



**MOTHER SETON ACADEMY
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

2020-2021

MISSION STATEMENT

Mother Seton inspires us to be attentive to the voice of grace. Mother Seton Academy is a faith-filled, nurturing and loving Catholic Community rooted in Gospel values. We provide academic excellence and encourage students to become responsible leaders, strong in integrity and willing to be of service.

PHILOSOPHY

The Mission of Mother Seton Academy School is to provide a faith-based school community in the Roman Catholic tradition. We encourage each student to reach his or her full potential in mind, body, and spirit through a variety of academic and extracurricular programs. Mother Seton Academy Catholic School provides a foundation that enables students to grow in faith, wisdom, and knowledge as disciples in Christ.

ADMISSIONS

Mother Seton Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national/ethnic origin, and/or disability if with reasonable accommodation the student can meet the educational programs or activities operated by the school.

Admissions Process:

Registration for PreK (Ages 3 & 4) through Grade 8 begins during Catholic Schools Week, which is celebrated during the last week in January. Registration applications and required forms are available in the school office and can also be downloaded from Mother Seton Academy's website.

Children admitted to PreK must be three or four years of age, and children admitted to kindergarten must be 5 years of age by October 1st of the school year.

Registration applications must include copies of birth and baptismal certificates, and current health and immunization records. All students applying for admission to Mother Seton Academy are required to be immunized. Religious exemptions are not accepted. In addition, applications for students entering Grades 1-8 must include academic and behavioral records, standardized test scores, and Child Study Team evaluations (if applicable). Evidence of successful completion of the grades in which students are currently enrolled must be submitted before acceptance.

Completed applications are reviewed by the principal, and parents will receive a letter confirming their child's enrollment status in Mother Seton Academy. As part of the admissions process, a meeting with the student, parent, and the school administration may be required prior to acceptance. Mother Seton Academy has the prerogative to accept/not accept a student(s) from enrolling.

All students accepted to Mother Seton Academy are on probation throughout the first trimester of the school year pending successful academic effort and conduct appropriate for Catholic school students.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

All students are expected to perform to the best of their ability. Each student's progress and effort is unique to the individual. Students completing a grade's work to the extent of their ability are to be promoted to the next grade level. When it becomes evident that it is necessary for a student to repeat the grade, parents will be notified by May. An approved summer school program or tutor may be accepted in order that the student is prepared for the next grade level. Approval must be given by the principal.

All students in Grade Eight need to pass all major subjects in order to be eligible for graduation. Any student who is not promoted in sixth, seventh or eighth grade may not repeat the year at Mother Seton Academy.

Assessments will be given periodically throughout the marking period at the teacher's discretion.

Criteria for Grouping: The following criteria may be used to group students in math:

- Past academic performance
- Standardized testing scores
- Teacher recommendations
- Study habits
- Placement test

Students will be monitored in their groups and adjustments may be made accordingly throughout the academic year.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Students in Kindergarten - Grade Eight may arrive to school between 8:30 A.M. and 8:45 A.M. and are to enter through the gym doors of the school. Supervision begins at 8:30 A.M.; therefore, students are not permitted in the building prior to that time unless they are attending the school's Before Care program or are participating in a scheduled curricular/extracurricular activity. Students arriving after 8:50 A.M. are considered tardy and must report to the school office upon arrival.

All pre-kindergarten students are to arrive by the preschool wing at their designated arrival time. Morning and full-day sessions begin at 9:15 A.M.

Students in K-8 are dismissed in the school gymnasium. Students who ride buses are dismissed first at 3:20 P.M. Students being transported by car are dismissed following the busses. For Pre-Kindergarten students in the morning session are dismissed at 11:45 A.M. and students in the full-day session are dismissed at 3:15 P.M.

Cars – When entering or leaving the building, extreme caution must be used. Parents who drive their children to school each day must park their cars in the parking lot and walk their children to the gym entrance of the school. Cars may not park in the handicapped spaces unless they display a handicapped sign/license plate.

Any time a student's dismissal method is changed, a note must be sent to the student's homeroom teacher at the beginning of the day, if changes need to be made, call the office early in the day. Please do not text individual teachers. Please ***do not*** call the office in the afternoon with changes in transportation unless there is an emergency. Classes should not be interrupted to give personal messages.

Bus – Bus transportation for eligible Kindergarten - Grade Eight students is provided by MOESC. Only authorized students may ride the bus to which they are assigned. Students are not permitted to go home on a different bus when visiting a friend's house after school.

Students are expected to conduct themselves properly while riding to and from school. Behavior infractions will be dealt with by the principal upon written notification from the bus driver. This may lead to a student being suspended from riding the bus.

Changes in Dismissal – Early dismissals during the school day interfere with the instructional process and are discouraged. Doctor or other appointments should be scheduled outside school hours whenever possible. A written request from the parent or guardian must be submitted on or before the requested day of early dismissal stating the reason for this request. Telephone requests will be honored only in cases of an emergency and upon satisfactory identification of the caller. A parent is to meet the child at the school office where he/she must sign the child out of school. No child will be permitted to wait in the schoolyard or on the street. ***Parents should not request an early dismissal after 2:45 P.M.***

ATTENDANCE

To receive the maximum benefit from classroom and instructional participation, it is important that a child report to school each day.

A parent must call the nurse's office before 8:45 A.M. and leave a detailed message to report a student's absence. A written note must be presented upon the child's return to school with the following information: child's name, grade, date of absence, reason for absence, and signature by a parent or guardian. If any student is absent for four or more days, a doctor's note must be presented to the school nurse. Any contagious disease must be reported as soon as diagnosed.

It is the student's responsibility to personally check with the teacher(s) to determine the work that is missed during an absence from school. Homework may be requested ***after*** a second day of absence. Excuses from physical education will be granted only upon a written statement from a parent/guardian. Excuses from

physical education for a long-term illness must have a written statement from the child's physician. In the event of an extended absence for illness is necessary, parents must contact the school for arrangements for necessary classwork, assignments, or home instruction. Absences due to extended vacations are not encouraged. Missed work will be assigned upon the student's return to school. Teachers are not responsible to assign work before the class receives the assignment or is taught the material. Parents assume the responsibility of teaching the material their child missed while on vacation.

Tardy and Truant Punctuality is very important in the education of a student. A student who is late must sign in at the office before reporting to homeroom. Students must be in their homeroom by the 9:00 A.M. bell. consequences may be issued to students who are habitually late. Students who are not in school or who are tardy without parental or school consent will be considered truant. Truancy will be considered a serious offense.

EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM

Mother Seton Academy's Before and After-Care Program is held on days that school is in session, including early dismissal days. Exceptions are listed on the school calendar. The program is held from 6:30 A.M. to 8:45 A.M. and dismissal time until 6:00 P.M. Information regarding the program is sent home in September and is available on the school website.

CAFETERIA

Students in Kindergarten - Grade Eight may bring lunch from home or buy lunch in the cafeteria. Milk as well as other drinks and snacks may also be purchased. Lunches are paid for on a daily basis. In an emergency, students may charge lunch for the day and pay the following day.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Reasonable care of the school building, furnishings, books, technology resources, and instructional materials is emphasized at all times. Parents are requested to render active support to this program. In this manner, operational and maintenance expenses can be held to a minimum.

Each child is required to have clean covers on her/his books at all times. If any book is torn or defaced, payment must be made for the replacement. Bookbags are to be used by all students for carrying schoolbooks. Marking or in any way destroying school property, including academy devices, is inexcusable and subject to disciplinary action. Payment may also be required.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE

Written notification of a change in address or telephone number is to be sent to the school office immediately when the change is made. This is necessary to keep school files as current as possible.

COMMUNICATION

Mutual understanding between home and school plays an important role in the development of the child. The following points will help produce a harmonious relationship and a level of understanding that is essential.

1. Weekly emails will be sent from the principal and materials will be posted regularly to the school website.
2. When in doubt regarding a school regulation, please contact the school office to clarify the question.
3. Faculty members will be happy to make arrangements for a conference with any parent at a time that is convenient for both parties. Arrangements may be made through the school office or by note to the teacher.
4. Parents may not disturb a student or a member of the teaching staff before school or during the school day.
5. Appointments with the principal may be made by calling the main office.
6. Parents must communicate with their children's teachers when and if difficulties arise, whether they be academic or disciplinary in nature, before contacting the principal.
7. The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the school. Just as the parents have the right to withdraw a child if desired, the school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

CURRICULUM

Mother Seton Academy upholds high standards for student learning through a well- rounded, value enriched curriculum that is reflected in standardized test scores and high school placement. Diocesan, National, and NJ Student Learning Standards are achieved through the various academic programs offered. The standards are starting points to ensure our students receive an excellent education as well as provide a framework for instruction. Teachers are responsible to follow the scope and sequence of the curriculum and to ensure they meet the needs of every student. Teachers are also encouraged to integrate curriculum in order to maximize instructional time and facilitate the transfer of skills and understanding. Areas of study include the following: Religion, English Language Arts, Math, Science, Physical Education/Health, Social Studies, Technology, World Language, Music, Art, Library Research, and Character Education.

DISCIPLINE

The purpose of discipline in a Catholic school is to bring about the self-discipline of each individual and of the Catholic school community as a whole so that student actions promote the Christian development of each member and thereby enhance the school community.

It is the responsibility of the school to help develop self-control. A sound policy of correction must be based on a clear understanding of motivation as well as a clear understanding of the nature of the child. Order is essential to the effective management of any school. It is maintained not only by a good teaching staff, efficient administration, and good educational programs, but also by the development of rational self-control in the child. To guarantee a good social and educational climate, it is important that students understand that acceptable standards of behavior will be expected at all times. Discipline will be administered when an individual's actions interfere with the right of teachers to teach and students to learn. Discipline plans are developed with the students and include the rules for the classroom and consequences when the rules are not followed. Emphasis will be placed on reinforcing positive behavior in the classroom. Students are reminded that any teacher/staff member has the right to correct students for discipline or dress code infractions.

Detention – Central detentions are held once a week from 7:30 A.M. - 8:20 A.M. A notice of detention will be sent home with students for parental signature prior to the detention being served. Detention slips must be signed and returned to the student's homeroom teacher to avoid further consequences. Three detentions in one marking period will be deemed as excessive and carry additional consequences and may result in school/community service, and the need for a student behavior contract which could lead to removal from the academy.

Detention may be assigned for the following reasons, although the list is not all-inclusive:

- Behavior which interrupts the educational process of others
- Chewing gum
- Disrespect exhibited to other students, faculty, or school volunteers
- Excessive tardiness to school or class
- Failure to complete classwork or homework
- Miscellaneous offenses handled by the principal
- Possession of unauthorized items such as toys, electronic devices, and cameras
- Violation of cell phone policy
- Violation of the current dress code

Suspension or Expulsion – The principal or her designee is responsible for determining whether an event warranting suspension has occurred. Credit will be given for student work performed during suspension when work is required for grading purposes. Expulsion may be warranted in the rare circumstance where either the student's interest would be better served in another environment or that the individual's behavior is a serious threat to the school community. This is specifically handled through the superintendent of catholic schools.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy – Mother Seton Academy subscribes to the Diocese of Trenton, Department of Catholic Schools, Policy #5050.6. This policy states, "A safe and civil environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation, bullying and like behaviors will not be tolerated as they are contrary to the mission of Roman Catholic Schools to educate the whole child in a God-centered environment and to facilitate growth and self-actualization."

Rights of Principal – The principal reserves the right to determine the seriousness of student behavior. The principal will also determine if certain cases of misconduct require stronger measures or police notification. The principal may waive any disciplinary rule for just cause at her discretion.

DRESS CODE

Regulation school uniforms are worn by all students in Pre-Kindergarten - Grade Eight. Uniforms are to be worn from the first day of school through the last day. Students are required to be neat and clean in appearance and shirts must be tucked in at all times.

All students must purchase the required official Mother Seton Academy uniform from Flynn & O'Hara. Official uniform requirements are marked with an *. The official uniform may be worn from September - June. Optional uniform choices are listed under both the winter and summer uniforms.

WINTER UNIFORMS– *Winter uniforms are worn during the months of November, December, January, February, & March.*

BOYS (GRADES K-8):

- Gray dress pants and belt
- White oxford shirt (short or long sleeved)
- Maroon school tie*
- Dark or white socks with school shoe
- Maroon V-neck school sweater/or vest with monogram*

GIRLS (GRADES K-3):

- Maroon plaid jumper *
- White blouse (short or long sleeved) with round collar
- Maroon knee socks or Maroon stockings with school shoes
- Maroon cardigan school sweater with monogram*

GIRLS (GRADES 6-8):

- Maroon plaid skirt
- White oxford shirt (short or long sleeved)
- Maroon sweater (cardigan or vest) with monogram
- Maroon knee socks or maroon stockings with school shoes

SUMMER UNIFORMS– *The summer uniform is an option that may be worn during the months of September, October, April, May, & June.*

BOYS (GRADES K-8):

- Maroon or white polo shirt with monogram
- Maroon shorts
- White or black socks with school shoes

Girls (GRADES K-3):

- Maroon or white polo shirt with monogram
- Maroon shorts
- White or black socks with school shoes

GIRLS (GRADES 4-8):

- Maroon or white polo shirt with monogram
- Maroon plaid skirt
- Maroon knee socks or maroon stockings with school shoes

SHOES: All shoes for boys and girls must be black, brown or tan; have non-marking soles; and heels that do not exceed one inch in height.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & PREK UNIFORM: Regulation uniforms are to be worn by all students (K-8) for physical education and daily for Pre-Kindergarten.

The uniform consists of school shorts, school t-shirt, school sweatshirt, school sweatpants and white socks. A well fitted tie or Velcro sneaker is to be worn with the physical education/PreK uniform.

MSA Spirit Wear is permitted to be worn for physical education. Sneakers should not have wheels or light up elements.

JEWELRY & HAIR: Necklaces (other than religious medals), bracelets, hair wraps, dangling earrings, nail polish/gels/tips and make-up are not permitted.

Simple watches may be worn by both boys and girls. Girls may wear small post or hoop earrings; however, earrings for boys are not permitted. Boys' hair should be short and well groomed. Hair length may not exceed the back of the shirt collar and should be above the eyes. Fad haircuts, including shaved designs and hair coloring are prohibited. Body piercing or body art is prohibited.

All clothing should be personally labeled. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen articles.

The Principal determines violation of the Dress Code.

EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS

Throughout the school year there will be monthly Wednesdays that have been set aside for faculty meetings. Additional days may be set aside for professional development for all faculty as designated by the Department of Catholic Education. All early dismissal days are indicated on the school calendar. Preschool students will be dismissed at 1:00 P.M. and K-8 students will be dismissed at 1:10 P.M. on these days.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

In the event of emergency closings, delayed openings, or emergency early dismissals, parents will be notified via the School Messenger Alert System.

Announcements of emergency closings or delayed openings will also be made over radio stations WOBN (11.7 AM - 92.7 FM) and WJLK (1310 AM - 94.3 FM), on News Channels 4 & 12, on Twitter and Facebook, and our school website (www.msaeu.org). If Howell Public Schools are closed or dismissed early for inclement weather, Mother Seton Academy will also close or dismiss early.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Mother Seton Academy offers several activities in which the students may participate if they meet the academic and physical requirements. The school does not intend to place total emphasis on these activities, and parents are asked to follow the same practice. However, for a well-rounded education, Mother Seton Academy offers a balance between academic studies and extra-curricular activities in order for students to develop intellectually, morally, emotionally, physically and culturally. Parental permission is required for students who participate in these programs.

A student who participates in any school sponsored activity must maintain

satisfactory conduct and passing grades in all subject areas. Students who fail to meet this requirement may not participate in the activity for a designated period of time. Students who participate in sports activities must have a yearly physical examination by a physician on file. Students who are absent from school may not participate or be present at any activity after school or be present on school property. Students are representing the academy and must maintain the appropriate dress code and behavior at all times.

FIELD TRIPS

Periodically, students are taken on field trips as part of their educational program. These trips are considered a privilege and a student may be denied participation if he/she fails to meet the academic or behavioral requirements. Such trips are made only with the written permission of the parent. When such trips are being planned, permission slips will be sent home to be signed and returned to school. Forms, other than the school form, will not be accepted. Any student who fails to submit the official signed form will not be able to participate. Telephone calls will not be accepted in lieu of the proper form being completed. A parent has the right to refuse to allow their child to participate in the field trip. Any student who does not participate in the field trip must report to school. All trips are supervised by the classroom teacher and other adults. The number of students assigned to each accompanying adult will be determined by the classroom teacher and approved by the school administration. The school is not liable for any accidents which may occur during the class trip. Parents may not take students home early from a class trip.

FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS

In compliance with New Jersey State Law, fire and emergency (ex. evacuation, lockdown) drills are held monthly throughout the school year. Students are trained to move quickly and quietly to their designated locations. Fire equipment is inspected in accordance with state law requirements.

FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

A Parental Statement of Agreement for each school year is signed between the Pastor and Parent/Guardian. This statement specifies the conditions governing children's attendance at Mother Seton Academy.

Tuition cost is used to help defray the cost of educating a student at Mother Seton Academy. A tuition and fee notice is sent home in January indicating the cost for the next school year. Supplemental fees are derived from the P.T.A. and both Parishes. Full cooperation by every family is expected in order to maintain the family tuition plan. ***Non-participation will result in an additional fee.*** All financial obligations must be kept current. Parents who do not pay tuition on time may be informed that their children must be transferred at the end of the marking period. School report cards will be withheld until all financial obligations are met. Refunds will not be given for any fees paid at registration.

Parents who experience unexpected financial difficulties should inform the Business Administrator immediately.

HEALTH/MEDICATION

A parent will be notified if their child becomes ill or is injured while at school. Emergency numbers for parents and two other people responsible for the child must be on file in the nurse's office and kept current.

Students needing medication prescribed by a doctor while at school must have a statement of permission signed by the doctor. A labeled prescription bottle with the student's name and dosage is required and must be left in the nurse's office. No staff member, including the nurse, may issue aspirin or medication to any student at any time if not doctor prescribed. This includes over the counter medication. If a student needs medication and the nurse is not present, parents will be called to administer it to their child. It is imperative that the school knows where to reach parents at all times. Medication must be dropped off/picked up by **parents**. Any medication left will be discarded at the end of the school year.

Parents are encouraged to practice good health habits with their children which will be reinforced at school.

The main phases of our Health Program are as follows:

1. The test for tuberculosis is given to pupils in accordance with the rulings of New Jersey State Board of Education. This test is to be performed by your family physician. The Mantoux Test is the only screening acceptable.
2. Health appraisal is required for students entering Kindergarten. It is the parent's responsibility to provide for such an exam and return a doctor's certificate to the school.
3. Vision tests are given to students in the following grades: K,2,4,6,8
4. Hearing tests are given to students in the following grades: K-3 and 7
5. Scoliosis screening is performed on every pupil in grades five and seven. Any pupil shall be exempt from the examination upon written request of a parent or guardian. Parents may be present for the examination.
6. All students are weighed and measured each year.
7. First-aid, if needed, is given by the nurse during the school day. The usual antiseptics used are hydrogen peroxide, first aid cream, and soap. If a child is allergic to these or other adhesive tapes of any particular substance, it is the parents' responsibility to inform the school nurse so that unnecessary problems can be avoided.
8. Parents will be notified if a child becomes ill at school. It is the parents' responsibility to provide transportation home. sponsored activities. It

is not a primary plan.

9. Medications, both prescription and non-prescription, will be given by the school nurse to students during the school day only if the permission to administer is given in writing by the doctor and parent or guardian. Medication must be in a labeled prescription bottle with the student's name and required dosage. This permission must be updated yearly.
10. Children are not permitted to carry prescribed or over-the-counter medications, except inhalers and EpiPens with a doctor's note.
11. Injuries occurring at home will not be treated in the health office.
12. After an illness, children will be allowed to remain in the building at lunch time, only if they have a written request from home.
13. **After any absence, a note from the parents must be presented to the school.** This note must state the student's name, the reason for the absence, the dates of the days absent, and the signature of the parent or guardian. After a four-day absence, a doctor's note must be presented to the school nurse.
14. If a child contracts a communicable disease, parents are asked to keep their child home from school until a physician gives permission for the student to return. The school must be notified immediately. State Law requires a doctor's certificate if a communicable disease is the cause of an absence.
15. Children who are sent home for fever/vomiting must stay home for a minimum of 24 hours prior to returning to school.
16. If a student contracts lice, the parents must notify the school. After the child is treated, he/she must be checked by the school nurse before entering the classroom.
17. School insurance is provided for all students in September. This insurance is in addition to a family's regular health plan. The insurance covers students during school hours and while participating in school activities.

HOMEWORK

The school's policy is to assign homework, either written or study, as a carryover of the work that has been covered in class. This home study provides a reinforcement and enrichment of material learned in school.

Parents are asked to schedule a homework period and a special place for their children to study each evening and make certain that the work is completed neatly and legibly. Parents should not do their children's homework, but they should supervise home study and train their children to present their work to them for approval. Advice and direction are sometimes needed, but children develop self-confidence and a sense of responsibility when working independently. If definite study has not been assigned for the night, it is

advisable for students to review their work in preparation for the next day's classes.

All classes may have homework daily. Long-range projects may also be assigned. All work missed through absences, etc. must be made up and presented to the teachers.

INSURANCE

The school provides School Accident Insurance for all students during school hours and while participating in school-sponsored activities. This insurance is not a primary plan, but can be used in conjunction with a Family Health Plan.

LIBRARY

The library is available to all students in PreK - Eighth Grade. Teachers may bring their class into the library, or they may send individual students to conduct research. Materials that are borrowed should be returned promptly. A fine will be charged for overdue books. Destruction or loss of any book necessitates payment for the full amount needed to replace the book.

LOST & FOUND

Articles that have been found should be taken to the office. Lost articles can be claimed by proper identification. It is a good idea to clearly mark items with the owner's name so they can be returned without delay. This also discourages unauthorized borrowing. The school is not responsible for any items that are lost or stolen.

PARENTS' RIGHT TO SCHOOL RECORDS

Parents may review their children's records in the presence of the school principal. This request must be made in writing to the principal. The school will respond to the request within twenty-four hours. The school abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent 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 court-certified copy of the court order.

The School Board

The Mother Seton Academy School Board members are appointed by the Co-Directors of the school. The School Board is part of the educational mission of the parishes which the pastoral leadership is responsible. The role of the school board is to make recommendations to the school administration to ensure that the administration is being responsive to the values, beliefs and priorities of the school and parish communities.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

The education of children involve a cooperative enterprise between home and school. Parents are urged to contribute suggestions and viewpoints concerning the educational needs of their children. The most efficient means to carry out this privilege is to become an active member of the P.T.A. The objectives of this organization are as follows:

1. To help parents and teachers develop a mutual understanding and appreciation of the ideals of Catholic education; namely, message, community, service and worship.
2. To provide programs, opportunities, and funds which:
 - a. Assist the children to develop a personal and community life-style grounded on Catholic teaching and Gospel Values.
 - b. Foster thereligious, intellectual, physical, cultural and social development of each child.
 - c. Enhance the ability of parents to participate actively and effectively in their child's education.

The goal of the P.T.A. is to respect and foster the established policies and practices as set forth by the Bishop, the Department of Catholic Education, the Pastor, and the Principal. The P.T.A. belongs to the Regional and Diocesan Organizations. P.T.A. Membership shall be open to all parents and guardians of students, the administration. and faculty.

PHONES

Use of the office telephone by students is limited to emergency calls only. Calls for permission to go to a friend's home or to ask a parent to bring in forgotten items from home will not be permitted. Children should be prepared for school on a daily basis. Personal cell phones are discouraged. However, if parents deem it necessary for their children to carry cell phones to school, completed Student Cell Phone Registration Forms must be submitted to the school office. Student cell phones that are brought into school must be registered and turned off. The phones are kept on the student. Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action. The school administration reserves the right to search cell phones.

PICTURES

School portraits and class pictures are taken yearly. The dates when these portraits and class pictures are taken are listed on the school calendar. The purchase of these portraits/class pictures is optional.

The school reserves the right to use pictures of students in publications such as school and local newspapers and the school website. Parents who do not wish their children's pictures to be used in this manner must notify the principal in writing prior to the beginning of the school year. An authorization form will be sent to all families and is also available on the school website (www.msaedu.org).

RELIGIOUS EXERCISES

The development of each child's faith life is fostered through times of prayer, participation in religious celebrations, liturgy, services, and the study of the scriptures, thereby providing a Christian foundation and climate of faith to mature. Children are encouraged to develop a daily prayer life, to receive the Sacraments on an on-going basis, and to perform acts of Christian service. Non-Catholic students are expected to participate in all religious activities except the Sacramental Life of the Catholic Church. Children in Grade Two will be prepared to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. Students in Grade Eight will be prepared to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

REPORT CARDS & PROGRESS REPORTS

Reports cards for K-2 students are available to be accessed by parents using Parent Portal three times during the school year in order that parents are informed of the status of their children with regard to academic subjects and personal traits. Discussions of pupil progress and grades are provided by parent-teacher conferences or by special appointments with teachers. A schedule for these meetings is issued in the beginning of the school year. Progress reports are issued to students in Kindergarten - Grade Two between the marking periods to keep parents informed of the children's progress. Parents of students in Grades Three - Eight receive access to their children's progress through Parent Portal. Cooperation between the school and home is absolutely essential for the students' successful academic achievement.

The marking code for Kindergarten students for major disciplines consists of a set of developmentally appropriate indicators as follows:

P - Proficient	E - Emerging
D - Developing	N - Not Yet Evident

The marking code for first and second grade students consists of a set of performance indicators specific to these grade levels as follows:

O - Progress is Outstanding	S - Progress is Satisfactory
G - Progress is Good	N - Progress is Needed

The marking code for students in Grades Three - Five consists of a letter grade associated with a numerical range as follows:

A (93%-100%)	Outstanding
B (85%-92%)	Good
C (76%-84%)	Satisfactory
D (70%-75%)	Needs Improvement
F (<69%)	Not Meeting Curriculum Expectations

Sixth through Grade Eight students will receive a numerical grade for each major discipline. Grades that are less than or equal to 69% are considered failing grades and do not meet curriculum expectations.

ACADEMIC HONOR ROLL

Primary Honor Roll Requirements (Grades 2 & 3)

1. Grade 2 is required to have a (G) in in all major subjects
2. Grade 3 is required to have a (B) in all major subjects
3. A minimum of a (2) in minor subject areas
4. A minimum of an (S) in conduct

Gold Honor Roll Requirements (Grades 4-8)

1. Grades 4-5 are required to have an (A) in all major subjects
2. Grades 6-8 must maintain an average of a (93) in all major subjects
Students in Algebra are required to maintain a (90) average.
3. Maintain a "2" in minor subject areas
4. Maintain an "S" in conduct

Silver Honor Roll Requirements (Grades 4-8)

1. Grades 4-5 are required to have an (A) in at least three major subjects; no grade may be lower than a (B)
2. Grades 6-8 must maintain an average of a (90) in at least major subjects;
No grade average may be below an (85)
3. Maintain a "2" in minor subject areas
4. Maintain an "S" in conduct

Bronze Honor Roll Requirements (Grades 4-8)

1. Grades 4-5 are required to have a (B) in all major subjects
2. Grades 6-8 must maintain an average of a (85) in all major subjects; No Students taking Algebra must maintain an grade average of (82)
3. Maintain a “2” in minor subject areas
4. Maintain an “S” in conduct

ROLE OF PARENTS

To assist the school in maintaining quality education, there must be effective communication between parents, students, teachers, and the administration. To help young people develop the self-control necessary to succeed to the best of their ability, adults are obligated to teach and give good example, in order to develop good habits of behavior in their children as well as proper attitudes toward school.

To help children in school, all parents should:

1. Recognize that the administration and teachers take the place of the parents while children are in school.
2. Teach and explain to children respect for law, for authority, for the rights of others, and for private and public property.
3. Talk with their children about school programs, activities, and share an interest in pupil progress. Praise improvement demonstrated by the children on progress reports.
4. Insist on prompt and regular school attendance and comply with attendance rules and procedures.
5. Be responsible for periodic health examinations.
6. Make every effort to attend individual and group parent-teacher conferences.
7. Arrange for a time and place for their children to complete homework assignments.
8. Work with the school in a cooperative effort to carry-out recommendations made in the best interest of the children.
9. Understand and comply with the rules of the school concerning pupil conduct and cooperate with the school to enforce disciplinary action.
10. Explain and review Catholic-Christian behavior with their children.
11. Parents, who are Catholic, must be practicing Catholics; accept responsibility for their children's Sunday Mass attendance; and live Catholic values in the home.

SCHOOL HOURS

Kindergarten - Grade Eight are guided by the following times:

8:45 A.M. First Bell
9:00 A.M. Late Bell, Prayers and Announcements
9:15 A.M. Classes Begin
3:10 P.M. Prayers and Announcements 3:20
P.M. Dismissal for Bus Students
3:25 P.M. Dismissal for Car Students

The school will not accept responsibility for students before 8:30 A.M. Students may enter the building as they disembark from the bus. Students must leave the building by 3:30 P.M. When waiting for activities (athletics, social, etc.), the students must be supervised by an authorized adult. Any student not picked-up on time after dismissal will be placed in the Extended Program where charges for that service will be incurred. Students may not be in the building at any other time unless they are supervised by an authorized adult. Periodically, students will be dismissed at 1:20 P.M. for staff development. Exact dates will be printed on the yearly calendar.

SCHOOL YEARBOOK

Students' school pictures are displayed in a school yearbook. Yearbooks are available for purchase for all students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade Eight. Information regarding purchasing a yearbook is included in a school newsletter and emailed to all parents.

SEARCHES

The school reserves the right to search all school property such as desks and cubbies, and anything that is brought on school property.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

The Department of Catholic Schools, Diocese of Trenton has selected Renaissance Star 360 assessments as the standardized testing tool for the 2019-2020 school year. This comprehensive interim and formative assessment suite delivers fast, valid data on individual student progress in reading and mathematics. The computer-adaptive assessments will be administered each trimester in October, January, and May to students in Grades Two through Eight. Student scores are immediately accessible to teachers; therefore, allowing for the monitoring of student progress and the adjustment of instruction to meet individual needs. Parents will receive reports each trimester showing student growth.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES/PROGRAMS

Mother Seton Academy provides students with a range of activities for personal, spiritual, and academic enrichment. Students are encouraged to pursue their creative talents in activities that foster a well-rounded individual. The following programs are offered to the students of Mother Seton Academy:

- Altar Servers
- Athletics
- Band
- Choir
- Dances
- Drama
- National Junior Honor Society
- Religious Service
- Scholastic & Fine Art Competitions
- Social Justice Club
- Student Council
- Yearbook

TECHNOLOGY

Mother Seton Academy is a leader in the use of technology to promote learning for the 21st Century. Students are instructed in a curriculum aligned to national technology literacy standards in a fully equipped computer lab. Additional computers are available throughout the school, and school-wide access to the internet is provided through a broadband connection with content-filtering software. A **1:1 laptop/ipad program** for fourth through eighth grade students provides access to digital textbooks and gives students the ability to create presentations, conduct research, and work collaboratively across the disciplines.

Students have the opportunity to learn the basic elements of computer programming and robotics through the use of various coding programs. All classrooms have interactive whiteboards that facilitate presentations to the entire class. In addition, a wide array of educational technology is available to each class, including iPads, digital microscopes, and scientific probes. A Technology Acceptable Use Policy is sent home for student and parent signature in September of each school year. Students who do not comply with usage rules may forfeit their computer privileges.

Student Participation on Social Networking Sites

Social Networking sites are a part of 21st century culture for students today. There are many beneficial aspects to social networking sites; however, it is important that students understand that they not only have the right to take advantage of such sites but also the responsibility to participate in these sites in an appropriate manner. While the values and ideals of the Roman Catholic faith should be followed in posting comments on a social networking site, it must be stated emphatically that parents are the first and best teachers for their children, and so, they bear the greatest responsibility in monitoring their children's online activities. Academy owned devices are continually monitored for infractions.

The school administrator reserves the right to conduct periodic internet searches in order to determine whether students have violated this policy. Any unauthorized activities on social networking sites that take place on school equipment, on school property, or during school hours and violate the acceptable use policy, which every student has signed, will merit appropriate disciplinary action.

Social media postings on private or personal sites such as but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, or Snapchat are not the responsibility of the school or school administrators. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to provide guidance to children and regulate their use of social media. The following points, while not comprehensive in nature, provide initial guidance. No student should: infringe upon another's copyright or trademark; post anything that is sexually explicit, illegal, unethical, or harassing in nature; post anything that harms the reputation of or causes embarrassment to the diocese, school, teachers, or classmates; or interact with current administrators or teachers on a social networking site. The Academy's Social Media policy is available on the school website (msaedu.org)

VISITORS

All visitors, including parent volunteers, except at the times of public functions, must sign in/out at the school office and receive a badge before walking through the school. Parents are to schedule conferences in advance at times convenient for both teachers and parents. Conferences will be scheduled at such times that they do not interrupt or interfere with a teacher's class. Students are not permitted to have visitors during the school day.

TRANSFERS

Parents of children who are leaving the school and transferring to another school should inform the principal one week in advance in order that transfer papers may be prepared. No records will be sent until a request form is received from the new school and all financial obligations are paid in full and cleared through the bank.

BIRTHDAY INVITATIONS

Birthday party invitations may only be distributed in class if they are going to every member of the class. We may not distribute telephone numbers or addresses of students.

SCHOOL/PRINCIPAL RIGHT TO AMEND

The principal retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause and parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.