



# OUR LADY OF SORROWS SCHOOL

## PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK 2010 - 2011

1100 GUMWOOD AVE.

MCALLEN, TEXAS 78501 - 4559

(956) 686 - 3651

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Web site: [www.olsschool.org](http://www.olsschool.org)

*This agenda belongs to:*

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/TOWN \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT NO. \_\_\_\_\_



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# OUR LADY OF SORROWS SCHOOL

1100 GUMWOOD AVE.

MCALLEN, TX 78501

PHONE: (956) 686-3651 FAX: (956) 686-1996

WWW.OLSSCHOOL.ORG



Nationally Recognized  
Blue Ribbon School  
2006



2010						
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	H	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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26	27	28	29	30	31	

**180 Instructional Days**  
**10 Staff Development/**  
**Workdays**

Revised 4-16-2010

2010	REPORTING PERIODS	2011
1st Quarter	August 13- October 20, 2010	(45 days)
2nd Quarter	October 21 - January 14, 2011	(45 days)
3rd Quarter	January 17 - March 25, 2011	(44 days)
4th Quarter	March 28 - June 1, 2011	(46 days)

### PROGRESS REPORT POSTING

September 16, 2010  
December 1, 2010  
February 16, 2011  
April 29, 2011

### REPORT CARD DISTRIBUTIONS

October 28, 2010  
January 20, 2011  
April 1, 2011  
June 6, 2011 (Mailed)

### SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

September 6, 2010	Labor Day
October 18, 2010	Fall Holiday
November 24-26, 2010	Thanksgiving Holidays
Dec. 23, '10- Jan. 7, '11	Christmas Holidays
February 21, 2010	Presidents' Day
March 14-18, 2011	Spring Break
April 22-April 25, 2011	Easter Holiday

### STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND WORKDAYS

August 9-12, 2010	Staff Development Days/Workdays
August 21, 2010	New Staff Diocesan In-service
September 3, 2011	Diocesan In-service
October 16, 2010	Parish Festival
November 22, 2010	Diocesan In-service
November 23, 2010	Staff In-service
February 19, 2011	PSIA Workday
June 2, 2011	Workday

### EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS

No After School Care

August 13, 16, 2010*	Orientation Days
August 18-27, 2010	New PK3 & PK4- 1/2 days
September 2, 2010*	Staff Development
October 15, 2010*	Parish Festival Set-up
October 29, 2010*	Parent-Teacher Conferences
December 22, 2010*	Begin Christmas Holidays
January 21, 2011*	Parent-Teacher Conferences
January 28, 2011*	Spirit Awards Banquet
April 21, 2011*	Holy Thursday
May 6, 2011*	Walk-a-thon
June 2, 2011*	Last Day of School

### SPRING TESTING DATES

Feb. 28- March 4, 2011 CogAT Testing (2, 5, 7)  
March 7-11, 2011 All School

### GRADUATION DATES

May 30, 2011 Last Day for PK3, PK4, & Kinder  
May 31, 2011 Kindergarten Celebration  
June 1, 2011 Eighth Grade Graduation  
June 1, 2011 Last Day for Grades 1-7

### WEATHER MAKE-UP DAYS

June 2, 2011 June 3, 2011

- S - Staff Development or Workday - No School
- O - Orientation Days - Half Day
- 1/2 - Early Dismissal - 12:00 noon
- - Holiday
- △ - Progress Reports Posted
- - Report Cards Distributed

2011						
JANUARY						
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FEBRUARY						
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27	28					
MARCH						
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APRIL						
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MAY						
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29	30	31				
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	H	F	S
			1	S	3	4

**CALENDAR SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

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## WELCOME

As we begin this school year, the administration, faculty, and staff of Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School are happy to welcome you to our campus.

This handbook has been prepared for you and contains information about school policies and regulations. Our goal is to provide a successful learning experience for each of you. You are very important, and your attitude will influence your effort and achievement.

We are asking both parents and students to read, discuss, and utilize the information in this handbook.

## PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK

The Our Lady of Sorrows School handbook is published so that parents, students, and staff may be informed of policies and procedures of the school. The students must carry this agenda daily to all classes. It is a good communication tool to relay messages and homework assignments to parents and teachers. If changes are necessary during the year, OLSS maintains the right to amend the contents of this publication. Such changes will be announced in the monthly newsletter to parents.

## MISSION STATEMENT

We, the faith community of OLSS, have as our primary mission to ensure a Christian environment where each child may excel spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially.

In order to fulfill this mission we strive to achieve the following goals:

### SPIRITUAL GOALS:

- To empower each child to become a living testimony of God's Word through prayer, the study of scripture, and the authentic teachings of the Church
- To manifest through worship our oneness with all God's people

### INTELLECTUAL GOALS:

- To challenge each student to develop an open, inquiring mind that allows an appreciation and acceptance of each person's uniqueness as a precious child of God
- To provide a curriculum that ensures educational excellence while nurturing each child's creativity, spontaneity, emotional stability, and self-worth

### PHYSICAL GOALS:

- To teach each child lifetime and leisure sports that provide opportunities for total physical development and good health
- To create a safe and pleasant learning environment

### SOCIAL GOALS:

- To provide a caring, loving environment built on trust, justice, and peace
- To foster a partnership based on mutual respect and understanding among the civic community, church community, school, and home
- To develop life skills that will encourage each student to become a mature, responsible, and caring citizen of the world

- To increase each child's level of awareness and sense of responsibility and respect for global ecology

Our hope is that through the implementation of these goals potential becomes reality, empowering each person to emerge as a challenging spirit-filled individual concerned with the advancement of God's kingdom on earth.

## PHILOSOPHY

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School prepares students spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With Christian values as the cornerstone, OLSS provides a learning environment that builds self-directed learners, collaborative workers, and community contributors.

OLSS parents, students, and faculty provide a strong Catholic community as the platform from which all learning takes place. This community recognizes the importance of all its members as teachers and models of Catholic education. OLSS develops students to take their places in society with strong Catholic values.

OLSS students pursue academic excellence within their individual potential and are guided to make decisions grounded in their Catholic faith. Guided by the above philosophy, OLSS supports and follows the Vatican Council Declaration on Christian Education:

*"Catholic schools are no less zealous than other schools in the promotion of culture and in the human formation of young people. It is, however, the special function of Catholic Schools to develop in the school community an atmosphere animated by the spirit of liberty and charity based on the Gospel. It enables young people, while developing their own personality, to grow at the same time in the new life which has been given to them at baptism."*

*II Vatican Council Declaration on  
Christian Education, Section 8*

## ORGANIZATION

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School is an integral part of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish. The chief executive officer of the school is the Pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows Church.

The Principal is the Chief Administrator of OLS School, and is appointed by the pastor. The Principal works with the School Advisory Council and all other Councils and Boards of the school to achieve the mission of Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School. The Principal has final responsibility for the educational and religious programs of the school, long-range planning, as well as all aspects of the school's general operation, financial management and institutional advancement. The Principal has primary responsibility for articulating the mission of Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School to the public.

Additionally, the Principal is responsible to see that quality religious and academic education is offered to all students. The principal must provide programs that give the best opportunities for all students to receive systematic catechesis, experience daily living in a faith community, and aid in the development of sound Catholic principles and values. In

addition, the principal must maintain academic programs of the highest quality.

The OLS School Advisory Council is an appointed advisory body to the Pastor and Principal for operating the facilities of OLSS. Its duties are to develop local school policies, provide long range planning, oversee the school budget, and promote the merits of Catholic Education. In order to be placed on Our Lady of Sorrows School Advisory Council agenda, requests must be submitted in writing two (2) weeks prior to the meeting.

The OLSS Development Council is an organization established to advance and enhance Catholic educational opportunities at OLSS. Its duties are to sponsor a major event, cultivate an alumni association, and promote public relations to supplement present revenues and increase Our Lady of Sorrows School's Endowment Fund.

The OLSS Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) provides a vehicle for communication and support among parents, teachers, and students. The PTO sponsors fundraisers, social events, and programs throughout the year.

The OLS School Endowment Fund Board oversees the investments for the Endowment Fund. The members of this board include the Pastor, Principal, Advisory Council President, Development Council President, PTO President, and Financial Advisor.

## **ACCREDITATION**

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School is fully accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department under the direction and standards established by the Texas Education Agency.

The last full accreditation visit was held in October of 2002. Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School received a high rating in all seven domains and was accredited without reservation.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

A grievance is a complaint based on any alleged violation or inequitable application of policy or a dispute over the meaning or interpretation of the terms contained in this handbook.

This procedure is intended to resolve a grievance informally at the lowest possible administrative level in a Christian atmosphere. Persons with concerns regarding application or interpretation of a policy should first attempt to address the concern with the teacher. Only after such attempts have failed should administrators be contacted.

The following levels of submitting and resolving a grievance are:

### **INFORMAL ACTION – RESOLUTION/CONCILIATION**

- Level 1 - Presentation to the Teacher
- Level 2 - Presentation to the Coordinator
- Level 3- Presentation to the Principal

### **FORMAL ACTION**

If a satisfactory resolution is not reached at the resolution/conciliation level, the complainant shall state his or her complaint in writing (on a form to be provided by the principal), setting forth the nature of the complaint, all relevant details and the remedy sought. This form should be submitted

to the pastor within ten (10) working days following the meeting with the principal.

Level 4 - Presentation to the Pastor

Level 4 decisions responding to any matter other than school personnel are final and will not be considered at Level 5.

Level 5 - Presentation to the Superintendent

## **MONTESORRI PROGRAM**

The Montessori classroom is a prepared environment which has a definite order and purpose. The classroom curriculum includes religion, practical life, sensorial, language, math, science, and cultural areas. Report cards are sent out in October, February, and May. Pre-K 3 and 4 begin the year on a half-day schedule as noted on the school calendar. Kinder students (K5) will follow the regular school schedule, attending for a full day.

Pre-K 3 and 4 will attend afternoons only during SAT Testing days. Kinder students (K5) will follow the regular school schedule, to allow time for testing. Dates for SAT Testing are posted on the school calendar.

## **CURRICULUM**

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School provides a well-rounded curriculum for students in grades PK-8. The curriculum covers the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as prescribed by the State of Texas as well as the objectives set forth in the curriculum guides adopted by the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Brownsville.

## **NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY**

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School will not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its admission, athletic, or tuition assistance programs.

## **CRITERIA FOR ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS**

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School exists primarily for Catholic students, and secondarily for students of any other denomination who choose a Catholic School.

The application process begins with an application form and a deposit of \$200.00 (registration fee). If a student is not accepted and/or a space is not available at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School, the \$200.00 deposit is refunded. After enrollment is completed and the student is accepted, the registration fee and tuition payments are non-refundable. Most student supplies and books are included in the tuition payment. In addition to tuition, all families are required to participate in a mandatory fundraiser.

**The criteria for enrollment are as follows:**

### **Grades 1-8**

- a. Standardized test scores of "50 percentile" or better on Reading Total, Math Total, Language Total, and Battery Composite **OR** Successful completion of entrance exam (cost of the exam is \$10.00)
- b. Submission of all required documents
- c. Passing grades of C or better in all subjects
- d. Behavior ratings of satisfactory or better
- e. Two (2) recommendations from current school
- f. Admission is subject to space availability and interview process

### **Pre-Kinder and Kinder**

- a. Submission of all required documents
- b. The child is potty-trained (Pre-Kinder 3-4)
- c. Child is emotionally and socially ready for a school environment
- d. One (1) evaluation form from previous Preschool, Day Care Director, or parent
- e. Child has some understanding of the English language
- f. Admission is subject to space availability and interview process

### **ADMISSION OF NON-CATHOLIC STUDENTS**

The non-Catholic applicant should:

- a. Understand, accept, and support actively the philosophy and goals of the school
- b. Relate responsibly to the members of the school community, whether adults or students
- c. Cultivate personal talents and abilities to the extent that he/she is able
- d. Attend religion classes
- e. Attend church service and/or liturgy at the school and understand the reasons for invitation
- f. Participate in the school's service projects

### **IMMUNIZATION RECORDS**

All immunizations must be up-to-date within 30 days of entry into school. Failure to comply will result in the child's removal from school.

### **EXEMPTION FROM IMMUNIZATION**

In the event that a parent/guardian strongly objects to the required school immunization, a written request must be submitted to the school principal with the appropriate affidavit obtained from the TX Dept. of Health, Immunization Division. Each individual vaccine exemption affidavit is good for two years from the date notarized.

The Catholic Bishops of the US and Catholic moral and ethical theologians have concluded that the use of vaccines is not morally wrong, therefore, no exemptions will be granted in the Diocese of Brownsville on the basis of religious beliefs.

If for medical reasons, an exemption requires a written statement signed by the child's physician (M.D. or D.O.), duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the US that, in the physician's opinion, the vaccine required is injurious to the child's health or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the child. Unless it is written in the statement that a lifelong condition exists, the exemption statement is valid for only one year from the date signed by the physician. This document must be submitted to the principal prior to the child attending school and will be reviewed annually.

### **EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

In order to assure our ability to make contact in case of emergency, parents must update Emergency Contact information as changes are made to home addresses, home phone or cell phone numbers, or emergency contact persons.

### **PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

If a student is admitted to Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School, a probationary period of nine (9) weeks exists during which time a decision is made whether or not to continue enrollment. This decision is based on the student meeting:

- Academic requirements
- Attendance requirements
- Homework requirements
- Code of Conduct requirements
- Social, emotional, and physical criteria of PK-K program

Parents are informed by the Principal of the need to enroll the child elsewhere if these criteria are not met.

### **TUITION, FEES, & MANDATORY FUND RAISER**

Annual tuition is to be paid in twelve (12) equal payments with the first payment due on June 1<sup>st</sup>. The remaining payments are due on the first (1<sup>st</sup>) of each month and payable until the fifteenth (15<sup>th</sup>). Tuition includes book fees and most supplies.

Payments are to be made at the bookkeeper's office or mailed in the envelope provided to attention of the bookkeeper.

The school conducts two mandatory fundraisers per year. The Fall Raffle, commitment is \$150 (30 tickets) and the Spring Car Raffle is \$100 (1 ticket). Commitments not fulfilled by the deadline will be assessed a \$15 late fee and charged to the family account.

Once a student is enrolled, registration fees are non-refundable. Refunds on tuition are not made after September 1.

Unused lunch and drink fees are refundable.

Educational trip fees that have been paid to the agency to be visited are non-refundable.

There is a thirty dollar (\$30.00) charge on all returned checks. A returned check constitutes grounds for payment in cash or by cashier's check. This applies to all checks made out to the school, not just tuition.

A late fee of twenty dollars (\$20.00) is added to each payment received after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. If the account is not cleared by the last day of the month, the student is not admitted to class until all financial obligations are met.

June and July tuition must be paid in full prior to the first official day of class. If any obligations cannot be met, you must make arrangements with the school administration. Failure to make these arrangements may result in your child not being allowed to begin the school year at OLSS.

In order to be eligible for January registration for the next school year, all financial obligations must be cleared. The school reserves the right to block enrollment if there is a documented history of non-compliance with the tuition payment policy.

The school will not forward records for students who withdraw with an outstanding balance.

### **FAMILY SERVICE HOURS**

Each family is required to perform 10 hours of service to the school community. This service can be performed at a variety of functions throughout the school year. Incomplete service hours will be billed to the family account at \$50.00 per hour. Further details are available in the Family Service Hour Program Guidelines.

## TEXTBOOKS

All student textbooks, workbooks, and paperbacks must be cared for at all times. Students who lose, deface, or misplace a textbook, workbook, or paperback are required to replace it at their own expense. The replacement cost of a hardback book is \$65.00, a workbook is \$20.00, and a paperback book is \$6.00.

## LOCKERS

Lockers and locks are provided as a convenience. Students are responsible for keeping their lockers clean and orderly. No decorations are allowed on the outside of the locker. Only school provided locks are permitted, all other locks will be removed from the locker. Students are advised not to share their locker combinations with others. Locker assignments and lock combinations will be handled through the main office.

## UNIFORMS

In a society where there is so much emphasis on external appearances and material possessions, it behooves us as parents and educators to help our children grow in the ability to see through and beyond these concerns to more important values. In an effort to teach our children that it is neither the clothing nor the possessions that make each person special, we require all students to wear the uniform prescribed for their grade level unless they have been given specific permission to do otherwise. If a student is not in uniform, the parents will be called and asked to deliver the necessary items to school for the child. The prescribed uniforms are as follows:

### GIRLS

#### PreK3 - PreK4

Plaid Skort (Parker Uniform)  
Sailor Blouse with tie matching the skort (Parker Uniform)  
Crew Socks – all white  
White/navy blue Tennis Shoe (Pat's Shoe Box)  
All White Tennis Shoe (Pat's Shoe Box/Parker)

#### K 5- Grade 3

Plaid Jumper (length just below knee) (Parker Uniform)  
Sailor Blouse with no tie (Parker Uniform)  
Crew Socks – all white  
White/navy blue Tennis Shoe (Pat's Shoe Box)  
All White Tennis Shoe (Pat's Shoe Box/Parker)

#### Grade 4 - Grade 5

Plaid Skirt (length just below knee) (Parker Uniform)  
Sailor Blouse with Tie matching the skirt (Parker Uniform)  
Crew Socks – all white  
White/navy blue Tennis Shoe (Pat's Shoe Box)  
All White Tennis Shoe (Pat's Shoe Box/Parker)  
Official PE Uniform (**\*longer blue shorts**)

#### Grade 6 – Grade 7

Navy Blue Skirt (length just below knee) (Parker Uniform)  
Sailor Blouse with Tie matching the skirt (Parker Uniform)  
Crew Socks – all white  
White/navy Tennis Shoe (all white size 7 and up) (Pat's Shoe)  
All White Tennis Shoe (Pat's Shoe Box/Parker)  
Official PE Uniform (**\*longer blue shorts**)

### Grade 8

Navy Blue Skirt (length just below knee) (Parker Uniform)  
Sailor Blouse with blue trim and Tie matching the skirt (Parker)  
Crew Socks – all white  
White/navy blue Tennis Shoe (all white if size is 7 or above)  
(Pat's Shoe Box)  
All White Tennis Shoe (Pat's Shoe Box/Parker)

### BOYS

#### K3 - K4

Khaki shorts or long slacks (Parker Uniform)  
Light blue Polo Shirt (Parker Uniform)  
Black Belt  
Crew Socks – all white  
All black Tennis Shoe (Pat's Shoe Box/Parker)

#### K5- Grade 5

Khaki Shorts or Long Slacks (Parker Uniform)  
Navy blue Polo Shirt to be worn Mon. – Thurs. (Parker Uniform)  
White Polo Shirt to be worn on Friday (Parker Uniform)  
Black Belt  
Crew Socks – all white  
All black Tennis Shoe (Pat's Shoe Box/Parker)  
Official PE Uniform (Grades 4 – 5)

#### Grade 6 – 8

Khaki Slacks (Parker Uniform)  
Striped Oxford Shirt (Parker Uniform)  
Tie to be worn with oxford shirts on Mass day  
Black Belt  
Crew Socks – all white  
All black Tennis Shoe (Pat's Shoe Box/Parker)  
Official PE Uniform (Grades 6 – 7)

\*\*All shirts and blouses must have the school emblem.

\*\*Students may wear plain black (boys) or white (girls) tennis shoes **during PE class only**

\*\*Scouting uniform may be worn to school on the day of regular meetings or for special Scout events.

\*\*All visible clothing must conform to uniform code.

\*\*All clothing must be clearly marked on the inside with the student's name.

\*\*Any official school shirt may be worn on Spirit Day (most Thursdays).

### WINTER WEAR - GIRLS AND BOYS

Plain white Tights or Knee-High Socks– NO leggings  
Navy Blue Cardigan Sweater – (Parker Uniforms)  
Navy Blue Pullover Sweater (Optional)– (Parker Uniforms)  
Navy Blue Wind Breaker – (Parker Uniforms)  
Navy Blue Fleece Jacket – (Parker Uniforms, Tuff Stuff)  
Navy Blue Sweatshirt – (Parker Uniforms)  
Navy Blue Heavy/Hooded Jacket – (Tuff Stuff)

**\*No other jackets will be allowed.**

K3 – K5 – Navy Blue Warm-Ups – (Parker Uniforms)

**Parker Uniform - located at 614 N Ed Carey Dr, Harlingen**

**Pat's Shoe Box - located at 19 S Main St, McAllen**

**Tuff Stuff - located at El Centro Mall, next to Luby's – 500 N Jackson, Pharr**

## GROOMING

Students must keep a neat appearance at all times.

Shoe laces are to be kept tied.

Boys' shirts must be kept tucked in.

Boys' and Girls' hair may not be bleached, tinted or dyed.

Boys must maintain a neat haircut. Hair must not cover the ears, eyebrows, or collar.

Girls' hairstyles are to be worn in a controlled style. (**Barrettes, bows, and combs that match the uniform Jumper or Skirt may be used.**)

Inappropriate hair styles for boys and girls will be determined by the Principal or Assistant Principal on a one-to-one basis.

Light make-up is permitted for girls in grade 8 only.

Only one pair of **stud** earrings may be worn (one in each ear lobe), even though a girl may have multiple piercings.

Earrings are not allowed for male students.

No other visible body piercing or tattoos are permitted.

One ring, one bracelet, one watch may be worn.

One necklace or a chain, medal, or cross may be worn inside the blouse or shirt.

Hair sprays, deodorant sprays, fingernail polish, colognes, or perfumes may not be brought to school. These will be confiscated.

Only clear fingernail polish may be worn.

## BASICS IN COURTESY

Students are to:

Address all members of the faculty and all adults with: Mr., Mrs., Miss, Sir, Ma'am, Sister, or Father as is appropriate.

Knock on doors and wait to be acknowledged prior to entering any office or classroom.

Use "Please, Thank you, and Excuse Me".

## ATTENDANCE

In compliance with State Law, Our Lady of Sorrows School follows compulsory attendance laws. The school calendar is published prior to the beginning of each school year. Parents/guardians are expected to honor this calendar when planning vacations and medical appointments.

**Pre-planned absences, such as vacations, will be counted as "Unexcused" and are discouraged.** Teachers cannot accommodate parents by outlining lesson plans in advance. Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations. No assignment will be given in anticipation of the vacation.

The school day extends from 7:45 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Students should not be on campus prior to 7:00 a.m. The school cannot accept the responsibility for any child arriving before or staying beyond the designated times unless the child is involved in a school-sponsored and supervised program.

1. OLSS students in grades K5 - 8 are required to attend school for a minimum of 164 days per year. The OLSS calendar provides 180 teaching days for grades K5 - 8.
2. To be considered an "Excused Absence", a note from a doctor or parents explaining the absence must be sent in to the homeroom teacher upon the child's return to

school.

3. No make-up will be allowed and no credit will be given for work missed due to Unexcused Absences.
4. In the event that a student fails to attend the required 164 days, the parent or guardian is required to appear before the attendance committee during May. Parent or guardian must furnish reasons for the absences, including medical verification before credit is given for the school year.
5. The attendance committee comprised of Principal, Nurse, and a teacher, accepts the following as "extenuating circumstances" for the purpose of granting credit: personal sickness, sickness or death in the immediate family, quarantine, or participation in approved, school sponsored, extracurricular activities.

## SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS

The school office is open on all school days from 7:30 am – 3:30 pm.

## ARRIVAL

All students are to enter the gym from the courtyard or the 11<sup>th</sup> Street entrance between 7:00 - 7:45 a.m.

Morning Assembly begins at 7:45 a.m. If a child arrives after 7:45 a.m., but before 8:00 a.m., he/she must report to the cafeteria and is marked as tardy. Any student arriving after 8:00 a.m. must report to the front office to receive a late pass and is marked as tardy. Any student arriving after 9:00 a.m. or leaving before 10:30 a.m. is marked as absent.

## TARDIES

Promptness is an indication of good self-discipline. Habitual tardiness will not be tolerated. Habitual tardiness seriously disrupts the educational process of other students and affects school performance of the student who is tardy.

## EXCESSIVE TARDIES OR ABSENCES

The following consequences will be in place to handle excessive tardies and absences:

- 7 tardies (Count each Quarter)– Elimination from extra-curricular activities and from Honor Roll for this Term
- 8 tardies (Count each Quarter)– Counts as day of Absence
- 9 tardies (Count each Quarter)– After-School Detention
- 18 tardies (Count for full year)– Placed on Probation, Exclusion from extra-curricular activities, including Y-O. for remainder of the year, Possible Blocked Enrollment for the following year (grades 1-7) or ineligibility for Honors graduation (grade 8)
- 5 Unexcused Absences – Elimination from extra-curricular activities and Honor Roll
- 12 Absences (Excused OR Unexcused) – Placed on Probation (Count for full year)
- 16 Absences (Excused OR Unexcused) – Possible Retention or Blocked Enrollment for the following year based on decision of the attendance committee, Exclusion from extra-curricular activities including Y-O (Count for full year)

## **DELIVERIES DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

There are times when parents "drop off" items (money, books, treats, projects, etc.) for a student. All such items should be left in the school office. It is the student's responsibility to check with the secretary to see if anything has been left for him/her. We do not interrupt teachers or classes to deliver such items.

Student lunches or fast-food items are not to be dropped off at school. If a lunch is forgotten that student is to eat a cafeteria meal. Each student should have a lunch card for such emergencies.

## **TELEPHONE CALLS**

School phones are to be used for official business only. Students are to use these phones for school business only after they have received permission from office staff.

Students are not called out of class to answer the telephone except in extreme emergencies.

Telephone calls requesting that a student be told of a change in transportation, After School Care, or pick up time are not accepted. Relaying these messages is very disruptive to the learning process and trying to relay such messages at the end of a school day is quite impossible.

## **EARLY DEPARTURE**

When a student is to leave school before the regular dismissal time, a written note is required. The note is to be presented to the teacher in charge at the time of dismissal. The student is to come to the office at the designated time and is to be picked up by the parent who signs out the child. Class is not interrupted to call a student to the office. The school does not release a child to anyone other than the parent, legal guardian, or adult listed on the school record.

We will not allow students to be dismissed through the office after 2:15 p.m. except in the case of emergency. A student may not be released early on a continual basis.

## **DISMISSALS**

All parents are to follow Dismissal Site instructions provided by the school.

No student is allowed to wait in the office area or outside the school building to be picked up. These rules are formulated to ensure the safety of each child while on the school campus.

Parents must notify the school in writing when a student is allowed to walk home, go to the public library, or ride home with another student or other person.

Because of the disruptions it causes during our dismissal, no limousines are permitted to pick up students.

## **LATE PICK-UP**

Students not registered in the After School Care Program and not picked up on time at the regular dismissal are taken to a classroom and supervised. There is a \$10.00 charge for this service. There is an additional charge of \$10 for every 15 minutes past 4:00 p.m. This will be billed directly to the student's account.

## **AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM**

The After School Care Program at OLSS was established in 1984 to provide a safe environment for children of working parents. Priority placement is given to families with both

parents working. Drop-ins are not allowed. A completed enrollment form must be submitted before students are accepted into the program. Payment for this service is due with the tuition payment at the first of the month payable by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. Failure to abide by the school policies may result in removal of the student from the program.

After School Care flat rates are paid August through May and are found in the After School Care Handbook.

## **WOW PROGRAM – WORKING ON WINNING**

The WOW Program exists to help at risk students succeed and become self-sufficient in an academic setting. This program provides assistance with homework, review for exams, and remedial assistance. Tracking sheets may be used to monitor progress.

Failure to abide by the OLSS Code of Conduct may result in removal of the student from the program.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is an important part of the student's educational experience. Assignments are expected to be neatly written and completed on time. Homework assignments may include class projects, research projects, science projects, technology projects, or preparation for a class test.

Assignments are given to reinforce skills taught in class, to foster habits of independent study, and to meet growth needs of individual students.

It is our goal to help each child develop responsibility in completing homework assignments. We believe that learning good homework habits will benefit students as they progress in their academic education.

The following guidelines have been set to help us achieve this goal:

### **PRIMARY DEPARTMENT – GRADES 1-2**

1. Homework is due the following day after the assignment is given unless otherwise noted. It is checked for completion, recorded, and returned.
2. Parents are notified in writing if homework is not brought in, and the child is allowed time during the day to complete the homework.
3. Consistently late homework is noted on the progress report and reflected on quarterly report cards.
4. Students who are absent **due to illness or family emergency** are given a day for each absence to make up work. Work missed due to Unexcused Absence may not be made up.
5. Students absent three or more days are given additional time to make up work. Arrangements must be made with the teacher involved.

\*When advanced notice is given for a long-term assignment, no excuse is accepted for lateness. If you know in advance that you will not be present on the due date, make plans to turn in the assignment in advance.

### **ELEMENTARY & JR. HIGH DEPT. – GRADES 3-8**

1. Each student is responsible for keeping his/her assignment notebook up to date.
2. Late homework will be accepted the day after the due date for partial credit

3. Parents must read teacher notes concerning behavior or work and sign the appropriate notices.
4. Parents are notified if a student misses homework assignments.
5. Students who are absent **due to illness or family emergency** are given a day for each absence to make up work. Work missed due to Unexcused Absence may not be made up.
6. Students absent three or more days for illness or family emergency are given additional time to make up work. Arrangements must be made with the teacher involved.

\*When advanced notice is given for a long-term assignment, no excuse is accepted for lateness. If you know in advance that you will not be present on the due date, make plans to turn in the assignment in advance.

Additional information and procedures can be found in the [Our Lady of Sorrows Homework Guidelines](#).

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

It is the responsibility of the student (grades 3-8) to arrange the time and place for make-up work with the teacher.

Make-up work must be completed within the allowed time -- one school day for each day the student was absent -- to make up assigned work and tests that were missed.

Work that is missed during an out-of-school suspension will not receive credit. However, students are expected to complete assignments to remain current with coursework.

Students who do not make up work during the allotted time, or who have not made other arrangements with the teachers, do not receive credit for the missed work.

For one day of absence, homework will not be sent home. If a student is absent for more than one day, parents should contact the office to obtain assignments from the teachers.

### **TESTING**

Testing of students may include the following:

1. Assessment of Catholic Religious Education (ACRE) Level 1 administered to grade 5 and Level 2 administered to grade 8 during the spring semester
2. Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) administered to grades K-8 during spring semester (If more than two days of testing are missed, make-up is not available)
3. Classroom testing (weekly and quarterly) to assess student performance
4. Special academic evaluations for students with specific needs by the appropriate testing agency, the public school district in which the student resides, or other specific testing personnel

### **TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Teachers must devote class time to instruction and supervision of students. Teachers may not see parents during class time. Parents may schedule a conference time before school, after school, or during the teacher's planning time on scheduled days.

Teachers will not receive phone calls from parents during class time. If a student is having problems in the classroom, parents are encouraged to request a phone conference or set

an appointment with the teacher. All conference appointments are made through the office.

Parent/teacher conferences are held at the end of the first and second nine-week reporting periods to assess student progress.

Conferences should be conducted in a confidential manner and in an appropriate setting (not in the hallway, at dismissal, etc.).

### **PRINCIPAL CONFERENCES**

The Principal is available to conference with parents by appointment.

### **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Progress reports are issued approximately midway through each marking period. The date of issue is listed on the official school calendar and in the monthly newsletter. It is the responsibility of the parent to ask their child for the report. A copy of the report is to be signed and returned to the homeroom teacher.

PreK and Kinder Progress Reports are issued 3 times each year; once before Christmas and twice more during Spring Semester.

### **GRADING POLICY (GRADES 3-8)**

Homework	25% of Academic Grade
Classwork and Quizzes	25% of Academic Grade
Tests	50% of Academic Grade

A project may be counted as classwork, quiz, or test.

Jr. High semester exams count as two test grades.

### **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards for grades 1-8 are issued every nine weeks. Grades 1-8 receive numerical grades. Grades are not issued to 1<sup>st</sup> graders until the second nine-week marking period.

A -- 94-100;	B -- 86-93; C -- 75-85;
D -- 70-74;	F -- 69 and below is failing

Pre-Kinder and Kinder report cards are issued three times a year; October, March, and May.

Report card envelopes must be signed and returned to the classroom teacher. Requests for grade change must be made in writing to the teacher within 2 days of distribution.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

In an effort to instill in our students the Church's teachings on social justice and call for all of the faithful to contribute to the good of all of its members and for the common good, all students in grades 6, 7 and 8 will be required to do 20 hours of community service during the school year. The community service conducted by the students will become part of their religion grade. Detailed instructions are provided by the religion teachers.

### **HONOR ROLL**

Honor Roll is defined in the following manner for grades 1-8:

**"A" Honor Roll** Grades for all subjects must be 94 to 100 with no more than 5 discipline slips, 6 tardies, or 4 unexcused absences.

**"A-B" Honor Roll** Grades in all subjects must be 86 to 100 with no more than 5 discipline slips, 6 tardies, or 4 unexcused absences.

## PROMOTION

A student is promoted if, considering his/her abilities, he/she has satisfactorily completed the work for the current grade.

The following are the specific regulations for promotion for various grade levels:

**Kinder** A student must have completed the requirements for Kinder and have the social maturity to be promoted.

**Grades 1 – 5** A student must have passing grades in all major subjects (Religion, English, Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies).

**Grades 6 - 8** A student, according to accreditation standards, must earn a minimum of 7 credits per year, with 21 credits required for the three years.

**Retention may be at the discretion of the Administration and Teacher(s).**

Students may also be TRANSFERRED to the next grade, but these students will not continue as students at OLSS.

## JUNIOR HIGH MATH REQUIREMENTS

In order to better meet our students' needs, the following math courses will be offered. At the discretion of the Principal and math teacher(s), students should meet the minimum criteria stated below. These criteria are based on course average AND test average within the course.

Student Placement 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Criteria

- Math Course 1 Grade  $\geq 70$  in 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Course
- Math Course 2 Grade  $\geq 87$  in 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Exams, Grade  $\geq 87$  in 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Course, and Above Average Performance on Standardized Testing

Student Placement 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Criteria

- Math Course 2 Grade  $\geq 70$  in Math Course 1
- Math Course 3 Grade  $\geq 70$  in Math Course 2

Student Placement 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Criteria

- Math Course 3 Grade  $\geq 70$  in Math Course 2
- Algebra I Grade  $\geq 70$  in Math Course 3

Students who fail a math course must sign up for our summer school program in June. In addition, the highest grade awarded to the student will be a grade of 70.

## GRADUATION

The school coordinates Kindergarten Celebration and Eighth Grade Graduation ceremonies and receptions.

## SUMMER SCHOOL

Students who fail major courses must sign up and successfully complete our Summer School Program held in June to be considered for promotion. Upon completion, the highest grade awarded to the student will be a grade of 70 for the course.

## ENROLLMENT BLOCK

The school reserves the right to dismiss or to block re-enrollment of a student for the following reasons:

- Repeated violations of the Code of Conduct
- Violation of Specific Policies

- Excessive unexcused absences or tardies
- Excessive non-compliance with homework policy
- Continued non-compliance with tuition payment policy
- Continued uncooperative behavior on the part of a parent

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems which arise, this clause empowers the administration to block enrollment for any repeat behavior which violates the spirit and philosophy of Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School even though not specified above.

## PERMANENT RECORDS

The following items are kept in a student's permanent file:

- Academic transcripts from other schools
- Academic testing scores
- Semester and end-of-year grades
- Credits earned in Jr. High
- Attendance record
- Promotion information

Health records and emergency cards are kept in the nurse's office.

## RELEASE OF RECORDS

Copies of Permanent Records and Health Records are released to a receiving school when that school applies directly by mail to Our Lady of Sorrows School.

These records are released without an on-site parent's signature on file. There will be a charge of \$3.00 for transcripts after the first one.

The release of special education or psychological test results to a receiving school must include a parent's signed release form for that information.

Notice of withdrawal of a student should be made by the parent in writing to the Principal in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the school to prepare necessary information and settle accounts. **No student records will be forwarded to another school until Business Office accounts have been settled.**

## FAMILY/CUSTODIAL SITUATIONS IN

### RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SCHOOL

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School is finding an increasing number of families experiencing transitions in parental custodial relationships. For this reason we find it necessary to clarify and restate the usual procedures followed by the administration and faculty in dealing with parents in such situations.

In two parent families it is assumed that both parents are living at the same address unless we have been notified otherwise. Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School personnel will, therefore, send home notices, communications, etc., with the child. It is assumed that both parents are communicating regarding the child and that all information is shared by and between the parents. This information includes, but is not limited to, conference appointments, report cards, progress reports, discussions with school personnel, tuition statements, and extra-curricular activities.

In families experiencing separation of parents, or ending in divorce, the above information will be sent home with the child to

whichever parent currently has care of the child. It is assumed that this information is shared by the parents and between the parents. Since this situation frequently impacts on a child's achievement and interaction at school, parents are asked to inform both the Principal and teacher of this fact so that appropriate support can be given to the child. Our Lady of Sorrows School personnel cannot proceed on hearsay, rumors, or demands of a parent, but only with the appropriate documentation detailed below.

In cases of an actual divorce decree involving clear custody by one parent, the Principal is to be informed by the custodial parent of this fact. A copy of the first page of the decree bearing the case number, the pages referring to custody and the relationship with the school, and the final page bearing the judge's signature are to be submitted to the Principal. Unless the decree indicates otherwise, school communications will be sent home to the custodial parent. Custodial parents should understand, however, that unless the divorce decree specifically limits the non-custodial parent's right to access to records, the non-custodial parent has a right to the same access as the custodial parent. We will, unless instructed by a Court Order, release such records upon request to the non-custodial parent. "Records" include official transcripts, report cards, health records, referrals for special services, and communications regarding major disciplinary actions. It does not include daily class-work and papers or routine communications sent home through the child to the home of residence. In these cases the custodial parent is asked to cooperate with the school and share this information directly with the non-custodial parent. This avoids time-consuming duplication of services.

Further, you should realize that unless restricted by Court Order, any non-custodial parent has the right to attend any school activity of their child which includes sports activities and class programs. Parents should keep each other informed as to these activities to avoid duplication of communications and to allow the school to better attend to the duty of teaching your children.

In cases of "joint" custody (shared parenting agreements) entitling both parents access to school personnel and activities, it is assumed that one copy of communications and information will be sent home with the child and that this will be shared by and between the parents.

Regarding parent conferences in all situations: It is preferred and will be the general procedure that one conference appointment be scheduled 'jointly' if both parents wish to be present. It is assumed that parents are also to set aside differences and to come together on behalf of their child for this time. A joint conference further insures that both parents are given the same information at the same time, thereby avoiding misunderstandings and misinterpretations.

In cases where joint conferences are clearly neither possible nor desirable by all parties involved, alternative arrangements may be discussed with the Principal, subject to the approval of both parents, and further reviewed by Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School's legal counsel. Every effort will be made to keep communication open with both parents while at the same time avoiding duplication of services and excessive demands on the teacher's time.

Visitation should generally begin at the home of one of the parents and not at school. It is hoped that visitation arrangements would reflect the sensitivity of both parents to the consistency and routines that foster security in a child and allow for school responsibilities and homework to be taken care of during the school week.

If there are questions concerning this statement of procedures or circumstances you feel necessitate other arrangements, please contact the Principal personally.

## **LIBRARY**

The library is central to the school's total educational mission. As such, the library program is fully integrated into the curriculum, serving the school's educational goals and objectives. The library offers both traditional resources and new technologies as teaching and learning tools. The library is accessible to teachers and students during the instructional day, as well as before and after school.

Students regularly visit the library to check out books, to receive instruction of library techniques, and to do research. When in the library they are under the supervision of the library manager. Fines are assessed for overdue books. Lost or damaged books must be replaced or paid for.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

All students are required to participate in the PE classes unless a written note from the student's physician is presented stating the duration of the exemption.

All students in grades 4-8 must wear the PE uniform for both PE class and athletics.

Failure to wear PE uniform is reflected in the grade.

## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:**

### **ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION**

Students participating in Extra-Curricular activities are evaluated at each progress report and reporting period. Any student receiving a failing mark in any subject will be ineligible for extra-curricular activities for (a) two weeks after a progress report or (b) four weeks after a report card. If, after this time period all grades are passing, the student will recover his/her eligibility. Continued participation in any activity is contingent on behavior and compliance with school policies and the Code of Conduct. Grounds for removal from an activity can include, but are not limited to, serious violation of the Code of Conduct, behavior contract, excessive discipline slips, and suspension.

### **ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

All students in grades 6, 7, and 8 are eligible to try out and participate in the interscholastic sports program offered by the school. Continued participation is determined by academic performance and behavior. Refer to the Athletic Handbook for more details regarding eligibility and participation.

**(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)**

### **STUDENT COUNCIL**

Student Council is a service organization that plans activities for the student body, and works with the PTO, the Athletic Program, faculty, and staff to promote school spirit and unity. Student representatives are elected during student orientation days at the beginning of the school year. Once elected, continued membership is determined by academic performance and behavior. Please refer to Student Council contract for more details.

### **WORSHIP COMMITTEE**

The Worship Committee's primary purpose is to enhance the religious climate of the school. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 may submit an application for membership. The final selection of members is determined by academic grades, essay, citizenship, teacher recommendation, and parental consent. Once selected, continued membership is determined by academic performance and behavior.

### **JUNIOR TECH**

The purpose of the Junior Tech Club is to develop and maintain an OLSS student web site promoting Christian values. Students in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 may submit an application for membership. The final selection of members is determined by academic grades, good citizenship, effective communication skills, computer skills, teacher recommendation, and an essay explaining the benefits of technology. Once selected, continued membership is determined by academic performance and behavior.

### **NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY**

Our Lady of Sorrows Middle School is a participating member of the NJHS. This organization is part of the National Honor Society, the oldest and most respected organization for recognizing the academic accomplishments of young scholars in America. Any student in the seventh and eighth grade who meets the challenging academic standards set forth by the organization's Charter is eligible for selection and possible induction.

### **CLUB DE ESPANOL**

The Spanish Club seeks to develop appreciation of the Spanish language and culture of various Spanish speaking nations, while extending the speaking and writing skills introduced in the regular Spanish courses. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 may apply. Once selected, continued membership is determined by academic performance and behavior.

### **LEGION OF MARY**

The Legion of Mary seeks to enhance the school through prayer and service. Members meet to pray together and plan service projects to the school and parish community. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 are eligible to participate and continued membership is determined by academic performance and behavior.

### **8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE Y-O RANCH EXPERIENCE**

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade class takes an annual trip to Y-O Ranch in central Texas. In order to qualify for this experience, a student must maintain a passing yearly average for all classes as well

as be passing all subjects for the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter. The student also must be in compliance with attendance and behavior requirements. A student will be ineligible for the trip if they have faced multiple disciplinary actions during the year, including but not limited to, placed on contract, probation, or suspended more than once during the year.

### **EDUCATIONAL TRIPS**

Educational trips are initiated by the teacher and must be arranged with the Principal beforehand. Parents must sign and return a permission slip along with applicable fees giving a student permission to participate in the trip. Permission given verbally, by telephone, or by fax will not be accepted in lieu of the official permission slip. Trips are a privilege, not a right; thus, participation can be denied if a student fails to meet academic and/or behavioral requirements. All trips will be related to some aspect of the curriculum being studied at the time the trip is taken.

Students not participating in the trip must attend school. Students who are participating in the field trip must ride the bus to and from the field trip with their class. Students not on the bus may not participate in the field trip and will be counted absent for the day.

Cell phones are not permitted on Educational Outings.

Medications including an EpiPen and a copy of the student's Emergency Health Care Plan must accompany the student.

The adult carrying the EpiPen will be identified and introduced to the student as well as the other chaperones.

### **PARTIES**

Grades PK-5 are permitted one party per year (Valentine's Day). School dances and activity days are scheduled for Jr. High.

Students are not allowed to take class time for birthday parties. Birthday cupcakes may be brought to share with classmates during break time or lunchtime as part of the dessert.

Birthday invitations may be distributed only with the approval of the teacher. Distribution must be made to the entire class or boy/girl portion.

Students may not bring refreshments or collect money for any celebration unless approved by the Principal.

Delivery of flowers, balloons, etc. to the school is discouraged. If delivered, such items will be given to the students at the end of the school day.

The developmental stages of students should be considered when planning outside activities that affect the school population. Home parties that encourage boy-girl relationships or allow the use of alcoholic beverages, drugs, or cigarettes should never be tolerated.

### **SOLICITATIONS**

Literature promoting private businesses, organizations, or political candidates may not be distributed through the school.

### **STUDENT FUND-RAISING**

Students may not engage in fund-raising activities without the approval of the Principal. Individual students are not

allowed to sell any item without the approval of the Principal.

## **VISITORS AND GUESTS**

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School is a closed campus. All parents, visitors, and guests must check in at the school office and receive a Visitor's Pass.

No one is allowed on the school premises without first receiving clearance from the office. Parents must obtain permission from the administration before making a classroom observation and/or visit. This regulation is for the protection of every child in attendance at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

All volunteers dealing directly with students must undergo a criminal background check. Volunteers receive training for the tasks they will perform. Volunteers are asked to sign in and designate where they are assisting.

## **SCHOOL DISCIPLINE**

The essence of Christian discipline is self-discipline.

Rules and regulations pertaining to the management of student behavior are necessary for the development and maintenance of an orderly, safe, Christian school environment.

Because student behavior needs to reflect the Catholic values of Our Lady of Sorrows School, the following Code of Conduct has been established. It is applicable at any time a student's behavior would reflect upon the school or parish community, **whether the action takes place on or off school property.**

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **SPECIFIC POLICIES**

#### **POLICY REGARDING BULLYING**

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School is committed to providing an atmosphere conducive to learning with a focus on the personal worth and dignity of every child. All efforts are made to educate children in a Christ-like setting. Therefore, verbal, written, or on-line acts of name-calling, taunting, bullying, harassment, physical aggression, acts causing physical injury, or acts causing another to do the same are not tolerated.

Victims or witnesses to these actions should report them to the teacher and/or administration immediately. All allegations are investigated, and prompt, appropriate disciplinary action is taken.

Disciplinary action may include any or all of the actions indicated in the 'Consequences' section of this Code of Conduct or as required by law.

#### **POLICY REGARDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The administration and staff of Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School believe that all students are entitled to study and work in school-related environments that are free of sexual harassment. Our Lady of Sorrows School does not tolerate sexual harassment of any type. (*Harassment : Engaging in any type of unwanted and unwelcome verbal or physical behavior*)

Victims or witnesses of these actions should report them to the teacher and/or administration immediately. Allegations are investigated and prompt, appropriate disciplinary action is

taken. Parents of both parties are notified.

Examples of peer sexual harassment include, but are not limited to: verbal, written, or on-line taunting, bullying, other offensive, intimidating, or hostile conduct, gestures or touches, actions, clothing or accessories, music, verbal, written, or on-line communications, graffiti, jokes, nicknames, stories, pictures, cartoons, drawings, or objects which are offensive, annoy, abuse, or demean an individual or group.

Disciplinary action may include any or all of the actions indicated in the 'Consequences' section of this Code of Conduct or as required by law.

#### **POLICY REGARDING STUDENT THREATS**

All student threats to endanger or inflict harm to oneself or others are taken seriously.

Anyone hearing a threat must report it immediately to the supervising adult or Principal.

A student making a threat, whether verbal, written, on-line, or other is taken to the office for supervision.

Judgment as to the seriousness and immediacy of the threat will indicate notification of the parents and/or police, as the situation warrants, along with any intended or potential recipients of the threat (i.e., adults or, if the threat is directed against a student, the parents of the student).

Disciplinary action may include any or all of the actions indicated in the 'Consequences' section of this Code of Conduct or as required by law.

#### **POLICY REGARDING FIGHTS**

Any student engaged in a fight is subject to immediate disciplinary action appropriate to the age and maturity of the student.

Disciplinary action may include any or all of the actions indicated in the 'Consequences' section of this Code of Conduct or as required by law.

#### **POLICY REGARDING WEAPONS**

A weapon includes but is not limited to any instrument, device, or object capable of inflicting injury and designed or specifically adapted for use as a weapon, and possessed or carried as a weapon. This includes any dangerous object (firearm, knife, deadly weapon, explosive, incendiary device) or look-alike.

This policy expressly prohibits the use, possession, transmission, sale or discharge of any weapons, instruments, or explosive devices in the school, on school grounds, or at school-sponsored activities. If it is determined that this policy has been violated, the parents of the offender shall be immediately contacted and shall cooperate with the disciplinary process.

Disciplinary action may include any or all of the actions indicated in the 'Consequences' section of this Code of Conduct or as required by law.

#### **POLICY REGARDING DRUGS OR ALCOHOL**

Students will not possess, sell, use, transmit, or abuse drugs or look-alike drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal substance. If it is determined that this policy has been violated, the parents of the offender shall be immediately contacted and

shall cooperate with the disciplinary process.

Disciplinary action may include any or all of the actions indicated in the 'Consequences' section of this Code of Conduct or as required by law.

#### **POLICY REGARDING SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Because school officials have a legitimate interest in the safety and protection of all students within their care and custody, a student's backpack or personal property may be searched when there is reasonable suspicion that a prohibited object or substance is in possession of a student.

Lockers are the property of the school and are subject to search at any time. The Principal reserves the right to conduct locker inspection and/or search if circumstances warrant it. Students tampering with another student's lock or locker are referred to the office for disciplinary action. The Principal reserves the right to have students empty their pockets, purses, and/or book bags for stolen articles, weapons, and/or drugs.

Disciplinary action may include any or all of the actions indicated in the 'Consequences' section of this Code of Conduct or as required by law.

#### **POLICY REGARDING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE**

Texas State law requires teachers, administrative personnel, and other employees of any public or private school to report all suspected incidents of child abuse to the Child Protective services (CPS). Child abuse includes physical abuse, physical neglect, sexual abuse, and emotional maltreatment. OLSS will follow the State of Texas guidelines for the CPS investigation.

#### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Respect Authority - students will not defy school authorities and/or challenge school rules and policies.
2. Accept consequences for your actions - students will not refuse to accept discipline and the consequences of their behavior.
3. Avoid school or classroom disruptions - students will not disrupt any school activity.
4. Avoid endangering yourself or others - students will not endanger the well-being of themselves or others and avoid all forms of assault or violence and will not bring to school or have in their possession any article or object judged to be harmful to themselves or others or the good order of the school.
5. Show affection appropriately - any expressions of affection between/among students will be simple and appropriate to the school situation.
6. Avoid foul language - students will not use profane, vulgar, disrespectful, or hurtful language.
7. Maintain a "Bully-Free" environment - students will not tease, bully, harass, and/or coerce others.
8. Respect school and personal property - students will not damage, destroy, or deface any property and will be required to make restitution as directed.
9. No unauthorized snacks - students will not chew gum or have or consume any unauthorized snacks, food, or beverages on school property.
10. No illegal substances - students will not possess, sell,

use, transmit, or abuse any drugs or look-alike drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal substance and will participate in the education and prevention programs provided or recommended by the school.

11. Follow the Uniform policy - students will follow the school uniform code regulations.
12. Complete assignments and do your own work - students will be truthful and honest and not engage in any form of cheating or dishonesty.
13. Leave all electronic devices at home - students will not have in their possession personal cell phones, pagers, electronic games, beepers, recording/ listening devices, or unauthorized software.
14. Follow arrival and dismissal policies - students will follow all school policies for arrival and dismissal and will not leave the school premises or assigned classes without authorized permission during the school day.
15. Follow rules and procedures - students will not violate the **Code of Conduct** or its **Specific Policies**.

#### **CONSEQUENCES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE**

Actions that can be used to enforce this Code include but are not limited to the following:

- verbal or written warning
- discipline slip/ referral (written notification to parents of infractions)
- confiscation of objects which violate the code of conduct (These items may be returned at the administrator's/teacher's discretion directly to the parent.)
- parent conference
- After School Detention (requires payment of applicable fee for additional supervision)
- In-School-Suspension (requires payment of applicable fee for additional personnel)
- behavior contract
- referral to professional counseling
- mandatory service

**The following disciplinary actions must be approved by the Principal or Assistant Principal:**

- Out-of-School Suspension (A student MAY NOT make up work missed)
- notification of the police
- blocked enrollment
- expulsion
- ineligibility for Honors graduation (grade 8)

#### **SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Administrators, faculty, and staff at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School are committed to:

1. Motivating and assisting students to follow the Code of Conduct as a means of personal growth, an expression of Christian moral behavior, and respect and care for oneself and others
2. Enforcing the school rules and discipline policies with fairness and discretion
3. Allowing for adjustments in disciplinary actions as deemed necessary due to circumstances and maturity

of the student

4. Maintaining effective and respectful communications with parents regarding student behaviors and appropriate parental responses
5. Continually updating their understanding of student behavior and its influences, and the techniques of classroom and student management

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES**

Parents/guardians have the responsibility as primary teachers and disciplinarians of their child to:

1. Model and support their child's practice of the Catholic faith
2. Support school policy and the authority of the administration and teachers
3. Insist that their child obeys the regulations and principles of good behavior
4. Support teachers and administration in the discipline of your child and respect their judgments as they apply the school discipline code
5. Be aware of and monitor external influences like TV programs, videos, etc.
6. Sign and return all correspondence in the time prescribed
7. Encourage their child to complete all assignments
8. Communicate openly with faculty and staff when necessary and avoid any criticism of teachers and school policy
9. Follow the policies and procedures stated in the handbook
10. Pay all fees (tuition, lunch, etc.) on time
11. Reimburse school for property destroyed (accidentally or intentionally) by their child

### **A note to parents:**

As the parent/guardian of an Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School student, you are principally responsible for the behavior and conduct of your child. As school administration and teachers, our goal is to assist and support you in this responsibility. Also, through our direction and our code of conduct, we hope to provide motivation and guidelines for your child's behavior. In a particular way of fulfilling your many parental responsibilities, we ask that you be especially mindful of your child's use of and exposure to our contemporary media and entertainment (television, films, video games, music, internet access, etc.). More than ever, these expose our children to extremes of violence, sexuality, and personal disrespect, which, in turn, can affect their own attitudes, values, and behaviors.

### **Elastic Clause**

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems which arise, this clause empowers the administration to take disciplinary action for any behavior which violates the spirit and philosophy of Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School even though not specified in this Code of Conduct.

## **CLINIC**

Texas State law forbids the dispensing of medications by school employees without the written request of the parents or legal guardians.

A student with severe health issues such as diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, etc. needs a note from the doctor summarizing the condition, to be kept in the student's emergency file.

If your child requires medication during school hours, this medicine must be sent to the clinic with a note containing the following information:

1. Name of student
2. Name of the medication
3. The prescribed dosage of the medication
4. The time(s) of administration of the medication
5. The EXACT dates the medication is to be given
6. In the case of prescription drugs, the full name of the doctor prescribing the medication
7. The signature of the parent or legal guardian
8. Medications must be prescribed by a U.S. physician and come from a U.S. pharmacy

Texas State law also requires that the medicine be sent in the ORIGINAL PHARMACY CONTAINER (prescription or non-prescription), labeled with the student's name.

All medicines are kept in the clinic and are dispensed by the clinic staff. It is the student's responsibility to come to the clinic when it is time to receive his/her medication. All medicines are sent home on Friday or the last attendance day of each week. If your child requires the medicine during the next week, a new note is required.

If a student requires a medication that needs to be given on a long-term basis (\*i.e. six weeks or longer), a permission form must be completed by the physician prescribing the medication. These forms may be obtained from the clinic.

No child should be sent to school ill or with a fever (temperature of 100 degrees or above). The student should remain at home until he/she has been free of fever for 24 hours. This is for the safety of your child and his/her classmates.

No child is to be left at school once he/she has become ill or injured. The clinic is not a hospital. It is a place for an ill or injured child to wait as comfortably as possible until a parent, guardian, or someone designated by a parent/guardian can come and take the student home.

## **GUIDANCE PROGRAM**

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School has a certified counselor on campus 5 days a week. The counselor may see a student up to three times without parental notification and consent. After the third visit, parents will be notified. Parents will be promptly notified if serious concerns arise.

The counselor provides individual sessions, group sessions, and whole-class sessions. She is also the coordinator of the RAINBOWS program.

Parents may request the use of the counselor's services by filling out the appropriate forms available in the office.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Teachers will keep confidential information entrusted to them so long as no one's life, health, or safety is at stake. Parents will be promptly notified if a teacher or administrator has a concern.

## RAINBOWS PROGRAM

The RAINBOWS program is available for children of all ages and religious denominations who are grieving a death, divorce, or other painful transition in their family.

## TECHNOLOGY

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School's computer facilities provide unequalled opportunities to explore and use a varied and exciting set of educational resources including computer programs, CDs, and access to the Internet.

We recognize that the Internet's access to virtually limitless sources of information poses a hazard. Some Internet sites contain materials which are sexually explicit, offensive, or contrary to our educational mission. Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School does use filters and a firewall that limit access to undesirable web sites. However, these measures are not completely effective in deterring individuals who are intent on accessing such sites. Therefore, we provide supervision wherever computers are in use.

Engagement in online blogs such as, but not limited to, MySpace.com®, Xanga®, Friendster®, etc. may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students or the parish.

We place primary responsibility on the student to use our computer facilities for appropriate means only. The rules for computer usage and guidelines for on-line conduct will be posted in each room where computers are available for use. Failure to meet any of these expectations may result in revocation of the student's permission to use the school's computers and/or other disciplinary action.

**To be granted permission to use the school's computers,** the student must:

- Sign the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) Agreement;
- Obtain a parental signature on the AUP Agreement;
- Return the signed copy of the AUP Agreement to the Homeroom Teacher.

**The following are considered as serious violations,** which may lead to suspension or termination of privileges:

- Use of the network or Internet to plagiarize or violate copyright laws
- Use of the network or Internet to send or display offensive and/or obscene messages or pictures
- Use of computer to access material that is profane or obscene, that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people
- Use of the network or Internet to harass, insult, or attack others
- Use of the network or Internet for commercial purposes or sending of unsolicited junk mail, or chain letters
- Trespassing in another's folder, work, or files FOR ANY REASON

- Use of floppy disks, CDs, or USB data devices (regardless of source or content) without the permission of the network administrator or classroom teacher
- The creation, propagation, and/or use of computer viruses
- Acts of vandalism, which include, but are not limited to, any attempt to harm or destroy the network/Internet or any networks or sites connected to the network/Internet
- Attempts to breach security codes and/or passwords
- Willful destruction of computer hardware, software, or attempts to exceed or modify the parameters of the system (will require restitution for costs associated with system restoration, hardware, or software)
- Attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other system users
- Deliberate interference with the ability of other system users to send or receive electronic mail
- Electronic snooping for any purpose or transmission of discriminatory or harassing language by any student, school employee, or volunteer
- Threats to carry out any of the above

## Online Safety

When using the Internet, students are expected to act in a proper and ethical manner and to abide by these general rules when using school computers:

- Being polite. Not writing or sending abusive messages to others.
- Using appropriate language. Not swearing, using vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language.
- Not revealing personal address or phone numbers or those of fellow students or send my picture to anyone without getting my parent's permission.
- Never arrange a meeting with any person encountered online while using the school's computer system.
- Notify a staff member if a request for personal information or threatening statements, or any transmission that causes the receiver to feel uncomfortable is received through the school's system.
- E-mail is not guaranteed to be private. People who operate the system do have access to all e-mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- Do not buy or order anything online or give out credit-card information

## PARENT PERMISSION FOR MEDIA RELEASE

Parents or Guardians must give permission for Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School to use a child's name, picture, or comments in any materials used to promote school programs, recruit new students, and/or dispense public information. This permission is to be granted or denied during orientation and kept on file throughout the school year.

## **USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES**

Use of the school facilities is encouraged for programs which provide a significant religious, educational, or civic contribution to the public, provided that such programs do not interfere with regular school activities or create expenses or liabilities which jeopardize the school's operation.

The principal in conjunction with the pastor will determine the conditions under which their school facilities may be used. Adequate insurance or bonding must be supplied.

## **CAMPUS CRISIS PLAN**

OLSS adheres to all regulations contained in the Campus Crisis Plan issued by the Diocese of Brownsville Catholic School Office. This Crisis Plan covers emergencies that may arise at school and includes response procedures, emergency numbers, and other pertinent information. The Crisis Plan is available for review in the school office.

## **SCHOOL CLOSINGS OR EVACUATIONS**

Notification of school closings due to weather will be announced on TV Channels 4, 5, and 48.

In case of a school evacuation, students are to be picked up at the Church.

## **ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

In compliance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), enacted in 1986, all schools, public or private, are required to have an inspection of all buildings, for asbestos-containing building materials (ACBM), by accredited asbestos-trained personnel. All Catholic School facilities of the Diocese of Brownsville were inspected in May 2009, including Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School campus in McAllen, TX. The Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School campus was inspected for ACBN by personnel from EFI Global, Inc. (EFI), an environmental consulting firm located in Houston, Texas. EFI is accredited and licensed by the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) to perform asbestos condition assessments of all suspect and identified ACBM. Building materials at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School were observed to be in undamaged condition and/or present minimal hazards, if any, to building occupants. Periodic surveillance is also conducted semi-annually by campus personnel.

This management plan assures that students and personnel are free from any exposure to asbestos containing material. The inspection findings, both current and previous, and management plan are on file in the administrative office. These are available for review upon request at any time during normal school hours.

## **GAS PIPE TESTING PLAN**

In compliance with the mandate from the Railroad Commission of Texas, Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School undergoes Gas Pipe Testing every two years.

## **RIGHT TO AMEND**

If changes are necessary during the year, OLSS maintains the right to amend the contents of this publication. Such changes will be announced through notices, monthly newsletter to parents, and the school website ([www.olsschool.org](http://www.olsschool.org)).



**2010 - 2011**  
**HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM**

This page of the handbook is to be signed and kept in the office.

I (We) and \_\_\_\_\_, Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
(NEATLY Print Student's Name)

have read and discussed the handbook.

We understand the rules and regulations and will support the policies and philosophies of Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date