items that the student may be unable to carry will be taken up for them.

Emergency School Closing:

1. General Policies — In the event of an emergency dismissal, children will be sent to their homeroom to await dismissal. Students will be dismissed through the front doors only. Parents or the individual designated to pick up the student should enter through the Washington Avenue doors. Students will be called. When possible, the media will be notified that the school is dismissing early. In the event the children are unable to leave the building at the end of the school day, school personnel will be responsible to provide for the children's health and safety.
2. Weather — Please listen to radio stations 1410 AM or 96.5, 102.5 & 98.5 FM for the closings. The closings are also on TV channels 2, 4, and 7. If the Dunkirk Public Schools are closed **due to bad weather**, NCCS is also closed. If your home district is closed, you are NOT required to attend school.
3. Illness — Closing will be considered only when many teachers are absent due to illness and/or fifteen percent of the students are absent as a result of flu-like symptoms or other contagious illnesses.

Uniform/Dress code:

Please see separate Appendix for code.

Non-compliance of the uniform/dress code will result in the following: A non-compliance report will be sent home with the student. After three non-compliance reports the following steps will be taken:

1. The students will call their parent at work/home to bring the item necessary to be in compliance.
2. The student will stay in the office until such time as the required item is brought to school or the student is taken home.

Lavatory Rules:

Proper use of bathroom facilities means respecting the property of the owner. Students in Grades 3 - 8 will sign out to use the lavatory and sign back in upon returning to the classroom. This is to help prevent damage to school property.

Parents will be notified if their child is involved in deliberate damage of a bathroom and fair and equitable resolution will have to be reached by all involved.

Electronic Devices:

Cell phone use is NOT permitted at Northern Chautauqua Catholic School by students. Students should not bring cell phones, iPods, or other electronic devices to school. Such items will be removed from their possession and sent to the office for parental pick up.

Bicycles:

Children in Grades 4 - 8 are allowed to ride their bicycles to school with prior written permission from their parents. Children are to allow for ample travel time in order to arrive at school at the appropriate time.

Damage or Loss of School Textbooks:

Each student is responsible for the textbooks that are assigned to him/her at the beginning of the school year. If damage occurs to a book (ex. cover torn off, pages missing, etc.) that student will be held responsible and charged a fee for that book. Fees will vary according to the type and age of book. No books will be turned over to the family, as they are the property of Northern Chautauqua Catholic School and/or the public school district.

All damaged books must be paid for before the child receives his/her final report card.

Extra Programs:

Guest speakers, field trips and assemblies are among our enrichment activities. Teachers are encouraged to plan field trips for their class. A written permission slip must be signed by a parent or guardian for all field trips and returned to the teacher at the designated time. Vocal permission will not be accepted. Drivers for local trips must fill out a Volunteer Drivers Form to be kept on file for a period of one year. Volunteers must also be VIRTUS trained and current on their certification and bulletins. VIRTUS trainings are offered throughout the vicariate. Please contact the office for more information or go to www.virtus.org to register for a training session.

Any student that is failing at the time of a major fieldtrip (ex. Eighth grade class trip), will not be allowed to attend. They will be required to come to school in proper uniform for the length of the trip. If a parent does not want a student to attend a field trip, that student must still attend school and will be sent to the office or another classroom during the trip.

Tuition Policy:

In order to educate each child, it is necessary to compute the cost per student according to the expenditures of school projects for the coming year and meet the expectations outlined by the Diocese of Buffalo. At registration time, parents will be given the tuition rates and asked to sign a tuition agreement contract. Effective with the 2016-2017 school year and in an effort for NCCS to utilize a paperless initiative, as well as eliminate delinquent tuition payments, **ALL parents will be REQUIRED to register with and utilize the FACTS Tuition Management Program** and **ALL** monthly tuition payments will be made through this tuition management system. A lump-sum, full-year tuition payment incentive is also offered (2% discount if paid by September 1st) and can be paid directly to the school office.

Financial assistance is available through Northern Chautauqua Catholic School and the BISON Children's Scholarship Fund. Applications for both are available in the office. Families are encouraged to apply to the BISON Fund first, which is due by the end of February.

Families may also apply to the school for financial aid, but may not receive from both. Once a decision is made by the BISON Fund with regard to aid being given, Northern Chautauqua Catholic School will then determine if the family qualifies for aid through the school.

Tuition Payments:

Northern Chautauqua Catholic School utilizes the FACTS Tuition Management Program for the collection of tuition of monthly tuition payments made directly to the school. A lump-sum, full-year tuition payment incentive is also offered (2% discount if paid by September 1st) and can be paid directly to the school office. Tuition information will be distributed yearly with registration materials. An early registration fee waiver incentive of \$35 will be offered to those families returning all completed registration materials within the first month of receiving the materials by a designated date.

Delinquent Tuition Payments:

The NCCS Finance Committee will address **ALL** instances of delinquent tuition payments in a swift and timely manner. Consequences for delinquent tuition payments are detailed in the tuition policy. The principal, under the terms of the tuition policy, can prohibit students from participating in **ANY/ALL** extra activities until tuition payments are up-to-date.

Fire Inspection:

Each year, the Dunkirk Fire Department inspects the building to be sure we are in compliance with fire safety codes and regulations. A copy of the report is available in the main office.

Graduation Ceremonies:

1. Pre-School 3 & Pre-Kindergarten 4: Each grade will end their sessions with a program. Parents will be notified of the dates in advance as it appears on the school calendar.
2. Kindergarten: Kindergarten will end their session with a program. This program will take place prior to the screening of next year's Kindergarten children. Parents will be notified of the date in advance as it appears on the school calendar.
3. Eighth Grade: Occurs in June after examinations and will include an evening ceremony and mass.

Insurance:

All children must be covered by health insurance in order to participate in the physical education and/or extracurricular athletic programs of the school.

All children are required to participate in physical education classes unless excused by the family doctor. This excuse must be in written form and is to be kept on file.

First Aid and Administration of Medicine:

First aid services are provided to all students by the nurse or school personnel, who have been trained in Basic First Aid and Adult/Child CPR. In cases of extreme emergency, 911 would be called along with the parents.

New York State Education Guidelines state that oral medications, including non-prescription (over-the-counter) drugs, may be administered by school personnel, if a parent submits a written request for medication administration on the appropriate form. The following procedure must be followed:

1. The child's physician must request in writing that a specific medication be given, prescribe the dose to be given, the time and duration of the treatment, and the reason for the medication being given.
2. The parent should sign the request asking that school personnel give the medication.
3. The medication should be delivered directly to the office by the parent.
4. The medication must be clearly labeled with adequate instructions.
5. The medication will be kept in a secure place in the office.
6. Most antibiotics can be taken before and after school, at dinner and bed time. Ask your doctor to establish times that a medication can be taken at home instead of during the school day.

NOTE: Only students in grades 5 - 8 (prep school) are allowed to have cough drops in school.

Field trips:

Medication that is taken by any student must be documented with the Nurse. When a class is taking a field trip, (day or extended) ALL medication, even over-the-counter, needs to have the proper forms filled out for administration on the trip. This includes such items as Dramamine, aspirin, etc., as well as prescription drugs. Forms are available in the office. No medication will be allowed on the trip if the forms are not completely filled out.

ALL FORMS MUST BE IN ONE (1) WEEK PRIOR TO THE ACTUAL DATE OF THE FIELD TRIP. THE SCHOOL NURSE MUST PROCESS ALL THE FORMS AND MAKE SURE THAT ALL THE MEDICATIONS ARE CLEARLY LABELED IN THE ORIGINAL PHARMACY BOX. ALL MEDICATION THAT IS NOT ABLE TO BE A SELF-MED RELEASE WILL NEED THE APPOINTMENT OF AN ADULT CHAPERONE TO CARRY/DISPENSE MEDICATIONS AS NECESSARY. IT IS THE PARENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO HAVE ALL OF THE APPROPRIATE FORMS TO THE NURSE BY THE APPROPRIATE TIME.

FOR CLASSES THAT WILL GO ON MULTIPLE TRIPS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, (ex... 8th Grade Camping Trip/Class Trip) IT MAY BE TO YOUR BENEFIT TO HAVE THE DURATION OF TREATMENT STATED AS "*all day & overnight field trips*". THIS WOULD COVER ALL THE POSSIBILITIES.

Registration:

1. *Pre-School (3/4)* — Must be three before September of the current school year and potty trained. This program is not a preparation for Kindergarten.
2. *Pre-Kindergarten* — To be admitted into PreK, a child must be four years of age on or before December 1st of the current school year.
3. *Kindergarten* — To be admitted into Kindergarten, a child must be five years of age on or before December 1st of the current school year.

Requirements for admission to above programs also include:

- a) Completed application
 - b) A birth certificate
 - c) A record of current immunizations as defined by the NYS Dept. of Health
 - d) A current physical from the family physician
 - e) Payment of non-refundable registration fee
 - f) Signed contract of acceptance of responsibility for tuition payments and Home School Association agreement
4. Grades Pre-School 3 – Grade 8 — Registration is conducted on a first come, first serve basis with priority given to members of our Northern Chautauqua Catholic School family. Registration will then be opened to anyone wishing to attend Northern Chautauqua Catholic School. For all admissions the following must be met:
- a) Presentation of birth certificate, immunization records, current physical and records from former school district
 - b) Payment of non-refundable registration fee
 - c) Signed contract of acceptance of responsibility for tuition payments and Home School Association agreement

Non-Discrimination Policy:

Northern Chautauqua Catholic School, being part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Buffalo, New York, adheres to the Diocesan policy of non-discrimination as stated in section 4014 of the Elementary School Handbook.

School Hours:

Pre-School	8:00 — 11:00 a.m.; Tardy after 8:00 a.m.
PreK — 4 th Grade	8:00 a.m. - 2:35 p.m.; Tardy after 8:00 a.m.
5 th – 8 th Grades	7:45a.m. - 2:35p.m.; Tardy after 7:55 a.m.

Lunch periods:

11:15 - 11:45 a.m.	Kindergarten – 4 th Grade
11:15 – 11:45 a.m.	Pre-Kindergarten (full day) in classroom

11:50 - 12:20 p.m. 5th Grade – 8th Grade

School Records:

Consistent with the provisions of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, official records, files and data directly related to their child(ren) are available to parents upon written request to the principal, and must be reviewed in his/her presence in the school office.

Sports/Extracurricular Activities:

Northern Chautauqua Catholic School sponsors the following activities that foster students' service, cooperation, and teamwork in settings other than the classroom:

1. Interscholastic:
 - a) Boys' Basketball and Baseball
 - b) Volleyball, Girls' Basketball, and Softball
 - c) Track

2. Additional activities and clubs may be provided at the discretion of the principal in consultation with the faculty. School activities that may take place include:

† Assemblies	† After School Program
† Computer Classes	† Spring Concert
† Christmas Concert	† Cultural Night
† Food Drives	† Math Days
† Fire Prevention	† Middle School Electives
† Art Fair	† Pi Day
† Math Tutoring	† Dance
† Chess Club	† Music and Movement
† Mission Club	

All activities taking place outside of school hours require that parents give their permission and make provisions for transportation to and from the activity.

Transfer Procedure:

The procedure for public school parents' request for their child to transfer to Northern Chautauqua Catholic School is the following:

1. Contact office for an appointment with the principal.
2. Arrange to have all records sent to Northern Chautauqua Catholic from former school
3. Have student's report card available

When parents wish to transfer a student from the public school during the school year, or in the hope that Northern Chautauqua Catholic will promote a child that the public school has retained, it becomes Northern Chautauqua Catholic School's responsibility to inform the parent that it is policy to honor the promotion and retention policy of other schools in the area. Also, admission after the first quarter will be determined after contacting the public school to discuss discipline/grades with the principal/guidance office.

In transferring pupils from Northern Chautauqua Catholic School, parents are expected to follow these procedures:

1. Discuss the reason for the transfer with the principal and complete an exit survey
2. Sign a release for academic and health records to be sent to the receiving school
3. Pay tuition in full and pay for any lost/damaged books and fulfill Home School Association commitment
4. Receive report card of the student after all obligations have been satisfied

Transportation:

Children from outlying districts receive bus transportation through their school district. Parents must request bus service before April 1st for the coming school year. Forms are sent home in registration packets. Students who ride Dunkirk white city buses or yellow buses can obtain information at the beginning of each school year in the "Observer" newspaper. Bus lists and routes are published in late August by the public school district. If the district in which the child resides is closed due to inclement weather, it is the parent's responsibility to transport the child to school.

Our Curriculum

Religious Education:

Religion classes for grades PreK - 8 will be conducted daily. Our guideline is the Diocesan Curriculum. The text that is used is the Sadlier "Coming to Faith" program. By using this program, we hope to:

1. Proclaim the message of Jesus, including the instruction on the sacraments. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered to the students during Advent and Lent. The Sacrament of Holy Eucharist is offered at each liturgy. The Sacramental ceremony and celebration for the First Reconciliation (Grade 2) and First Communion (Grade 3) will be conducted by each child's own parish. Each parish's Religious Education Director will contact parents at the appropriate time for their schedule of parent/student preparation meetings.
2. Foster community
3. Motivate our children to service
4. Lead our children to prayer. Formal prayers are taught and spontaneous prayer is encouraged.

All children in grades K - 8 will plan and attend liturgy once a week. PreK will attend liturgy on one Thursday each month and Holy Days. Parents are invited to join our school community at these liturgies. On occasion, there are Para liturgy assemblies that the entire student body, PreK - 8 attend. These are held in our gym. Please note the school calendar and weekly memos for dates and times. Catholic and non-Catholic students alike will participate in all religion classes, liturgies and activities.

Faith Themes PreK - Grade 8:

PreK – K-	Creation; Jesus, God's Gift; Our Family, God's Gift
Grade 1-	Creation; God as Father, Son, Spirit; Jesus' Family, the Church; Baptism

Grade 2-	The Person of Jesus; Reconciliation; Eucharist
Grade 3-	The Holy Spirit; The Church; The Mass
Grade 4-	Morality; Ten Commandments; Beatitudes
Grade 5-	The Sacraments; Worship
Grade 6-	Old Testament
Grade 7-	Jesus; New Testament
Grade 8-	Creed; Mystery and Mission of the Church

In addition to the required Diocesan Religion Curriculum, our students participate in the following activities, in correlation to our program:

- † Weekly celebration of the Liturgy, with student - teacher preparation
- † Weekly study of Sunday Scripture of the Church year
- † School celebrations of the church (i.e. Holy Days, Seasons of Advent, Lent)
- † Adopt-A-Parish program
- † Pastors' visits
- † Para liturgies
- † School Assemblies with guest speakers (i.e. Missionaries)
- † Opportunities for community service
- † Spiritual Guidance
- † Religious retreats Grade 8
- † Service Projects
- † Ministry to Parish Shut-ins

Christian Teaching of Human Sexuality:

The Family Life Series which accompanies our religion textbook is incorporated into the existing Religion curriculum program of each grade. Northern Chautauqua Catholic also provides lessons on Safe Environment as directed by the Diocese of Buffalo.

Academics:

The curriculum for all grade levels includes:

- † Art
- † Health
- † Language Arts, grammar, spelling/writing skills (ELA)
- † Mathematics
- † Music
- † Technology/Computers
- † Physical Education
- † Reading (ELA)
- † Religion
- † Science (Kits/equipment provided by BOCES)
- † Social Studies
- † Spanish

Spanish is studied in grades PreK - 8. An eighth grade student may take a Spanish Proficiency Test, which may give the pupil credit toward his/her high school foreign language requirement, depending upon the secondary school district's regulations.

Chorus:

Students are required to participate in the Christmas and Spring concerts. Their music grade will reflect this participation. Students in grades 5 - 8 who participate in the Art Elective are exempt from the concert(s).

Concert Etiquette:

Students and parents attending the concert will arrive promptly. Students should have proper attire as outlined by the school.

The audience is to remain seated for the entire concert. Students will not be dismissed before the end of the entire performance. Parents must pick up their child(ren) in their homeroom.

Testing Program:

The testing program for Catholic schools includes teacher-constructed classroom tests and statewide standard assessments.

A. *Local Testing Program:* The backbone of day-to-day evaluation in the school is the classroom test. Due to its flexibility it can be used to:

- † stimulate pupil interest
- † evaluate pupil abilities prior to instruction
- † establish readiness for new learning
- † determine the need for or the effectiveness of remedial work
- † accomplish a variety of other special purposes

Classroom unit tests should be administered as each unit of curriculum is completed. The principal reserves the right to review these tests before they are administered to the students. They are helpful tools used to assess student progress and the effectiveness of instruction.

Final Examinations:

Final examinations are composed and administered by the teacher and should reflect the required curriculum taught. They are to be constructed similar to the format of the NYS assessments, as to have the students become familiar with the types of questions and the format they will see. Copies of the examinations are kept on file for one year. Final examinations are administered to students in grades 3 — 8 in June.

Standardized Testing:

Northern Chautauqua Catholic School uses the New York State Common Core to evaluate student performance, assess program effectiveness and prescribe educational programs.

New York State Tests:

New York State has developed assessment examinations in conjunction with the learning standards. Listed are the tests and grades in which given. Northern Chautauqua Catholic administers all state tests, as directed by the Diocese of Buffalo.

English/Language Arts:

Mathematics:

Science:
Grade 4
Grade 8

Student Evaluation Reports:

(Schedule for Distribution)

PreK — Twice a year, January and May

Kindergarten — Three times a year, beginning with the second quarter report cards

Grades 1- 8 — Four times a year, with progress reports at the mid-marking period of each quarter (at 5, 15, 25, and 35 weeks) AND again with report cards at the end of EACH ten week marking period.

Progress Reports:

All students will receive progress reports after the first five weeks of each marking period, as designated by the school calendar. These reports are sent home electronically, via the eSchool Parent Portal.

In addition, parents are kept informed of progress during each quarter by a variety of methods. Corrected tests, Friday folders (Grades K - 4) and requesting parent's signature on various classwork are sent home for the purpose of keeping parents informed of their child's progress. Phone calls and emails are also utilized for informing parents of student progress and issues.

The use of discipline reports and discussion documentation are other means of keeping parents informed of the happenings in the class.

Report Cards:

Report cards for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd quarters will be available electronically, via the eSchool Parent Portal, according to the dates specified on the school calendar. June report cards will also be available electronically at the end of the school year, via the eSchool Parent Portal. Grades K – 3 will use a Standards-based report card. Grades 4 – 8 will use numeric grading.

Marking Scale:

- † Class Participation
- † Classwork/Homework Completion
- † Final Examinations
- † Performance on Projects
- † Student Portfolio
- † Unit Tests
- † Weekly Tests and Quizzes

All of these areas are to be considered when preparing quarterly grades for a student. The weight of each average may be determined by local school policy.

Cheating/Passing Notes during a Testing Situation:

While cheating is an inappropriate, unacceptable behavior in itself, note/letter passing during a test/quiz situation is also unacceptable. Regardless of whether or not your child(ren) is finished

with their test, it will be considered a form of cheating. The test paper will be taken away, they will receive a zero for the test and a letter will be sent home to inform you of the situation.

Grading:

Kindergarten - Grade 3 will use standards-based assessments in all areas as indicated by the marking code listed on the card. A numerical grading system will be used in all subject areas for Grades 4 - 8. No letter grades will be given to any student. The comment area of the report cards follow the New York State Standards and are reported in the form of rubrics. The final assessment in a specific subject is calculated into the fourth quarter grade. (The final average in a specific subject is calculated by adding the four quarters and the final exam grade and then dividing by five.)

Exemption for Foreign Language Instruction:

Students are only exempt from foreign language instruction after diagnostic testing and consultation between parent, teacher and principal. In place of foreign language instruction, the student will receive additional instruction in areas of weakness. This instruction will include, but is not limited to, remedial instruction and enrichment activities.

A consent form will be completed and signed by the parent(s), teacher and principal. Exemptions are for a period of one year, at the end of which, a follow-up evaluation will be made to determine the status of the exemption for the upcoming academic year.

Honor Roll Criteria:

First Academic Honors:	94 - 100 %
Second Academic Honors:	90 — 93.9 %
Merit Roll:	85 – 89.9 %

Homework:

Homework is an important part of a student's education and establishes a daily link between home and school. As such, homework offers parents the opportunity to be involved in the curriculum on a regular basis. Assignments are to be recorded in the student assignment notebook for Grades 3 - 8, on a daily basis. The student is taught the proper procedure for using the assignment notebook in Grade 3 or upon entering Northern Chautauqua Catholic School. It is the student's responsibility to record their assignments in their assignment notebook and make sure that all their materials are packed to take home. Homework is also available on the website, nccschool.us, for grades 5 — 8 and after October 31st for grades 3 & 4. Please encourage your child to prepare for tests in advance in case of illness or school closure. It is to their benefit to prepare a little each night, than to cram all in one night.

*Teachers will prepare homework for **excused** absences. Homework for **unexcused** absences will be provided at the discretion of the teacher.

The amount of time it takes for a student to complete their homework varies with each student. Some students complete the majority of their assignments if not all of them, in the allotted time

in school. Some students may need additional time at home, as each student works at their own pace. You may need to review certain concepts or subject matter at home to reinforce the lesson that was taught. **Homework is the student's responsibility** and that includes the punctuality of returning assignments at designated due date.

Standards for Passing Grades:

Passing marks for each grade level are as follows:

Kindergarten – Grade 3	Standards-based assessment
Grades 4 to 8	70%

Promotion Standards:

Factors to be considered in the promotion of student should include:

- † Class performance according to grade level requirements
- † Student age and ability
- † Performance on standardized tests
- † Student achievement on tests and examinations
- † Competency tests
- † Successful achievement of required passing average

Retention:

Testing, diagnosis and actual performance may indicate that some students cannot complete a year's work in that time; therefore, it may become necessary to retain a pupil an additional year in a particular grade.

Criteria for Retention:

1. The student has failed to pass the major subjects at any given grade level. The list below indicates the specific failure(s) on each grade level that could result in retention at a particular grade level:
 - a) Kindergarten Failure to achieve competency in:
 - † Recognition of letters (upper & lower case)
 - † Emergent phonological awareness
 - † Visual and auditory discrimination of objects and sounds
 - † Gross and fine motor coordination
 - † Rote counting
 - † Maturation level
 - b) Grades 1 and 2 — Failure in Reading
 - c) Grade 3 — Failure in both reading and mathematics
 - d) Grades 4 & 5 Failure to achieve an overall average of 70% in the major subject areas of Religion, Language Arts/Spelling, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science/Health. In addition, failure to achieve a passing grade in Reading.
 - e) Grades 6 - 8 Failure to achieve an overall passing average of 70%
2. The student has failed to achieve a satisfactory score on a Standardized Test in Reading, Mathematics and Language Arts. The following list indicates the cut-off points for satisfactory scores:
 - a) Grade 2 — five months below grade level

- b) Grade 3 & 4 — one year below grade level
 - c) Grade 5 & 6 — one year, three months below grade level
 - d) Grade 7 one year, five months below grade level
3. The student has not demonstrated acceptable effort in achieving academic success. The following types of behavior indicate unacceptable effort:
 - a) Consistent failure to complete school and homework assignments and projects
 - b) Consistent inattention to classroom instruction
 - c) Lack of preparedness for school assignments
 4. Final decision of the teacher and administration with input from the parent.

Discipline

Authority of Teachers and School Personnel:

The authority of each teacher, substitute teacher, tutor, teacher aide, coach, lunchroom monitor, librarian, parent volunteer, kitchen worker, custodian and secretary applies to all children at all times in all places and also at school activities away from school. *Any student who is disobedient or disrespectful toward any of the above people, or who breaks a safety rule, or violates another individual's basic right, can expect to receive disciplinary action and/or be sent home.*

Student Behavior:

1. Students are expected to treat themselves, each other and adults with respect.
2. Older students are expected to watch out for younger ones' safety and comfort.
3. Students should greet adult visitors to their classroom properly.
4. Students are expected to follow all school rules.
5. Students must follow the Uniform/Dress Code. *See separate Appendix
6. In the hall, students will stay on the right side and travel quietly.
7. During fire drills, students will maintain quiet and order, following teachers' instructions.
8. Students are expected to be cooperative and courteous at all times. These expectations apply to all school-related activities and on the bus.
9. Behavior, such as excessive talking in class, discourtesy/disrespect to the faculty, staff, other students or parents, use of improper language and general lack of cooperation are not acceptable. In cases of disruptive behavior, the student will be sent to another room or the office, in order to regain and curb the disruption in the classroom.
10. In case of a fight (physical or verbal) the student(s) will receive the following disciplinary action:
 - a) Parent Notification — Student Disciplinary Report/Discussion Documentation will be sent home.
 - b) One day **In-School Suspension** or until parent/student/teacher/principal conference takes place, with the possibility of suspension from school into parent's custody. Students will be provided with the work they miss while suspended.

- c) For **Out-of-School Suspension**, the student is responsible for the work that is covered in the classes on the days that they are suspended. Students will be provided with the work they miss while suspended. Parents are required to pick up the assignments for their child to complete at home while the student is suspended. Completed assignments are to be returned with the child upon their return to school.

Generally Unacceptable Behavior in School or on School Property:

- † Abusive Language
- † Bullying
- † Cheating
- † Disrespect
- † Fighting
- † Gambling
- † Gum Chewing
- † Harassment
- † Lying
- † Possession of unauthorized electronic devices
- † Snowball throwing
- † Tardiness for class
- † Threatening abuse
- † Vandalism

Suspension:

Suspension is a drastic punishment that should be used rarely and only after all remedial measures have been employed without success. New York State Education Law 12:76 permits suspension of a student for:

1. Insubordination or disorderly conduct that otherwise endangers the safety, morals, health, or welfare of others.
2. A physical or mental condition causing behavior which endangers the health, safety or morals of him/herself or other students.

In suspending students, the following directives should be observed:

1. In-school suspension indicates that a student will not be permitted to attend classes, but will be supervised and provided with study assignments to be done during the suspension.
2. Out-of-school suspension indicates that the student will not attend school but will be provided with study assignments during the days of suspension.
3. Parents are to be informed of the decision for suspension and reasons for the actions before the suspension date.
4. A conference must be held with the parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
5. A written record of the suspension, including the date, reasons, and conference with the parent(s) report is to be kept on file and placed in the student's permanent record card. The official Attendance Register is to be appropriately marked.

Probation:

A student may be placed on probation for a specified time for serious or continued misconduct which does not require immediate drastic action. The following procedures are to be followed:

1. A conference including the parents, student and principal (or sometimes the teacher) is held to discuss the nature of the misconduct and the terms of the probation.
2. A written account is made of the agreements reached at the conference, with a copy given to the parents. The student and parents are made aware that the student has been given a definite period of time in which to conform to the behavior code of the school community.

Dismissal:

Valid reasons for dismissal may include:

1. Repeated disregard for Christian Principles of moral conduct
2. Parents and/or student's continued lack of cooperation in supporting the school's mission and policies
3. Student behavior that disrupts learning or presents a threat to the safety of others
4. If the principal determines that the school's program cannot provide a benefit to the child

The following directives should be observed:

- † An accurate record should be kept of all previous measures of remediation, counsel probation and suspension
- † Parents must be notified in writing that dismissal is being considered
- † A conference where the grounds for dismissal are presented and discussed should be held with parent(s)/legal guardian(s), student, principal and teachers
- † The principal must provide the Superintendent of the Diocese of Buffalo with specific reasons for dismissal and previous actions taken to avert dismissal

- † The Superintendent of the Diocese of Buffalo assists the principal in making the final decision
- † The student's records are appropriately marked

Serious Discipline Infractions:

The following are examples of serious types of misconduct which may warrant serious disciplinary action such as probation, suspension or dismissal:

- † Repeated disregard for Christian principles of moral conduct
- † Chronic or incorrigible misbehavior which undermines the classroom discipline and impedes the academic progress of the other students
- † Repeated acts of disobedience, disrespect and defiance of school personnel and regulations
- † Persistent defiance of the authority of teachers and principal
- † Assault and battery, or any threat or violence directed toward other students or school personnel
- † Substance abuse
- † Sexual harassment
- † Possession of drugs or weapons
- † Bullying

Approved Disciplinary Actions:

New York State Education Law 12:73 approves of the following types of discipline for violations of student disciplinary codes:

- † verbal warning
- † written notification to parents or guardian
- † probation
- † reprimand
- † detention
- † suspension from transportation
- † suspension from participation in athletic events
- † suspension from social or extracurricular activities
- † suspension from other privileges
- † exclusion from a particular class
- † in-school suspension
- † involuntary transfer
- † suspension not in excess of five days
- † suspension in excess of five days

Search and Seizure:

School personnel are free to enter a child's desk, back-pack or locker at any time to search for questionable items. The following materials may not be brought to school:

- † Guns, firearms, bombs
- † Alcoholic beverages of any type
- † Drugs (except where procedures for medication have been followed)
- † Fireworks
- † Immoral or pornographic materials

If items found are illegal (ex. drugs, weapons, fireworks), they will be turned over to law enforcement authorities. Other items will be given to the child's parents. Appropriate disciplinary actions will follow such an incident.

In addition, any items such as cell phones and other electronic devices, etc. (or anything deemed unfit by the principal) are not allowed in school. They will be confiscated and kept in the office until picked up by a parent.

Safety: (drugs, alcohol, dangerous items, etc.):

It is the policy of the school that students shall not be permitted to possess or be under the influence of tobacco products, lighters, matches, alcohol or any other illegal drug or drug paraphernalia on school property or at a school-related event.

In the event a teacher or staff member suspects a student to be in violation of this policy, the principal is to be informed and proper measures will be taken based on each individual case.

Under no circumstances may dangerous items (knives, etc.), suggestive magazines or other materials contrary to Christian values and the moral teaching of the Catholic Church be brought to school or on the bus.

The following procedures are to be followed handling specific drug/alcohol related incidents:

1. Any student in an elementary school of the Diocese who is selling, or providing drugs or alcohol to other students in school or at a school sponsored event is liable for expulsion. The student will be suspended immediately and a conference with the student, parent(s), or guardian(s), principal and Canonical Administrator will be arranged as soon as possible after the incident. If not dismissed, the student will be put on probation. In addition to recommending counseling, the principal will invoke suitable penalties and procedures to ensure the terms of the probation.
2. Any student in an elementary school of the Diocese who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol in school or at a school-sponsored event will be suspended and the student's parents or guardians will be notified immediately. After consultation with the Canonical Administrator, a conference with the principal, parent(s) or guardian(s) and the student will be arranged as soon as possible. In addition to recommending counseling, the Principal will impose suitable penalties and procedures and the student will be placed on probation. A second serious offense involving drugs or alcohol in any form will result in dismissal.
3. Any student in an elementary school of the Diocese who is detected using drugs or alcohol or in possession of drugs or alcohol in school or at a school-related event will be suspended and the student's parents notified immediately. After a conference with parents or guardians and the student, the principal will recommend counseling and impose suitable punishment that will include probation.

Involvement of Parents

The Home School Association of Northern Chautauqua Catholic School

The purpose of the Home School Association of Northern Chautauqua Catholic School is to offer an opportunity for parents and teachers to cooperate in their efforts to educate children according to Catholic principles. The Association is very active in their efforts to afford all of our children an environment that is conducive to learning, opportunity for social activities and the educational materials needed.

All families become members of the Association upon registration of their child(ren) to share their ideas and talents toward the betterment of the group and Northern Chautauqua Catholic School. It is the giving of ourselves that has helped to make Northern Chautauqua Catholic School the vibrant school that it is.

The officers look forward to working with you in the years your family is a part of our school community. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend meetings and to participate in school activities. The Home School Association meets on a regular basis throughout the school year. Dates for meetings are in the school calendar that is sent home at the beginning of the year.

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Handbook Committee: Donna Pucciarelli, Tammy Bankoski, Kristine Morabito, Laura Markham

Parent/Student Handbook Compliance Form

After familiarizing yourself and your child with the pertinent information in the Parent/Student Handbook, please return the form below to the school office with signatures.

We, at Northern Chautauqua Catholic School, appreciate your cooperation in this matter. It is vital to the smooth operation of the school and our togetherness in the education of your child.

COMPLIANCE FORM

Upon reading this handbook, I agree to follow the rules and directives designed for the education, safety, and protection of my child(ren), as well as the desired functioning of Northern Chautauqua Catholic School.

Therefore, I state that I have read, understand, and accept the complete handbook and agree to abide by all of its directives and policies.

(Please sign and return to the school office)

Student(s) Name(s): _____
(Please print) _____

Parent(s)' Signature(s): _____

Date: _____