



# **Parent - Student Handbook**

# **Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Academy 2020-2021**

## Section 1- Faculty and Staff

<b>GRADE</b>	<b>TEACHER/HOMEROOM</b>
Nursery	Mrs. D. Perez / Ms. K. Alam (Aide)
PreK for All	Mrs. R. Gavilan – PreK-for-All - Director
PreK for All	Ms. K. Murphy / Mrs. L. Chen (Aide)
PreK for All	Ms. P. Portoghese / Mrs. T. LoPinto (Aide)
Kindergarten	Mrs. A. Foertsch / Ms. J. Wronski (Aide)
Kindergarten	Mrs. C. Kaminsky / Ms. J. Wronski (Aide)
Grade 1	Mrs. L. Espinal / Ms. K. Murphy (Aide)
Grade 2	Mrs. C. Monforte / Mrs. L. Kerrigan (Aide)
Grade 3	Mrs. E. McNally / Mrs. L. Diunte-Lusher (Aide)
Grade 4	Mrs. C. Henry / Mrs. J. Bastidas-Marrero (Aide)
Grade 5	Mrs. J. Haddock / Ms. M. Vulaj (Aide)
Grade 6	Mrs. P. Neubert
Grade 7	Ms. M. McManus
Grade 8	Mrs. D. Caracappa

<b>SPECIAL SUBJECTS</b>	<b>TEACHER</b>
Art	Mrs. J. Wronski
Computer	Mrs. J. Scaturro
Math Support Services	Ms. A. Snorteland
Music / Choir	Mr. R. Closs
Physical Education	Mr. A. Espey
Reading Support Services	Ms. J. Soriano
Spanish	Ms. S. Sordilli

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF/SUPPORT ROLES</b>	
Registration & Student Information	Mrs. S. Cumiskey
Government Programs/Tech Assistant	Mrs. K. Scapp
Bookkeeping & Tuition	Ms. S. McKoy
After School Program Director	Mrs. E. McNally
Choir Program Directors	Mrs. C. Kaminsky Mr. R. Closs
Department of Health Nurse	Mrs. C. Donnelly

## Section 2- Introduction

This handbook is a living document. Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Academy and the Diocese of Brooklyn reserve the right to amend this document at any time. All families will be notified of any and all changes to this document prior to enactment.

## Section 3- School Overview

### 3.1 Brief History of the School

Our Lady Queen of Martyrs School opened its doors in 1928 to provide a Catholic education to children of the parish Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Roman Catholic Church, Forest Hills under the direction of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In September, 2015 the school transitioned to a Catholic academy, partnering in leadership with a board of dedicated lay and religious volunteers to ensure the vibrancy and vitality of Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Academy for years to come. Throughout its history, OLQMCA has continued to be a valued and committed member of the local and larger community, creating an environment where community service and citizenship is fostered, faith is nurtured and intellect is challenged. Through God's grace we will continue to light the way for generations to come.

### 3.2 Mission statement

We Answer God's Call to Be More.

### 3.3 Vision Statement-

Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Academy is committed to creating an environment where community service and citizenship is fostered, faith is nurtured and intellect is challenged. We seek to provide students and staff every opportunity for success through varied experiences, critical thought, expansive materials and thoughtful exchange.

### 3.4 Parental Expectation of Adherence to School Policy

Discipline in the schools should reflect the spirit of *Vatican Council II*, as expressed in *the documents on Christian Education and Religious Liberty*. Therefore, discipline should be geared to assist a child develop in the understanding of self as being made in the image of God.....*Education is integral to the mission of the Church to proclaim the Good News. First and foremost every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth* (cf. *Spe-Salve*, 4). *This*

*relationship elicits a desire to grow in the knowledge and understanding of Christ and his teaching. In this way those who meet him are drawn by the very power of God to lead a new life characterized by all that is beautiful, good, and true; a life of Christian witness nurtured and strengthened within the community of our Lord's disciples, the Church....Dear friends, I wish to conclude by focusing our attention specifically on the paramount importance of your own professionalism and witness within our Catholic universities and schools. First, let me thank you for your dedication and generosity. I know from my own days as a professor, and have heard from your Bishops and officials of the Congregation for Catholic Education, that the reputation of Catholic institutes of learning in this country is largely due to yourselves and your predecessors. Your selfless contributions – from outstanding research to the dedication of those working in inner-city schools – serve your country and the Church. For this I express my profound gratitude.*

Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to Catholic educators at the Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, April 17, 2008

Evidence of discipline exists in a school community when the students, teachers, administration, and parents/legal guardians work cooperatively to educate the whole child: spiritually, academically, socially, emotionally, and physically.

## **Section 4- Catholic Identity**

The mission of Catholic Education is to form children in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ as celebrated in the Catholic Church, while providing a comprehensive academic education that will help them reach their full human potential and contribute to the common good of our nation and the world. Ultimately, the mission of all Catholic education is to lead those entrusted to its care to find salvation in Jesus Christ.

In *Catholic Schools on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (#11) Saint John Paul II wrote that Catholic schools are "...the privileged environment in which Christian education is carried out. Catholic schools are at once places of evangelization, of complete formation, of enculturation, of apprenticeship in a lively dialogue between young people of different religions and social backgrounds."

Diocesan academies and schools strive to emulate the words of Saint John Paul II by:

- creating an evangelizing community, where people come to have a better and deeper understanding of Christ and His Church
- recognizing the importance of multicultural, multi-faceted, academically sound educational programs that meet the needs of the poor and the rich, the Catholic and the non-Catholic, the wise and the not so learned
- welcoming members to the school community regardless of culture, race, or religion and celebrating the diversity that exists within our communities, churches, and schools
- creating an environment that encourages young people to grow, not separated from others, but as part of a larger community, as part of the family of God

- not only promoting and encouraging academically sound individuals, but rejoicing with children who are spiritually, theologically, and liturgically enlivened and fulfilled

## Section 5- Student Behavior

### 5.1 Conduct

All students should exemplify a model of respect and cooperation. Each child is a member of a class and his/her behavior must support the learning of all. Any child who receives a personal progress code of “1” in two or more trimesters will be denied re-registration for the following school year. Re-registration will hinge on a partnering of home and school to recognize the problem areas and engage in interventions.

### 5.2 School Rules

The expected and prohibited behaviors of OLQMCA students are as follows:

#### Expected Behaviors

- ❖ Arrive at school on time.
- ❖ Respect the property of others.
- ❖ Obey the directions of school staff and crossing guards.
- ❖ Be courteous to children and staff.
- ❖ Wear the regulation school uniform and acceptable dress code for N.U.T. Days.
- ❖ Strive for good attendance, but do not come to school if you are sick.
- ❖ Respect the rights of all members of the school community.
- ❖ Be attentive in class and participate in class discussions.
- ❖ Show good conduct in all school situations.
- ❖ Obey the rules on signs which are posted on the school building and school property.
- ❖ Walk through the corridors and stairwells in a quiet, orderly manner.
- ❖ Report graffiti or vandalism to school personnel.
- ❖ Seek help from adults if a serious disagreement or fight occurs.
- ❖ Use good manners in the school building and on school grounds.
- ❖ Take pride in the appearance of your classroom and your school.
- ❖ Exhibit good sportsmanship in Gym classes, after-school activities, Field Day and recess.
- ❖ Remember while wearing the school uniform, you represent OLQMCA on and off school grounds.

## **Prohibited Behaviors**

- ❖ Harassing, threatening, ridiculing or otherwise intimidating others – physically or verbally
- ❖ Fighting with other students or engaging in violent behavior, as instigator or active bystander
- ❖ Littering or damaging school property or anything belonging to others
- ❖ Running in corridors or in the stairwells
- ❖ Throwing snowballs on school grounds
- ❖ Using racial, religious or personal slurs
- ❖ Wasting time or playing in lavatories
- ❖ Chewing gum in school
- ❖ Using and/or being in possession of alcohol, tobacco or any other drugs
- ❖ Having body art and tattoos, both permanent and temporary
- ❖ Showing disrespect towards school personnel and lunch parents and chaperones
- ❖ Using vulgar language or gestures
- ❖ Engaging in lewd behavior or displaying obscene material
- ❖ Stealing, cheating, lying, plagiarizing or forgery
- ❖ Possessing matches or any other fire producing material
- ❖ Possessing any items that reasonably can be considered or used as a weapon
- ❖ Leaving classrooms without teacher permission, or the school building or property without parent or teacher permission
- ❖ Using personal electronic devices such as hand-held video game components, tablets, cell phones, smartwatches, airpods, or cameras
- ❖ Sexual harassment is never tolerated and can result in suspension or expulsion
- ❖ Disrupting a class with inappropriate sounds or actions
- ❖ Wearing clothing that is disruptive to the orderly running of school (See uniform regulations.)
- ❖ Having correction fluid (white-out) is prohibited due to its harmful effects as an inhalant
- ❖ Wearing colored nail polish

## **Disregard of the Code of Behavior**

Disregard of the school's Code of Behavior will be addressed in the following ways. A student will be verbally warned that his/her behavior is unacceptable. Parents will then be contacted to discuss the child's behavior. After a second time, students will have detention. If a third offense occurs, the student will face possible suspension or expulsion. Discretion lies with the principal. Teachers will document all instances of code infractions.

### **5.3 Diocesan Anti-Bullying Policy**

The school communities within the Brooklyn Diocese believe in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person. We believe that all students, school employees and volunteers have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. All members of the school community, in turn, have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance. Research shows that students who learn in a safe and supportive environment succeed academically. Students have a right to learn in an environment free of any harassment that substantially interferes with their education.

Bullying, bias-based harassment/intimidation are intentional, repeated, hurtful acts (physical, verbal, written) committed by one or more persons towards another person or persons. It usually involves an actual or perceived imbalance of power which can be physical, emotional or verbal. If not addressed, bullying can lead to the creation of a hostile, offensive or intimidating school environment and can affect a student's educational opportunities. The behaviors include but are not limited to:

- *Physical:* physical violence, stalking, threats, aggressive or menacing gestures, exclusion from peer groups which is intended to humiliate or isolate the target (relational bullying)
- *Verbal:* taunts, teasing, derogatory language, derogatory jokes, name calling, slurs, spreading rumors
- *Written:* written or graphic material including graffiti containing comments or stereotypes that are electronically written and transmitted via internet, social messaging sites, blogs, instant messaging, text messages, cell phones, webcams. This would also include forwarding such messages if received. This generally constitutes cyber-bullying.

#### *Reporting Procedures:*

- The targeted student, parent/guardian of a student or other students in the school (bystanders), or any school staff who believe that bullying has occurred should report the incident to the principal.
- The principal needs to conduct an investigation by interviewing all parties separately.
- The parents of all involved students should be notified.
- If it is determined that bullying has occurred, the child who bullied another student is to be subject to consequences per the school's disciplinary code.
- Parents should be advised to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency if the situation warrants such a report.
- Referral to counseling should be made for all parties if deemed necessary.
- The principal must follow up to see that the offending conduct has stopped.
- All students should be notified that retaliation against anyone who makes a report will not be tolerated and those that retaliate will be subject to disciplinary actions.

### **5.4 Diocesan Cyber Bullying Policy**

In accordance with New York State Law on Cyber-Bullying, inappropriate or defamatory content found to be injurious to an academy or parish school community member may result in disciplinary action, even if done outside of academy/parish school premises or using devices not owned or controlled by the

academy/ parish school. All instances of such behavior must be reported immediately to the administration, who will investigate the matter and enforce the consequences deemed appropriate.

Violation of this policy in whole or in part may result in any or all of the following and will be issued at the discretion of the academy or parish school principal:

- Loss of use/privileges of school/academy technology
- Disciplinary action including, but not limited to, detention, suspension, expulsion, and /or legal action by the school/academy, civil authorities, and/or other involved parties
- Compensation for damages, both physical and punitive, incurred due to actions in violation of this policy

### **5.5 Diocesan Acceptable Use Policy**

The use of technology is permitted on school premises under limited conditions as authorized by the Principal for the sole purpose of enhancing academic achievement while respecting the dignity and safety of all members of the Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Academy community.

In using information and technology in safe, legal, and responsible ways; the following conditions of being a digital citizen within the Diocese of Brooklyn are expected:

#### *Respect One's Self*

- Public user names should be appropriate
- Be mindful of any and all content you post including photos, personal views, comments, personal information, etc.
- Avoid seeking out and/or viewing inappropriate content
- Do not engage in potentially harmful activities such as communicating with persons unknown to you or engaging in internet challenges

#### *Respect Others*

- Be mindful of comments, posts, photos or any content directed toward or including others
- Refrain from engaging in inflammatory, harassing, or any other such disrespectful behavior
- Do not perpetuate inappropriate content by sharing it with or sending it to others
- Warn others of potentially disturbing or harmful content that should be avoided

#### *Protect One's Self and Others*

- Report any and all cyber-abuse committed against you or others to parents, teachers and/or administrators
- Keep groups with friends private to avoid potentially inappropriate or dangerous content and communications from unknown sources

#### *Respect Intellectual Property*

- Cite sources when using any content not originally authored by you

Members of Parish School and Catholic Academy communities must remember that when telecommunicating with individuals, groups, or institutions, you are doing so as an individual. You should



not represent yourself, your views, ideas, questions, or actions as representing the Parish School or Catholic Academy you are associated with without the expressed permission of the principal.

### *Security of Technology*

The schools and academies of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn assume no responsibility for the theft, loss, repair or replacement of any technology devices that are brought onto school/academy property, whether it is lost, stolen, damaged, or confiscated.

Security on any computer system is a high priority. If you believe you can identify a security issue, you must notify a system administrator, principal, or teacher and not disclose the problem to others in any way. Although there are safeguards in place to protect all users from inappropriate content, we are not responsible for failures in filtering that result in a bypass of our program and/or access to objectionable content. If any inappropriate content bypasses these safeguards, any parties involved should turn off the monitor and report the security breach immediately to a system administrator, teacher or the principal.

Additionally, member of the school/academy community shall not:

- Use another's credentials for any reason
- Gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to Diocesan or school/academy computers or computer systems
- Download or install any software application without prior authorization

### *Administrative Rights (To monitor use of technology)*

The school/academy reserves the right to monitor both student and employee use of technology and computer accessed content. Due to the evolving nature of technology, the Catholic schools and academies of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn reserve the right to amend or add to this policy at any time without notice.

### *Personal use of Social Media (Teachers, Students)*

This section refers to the personal use of social media. This includes, but is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Tumblr, Instagram, Google+, LinkedIn, Snapchat or any other such medium. All references to school/academy personnel, students and/or any member of the school/academy community in technology related mediums such as web pages or email which is deemed to be conduct injurious to the moral tone of the school or academy are violations of this policy. Any communication with current students by faculty, staff or administration is strictly forbidden on any personal social networking site. Personal posts must use appropriately respectful speech, and refrain from harassing, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening or other inappropriate communications. Representation of the school/academy in whole or part on any personal posts and/or communication is prohibited.

## **Section 6- General Procedural Information**

### **6.1 Dress Code**

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn believes that clothes do not define a person. The wearing of a uniform allows everyone to be seen for who they are, not by what they have. The purpose of a uniform is a means of consistency in student dress, while keeping costs to a minimum. It also reduces the problem of competitive dressing. Students, unless otherwise notified by Administration, will wear the school uniform.

All students are expected to keep themselves well-groomed and neatly dressed at all times. A clean and healthy appearance is important. Any form of dress or hair style which is considered by the Administrators to be contrary to good hygiene or which is distracting or disruptive in appearance and detrimental to the purpose or conduct of the school will not be permitted. All clothing must be clean, neatly pressed, and in good repair. No ripped, torn, or defaced items may be worn.

## **UNIFORMS**

**Students must always be in full uniform.** Uniforms must be purchased from the Flynn & O'Hara Company. All students are required to wear uniform shoes purchased through the DaBar Shoe Store. Students are not allowed to wear non-uniform apparel while wearing the school uniform. **Failure to comply with uniform policy will result in decreased personal progress/complies with school policy codes on a student's report card.**

Nursery students are not required to wear school uniforms.

### **Uniform Guidelines**

#### **Girls**

##### **Grades PreK and K**

Elastic-waisted Uniform Pants with  
Uniform Polo (long or short-sleeved)

**or**

Uniform Jumper with Uniform Polo  
Navy Socks (knee high) or Tights  
Uniform Sweater (optional)

##### **Grades 1-5**

Uniform Jumper  
Uniform Blouse (short or long-sleeved white blouse with round collar)  
Navy Cardigan Sweater (optional)  
Navy Socks (knee high)  
Plaid Uniform Tie  
Tights (navy only)

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

Uniform Pleated Skirt  
Uniform Blouse (short or long-sleeved white blouse with pointed collar) -To be tucked in at the waist  
Navy Bolero Vest  
Navy Sweater (optional)  
Navy Socks (knee high)  
Tights (navy only)

## **Boys**

### **Grade Pre-K and K**

Elastic-waisted Uniform Pants  
Uniform Polo, long or short-sleeved

### **Grades 1-8**

Belted Uniform Pants  
    Navy - Grades 1-5  
    Gray - Grades 6-8  
Uniform Shirt (short or long-sleeved white shirt) -To be tucked in at the waist  
Uniform Tie  
    Blue – Grades 1-5  
    Striped - Grades 6-8  
Black, navy or brown belt should be worn at all times.  
Navy or Black socks  
Navy Sweater (optional)

**Grade 8 only is permitted to wear the school Uniform Polo all year. Uniform Polo shirts must always be tucked in at the waist.**

### **Optional Summer Uniform**

**(May 1 - Nov 1 ONLY):**

#### **Shoe Options:**

Uniform Shoes  
All black or all white Sneakers - no high-tops

#### **Grades Pre-K – 8**

Uniform Khaki Shorts  
Uniform Khaki Skort (Girls)  
Uniform Polo

White crew socks – ankles must be covered  
Shorts that have belt loops must be worn with a black, brown or navy belt.  
Summer uniform dates may be changed according to the weather conditions. You will be informed of any changes.

### **Physical Education/Gym Uniforms**

All students must wear the school gym uniform to participate in Gym class. Sneakers must be worn and secured by tied laces or Velcro. Sneakers must be white or black. High top sneakers should not be worn on

gym days. Sneakers that do not match, have high heels, light up, are slip-ons, have wheels or are zippered are never permitted. Gym uniforms must be purchased through the Flynn & O'Hara Uniform Company.

### **6.1a Dress Down Days/No Uniform Today (NUT) Days**

There may be occasions in which students are allowed to wear non-uniform attire. Students are reminded to dress with modesty. Students should adhere to the following attire:

- Appropriate length skirt, shorts or dress – no shorter than 3" above the knees
- No torn or tight jeans or pants
- No spaghetti strap tanks, midriffs, tube tops, etc.
- No logo type T-shirts
- No hats (unless specifically designated)
- No loose/baggy pants or shorts
- No make-up or nail polish (including gels/French manicures)
- No hoop earrings or excessive jewelry
- No jeggings, leggings or skinny jeans

Students/families may be awarded NUT cards for reasons which include fundraising recognitions, service recognitions and participation recognitions. **NUT Day cards cannot be used on days that the students attend Mass or liturgies. NUT Day passes are not to be reproduced under any circumstances or given to another child.**

### **6.1b Grooming Code**

Hair must be its natural color, clean, neatly combed, and not totally covering the eyes.

- For boys: hair cannot be at a length that covers the ears or falls below the shirt collar
- For boys: facial hair is not permitted
- Hair must be a natural color. Streaking, highlighting, lowlights, glints, etc. are not permitted
- Carvings/etchings and mohawks or extreme hairstyles are not permitted

Students are not allowed to wear make-up at any time. This includes eye make-up, nail polish, and acrylic nails. Only appropriate jewelry is allowed. Two bracelets may be worn at a time. One pair of small earrings may be worn by girls only. Necklaces must be tucked into the shirt. Tattoos and body piercings are not allowed.

### **6.2 Attendance Policy**

Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Academy has developed our attendance policy in accordance with New York State Education Law Section 3205. This comprehensive attendance policy will help to uphold the philosophy and mission statement of our school/academy, as stated in this handbook.

Education Law of the State of New York mandates school attendance for all children between the ages of 6 and 16, but the responsibility for compliance rests with the parents/legal guardians. The school is required to keep an accurate record of daily attendance, absence and tardiness in the register of attendance in a manner approved by the Commissioner of Education.

- When a child has been absent, a written excuse is required from his or her parents/legal guardians. If a student is absent without an excuse, or if the school has reason to suspect the validity of the excuse, the principal will investigate the situation.
- When a student has been absent for five days without a satisfactory explanation, a report will be made to the attendance officer of the local public school district.
- Continuing illegal absences, totaling five or more days, will also be reported to the attendance officer at the local public school district office.
- Although each case is different, it should be noted that at 40 truancy days, retention is a strong possibility and principals will contact the local district office to alert the truancy officer.

### 6.3 Lateness

A student who arrives after the time set by the academy for the beginning of the day will be marked late. The student will receive a late pass upon entering the building. The student’s lateness is documented and the late pass must then be given to the home room teacher. Students with five or more days late in a trimester are unable to receive Honors recognition.

### 6.4 School Calendar

New York State Law currently requires a school calendar to provide 176 days of instruction with 4 professional days and cites the following holidays when schools may not be in session:

New Year's Day	First Day of January
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Third Monday in January
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Columbus Day	Second Monday of October
Veterans Day	Eleventh Day of November
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Christmas Day	Twenty-fifth day of December

On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the feast of the patroness of the Diocese of Brooklyn, the academy or parish school will be closed. Academies and parish schools may also choose to observe other Holy Days. All advanced school closings will be indicated in the school calendar.

### 6.5 School Hours

**\*\* Please see adjusted hours and arrival doors appendix for start of 2020-2021 school year**

General school hours run from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. There are programs, however, that run before and after school that extend the day for some students. Students are asked not to report to the school grounds before 8:00 AM, unless they participate in the Before School Program between 7:00 AM – 8:00 AM or the Choir Program at 7:30 on Mondays. Supervision is not provided before 8:00 AM. Parents are asked not to congregate in the yard in a manner that blocks the students’ entry into the school building.

#### Grades K-8 Hours

8:00 AM Bell Rings – Students enter the building through the school yard

8:10 AM After this time, students are late

2:50 PM Kindergarten Dismissal

3:00 PM Grades 1 - 8 Dismissal

### **PreK-for-All Hours**

8:15 AM - 2:35 PM

### **Nursery Hours**

8:15 AM – 2:30 PM

School doors open at 8:00 AM and students report directly to their classroom. It is the parent's responsibility to get the children to school on time. Cars are prohibited from entering the school parking lot to drop off children, **no exceptions**. Parents bringing children to school by car must park on the street. Parents can escort children into the school yard. Parents are not allowed to enter the school building with their children.

All students entering the building prior to 8:10 AM are to use the school yard entrance. Students who use the Austin Street entrance before 8:10 AM are not in compliance with school policy and will receive a late pass. This will be reflected on their report cards and remove them from Honors consideration. Students arriving to class after 8:10 AM are tardy and will be marked accordingly. Consistent lateness is educational neglect and jeopardizes future re-registration and acceptance into high school.

**Children should not leave the yard once they have arrived.**

### **6.5a Before Care & After Care**

#### **BEFORE SCHOOL PROGRAM**

The Before School Program (BSP) has been developed to assist working parents whose children require supervision before school. Parents can drop off students between 7:00 AM – 8:00 AM before school begins. Families are charged per student/per day for this service. Families are billed monthly. Please review the Before School Program Overview document in the Parent Resources tab on the Academy website for detailed information about the program.

#### **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

The After School Program (ASP) was developed to assist working parents whose children require supervision after school. It is available to all students in grades Nursery – 8, from dismissal until 6:30 PM. Fees are charged at an hourly rate. A late fee will be charged for students picked up after 6:30 PM. Families are billed each week and must remain current on all fees charged.

Please review the After School Program Overview document in the Parent Resources tab on the Academy website for detailed information about the program. You must complete the ASP registration and consent forms before your child participates in the program.

### **6.5b School Office Hours**

The school office is open each day from 7:50am- 3:30pm

\*\* During the 2020-2021 school year in-person access is limited. Please call 718-263-2622 in advance.

### **6.5c Early Release Schedule**

\*\*\* A schedule of early release days will be provided to parents and will be posted individually on our monthly online calendar available at [olqmca.org](http://olqmca.org)

### **6.6 Releasing of Students**

Students are expected to be in attendance for the complete session each school day. If for any reason a student must leave the academy or parish school before the regular dismissal hour, a parent/legal guardian or a person authorized by the parent/legal guardian must come to the academy or parish school office to pick the student up and escort the student out of the building. Parents/legal guardians must provide authorization for their child to be released to an individual other than a parent/legal guardian.

### **6.7 Custody, Guardianship Orders**

Parents must provide accurate custodial information to be kept on file at the academy or parish school. Non-custodial parents do have rights. The law protects non-custodial parents and maintains that parents do not cease to be parents when they no longer have custody of their children. The Diocese of Brooklyn abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school or parish academy will provide the non-custodial parents with access to academic records and other school information regarding his or her child. *If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide the school with a current court certified copy of the court order.*

### **6.8 Field Trips**

OLQMCA requires signed permission from parents/legal guardians of students who wish to participate in scheduled field trips. Prior to all trips information shared with parents/legal guardians will include the date, purpose and destination of the trip, the expense, the means of transportation, and probable time of return.

Adults who wish to chaperone must complete Virtus training and background checks prior to accompanying students. Please see section 9.4 for further information about this process.

### **6.9 Birthday Policy**

OLQMCA recognizes the special nature of birthdays and the opportunity it creates to celebrate the gift of each child's life. Parents should consult with classroom teachers regarding appropriate grade level recognitions. Invitations to outside gatherings may only be distributed in school and/or on school grounds if all members of the class are invited. For smaller gatherings, parents are encouraged to mail or email invitations.

Due to COVID-19, students may not bring food into the classroom to be shared with other students. To promote health and safety, students should consume only the foods that they have brought to school or have been provided by the school.

#### **6.10 Lost and Found**

Students should first check with their classroom teacher in hopes of recovering missing items. Students and/or parents may also call the school office in the event an item was turned. Parents should label all items to facilitate their safe return.

#### **6.11 Responsibility for Valuables**

The academies and parish schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn are not responsible for valuables that are lost or damaged. It is strongly advised that students do not bring valuables into the school building including electronic devices such as tablets, cell phones, smartwatches, airpods, etc.

#### **6.12 Transportation**

While students are being transported to and from their academy/parish school, it is expected that they will uphold the behavior expectations of the academy/parish school.

##### **6.12a Yellow Bus Service**

Yellow Bus service is available to students in grades K - 6. NYC Department of Transportation determines a student's eligibility to take the yellow bus by their age and home location. Students must live at least two miles from the school. There are specific set routes. If you are interested in this service, please complete and return the yellow bus application survey that was sent home with your child. Students who continuously disregard bus procedures and rules are at risk of losing their access to bus transportation.

Each bus company must hold an evacuation drill at least once a year. Students are expected to follow all instructions as given by the bus driver or other adult facilitating the drill.

Families utilizing NYC-provided bus service are provided annually with behavior expectations and consequences. Families are also provided with the name and contact information of the transportation company once OLMCA is notified of such by the NYC Department of Transportation.

##### **6.12b Metrocards**

MTA Metrocards are available to students in grades K-8 who live at certain predetermined distances from the school. These predetermined distances are set by the Board of Education and the Department of Transportation. OLMCA takes direction from the Board of Education and the Department of Transportation in these matters.

##### **6.12c Transportation - Use of Other Vehicles**

Only a licensed public carrier that is fully insured should be used to transport students. Teachers or administrators should not transport students in their personal vehicles.



Parents/legal guardians must provide authorization for their child to be transported by someone else. This includes transportation for dismissal as well as extracurricular activities.

## **Section 7- Student Records**

### **7.1 Change of Address/Phone Number**

For student safety, it is imperative that parents/ legal guardians alert the academy or parish school to any changes in address or phone number. Parents/ legal guardians must also provide the academy or parish school with an adequate number of emergency contacts (with up to date information).

### **7.2 Educational Records Requests**

In the event of a student transferring to a different academy, parish school, or public school, the school will provide student records to the school of transfer. Requests can be made in writing by the parent/legal guardian or by the school that the student will be transferring to. The school office is responsible for sending student records directly to the school of transfer. If records are not provided in a timely fashion, parents or legal guardians may contact the Office of the Superintendent to receive further assistance in this matter.

### **7.3 Authorization to Release Records**

Academies and parish schools may not release the records of students without the written consent of the parents/legal guardians to any individual, agency or organization other than the following:

- Other academy or parish school officials who have legitimate educational interests.
- Officials of other academies or parish schools in which the student intends to enroll.
- Officials of the courts with lawfully issued judicial process, i.e., subpoena, court order, etc.
- Please note health records are the property of the Department of Health.

### **7.4 Review of a Child's Official Records**

Parents/legal guardians have the right to inspect any and all material which is part of their child's permanent record. Academies and parish schools require parents/legal guardians to provide a written request prior to when they wish to examine their child's permanent record. At the time of inspection, the academy or parish school administrator, or qualified delegate, will be present.

## **Section 8- Health and Nutrition**

### **8.1 Medical Requirements**

The New York City Department of Health requires that all new students entering nursery through grade 12 show proof of having received a complete medical evaluation. Children who transfer from one school to another in New York City are not considered new students. These requirements may change from year to year.

New York State Law states that all students in Grades Nursery through 12 must be immunized as directed by the New York State and New York City Departments of Health. New students may enter school provisionally with documentation of **an initial series of immunizations**. Once admitted provisionally, a student has a certain amount of time to continue and complete the medical requirements. Students who fail to complete the necessary requirements within the appropriate time frame **must be excluded from school**. Parents must provide records of immunization to be kept on file at the Academy or parish school. Any exemptions to the immunization requirements must be approved by the Academy or parish school with documentation being kept in the student's health records. Only medical exemptions are permitted per New York State Law. Religious exemptions are no longer permissible.

- For nursery, pre-k, and UPK Programs--Between July 1 and December 31 of each year, all children between the ages of 6 months and 59 months and attending a group child care or school-based child care program must receive one dose of influenza vaccine.

## **8.2 Administering Medications at School**

School nurses may administer over-the counter-prescription drugs to students with written consent and medical authorization from a parent or legal guardian. School nurses may administer prescription medication that has been prescribed by a physician but must be provided with

- Medical authorization from the parent or legal guardian consenting to administering the medication
- A medical plan developed by the child's parents and health care provider detailing the proper administration of the medication, details regarding the child's medical concerns, and other pertinent details.

### **8.2a Administering Epinephrine**

Parents or guardians will supply their own epinephrine auto-injector and must provide written consent and medical authorization for its use. The academy or parish school must have an up-to-date medical statement on file for each child in care. For a child with identified allergies or with special health care needs, the academy or parish school must have a copy of an individual health care plan developed by the child's parents and health care provider. Parents must make program staff aware of the individual health care plan on their child's first day at the program.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian of the student who is at risk of anaphylaxis:

- to notify the school that the child/student is at risk of anaphylaxis and is in need of the presence of epinephrine on school premises
- to indicate to the school if the child/student is capable of self-administration of the epinephrine device

- to supply the school with the epinephrine device\* in its original packaging as received from the pharmacist
- to replace the epinephrine device when it expires, discolors or has been used

\*It is recommended that two epinephrine devices be supplied, the second functioning as a back-up in case of malfunction or if an extra dose is necessary in accordance with medical documentation.

### **8.2b Administering Epinephrine on Field Trips**

In the event of a school trip or school event conducted outside of the school premises, it is the responsibility of the parent (or a designated person who appears on the child’s emergency contact list) to attend with the child/student for the purpose of epinephrine administration, if necessary.

### **8.3 City & State Health Services**

*The Education Law of New York State mandates that students attending nonpublic schools receive the same health services provided to students attending public schools*

### **8.4 Limitations of Physical Activities**

A physician's note must be submitted to the school nurse through the classroom teacher in the event of a request for adjusted/limited physical activity due to health reasons. The notice should include reason for the limitation, notation of types of activities prohibited and an estimated time frame. A physician’s note of clearance must be provided to authorize a child’s return to activities.

### **8.5 Breakfast/Lunch Program**

OLQMCA participates in the NYC DOE free lunch program for all nursery, Kindergarten – grade 8 students. The PreK for All program participates in both the free breakfast and lunch programs offered by the NYC DOE.

### **8.6 Wellness Policy**

OLQMCA is committed to our faith, our families and the education of our students. We will make every effort to ensure that students are able to learn in a positive and safe environment that promotes personal, emotional and academic growth. It is important that the staff, parents/legal guardians and students maintain good health throughout the school year. Students must be up-to-date with all vaccines and doctors’ appointments. Parents/legal guardians should only send students to school when they are feeling well and are COVID-19 symptom free. We have a responsibility to protect our own health and that of our neighbor.

In the event of absence, families are requested to contact the school nurse to report reason for absence.

OLQMCA is staffed with a full-time NYC Department of Health nurse. The school nurse provides assessment of student health complaints, direct care to students for injuries, management of acute illnesses and

long-term care of students with special health needs. The nurse also oversees all mandated health screening programs, verification of immunizations and infectious disease reporting, and administration of medications. All student medications will be housed in the nurse's office. When necessary, our nurse can be reached at 718-263-2622 ext. 15005 or [nurse@olqmca.org](mailto:nurse@olqmca.org)

In the event that a student becomes ill during the day and must go home, the nurse will call the parents to arrange for the student to get picked-up from school. Upon arrival, the parent or designated guardian must sign the student out for the day. Any student leaving early must be signed out in the Student Sign Out book at the office.

## **Section 9- Parental Obligations**

### **9.1 Parental Involvement**

Home is the first place where a child learns love and respect for God and neighbor. Parents/legal guardians, in choosing a Catholic school to continue the education begun at home, have responsibilities as well as opportunities to share in the continuance of their children's education.

Parental involvement consists of parents/legal guardians and staff meeting together because of common interest in the child. It is expressed in many ways such as sharing in student supervision in the lunchroom or playground or serving as library or teacher aide. In some instances, parents/legal guardians may be asked to assist in advocacy in all areas that would benefit the schools, including programs that request government assistance, in consultation with the Office of the Superintendent. The involvement of the total family is also a means of communicating the academy's and parish school's performance to the total parish community.

Parental support for the education of their children is of the utmost importance. Parents and legal guardians are also expected to uphold the behavioral expectations set forth for students and staff within the academy or parish school community. Failure of parents to act in a manner compatible with the values of the academy or parish school may result in student dismissal.

### **9.2 Fundraising**

OLQMCA raises much-needed money through fundraising promotions. Some of our fundraising is mandatory and some are voluntary. Our mandatory fundraisers include a candy bar sale, Play or Pay and a Pot-of-Gold Raffle. Our voluntary fundraisers include various other events throughout the school year. All proceeds benefit the Academy.

**Play or Pay** - Each family, of students in grades K–8, must volunteer at least 20 hours or be assessed **\$300**. You will be charged \$15 for every hour short of the 20 hours of your volunteer service. Volunteering activities include, but are not limited to, Morning Door Duty, Class Parent, Spring Dance, Bake Sale Days, Specials Helper (ex. Computer, Library, Gym), Walkathon, Halloween Party, Fall Fun Day, Catholic Schools

Week, Set-up for the Grade 8 graduation dance, etc. Evening and weekend activities are available for parents who are unable to volunteer during the school day. These events and opportunities run throughout the school year.

### **Candy Fundraiser- 1 box per child - \$60**

Our candy fundraiser is a mandatory fundraiser for all families with students in grades Nursery and Kindergarten through eighth grades. The candy fundraiser requires that each student receive one box of assorted World's Finest Chocolate candy. One box costs \$60. No more than two boxes are required for any family with three or more children in the school. This event usually runs for two weeks in February.

### **Walkathon**

This important fundraiser is critical to maintaining the quality and affordability of education at OLQMCA. Students walk together on a predetermined route through the Forest Hills Gardens neighborhood followed by refreshments and an award ceremony. All funds raised are used to make upgrades to our classroom technology and enhance the overall education of all students.

OLQMCA raises funds by contacting potential sponsors who may contribute a tax-deductible donation. Mailers are sent out to students' families, relatives, and friends to coincide with the event. Students and classes also have an opportunity to compete for several prizes and awards based on their participation in the Walkathon. This event occurs in November.

**All volunteers must participate in the "Protecting God's Children Program" VIRTUS Training in order to volunteer in any capacity that involves direct interaction with the students. Refer to section 9.4 of this handbook.**

### **9.3 Parent Teacher Association (PTA)/ Home Academy Association (HAA)**

Every academy or parish school is encouraged to establish a Home School Association. Its purpose is the educational enrichment of parents/legal guardians and teachers. The goal of the Home School Association is to foster a clearer understanding of the mutual responsibilities of parents/legal guardians and teachers regarding the education of the students.

An added responsibility of the Home School Association will be to assist in the fundraising efforts of the academy or parish school. In the school, this is done in coordination with the administration. In an academy, it is done in coordination with the board of directors of the academy. No organization may hold title to accounts nor have access to funds raised for the academy or parish school. All financial transactions must be approved by the pastor/academy board of directors.

### **9.4 Volunteering, Chaperoning & Virtus Training**

Parent volunteers and chaperones are an integral part of the school community. All parents/legal guardians/ other adults, must complete VIRTUS training, sign a Code of Conduct agreement, and complete a background check.

- The VIRTUS program for adults is a three-hour live awareness session that instructs adults of the Church that to protect children you must have continuous awareness and vigilance. This awareness session helps trainees understand signs of child sexual abuse, the methods and means by which offenders commit abuse, and five empowerment steps to prevent child sexual abuse.

- The Code of Conduct is a document that acknowledges the importance of legal, professional and responsible conduct of all who work with children and young people. All clergy, employees and volunteers are required to read the Code of Conduct and to sign a Statement of Acknowledgement Form. The Code of Conduct is distributed at all VIRTUS sessions.
- All employees and volunteers are also required to have a criminal background screening completed before they start their employment or service. These forms are also distributed at all VIRTUS sessions. As of May 2010, all background screenings (employees and volunteers) will be done through the Safe Environment Office. The searches are done through LexisNexis (volunteers) or HireRight (employees). All information is kept confidential and if a positive result is returned, the pastor/administrator will be notified and appropriate steps will be taken. Background searches will be rerun every 3 years for employees and 5 years for volunteers.

## **Section 10- Safety**

### **10.1 Emergency Drills**

Per New York State laws, academies and parish schools are required to conduct twelve emergency drills over the course of the school year. Four of these drills must be lockdown drills. Students are expected to follow all directives provided to them by school teachers and staff. Failure to comply or act appropriately during emergency drills will result in disciplinary action.

### **10.2 School Closings**

The Diocese of Brooklyn will base their closings on the New York City Public School System. If the New York City DOE closes schools due to inclement weather, the schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn will close as well. Local academies and parish schools may also make decisions to close their individual schools based on inclement weather or other hazardous conditions (infrastructure issues, flooding, property damage, etc.). Parents will be notified as soon as possible. In the event of a closure during the school day, proper provisions will be made for students to return home or to be cared for in other premises until the usual dismissal time.

### **10.3 Procedures for Visitors**

All visitors must be admitted to the building by our school security guard or a school staff member. Visitors should sign in at the front door and will receive a visitor designation (lanyard, sticker, etc.) if available. Visitors to the school are asked to remain in the office until they have confirmed their destination within the school. For the safety of staff and students, visitors should not walk about the school, but should travel to their intended destination within the school. Prior to leaving the school, visitors should return to the main office, sign out, and leave through the main doors. Visitors should not exit through side doors to ensure that building security is maintained.

**\*\*During COVID-19, we ask all parents and legal guardians to visit the academy or parish school only when necessary as well as to keep any visits as brief as possible.**

#### **10.4 Video Surveillance Cameras**

Academies and parish schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn are authorized to use video camera surveillance on academy/parish school property to monitor the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to the property, and to safeguard facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be placed in locations as deemed appropriate by the designated school administrators.

Violations of Diocesan policies, administrative regulations, building rules, or laws that images, video and audio capture through surveillance may be used as evidence that may subject students, staff, and visitors to appropriate disciplinary and legal action, including, but not limited to, disclosure to law enforcement.

Data from video surveillance is typically retained for a year. Data related to a known incident which involves injury to students, staff or members of the public or property, or which involves any potential violation of the law or Diocesan policies will be kept with reports of the incident until the incident has been appropriately resolved.

## **Section 11- Instruction**

### **11.1 Grading Policy**

It is our intention for student grades to be a reflection of both effort and ability. Report cards documenting student progress are provided to parents in December, March and June of each school year for students in grades K-8.

Each year parents are provided, by classroom and content teachers, with an explanation of the categories and their respective weights which contribute to student grades.

### **11.2 Homework Policy**

#### **HOMEWORK/ASSIGNMENTS**

The purpose of homework is to provide the student with a review and reinforcement of the day's schoolwork and to help develop the necessary skills for independent study. Students in grades K-2 are encouraged to read to their parents nightly and complete all other assignments. They will spend approximately thirty minutes on homework each day. The students in grades 3-5 will spend approximately one hour each night completing homework. Students in grades 6-8 will generally need to spend two hours to complete homework and prepare for the next day's classes. Long range assignments and/or projects are frequently given to the children. Assignments may also be given during the weekend. In general, students at OLQMCA are assigned homework each night – Monday through Thursday. We recommend that all children review the day's lessons each night, even if a written assignment has not been given. **Assignments will be downgraded if submitted after the due date.**

Students will be given the opportunity to make up a test or missed work and/or hand in an assignment late only after an absence. However, no work will be accepted two weeks after the due date. Any

assignment/test etc. marked “Missing” is calculated as a zero grade on Option C. Please check the school website for daily homework postings.

- ❖ Children should complete all assignments by themselves with minimal assistance from adults.
- ❖ Parents should encourage students to review class notes before doing homework.
- ❖ Schedule a time each day to do homework, showing that it is an important priority.
- ❖ Work in a quiet well-lit area.
- ❖ Prepare required materials such as pens, pencils, rulers or dictionaries before beginning assignments.
- ❖ Homeroom period is not a time to work on assignments. It is used for reading and review.
- ❖ A parent's signature on a test, assignment or homework signifies that they are aware of the work and have reviewed it with their child.
- ❖ Parents are encouraged to check their child’s homework to ensure it is correct, complete, and neatly done.
- ❖ All homework must include the proper school heading in grades 4-8.
- ❖ All homework in grades 4-8 should be completed in blue or black ink. All math work must be completed in pencil.
- ❖ Homework should be brought in by the students themselves. Faxes or emails of homework are not accepted unless a teacher has authorized them.
- ❖ Please check your child’s home folder and the school website daily for important announcements and the monthly calendar.

Classroom and content teachers will provide parents with anticipated estimates of daily homework assignments and time on task. Parents, teachers, and students are expected to work as partners to ensure work is completed and submitted in cases where a student displays difficulty in these areas.

### **11.3 Protecting Instructional Time**

Maintaining school schedule and structure is of the utmost importance during the school year. As academies and parish schools make their calendar and schedules, their goal is to protect instructional time as much as possible. In protecting instructional time, parents are asked to refrain from removing their child during the school day for unnecessary activities. Appointments should be scheduled, when possible, before or after the school day in order to avoid disrupting student learning. Vacations and family trips should also be planned, when possible, for existing school vacation weeks. In the event of a necessary absence, parents should alert the school and classroom teacher as soon as possible. If an extended absence is known, parents should communicate with their child’s teacher to create a plan for making up missed work.

### **11.4 Reporting Student Progress**



#### **11.4a Progress Reports & Report Card Schedule**

Parents/legal guardians will receive report cards three times a year, at the end of each trimester. Parents/legal guardians will also receive progress reports during each trimester prior to receiving the report cards. It is vital to a student's progress that an open communication exists between parents/legal guardians and their child's teacher. Any concerns regarding a child's progress should be addressed first to the child's teacher.

#### **11.4b Parent Teacher Conferences**

Parents/legal guardians will have the opportunity to attend parent teacher conferences at the end of the first and second trimesters following receipt of student report cards. While these are formally scheduled conferences, parents are also encouraged to schedule meetings with teachers or other staff, when necessary, to discuss their child's progress and learning goals.

#### **11.4c NYS Testing**

Students in grades 4, 6, 7, and 8 will participate in New York State Testing. Parents receive an Individual Student Report (ISR) which includes a breakdown of a student's performance in different skill areas within ELA, Math and Science. This helps parents understand where their child is doing well and in what areas he or she may need additional practice. Parents can use these results to guide a discussion with their child's teacher about additional supports or challenges that may be needed in the classroom, as well as ways to support learning at home.

There are no negative consequences when taking state tests as the tests are considered diagnostic. The ELA and math test results are not recorded on student permanent record cards or report cards. New York State law forbids the use of state test results as the determining factor in promotion.

#### **11.4d TerraNova Testing**

Students in grades 3-8 will participate in TerraNova Testing in the fall. TerraNova testing is a nationally-normed, standardized testing program. This series of tests is issued to diagnose student performance and develop student learning goals.

## **Section 12- Internet Use**

### **12.1 Option C**

The Option C Parent Portal allows parents to be involved in their child's academic life on their own schedule and more efficiently. Rather than writing a note to a teacher to see how their child is doing on assignments, parents can access the portal and see it in real time. They can communicate with teachers directly through Option C removing the issues of lost or blocked email messages. It allows teachers to contact parents directly and keeps a record of the interaction should it be necessary. As grades are recorded for student work, they can be shared with parents, giving up-to-date progress reports at any time.

OptionC's Parent Alert System is a flexible notification system that lets its audiences - parents, principals, and school staff - communicate quickly and reliably. Academies and parish schools may also create alerts to

send to parents regarding fundraisers, events, drills, community affairs, school closings and any information they would like to communicate quickly. Users can decide how they want to be reached, either by voice, text or email, or any combination. Parents should check their settings on Option C to ensure that all contact information is up-to-date and all options are set correctly.

## **12.2 Communications with Teachers**

Students benefit tremendously when an open line of communication exists between families and teachers. It is recommended that parents/legal guardians communicate any concerns regarding their child. Parents/legal guardians as well as teachers should always use Option C, school communication platforms (I.e. Google classroom), or a note sent directly to the teacher/family. If needed, the parent/legal guardian or teacher can schedule a follow-up meeting to address any further issue. It is also recommended that a parent communicate with a teacher regarding their concerns prior to involving the administration. Initiating an open communication with the teacher first continues a positive relationship between families and teachers.

It is strongly advised that parents and teachers do not use personal social media accounts or personal cell phones (texting) as a means of communication in regards to school related concerns.

# **Section 13- Finances**

## **13.1 School Tuition Policies**

The success of our Academy relies on the commitment of our families to make Catholic education a financial priority. The Academy has full-year contractual and financial obligations that must be met, such as teacher salaries, utility bills, building maintenance and improvements, and other expenses. Families that seek enrollment are required to satisfy the annual tuition by specified due dates.

These policies are not intended to deprive anyone of a Catholic education. It is our desire to maintain a fair approach to collection of tuition and to provide a sound financial policy for the overall welfare of our families. We encourage all responsible parties to maintain open communication with the business office to ensure a complete understanding of each family's financial obligations. The goal of our academy is to provide a Catholic education to every student who desires one, but only by mutual cooperation can we make certain that this goal is met. Parental non-payment or delinquency in meeting financial obligations creates an additional burden for the Academy.

- Tuition contracts specifying a payment schedule will be published and shared with families. All families must sign an enrollment contract that guarantees the family will be responsible for the full payment of tuition for the academic year.
- Academies will arrange for all tuition and fees to be collected through FACTS Tuition Management.
- Tuition payment schedules will follow the most appropriate schedule for the academy and parents: monthly, one payment, or three installments.
- A Tuition Assistance Committee will be in place at every school/academy.

Academies and parish schools reserve the right to place severely delinquent accounts in the hands of a collection agency or its attorneys for collection. It is not our desire that any family should incur unnecessary legal fees or suffer further embarrassment or inconvenience in this regard. Again, we encourage prompt communication with the academy in an effort to avoid litigation.

In order to withdraw a student, the parent must submit written notice to the principal in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the academy to prepare necessary information and settle accounts. No student records will be forwarded to another academy or school until all accounts have been settled.

Following the terms of the enrollment contract, refunds will be made only in accordance with the stated guidelines and/or at the discretion of the administration. The refund must be requested prior to the start of the period for which payment would be made.

### **13.2 Tuition and other fee schedules**

The academy or parish school will collect tuition and fees in one, three, or ten payments over a ten month period. Tuition collection will begin prior to the start of the school year and will typically extend from July to April. Parishioners are required to make a verifiable minimum donation of \$400 in their weekly contribution envelope during the year prior to registration in order to receive the parishioner tuition rate.

#### **Parishioner Tuition Rates:**

##### **Grades 1 - 8**

One child - \$5,075  
Two children - \$8,500  
Three children – \$11,350

##### **Kindergarten**

One child - \$4,975  
Two children - \$8,400  
Three children – \$11,250

##### **Nursery**

Each child - \$5,300

#### **Non-Parishioner Tuition Rates:**

##### **Grades 1 - 8**

One child - \$5,950  
Two children - \$10,100  
Three children – \$13,450

##### **Kindergarten**

One child - \$5,850  
Two children - \$10,000  
Three children – \$13,350

## **Nursery**

Each child - \$5,300

## **Registration Fees**

Nursery - \$350/child

Kindergarten - \$350/child

Grades 1-8 - \$200/child

## **Computer & Supply Fees**

Grades K-8 - \$225/child

Nursery - \$55/child

## **Additional Fees**

Grade 8 – set each year in accordance with costs of planned events

Grade 7 - \$90/child (Confirmation Fee)

## **FUNDRAISING**

OLQMCA raises much-needed money through fundraising promotions. Some of our fundraising is mandatory and some are voluntary. Our mandatory fundraisers include a candy bar sale, Play or Pay and a Pot of Gold Raffle. Our voluntary fundraisers include various other events throughout the school year. All proceeds benefit the Academy.

### **Candy Sale - 1 box per child - \$60**

Our candy sale requires that each student receive one box of assorted World's Finest Chocolate candy. One box costs \$60. No more than two boxes are required for any family with three or more children in the school. This event usually runs for two weeks in February.

### **Pot of Gold Raffle - (6 books per family) - \$100**

Our Pot of Gold Raffle requires each family, in grades Nursery & Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup>, to purchase six books of Pot of Gold raffle tickets for \$100. There are four monetary prizes to win in the raffle. This event usually takes place in March.

### **“Walk to a Brighter Future” Walkathon**

This important fundraiser is critical to maintaining the quality and affordability of education at OLQMCA. Students walk together on a predetermined route through the Forest Hills Gardens neighborhood followed by refreshments and an award ceremony. All funds raised are used to make upgrades to our classroom technology and enhance the overall education of all students.

OLQMCA raises funds by contacting potential sponsors who may contribute a tax-deductible donation. Mailers are sent out to students' families, relatives, and friends to coincide with the event. Students and classes also have an opportunity to compete for several prizes and awards based on their participation in the Walkathon. This event occurs in November.

**All volunteers must participate in the “Protecting God’s Children Program” VIRTUS Training in order to volunteer in any capacity that involves direct interaction with the students. Refer to the VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS section of this handbook.**

**Play or Pay** - Each family of students in gr. K – Gr. 8, must volunteer at least 20 hours or be assessed **\$300**. You will be charged \$15 for every hour short of the 20 hours of your volunteer service. Volunteering activities include (but are not limited to) Morning Door Duty, Class Parent, Spring Dance, Bake Sale Days, Specials Helper (ex. Computer, Library, Gym), Walkathon, Halloween Party, Fall Fun Day, Catholic Schools Week, Set-up for the Grade 8 graduation dance, etc. Evening and weekend activities are available for parents who are unable to volunteer during the school day. These events and opportunities run throughout the school year.

### **13.3 Resources for tuition assistance**

Catholic education is meant to be available to every Catholic family. Every family desiring a Catholic education for their child(ren) will participate to the extent capable in the cost of providing that education.

To assist families in need of financial assistance to meet tuition obligations, Futures in Education provides partial tuition assistance to those families that qualify for aid. Each family in need of tuition assistance must complete a financial aid application. First-time financial aid applicants must apply for assistance through the FACTS Management site. Returning families seeking aid will receive an email from Futures in Education with instructions for reapplying for aid.

If a family requests additional assistance beyond the awarded amount, the request will be forwarded to the Tuition Assistance Committee. The review will be completed as early as possible.

### **13.4 Tuition Assistance Committee**

The Tuition Assistance Committee is an essential advisory body to the pastor/board chair and principal. It has a two-fold purpose.

- The Committee will have the responsibility of direct involvement in the monitoring and collection of tuition arrears from the families of its respective school or academy.
- The Committee will be empowered to recommend, when needed, a partial deferment of tuition for families that have demonstrated true financial need or face unforeseen extraordinary circumstances. Such a deferment will establish a fair and just tuition rate that will allow students to remain enrolled when even scholarship assistance is not enough. This discernment must be guided

by an approved process that is fair, transparent and reasonable. Any recommendation made by the Tuition Assistance Committee must be approved by the respective pastor of a parochial school and the Board of Directors for an academy.

Should there be a concern regarding the tuition assistance process or if an appeal for discernment is requested, parents/guardians should present their concerns in writing. The letter should be addressed to the chairperson of the Board of Directors. The response from the chairperson would be final.

### **13.5 FACTS Tuition Management Company**

FACTS is a tuition management company designed to make tuition collection simpler for families as well as academies and parish schools. There will be one FACTS record per family, and each student must be listed separately. This provides valuable details about the charges and discounts each student is receiving. In turn, this provides the academy better reporting. A major benefit of FACTS is the ability to process automatic drafts of the payer's bank account or credit card. There is a 2.85% convenience fee on credit card transactions. FACTS does offer an invoicing option as well. With this option, FACTS will send an invoice to the payer (via email or postal mail) twenty calendar days prior to the payment due date. The payer must then initiate payment either by using a credit card or bank account online, over the phone, or by mailing a check directly to FACTS. Families are encouraged to pay via automatic draft. FACTS also allows for flexible payment options. OLQMCA's payment options are monthly payments, three trimester payments, and a payment in full.

### **13.6 Tuition Delinquency**

- By standard practice, FACTS will send payment reminders prior to any due date, returned payment notices in the case of a failed payment, and will make automated phone calls to delinquent payers. Payers who fail to communicate with the academy and resolve the delinquency through a payment schedule approved by the academy will result in suspension of services for the student.
- Students will not be permitted to attend class at the start of the trimester should any balance be past due.
- No student will be permitted to begin an academic year unless all registration and other required fees are current. Registration and other required fees are paid through FACTS Tuition Management at enrollment. Enrollment for students whose families are not current in the registration or other required fees by June 30 may be cancelled at the discretion of the academy. In no event will students be permitted to attend class at the commencement of the academic year unless the delinquency is paid in full.
- In order to participate in graduation activities, all debts for eighth grade students must be cleared by the first Monday of May. Eighth grade transcripts will not be released to the high schools if the financial obligations have not been met.

- All fees must be paid in full before records or progress reports will be processed. It is the sole discretion of the academy to withhold trimester exams, report cards, transcripts, records, and diplomas until all financial obligations are satisfied in full.

## **Section 14- Safe Environment**

### **14.1 Reporting Inappropriate Behavior with Children to Principal**

Parents and children are strongly encouraged to immediately report any incidents of inappropriate and/or troubling behavior to the academy principal. Incidents will be thoroughly investigated and reported to diocesan and community officials where appropriate. During the school day the principal can be reached at (718)263-2622, after school hours families should email, [azuschlag@olqmca.org](mailto:azuschlag@olqmca.org)

Parents and children are encouraged to maintain an open dialogue and share experiences about their day. Children should be routinely reminded of appropriate and inappropriate behavior to allow them to distinguish between them. In the event a child brings to their parents' attention a concern of inappropriate behavior by a classmate, parents should immediately bring it to the attention of their child's teacher. In the event a child reports a concern regarding a teacher or staff member the issue should immediately be brought to the attention of the academy principal.

### **14.3 Child Lures Prevention Program**

The Child Lures/Teen Lures Prevention programs are presented to the children and youth who attend each academy or parish school. This program is tailored to different age groups and covers topics such as staying healthy and safe, kindness and respect, trusted adults, my body belongs to me, child luring, choosing grown-ups to help, children are special, and abuse is never a child's fault (topics will vary based on age level appropriateness). For older students, topics include sexual assault, harassment, dating violence, bullying/cyberbullying, sexting, identity theft, online luring, suicide and human trafficking with the goal of facilitating authentic conversations to bring awareness to the topics.

Each program provides teachers with the resources to facilitate appropriate conversations. Parents/legal guardians will also be provided with a link to access parent guides digitally to continue the conversations within their homes.

### **14.4 Alcohol and Drug Free Zone Policy**

The New York City Tobacco Products Regulations Act of 1994 curtails exposure to tobacco use on school grounds. For the purpose of this legislation "school grounds" means the "buildings, grounds or facilities, or any part thereof, owned or occupied by public or private institutions for the primary purpose of providing educational instructions to students at or below the twelfth grade level." Tobacco use is not permitted on school grounds at any time. A "tobacco product" is any substance which contains tobacco including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, and chewing tobacco. New York City regulations are far more stringent than the regulations promulgated by New York State. However, schools subject to the rules of this municipality, as are the schools of the Diocese of Brooklyn, must follow the local laws. Thus, smoking is prohibited on ALL SCHOOL PREMISES AT ANY TIME.

For the safety of our students, alcohol is also prohibited from being consumed on school premises at any time.

#### **14.5 Signs of Suicide (SOS) Prevention Program**

SOS Signs of Suicide (SOS) is a universal, school-based prevention program designed for middle school (ages 11-13) and high school (ages 13-17) students. The goals of this program are:

- Decrease suicide and suicide attempts by increasing student knowledge and adaptive attitudes about depression
- Encourage personal help-seeking and/or help-seeking on behalf of a friend
- Reduce the stigma of mental illness and acknowledge the importance of seeking help or treatment
- Engage parents and school staff as partners in prevention through “gatekeeper” education
- Encourage schools to develop community-based partnerships to support student mental health

Through a video and guided discussion, students learn to identify warning signs of suicide and depression. At the end of the session, students complete a seven-question screening for depression (anonymous or signed – the school can decide) to further encourage help-seeking and connect students at risk with trusted adults. The curriculum raises awareness about behavioral health and encourages students to ACT (Acknowledge, Care, Tell) when worried about themselves or their peers.

## **Section 15- COVID-19**

The COVID-19 virus is an infectious disease. It spreads between people who are physically close. OLMCA takes every precaution to ensure all staff and students are safe by social distancing, wearing masks, frequent washing and sanitizing of hands, and encouraging staff and students to stay home when feeling ill.

### **15.1 Hygiene and Health Requirements**

All health related policies and procedures have been adopted from the regulations published by the NYC Department of Education in partnership with the NYC Board of Health. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic hygiene and health requirements have changed considerably. These changes are explained in sections 15.1a through 15.5.

#### **15.1a Face Coverings**

Students are required to wear face coverings when in the school building and maintain appropriate social/physical distancing. Students should bring an appropriate face covering from home. The school will have surgical masks available for students as needed. Students’ cloth face coverings should be clearly identified with their names or initials, to avoid confusion or swapping. Students’ face coverings may also be labeled to indicate top/bottom and front/back. Non-disposable masks should be washed daily.

All visitors to the school for any reason will always be required to wear a face covering while on school grounds or in the school building. Faculty and staff are also required to wear masks.



All masks for faculty, staff, and students are subject to approval by the principal and Office of the Superintendent of Schools. Masks should be plain and free of any objectionable statements or support for any group, product, political view, and so on, other than the name of their Parish School or Catholic Academy.

Students will be provided opportunities for short breaks to remove masks throughout the day, while social distancing, in addition to removing them during outdoor times and while eating.

### **15.1b Social Distancing**

Classrooms and other school areas will be set up to ensure social distancing between students. Students will also be required to maintain social distancing when they are not at their desks. This is particularly important when students are not wearing face coverings such as while eating or during mask breaks.

### **15.2 Health Policies**

If a student or staff members displays symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day, the following procedures will be followed:

- Each building will have a designated Isolation Room for students or staff who display symptoms.
- A student showing symptoms of COVID-19 will be escorted to the Isolation Room by a staff member wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- The area where the student was showing symptoms will be immediately cleaned and disinfected.
- The student will be evaluated by the nurse/health professional in the Isolation Room.
- A family member or guardian will be contacted by a staff member and asked to pick up the student.
- Upon pick up, the nurse/health professional and school staff will strongly advise the family to visit a doctor and get the student tested for COVID-19.
- Any student placed in the Isolation Room will be adequately supervised by a staff member during this time until the ill student can be picked up by a parent/legal guardian.

### **15.2a Health Screenings**

Parents/legal guardians will be asked to check student temperatures and screen students for symptoms prior to their arrival to school grounds and report student status through the ParentLocker Connect app daily health screening. In the event that parents/legal guardians are unable to do so, school staff members will be designated to complete health screenings. It is asked that all parents/legal guardians are vigilant in temperature and symptom screenings for their children for the safety of other students as well as staff members. School staff will also perform random temperature screenings for both students and staff members using no-touch thermometers.

*Symptoms of COVID-19 are:*

- Fever of 100.0°F or higher or chills
- Cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Loss of taste or smell

- Sore throat, congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

### **15.3b Staff/Students Excluded from In-Person Learning**

School-based staff and students cannot report to school if they have:

- Been knowingly in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19
- Tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days
- Experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, in the past 14 days
- Traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days

### **15.4 Returning to School after Showing Symptoms**

Any individual (student or staff member) showing signs of COVID-19 can only return to school when **all** of the following conditions are met:

- Received a positive COVID-19 test AND
- Isolated for 10 days AND
- Presents clearance from a healthcare provider AND
- The individual has been symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

OR

- Received a negative COVID-19 test AND
- Presents clearance from a healthcare provider AND
- The individual has been symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

OR

- Never got a COVID-19 test AND
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms started AND
- Presents clearance from a healthcare provider AND
- The individual has been symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

If DOHMH or NYC Test & Trace Corps determine the individual is considered a close contact of a positive case, the individual can only return to school when all the following are met:

- The individual has completed a 14-day quarantine regardless of symptoms or COVID-19 test results since their last exposure to that case AND
- Presents clearance from a health care provider evaluation AND
- The student has been symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.
- Students in quarantine should participate in remote learning if feeling well enough.

### **15.5 School Closures**

Academies and parish schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn will continue to work to provide in-person learning as long as it is safe to do so. Academies and parish schools will follow guidance from local Board of Health officials as well as directives from the City of New York to ensure student safety.

*Per the New York City Department of Education “In order for schools to reopen and stay open, the percentage of positive tests in New York City must be less than 3% using a 7-day rolling average. Schools will need to close if the percentages of positive tests in New York City are equal to or more than 3% using a 7-day rolling average. It is important to note that the above threshold is just one trigger for closing schools but may not be the only trigger. For example, a decision to close schools would be made where there were recurrent, uncontrolled outbreaks of COVID-19 in schools, even if the overall case rates across New York City were to remain low.”*

In the event of positive cases reported within the school community, the following procedures will be followed per NYC Test & Trace Corps and DOHMH Investigations:

<b>Number of Cases</b>	<b>During Investigation (at least 24 hrs)</b>	<b>After Investigation</b>
One confirmed case in a classroom	Close classroom with positive case, transition to remote learning	Classroom remains closed for 14 days; Students and staff in close contact with positive case quarantine for 14 days
At least two cases linked together in school, same classroom	Close classroom with positive cases, transition to remote learning	Classroom remains closed for 14 days; Students and staff in close contact with positive cases quarantine for 14 days
At least two cases linked together in school, different classrooms	Close school building, transition to remote learning	Classroom or each case remains closed for 14 days; Students and staff in close contact with positive cases quarantine for 14 days. Additional school members are quarantined based on where the exposure was in the school (e.g., the locker room)
At least two cases linked together by circumstances outside of school (e.g., acquired infection by different setting and source)	Close school building, transition to remote learning	School opens after investigation; Classrooms remain closed for 14 days
At least two cases, not linked but exposure confirmed for each outside of school setting	Close school building, transition to remote learning	School opens after investigation; Classrooms remain closed for 14 days
Link unable to be determined	Close school building, transition to	Close school for 14 days

## 15.6 Distance Learning

Distance learning that is facilitated by a Catholic Academy or Parish School within the Diocese of Brooklyn is bound by all parts of the Acceptable Use Policy. As distance learning requires the use of other mediums such as teleconferencing platforms, virtual classrooms, digital file transfer and online work, there are other factors that need to be addressed.

- Device Usage – The use of school/academy or personal devices for distance learning is allowed. It is recommended that all school/academy issued accounts only be used for schoolwork purposes and that those accounts are signed out of after work is completed. All usage is governed by this policy.
- Video/Audio Conferencing – Video or audio-conferencing platforms may be used to facilitate class meetings and communication between teachers and students for teaching and group work. When using these platforms, participants must remember to conduct themselves in a professional manner commensurate with behavior expected in a physical classroom. Entering meetings other than those you are explicitly invited to by the coordinator (teacher, principal, etc.) is strictly prohibited. Trying to circumvent the security of a meeting, “hijacking” a presentation or displaying any objectionable content during a meeting is a direct violation of this policy and subject to the disciplinary actions contained within. Recording of video/audio conferences is also prohibited.
- File Transfer/Submission – The transmittal of files may be required at times for teachers to provide and students to submit work. The willful transfer of objectionable material, malicious content or any other such transmissions is a violation of this policy.
- Learning Platforms – The use of learning platforms such as ThinkCentral, Learn360, Mathletics, Microsoft 365, Google Classroom and others is for the sole purpose of supporting and furthering the education of students. Any use of these platforms for any other reason may be considered a violation of this policy.
- Any use or misuse of the technology provided for distance learning that interferes with the education of students or the operations of the school/academy is a violation of this policy.