

O'CONNELL COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

1320 TREMONT  
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77550

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

2021-2022

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*"The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.  
And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; you shall teach them diligently to your children." Deuteronomy 4:8*

## O'CONNELL COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL 2021-2022 STUDENT/PARENT MANUAL

This manual explains the philosophy and operating procedures of O'Connell College Preparatory School. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the information contained in this manual. The Parent/Student Handbook reflects the policies of O'Connell College Preparatory School for the 2021-2022 school year. Please read this document carefully and sign the attached agreement. This agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of O'Connell College Preparatory School during the 2021-2022 school year.

This Student/Parent Manual is subject to amendments as the school year progresses. Instances may arise which will require school administration and board to make necessary changes for the betterment of O'Connell College Preparatory School.

Any future publications approved by the O'Connell Foundation Board are school policy; therefore, this document will not be all-inclusive. If written Board directives or policies on a subject do not exist, written guidelines, decisions, and actions of the administration will prevail.

In addition to the policies included in this publication, regulations from the Texas Education Agency and the Texas Association of Parochial and Private Schools (TAPPS) will be followed in the administration of the school.

**O'CONNELL COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL** is a 4-year co-educational parochial/private high school that offers college preparatory programs at its campus located in Galveston. The current teacher/student average ratio is 1:10. Acceptance for admission to O'Connell is based primarily on the prospective student's past school record, potential for achievement in an academic setting, and the recommendation of his/her current principal. Application procedures include completion of application, principal recommendation, teacher recommendations, entrance exam scores, review of transcripts, test scores from the previous school attended, previous attendance records, and previous discipline records.

**MISSION STATEMENT:** O'Connell College Preparatory School seeks to develop competence, conscience, and compassion in our students through a challenging program of spiritual, academic, social and extra-curricular activities.

**PHILOSOPHY:** The philosophy of O'Connell is enriched in Catholic tradition, which promotes goodness, faith in action, discipline, and responsibility in education.

**HISTORICAL SKETCH:** O’Connell College Preparatory School is the only Catholic secondary school in Galveston County. O’Connell resulted from the consolidation of three previously existing Catholic Schools in 1968:

- Dominican High School (established in 1882, Dominican was an all-girls school owned and operated by the Dominican Sisters).
- Kirwin High School (founded in 1927, Kirwin was an all-boys school owned by the Diocese of Galveston-Houston, operated by the Christian Brothers),
- Ursuline Academy (organized in 1847, Ursuline was an all-girls elementary and high school owned and operated by the Ursuline Sisters).

In the autumn of 1967, the religious orders operating the three schools agreed on consolidation as a means of continuing Catholic secondary education in Galveston, offering a broader curriculum than was possible in any of the three smaller high schools. The Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese, Bishop John Morkovsky, S.T.D., approved the plan. He appointed a Board of Trustees composed of laymen and priests to plan and bring about the consolidation in cooperation with the Diocese, the three religious orders, and the Catholic parishes of Galveston County. The Board named the newly created school after the Right Rev. Monsignor Daniel P. O’Connell, P.A., Pastor of St. Mary’s Cathedral in Galveston from 1933 until his death in 1966, and a longtime friend of Catholic education.

The Catholic Diocese of Galveston-Houston decided to close O’Connell High School at the end of the 2003-2004 school year. The seven dedicated board members, with the support of O’Connell alumni and many other people and organizations from Galveston County refused to let O’Connell close. As of July 1, 2004, O’Connell College Preparatory School has continued the rich Catholic beliefs and practices under the direction of the seven dedicated directors and the support of the Galveston-Houston Catholic Archdiocese.

**ACCREDITATION and MEMBERSHIPS:** O’Connell College Preparatory School is accredited by the Texas Education Agency through the Texas Catholic Schools Accreditation Agency and is a member of TAPPS (Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools) and Texas Association of College Admissions Counselors. All policies formulated by the school are within the policies of the Archdioceses of Galveston-Houston.

**OPEN RECORDS:** Schools maintain all records of students in all schools as prescribed in the Texas Open Records Law Article 6262-17A and the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. According to FERPA all personal information relating to the student, which is kept in school records, may not be released to non-educational agencies without the consent of parents or legal guardians or adult students (those 18 or over). All student records are open to both student and parent/guardians by appointment with the principal. Directory information, which can be disclosed by all school officials to educational agencies, includes:

- a) student’s name and address, and telephone listing;
- b) date and place of birth.
- c) participation in activities and sports.
- d) height and weight of athletic team member.
- e) dates of attendance.

- f) degrees, honors and awards received.
- g) school most recently attended.
- h) grade level.
- i) photograph.

Students have the right to determine which test scores are to be released to colleges. Under no circumstances can directory information be disclosed to private or profit-making entities other than employers, prospective employers, or representatives of the news media unless parent/guardian or legal adult student gives consent.

**HARDSHIP FEE POLICY:** Student(s) with hardship conditions which result in their inability to pay fees or tuition may request assistance by having their parent or guardian discuss possible grants and scholarships with School Administration at 409-765-5534.

**CHILD ABUSE:** State law governing child abuse shall be followed. Any teacher, administrator, other employee of the O'Connell College Preparatory School, or any other person who has cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect, shall make such reports as required by law. FAMILY CODE 3401.08.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT:** Sexual harassment of students or staff is a form of discrimination on the basis of sex under Title IX. Title IX is the federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in schools. Sexual harassment and sexual violence are both forms of prohibited sex discrimination in schools, and much of what we might call "bullying" is actually prohibited harassment.

**GUARDIAN/RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS:** Students must reside with a parent or legal guardian. Any change in address should be reported to the office immediately. Extraordinary circumstances must be brought to the principal. The school 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, 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.

**PERMANENT RECORDS:** Semester grades are issued in January and June and are the only grades entered on a student's official transcript. The transcript is the official record of scholastic work accomplished during high school. Transcripts are forwarded to colleges or universities upon request by the student provided all financial obligations have been met. A student's official file consists of the academic transcript, academic testing, health records, and emergency contact information.

**NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY AS TO STUDENTS:** O'Connell College Preparatory School admits students of any race, color, nationality and ethnicity to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies,

administrative policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic and other school-administered programs. Inquiries regarding these policies should be directed to the principal at 409-765-5534.

**WEATHER ANNOUNCEMENTS:** When weather conditions require a change in the school schedule, announcements will be made on KHOU. The announcement will be one of two kinds: that (a) school will be canceled for the day, or (b) the opening of school will be delayed. O’Connell will generally follow the decision of GISD schools. Parents will also be contacted by IRIS-Immediate Response Information System.

**SCHOOL HOURS:** OCPS is open daily from 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. on school days. The school will not accept responsibility for supervision until 7:30 a.m. or after 3:45 p.m. except in conjunction with a school-supervised activity. For school-supervised activities, responsibility extends from the beginning of the activity until the activity is complete.

**CELL PHONES:** Parents wishing to contact their child during the school day should call the office (765-5534) and leave a message. The student will be notified of the message at the earliest possible time. Cell phones are **not** to be used during the school day or in the school building (other than at lunch time, or if required for a class/lesson), must not be visible, and should remain in the off mode at all other times. **Therefore, parents may not contact their students using these devices during school hours except during lunch time. Detention will be issued to students who use cell phones during any other times.**

**TUITION AND FEES: 2021-2022 School Year**

TUITION AND REQUIRED FEES		SPORTS PARTICIPATION FEE	
Tuition	\$ 8900.00	Football	\$250.00
Registration Fee	\$ 400.00	Volleyball	\$150.00
Technology Fee	\$ 200.00	Basketball	\$150.00
		Cheerleading	\$150.00
		Soccer	\$150.00
Fees include:		Baseball/Softball	\$150.00
Science and lab fees		Golf	\$150.00
PSAT testing		Track	\$150.00
Religious retreats		Swimming	\$150.00
Student insurance		Tennis	\$150.00
Elective fees		*** All season package	\$450.00
SAT Prep classes			
ACT Prep Classes			
International Student Fee	\$1000.00		
Total cost	\$9,500		



The \$9,500.00 tuition and fees cover all classes and activities that are required for graduation. Registration fee of \$400.00, and technology fee of \$200.00 must be paid when the student officially registers for the 2021-2022 school year. Registration fees are non-refundable.

A student may not begin classes until this fee is paid.

Three methods of payment of tuition and fees:

1. Pay total tuition and fees before August 15, 2021
2. Pay ½ tuition and fees before August 15, 2021 and ½ tuition and fees before December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021
3. \*\*Pay 1/10 or 1/12 (excluding Seniors) of total tuition and fees (excluding registration fee) each month starting August 15, 2021:
  - \$25.00 fee for insufficient funds
  - \$25.00 late fee if payment is not received within 10 calendar days e.g. August 25<sup>th</sup>)
  - \*\*Payment contract must be in place when this option is chosen. ACH drafting from checking or savings account only (mandatory).

- Registration fees must be paid by the first day of classes.
- All sports fees must be paid by the first game of each sport.
- Students who leave during the academic year will be charged tuition through the end of the month during which he or she withdraws. Registration fees are non-refundable. Records will not be released to another institution until all balances are cleared through the Business Office.

## **TUITION PAYMENTS**

Tuition and fee rates are set and approved by the School Board each year. Prior to attending classes, a registration fee of \$400 and technology fee of \$200 must be paid. Tuition payments are then set up on an annual, semester or monthly basis. All paperwork regarding tuition payments must be on file in the business office. Late tuition payments or failed payments (insufficient funds) are subject to a \$25 service fee, payable to the school.

Additionally, if a child is withdrawn from O'Connell prior to the end of the school year, the family will be responsible for paying the monthly tuition amount for the remaining months in which their child was enrolled. Records will not be released until this financial obligation is met. Records may be released on the same day for payments made by credit card, money order, or cashier's check. Payments made by personal check are subject to a 5-7 business day hold (for payment to clear) prior to the release of records.

## **DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS**

Any student whose account becomes 60 days in arrears will be excluded from class attendance until the account is made current. The principal may waive this restriction at his or her discretion upon the submission of a satisfactory payment plan in writing from the parent or guarantor. The Principal or the Finance Director should be consulted beforehand about the school's requirements for any such plan. Student records will not be released or transferred to other schools in cases where student accounts are in arrears. Students will not be permitted to graduate with their class if accounts are not paid in full. Students may not attend O'Connell classes at the beginning of the year if an outstanding balance remains from a previous year.

### **O'CONNELL FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS**

Mr. Wayne Mallia	President
Mr. John Cartwright	Treasurer
Fr. Jude Ezuma	Member
Ms. Tammy Jacobs	Member
Mrs. Cindy Cagle	Member

### **O'CONNELL STAFF/FACULTY 2021-2022**

#### **ADMINISTRATION/STAFF**

Mrs. Patti Abbott	Principal
Mrs. Christine Badger	Dean of Students
Mr. Jonathan Jourdan	IT
Mrs. Paula Lamb	School Counselor
Mr. Derek Martin	Athletic Director
Mrs. Shanna Pennington	Director of Finance
Ms. Chantal Rodriguez	Director of Admissions

#### **FACULTY:**

Mrs. Christine Badger	English/German
Mrs. Nina Corley	Grant Writer/Biology/Computer Science
Miss Olivia Dillon	Art
Mrs. Suzanne Hogan	Theology I-IV
Mrs. Roxanne Hogan	Algebra I and II; Geometry
Mrs. Paula Lamb	History/Speech
Mr. Eric Martinez	Aviation
Mr. Tyler Morrison	Anatomy & Physiology
Mrs. Cynda Mullikin	College Prep/Freshman Seminar
Ms. Tabitha Peña	STEM/Government and Economics/IT/Calculus/Physics
Mrs. Claudia Stevens	Grammar & Composition
Mr. James Sturrock	Spanish/ Music/ Horticulture/Social Studies/Maritime

## DEPARTMENT CHAIRS:

Mrs. Christine Badger  
Mrs. Roxanne Hogan

Arts & Humanities  
Mathematics & Science

## TEACHER EMAIL ADDRESSES

Christine Badger	<a href="mailto:christine.badger@oconnellprep.com">christine.badger@oconnellprep.com</a>
Olivia Dillon	<a href="mailto:olivia.dillon@oconnellprep.com">olivia.dillon@oconnellprep.com</a>
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Eric Martinez	<a href="mailto:eric.martinez@oconnellprep.com">eric.martinez@oconnellprep.com</a>
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Claudia Stevens	<a href="mailto:claudia.stevens@oconnellprep.com">claudia.stevens@oconnellprep.com</a>
James Sturrock	<a href="mailto:james.sturrock@oconnellprep.com">james.sturrock@oconnellprep.com</a>

## ADMISSIONS.

**ENTRANCE CRITERIA:** O'Connell is a College Preparatory School. All students who enter O'Connell must meet the school's entrance criteria. The evaluation criteria include:

- Recommendations from previous teachers and administrators
- Scores on their most recent standardized test, including TAKS or the Stanford Achievement Test.
- Attendance, conduct, report card and transcripts from the student's previous school.

## ADMISSION FROM PREVIOUS SCHOOL/DISCIPLINARY ISSUES:

If a prospective student has been disciplined at his/her previous school and directed to attend an alternative school, the student must serve their term of punishment (discipline) before he/she can be admitted into O'Connell College Preparatory School.

If a prospective student has been expelled from his/her previous school, O'Connell will review all documentation pertaining to the expulsion and render a decision to either accept or decline the student in question.

## SENIOR TRANSFER CRITERIA

- Must meet the O'Connell entrance criteria.
- To be able to graduate from OCPS students must:
  - Meet all O'Connell graduation requirements.
  - Be in attendance for at least the last semester of school before graduation.

- Pass all classes taken at O’Connell during the last semester of school, even if the courses are not needed for graduation.
- Meet the O’Connell attendance requirements.
- Meet the O’Connell community service requirements (hours are based on student enrollment date and prorated at 2.5 hours per month)
- Comply with all O’Connell financial requirements.

Students who enter O’Connell after the first nine-week reporting period of the fall semester must complete all O’Connell graduation requirements and any additional requirements set by the previous school.

**STUDENT WITHDRAWAL POLICY:** Students transferring to another school from O’Connell must meet with the principal for an exit interview and follow withdrawal procedures. These procedures include obtaining grades to date of leaving, obtaining signatures from the financial office, the Athletic Director and the Counselor (ensuring all debts are paid and O’Connell property returned). A form for this process is available from the front office. O’Connell will not forward records or transcripts until all materials belonging to OCPS are returned and all debts are settled including paying all tuition due up to the time of withdrawal. Tuition fees paid through the month enrolled are non-refundable.

**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:** The O’Connell College Preparatory program prepares the students for the state’s top two graduation plans, the Recommended and Distinguished.

<b>English</b>	4.0 credits To include English I, II, III, IV
<b>Math</b>	4.0 credits To include Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II
<b>Science</b>	4.0 credits To include the following: Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The fourth year of science may be selected from an additional lab-based course.
<b>Other Languages</b>	3.0 credits -Distinguished Plan 2.0 credits-Recommended Plan The distinguished plan requires 3 years in the same language.
<b>Social Studies</b>	4.0 credits To include World Geography, World History, United States History and Government/Economics
<b>Theology</b>	4.0 credits including Theology I, II, III and IV
<b>Physical Education</b>	1.5 credits Athletics, drill team and cheerleading may substitute for physical education credits. One (1) PE credit may be earned each school year.

<b>Speech</b>	0.5 credit
<b>Health</b>	0.5 credit
<b>Fine Arts</b>	1.0 credit
<b>Electives</b>	1.0 credit

**COMMUNITY SERVICE:** All students are required to accumulate and report 25 hours of community service each school year. The Theology department will organize and review all student community service hours. Record keeping of projects and hours completed will be maintained by the Administration. Seniors are responsible for a senior project which encompasses 50-100 hours.

**GRADES AND REPORT CARDS:** Online grade books are open to students and parents in CANVAS, progress reports are distributed to student's half-way through each nine-week period, and report cards indicating student performance are emailed quarterly. Parents are urged to request a conference with their student's teacher if they wish to discuss their academic performance. Faculty members are available to meet with parents by appointment and may be contacted by email. CANVAS access codes will be available for parents to enable them to access grades and assignments.

**GPA COMPUTATION:** Adding the numerical semester grade of each course attempted at the high school level and dividing the total number by the number of courses attempted determines a student's grade point average. Honors, AP, and Dual-Credit classes carry 10 weighted grade-points for each semester in which the student completes the designated advanced class with a passing semester grade. Credit earned in summer school, before entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade, or through credit-by-exam or correspondence is not used to calculate a student's GPA. Credit Recovery Courses are given a Pass or Fail, which does not affect GPA computation.

**GRADING SYSTEM:** The school year is divided into four 9-week grading periods, with 2 reporting periods each semester. O'Connell College Preparatory School reports all grades including:

- Four and one-half week progress reports
- Nine-week grade reporting
- Semester examinations
- Semester averages

Grades are on a numerical basis, with the letter grade equivalent show below:

90% - 100%	=	A (excellent)
80% - 89%	=	B (above average)
70% - 79%	=	C (average)
Below 70%	=	F (non-mastery)

If a student fails the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of a course and the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester grade is high enough to average with the first semester to equal a grade of at least 70%, the full credit will be awarded for both semesters. However, if the student passes the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of a course but fails the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester, then the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester must be repeated to earn the full unit of credit.

**SEMESTER GRADE:** Each semester grade is comprised of the two nine-week grades and the semester examination grade. These grades are to be averaged as follows:

First nine-week average	=	40% of the semester average
Second nine-week average	=	40% of the semester average
Semester exam	=	20% of the semester average

### **GRADING PERCENTAGES PER COURSE**

Homework	=	15%
Quizzes	=	25%
Tests	=	60%

### **STUDENT CLASSIFICATION FOR PROMOTION TO NEXT GRADE LEVEL:**

0.0 – 6.0 credits	=	Freshman
6.5 – 13.0 credits	=	Sophomore
13.5 – 18.5 credits	=	Junior
19.0 or more credits	=	Senior

Student classification is determined at the beginning of the school year. The classification does not change at the end of the fall semester unless the student is graduating at the end of the spring semester.

**TESTING GUIDELINES:** Students must have a minimum of two major grades per quarter. These grades would be for cumulative tests, essays, or projects. Tests may be objective, essay, or a combination of the two. When a teacher schedules a major test, it should be put on the testing calendar in the teachers' workroom. No more than two major tests should be scheduled for the same group of students per day.

**VALEDICTORIAN and SALUTATORIAN:** The highest-ranking student in the graduating class is designated Valedictorian and the second highest ranking student is designated Salutatorian. The rank is based on eight semesters. In case of a tie, co-valedictorians or co-salutatorians are named. To be eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian status, the student must have attended O'Connell for at least four consecutive semesters, including the entire senior year.

**ACADEMIC PROBATION:** The policy of academic probation is a positive means of identifying and assisting students who are performing below the minimum scholastic standards. Probation procedures are designed (1) to protect the student from prolonged unsatisfactory performance, thereby increasing his or her opportunity to succeed and (2) to assist the student in reevaluating his or her educational goals.

New students or incoming freshman will remain on academic probation until the completion of the first grading period. Students who fail two or more courses during one semester are placed on scholastic probation for a period of two quarters. They will be required to meet regularly with the principal to form, monitor, and evaluate a plan for academic success. At the end of the probationary period, students are removed from probation if they are not failing any courses. If, after the second

quarter of probation, students continue to fail two or more courses, they may be asked to reconsider their educational goals and withdraw from O'Connell College Preparatory School.

O'Connell College Preparatory School reserves the right to dismiss or suspend any students whose academic progress is deemed unsatisfactory, or whose conduct is deemed detrimental at the discretion of the teachers and the principal. Our goal is to extend the academic success of our students.

## **ADVANCED PLACEMENT/HONORS**

The academic committee, based on previous grades, teacher recommendation, test scores, and seriousness of purpose, may place students in Honors, AP, and dual credit classes. Honors classes may cover some of the same course content as regular classes but require higher level thinking skills in the classroom activities and assignments. Advanced Placement courses require the student to take the College Board's AP exam at the culmination of the course, enabling the student to be awarded college level credit if his score meets the minimum requirements of the college to which he is admitted. Students who do not maintain a passing average in an AP or Honors class will be moved to the same class at the regular level.

The criteria for placement into the Honors, AP, and dual credit program include the following:

- A final grade of 80 or above in the previous advanced level of the subject or
- A final grade of 90 or above in the previous regular level of the subject and 80% or better on the most recent standardized test in the subject area and approval of the Academic Committee.

Any student who moves up from a non-advanced placement course to an AP course must have a 90 or above average at the end of the first quarter in order to remain at that level. If the student's average is below 90, a meeting with the student, teacher, parents, and the principal and /or the counselor will be required to determine the student's disposition.

If a student moves up to an advanced placement English class, he or she must complete the summer reading assignments on time. Failure to turn in all the summer reading assignments will result in the student's returning to the non-advanced placement course.

**CONFERENCES – PARENT/TEACHER:** A parent/teacher conference day is scheduled in the fall, however, teachers are available for parent conferences during any school day by appointment. If any questions or concerns arise regarding a student's progress in class, teachers will contact parents to express those concerns. Parents, likewise, are encouraged to contact their student's teachers should they have any questions or concerns about their child's performance. Teacher email addresses are on page 10 of the handbook.

**COLLEGE VISITS:** O'Connell recognizes and encourages students to visit college campuses which they may choose to attend after graduation. Generally, visits are performed during regular school days when classes are in session. In the academic year, Juniors are permitted four (4) school days and Seniors are permitted four (4) school days for college visits. Students must make prior arrangements with their teachers noting the day or days they will be absent for college visits. Students are still held

responsible for any class work, homework, or tests missed during this excused absence. To be granted an excused absence, the student must return a signed statement, from the college or university. This documentation must be turned into the College Prep office upon the day you arrive back to school. Failure to produce the signed letterhead will result in an unexcused absence. No exceptions.

**CREDIT RECOVERY:** Credit recovery is available through Texas Tech online high school. However, the student/parent is responsible for the cost of the course, it is not intended to replace courses currently offered at O'Connell; it is to be used for reteaching and recovering credit lost due to failure of the course on campus. **IF A COURSE IS OFFERED AT OC, THE STUDENT MUST TAKE THE COURSE WITH A LIVE TEACHER.**

**DUAL CREDIT COURSES:** Students taking dual-credit classes at Galveston College will receive high school and college credit for the classes if the student meets all requirements. A list of dual-credit classes and the process for signing up for the classes may be obtained from the counseling office. Please see counselor for testing and grade requirements.

Prior to TSI assessment, criteria for applying for the Dual Credit program include the following:

- A final grade of 80 or above in the previous advanced level of the subject or
- A final grade of 90 or above in the previous regular level of the subject and 80% or better on the most recent standardized test in the subject area and approval of the Academic Committee.
- Teacher recommendation

Students must pass the TSI in accordance with state standards.

**SENIOR EXAM EXEMPTION POLICY:** Seniors who meet the following criteria in a class are eligible for an exemption from the spring semester final exam in that course:

- 93 or above for the first semester and third nine-week average
- No more than three (3) absences in that class (excused or unexcused), per semester

Excused absences due to college visits and participation in school sponsored events are not included in this total. For exemption purposes three (3) tardies are equal to one absence.

The reason for an absence is not considered. Except as stated above, all absences, regardless of reason, count against the allowable number of absences. Seniors who are suspended from school are not permitted college visits or participation in school sponsored activities during the suspension. Suspended seniors are ineligible for exam exemption in any class. No exceptions.

**STANDARDIZED TESTING:** The PSAT scores are tracked throughout high school so that the counselor may determine any changes needed in placement and /or curriculum. Each student is counseled individually regarding the strengths and weaknesses of his/her test scores, and a plan of action is set up. The TSI test is used so that students desiring to take dual credit courses may be accepted for entrance into Galveston College.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** As an educational institution, O'Connell College Preparatory School views grades earned as a reflection of the students' original work and the students' level of mastery in an academic area. Students are expected to practice honesty and uphold integrity and submit only their



own, original work on examinations, quizzes, tests, and homework or other assignments such as research papers. Doing otherwise is an act of personal and academic dishonesty as well as an act of injustice to other students. Students who are found to give or receive assistance on an examination, quiz, test, research paper, or other assignment subject themselves to a grade of zero, a detention, and possible suspension. If this occurs on a semester exam, the student will receive a zero on the exam and not receive credit for the course. The teacher will report all instances to the principal and parents/guardians.

**PLAGIARISM:** Plagiarism is a violation of “academic integrity.” Plagiarism is “the act of passing off as one’s own, ideas or writings of another.” Students who are found guilty of plagiarism are subject to the school disciplinary procedure and will receive a grade of “zero” for the assignment or exam. Any essays, term papers, etc., will be uploaded to the TURNITIN software.

**HOMEWORK POLICY:** Homework assignments are an integral part of the learning process. Homework reinforces skills, introduces new concepts, provides opportunities to go beyond the classroom and teaches personal skills such as time management and perseverance.

Any teacher, according to his/her policy, has the discretion to assign a classroom detention for a missing/unacceptable/late assignment if the teacher feels that the student is not putting enough effort into assignments. Also, the teacher contacts the parent. Missing assignments from one semester will not apply to the next semester.

**LATE WORK:** Late work is defined as work assigned when a student is present at school and not turned into the teacher at the assigned time. Both homework and class work are late if the assignments are not turned in at the required time. Class assignments are to be completed as assigned and turned in as scheduled. Students who do not work on the class assignment will receive a zero for the day without an opportunity to make up the work.

Homework reinforces the lessons presented in class and is an integral part of each course. Teachers are to assign homework as needed to supplement the course. Students are to complete the homework assignments as expected. Students who do not complete a homework assignment may receive a zero for the assignment and documented in gradebook. Some teachers choose to allow students to turn in homework late even though it is not required that teachers accept late work. It is, however, due by first period the following day. There is a point deduction of 10 points for each day late and will not be accepted after 3 days.

In the event of virtual learning, the late work policy is subject to modification.

**SCHEDULING and COURSE CHANGES:** In the spring and summer of each year, students are individually scheduled for courses for the following school year. Student-initiated drops/adds will be considered within the 1<sup>st</sup> full week of school. At this time, the students must have the principal and parental approval. After the 1<sup>st</sup> full week of school, students may not drop/add courses without the approval of their parents, the teacher of the course involved, and the principal. The principal has the final decision in the matter. If parents/guardians have questions concerning any schedule issues they are encouraged to address their concerns with the principal.

## **ATTENDANCE:**

Texas Law Attendance Policy stipulates that a student must be present in school 90% of the time; otherwise, he/she will forfeit the credit in the classes in which the absences have occurred. Students are allowed eighteen (18) absences for the school year (nine for one-semester courses). This total includes excused and unexcused absences and absences from suspension; however, absences for school activities are not included in this total. At the secondary level “parts of days” is defined as missing more than one-half of any class period; students are counted absent if they miss twenty (20) minutes of a class period.

If a student is in attendance less than 90% of the days the class meets, the student will lose credit unless each class is made up in an acceptable manner, such as but not limited to, Saturday School, after school hours, etc. **Time made up allows for credit to be given but does not remove the absence documented by the school to meet state compulsory attendance requirements.**

**STUDENT ABSENCES POLICY and PROCEDURE:** All students are required to attend all assigned classes daily. Failure to attend any class without parent and school permission is truancy and is a student discipline issue. The entire process of education requires a regular continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences, and study to reach the goal of maximum educational benefits for each individual student. Students with good attendance records generally achieve higher grades, enjoy school more, and are much more employable after leaving high school.

When returning to school after an absence, (other than for a school sponsored event), a student must bring a note signed by the parent/guardian that describes the reason for the absence. Alternatively, an email **from the parent** explaining the student’s absence may be sent to the school before the student returns. Parents will be contacted if the student does not bring in a signed note, or an email has not been sent.

Students are allowed a maximum of eighteen absences with parent permission per year per class. **This includes both excused and unexcused absences**, but excused college visits or participation in school sponsored activities will not count toward these absence totals. Parents will be notified when a student is absent from a class. Excessive absences will be dealt with by the principal or Dean of Students on an individual basis. Students who have excessive absences from school and fail to make up the time will be removed from school. Excellent attendance is a requirement for continued enrollment at O’Connell College Preparatory School.

### **Procedure When Absent:**

- If an unexpected absence occurs, the parents/guardians are requested to notify the school attendance office (409-765-5534) that day and every day (in the case of a continuous absence) by 8:30 a.m.
- Students returning to school after an absence must first report to the school attendance office and present a note from the parents/guardians stating the reason for the absence, (unless parent has already emailed the office). The students will then be given an ADMIT SLIP, which must be presented to and signed, by all of the student’s teachers. The student’s 7<sup>th</sup> period teacher will collect the slip and return it to the school office.

- If a student is absent three (3) or more days in a row, a doctor's note will be required for the absence to be excused.
- After a total of ten (10) absences during the school year, all subsequent absences will require a doctor's note for the absence to be excused.
- The school realizes that on rare occasions students will be absent from classes for only a portion of a day. In such instances, the student must present a note from the parents/guardians to the school office before the regular school day begins. The note should indicate the time during which the student will be absent. The student is given an EARLY DISMISSAL SLIP that is to be presented to the teacher when leaving class; then the student signs out at the office. Every effort to minimize these instances should be made. When possible, doctors' visits, driver's tests, and personal errands should be planned outside regular school time. Work or baby-sitting is not considered a valid reason for an absence. Students should check with teachers before leaving campus to turn in any work and get any assignments that will be missed during the absence.
- If a student becomes ill or is involved in any emergency where he/she must leave school, the parents/guardians will be notified immediately to come to the school. If a medical emergency exists with a student and the parents cannot be contacted, emergency personnel will be summoned to the school and/or the student will be transported to the local hospital by either school or emergency unit personnel. Health records require additional names for contact in case of emergency.
- In any case (other than an emergency) for which a student needs to leave campus, permission must be given by a parent/guardian, and students must be signed out by a parent/guardian or designated individual listed on the student's Application/Enrollment form. \*Students who are 18 years of age may sign themselves out, but permission to leave campus must still be given by parent/guardian.
- Parents are encouraged to email teachers for assignments when their child will be absent for multiple days because of illness. Arrangements can be made to pick up the assignments in the front office.
- O'Connell teachers are not expected to have assignments prepared in advance for students who will be missing school for a personal vacation. These assignments will need to be completed upon the return of the student following the regular make-up policy.

**MAKE-UP WORK:** Students who have been absent and present an excused absence slip to the teacher are permitted to take a make-up test/quiz and/or hand in assignments missed without a grading penalty. Students are reminded to complete all assignments and have them prepared to hand in on their return to school. They should be prepared to take make-up tests on their return or within a time arranged with each individual teacher. The normal rule is to allow one day to make-up the missed work for each day a student misses a class with an excused absence. Students are not to miss class time to make up test and/or quizzes missed as the results of an absence. The make-up work is to be completed before or after school within the allowable number of school days.

A student who misses class for a school-related activity must contact teachers before the absence to obtain assignments which will be missed. The missed work will be due when the student returns to class. Work due the day of the absence should be turned in prior to leaving school for the activity.

**TUTORING:** Students are encouraged to get extra help with the courses they are having difficulty with. Each teacher will plan and schedule their own tutoring times. Please encourage your child to speak to the teacher of record.

**TARDIES:** Sufficient time is given to our students to change classes. It is the belief of our staff that all students can reach their classes within the given amount of time. Tardiness takes away from instructional time and disrupts the class routine. Students are expected to be seated in the classroom when the tardy bell begins to ring. Teachers will use the discipline plan to assign punishment for all tardies. The administration will file truancy charges if a student's tardies become excessive. Students who are more than fifteen (15) minutes late to class are to be counted absent on the attendance reporting system and the absence will count as one of the nine allowable absences.

**TARDY PROCESS:** Arriving at class and school on time demonstrates respect for the school, teachers, and classmates. Students are expected to be in their assigned classroom before the tardy bell rings. Teachers are to mark a student tardy who comes into the classroom after the tardy bell starts to ring. The administration is responsible for assigning the discipline for excessive tardies. First period teachers are not to allow a student into class after the tardy bell without a tardy slip from the office stating the exact time the student signed in.

Students are allowed a total of three (3) tardies to each class per quarter. After the third tardy, the student will be assigned a detention. After three (3) detentions, Saturday school will be assigned. The attendance clerk will check student tardies and assign detentions for first period tardies. Students who do not serve the detention on the day assigned will receive additional consequences.

Teachers are responsible for enforcing the tardy policy for all classes by marking the students' attendance record as tardy ("T") each time the student enters the class after the tardy bell starts to ring. For tardies to periods after first period, individual teachers will assign the detentions.

**CLOSED CAMPUS:** O'Connell College Preparatory School is a closed campus. Since the school is responsible for the student from the time he/she arrives at school until the end of the regular school day, all students are to remain on campus from their arrival at school until the end of the regular school day. **Students may not leave campus** after they are dropped off at school and/or they drive their car to school, to include having a parent sign them out for lunch. Students leaving campus before the end of the regular school day, without administrative approval, are truant from school and will be assigned a Saturday detention.

The school must know when a student leaves campus. The school is responsible for the student once he/she arrives on campus and must always know the location of all students during the school day. The reason for the absence does not excuse the student's responsibility to communicate with school officials before leaving campus.

- **Dual-Credit Students:** Juniors and seniors taking dual credit courses at Galveston College are allowed to drive to their classes; however, they must sign out in the front office before leaving. Not signing out could result in disciplinary action; students leaving for GC are still considered to be O'Connell students and must abide by the school's policies.

- **Off-Campus Lunch:** Seniors are permitted off-campus lunch but only with parent authorization and on days designated by the principal. All seniors must have a signed permission slip on file in the front office to use this privilege. Returning late from off-campus lunch will result in disciplinary action.

**HALL PASS:** Students who are not in the classroom are missing valuable instruction. Leaving the classroom during instruction should be the exception rather than the rule. For this reason, hall passes are to be issued by the teacher every time a student is permitted to leave the classroom. Students are not to leave the classroom without a hall pass. Students who do not have a hall pass are truant. The Principal or Dean will handle all issues of this nature.

**O’CONNELL DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY:** O’Connell College Preparatory School shall foster a climate of mutual respect for the rights and privileges of other students, teachers, and staff. Students shall exercise their rights and responsibilities, in compliance with rules established for the orderly conduct of the OCPS educational mission. OCPS rules of conduct and discipline are established to achieve and maintain safety in the school. Students who violate the rights of others or who violate school rules shall be subject to disciplinary measures designed to correct the misconduct and to promote responsible citizenship.

O’Connell College Preparatory School strives to create a structured environment that is positive, productive, and supportive. The school holds high expectations for the staff and students. By following these expectations, students will be able to learn more and become more productive citizens.

**SELF-DISCIPLINE:** Self-discipline is the best kind of discipline. Students should strive toward self-discipline by recognizing their responsibilities and exercising good judgment. OCPS staff members must serve as role models for the students.

**POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT SUGGESTIONS:** For the discipline plan to be most effective, positive reinforcement techniques must be utilized for students who follow expectations. Educators may give educational incentive rewards to individual students or groups of students whenever appropriate.

**OCPS OBJECTIVES**

- To facilitate the academic and social growth of the students
- To prepare all students for college
- To achieve consistency in discipline throughout the campus
- To increase classroom time on-task
- To teach self-discipline and respect for others
- To provide students with clear expectations concerning appropriate behavior
- To improve home and school communication and cooperation

**CAMPUS & CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS:**

- Students are expected to be honest in all actions and not tolerate dishonesty from others.
- Students will not loiter in the hallways.

- Students are expected to use an appropriate classroom voice and language at all school functions and when representing the school.
- Students should eat and drink only in designated areas.
- Students should follow all directions and school policies.
- Students are expected to be in an assigned place or seat, ready to work, when the tardy bell rings.

**DISCIPLINE:** All members of the O’Connell community are expected to contribute positively to our reputation as a friendly, challenging, and safe learning environment. We will not tolerate individuals who disrupt the education of others. Our community is based on positive attitudes and an unselfish outlook on the whole student body, not just the individual. Each day, our community will strive to do our very best to eliminate problems that take away from our mission of providing the students and faculty the best possible chance to be successful in the classroom, Mass, cafeteria, and athletic fields of play.

Students who do not meet the above stated expectations will serve detentions to pay back the community for the time. Additionally, students who break the following rules are subject to disciplinary action.

1. Excessive tardiness
2. Disrespect toward others (students and faculty/administration/staff)
3. Dress code violations
4. Lack of responsibility
5. Misbehavior during campus events
6. Damage to school property (Any student who accidentally or intentionally destroys or damages anything on campus must pay the cost of such destruction. Students are expected to report any damage immediately to the teacher in charge or to the principal.)
7. Skipping classes/school
8. Violating any other established school policies and procedure.
9. Public Display of Affection—or PDA—includes physical contact including, but not limited to, intimate touching, fondling, cuddling, and kissing at school or a school-sponsored activity between two students typically in a relationship.
10. Social media policy in appendix

The administration reserves the right to determine an appropriate consequence for student’s behavior.

**DETENTION:** Detention is held after school or at lunch. Skipping or missing assigned detention will result in further disciplinary action. Extra-curricular practice and/or activities are not grounds for missing detention. Detention may be assigned for infractions of rules occurring outside of school. Students who fail to serve the assigned detention are not allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities until the detention is served by the student.

## **OCPS DETENTION POLICY:**

- **After-School Detention** will be held two days per week – Tuesdays and Thursdays - from 3:30 to 4:30. Students in after-school detention are expected to show up on time, have something to work on, and to sit quietly until dismissed. No food or drink is allowed. After-school detention will be assigned for infractions such as the following:
  - excessive tardies (detention for 4<sup>th</sup> tardy and each subsequent tardy)
  - disrespect or disruption of class
  - dress code violations
  - food in building
  - minor infractions in the classroom (no homework repeatedly, coming to class without supplies, minor disruptions, chewing gum or eating candy, etc.)
  
- **Saturday Detention** will be held as needed from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Students must show up on time—the door will be locked promptly at 8:00 and students will not be allowed in the building after that time. There will be a \$20.00 fee for Saturday detention that must be paid either before the detention is to be served or on the day the detention is to be served. Students will follow the same rules as above. Saturday detention will be assigned for infractions such as the following:
  - excessive detentions (after three detentions in a quarter, a Saturday detention will be assigned for the fourth and every subsequent detention in that quarter)
  - missing after-school detentions
  - repeated major infractions.
  - truancy from class
  - leaving campus without permission
  - major infractions deemed too severe for after-school detention.

Missing a Saturday detention will result in having to serve two Saturday detentions. If a student misses a second time, In-School Suspension will be assigned.

- **In-School Suspension** will be assigned for major infractions at the discretion of the Principal and the Dean of Students. This will be used only for major offenses. There is a \$60.00 fee for in-school detention.

If a student has a valid reason that he or she cannot attend a detention (such as work, doctor's appointment, or a family conflict), the detention may be rescheduled if the student sees Mrs. Badger at least 24 hours before the detention is to be served. Athletic practice is not a reason to miss detention. If the student has a game, he/she must see Mrs. Badger to reschedule; one should not assume she will know which students may have a game! If a student has tutoring, he/she should see Mrs. Badger and arrangements will be made to serve the detention while in tutoring. Of course, last minute conflicts may arise, and those will be handled on a case-by-case basis. If a student simply does not show up for the detention without rescheduling, the detention will be rescheduled, and an additional detention will be assigned for missing the detention.

**SUSPENSION and EXPULSION:** Suspension and/or expulsion are extreme discipline measures to be employed only when all available school resources are unable to bring about a positive change in

the student's behavior. A student may face suspension or expulsion for a serious offense or for the accumulation of many lesser offenses. The following are grounds for immediate suspension or expulsion:

1. Use or possession of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs on campus and/or at school functions.
2. Vandalism
3. Fighting
4. Continuous assigned detentions or failure to serve assigned detentions (determined by Principal)
5. Serious disrespect for school personnel and other students, including harassment, bullying, cyber-bullying, and making slanderous or disparaging statements.
6. Tampering with personal property of others and/or the unauthorized use of school equipment, including fire alarms, fire extinguishers, etc.
7. Stealing
8. Unsafe actions that jeopardize the safety of others, such as being in possession of any type of weapon
9. Disgraceful public conduct reflecting on the school, including statements made on social networking sites.
10. Other serious offenses determined at the professional discretion of the principal.

**DRUG & ALCOHOL POLICY:** The use of DRUGS, INCLUDING ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO, is strictly prohibited on campus as well as at any school sponsored or extracurricular activity/event. This prohibition includes any time a student or his/her parent is representing O'Connell College Preparatory School. Students engaging in the possession, sale, being under the influence of or use of drugs or alcohol or any controlled substance are also subject to established Archdiocesan policies regarding substance abuse, (policy #3360):

"The use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful. A student is subject to removal from class that may result in suspension, expulsion, or referral to prosecution if, while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property, there is a question of:

- Chemical substance use, possession for consumption, sale or dispensing of illegal drugs and narcotics, (hard or soft drugs, alcohol, inhalants, marijuana, synthetic marijuana or other controlled substance).
- Acting under the influence of an illegal drug-alcohol, narcotic, marijuana, or controlled substance; Medication misuse or overdose. The school nurse, the counselor, and the principal should work together with the student and family toward bringing about a completed recovery and elimination of the drug abuse for the student involved."
- Drug dogs will be used as needed throughout the year.
- Possession of Juul, vapes, using nicotine or illegal substances, is prohibited and will result in suspension or expulsion. Possession of tobacco products will also result in suspension or expulsion. Possession of these substances is prohibited by law on school campuses.
- Regarding sports and extra-curricular activities, additional consequences or game suspensions may be administered at the discretion of the Athletic Director and/or Dean of Students and principal.



**RANDOM DRUG/ALCOHOL TESTING POLICY:** O’Connell College Preparatory School has a random drug-testing program through which all students are eligible to be randomly selected for testing. Any student having a positive test would immediately fall under the strictures of the O’Connell College Preparatory School drug policy. Enrollment at O’Connell constitutes acceptance of this policy.

- **Contesting a Positive Result:** If a parent wishes to contest the result, the parent may request a retest at the expense of the parent. The repeat test shall be done by the same lab and collected in the same manner as the initial test.
- **Breathalyzer Test:** A sobriety test may be used to determine if a student has consumed alcohol. This test may be administered on campus or at school-sponsored events as students enter, participate in, or leave the event.
- **Student Searches:** The school is co-tenant of lockers and desks and reserves the right to conduct searches or inspections of personal effects, lockers, baggage, vehicles, and /or any other student property for the purpose of determining if any individual on the premises of OCPS is in possession of any illegal or unauthorized items. These searches may be conducted from time-to-time without prior announcement. School officials reserve the right to use drug sniffing dogs with or without reasonable suspicion.

**CYBER BULLYING/HARASSMENT:** O’Connell College Preparatory School has a policy of No Indifference. The school will investigate all claims of harassment and determine an appropriate consequence. O’Connell students will be held responsible for the misuse of technology on or off campus that adversely affects the educational environment and reputation of the school. The school reserves the right to expel a student or students from school if it has been determined the infraction is serious enough to justify such action. The school has an ethical obligation as well as a legal obligation to act in these situations.

Cyber bullying/harassment includes, but is not limited to, offending, harassing, or threatening others through technological means, including email, instant messaging, web pages, blogs, video and digital photo images, social networking sites (such as Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok), sexting, and/or text messages. It is considered inappropriate behavior when it includes:

- Obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful messages
- Posting information that could cause damage, danger, or disruption of the educational process.
- Making a personal attack, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks
- Knowingly or recklessly posting false or defamatory information about a person
- Using technological communication to intimidate, bully, harass, or embarrass others in any area included in this policy.

**DISCIPLINARY PROBATION:** The school will make every effort to assist students in avoiding decisions or actions that will result in a suspension or an expulsion. A student placed on disciplinary probation will be given a list of behavioral expectations and/or guidelines, which must be followed during a specified probationary period. Violations of these expectations/guidelines may result in suspension or expulsion.

**SUSPENSION:** Suspension from school entails the student being temporarily removed from classes. Suspension may be on-campus or off-campus. As of the 2<sup>nd</sup> suspension in a school year, the student is liable for expulsion. A student who is suspended is not permitted to participate, (as a member or

spectator), in any extracurricular activities during the time of suspension. Moreover, the student may receive a “zero” for any grade given during the suspension.

Upon learning of a student’s conduct that may result in suspension or expulsion, the principal or Dean should:

- Notify the parent/guardian immediately and request a conference.
- After a conference with the parent and student, the student may be suspended for a period of up to three (3) days or may be expelled.
- The student may be placed on probation upon his or her return to school.

**EXPULSION:** Expulsion means that the student is required to withdraw from school for the remainder of the school year, (or permanently, at the principal’s discretion). In the event of an expulsion the student and parent(s) will be called-in to attend a final conference with the administration.

**APPEALING A SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION:** A parent or guardian who wishes to appeal the principal’s decision regarding probation, suspension or expulsion can use the grievance policy listed below Step #2. However, sometimes students will not be invited to return to O’Connell and are not entitled to the grievance procedure.

### **GRIEVANCES:**

The parties to any grievance should seek a time for calm and unbiased discussion and resolution of the matter. Should the discussion fail to facilitate a satisfactory outcome, the following steps are to be followed:

1. In grievances involving a student or parent and a faculty member, the appropriate faculty member shall arrange a conference of all the parties concerned. Should this conference fail to facilitate a satisfactory outcome, the matter shall be referred to the principal for hearing and resolution.
2. Should the parties to the grievance still fail to be satisfied with resolution of the matter, a request may be made for a hearing with the appropriate school board committee. The parties must write out a detailed statement stating why they think their appeal should be heard by the school board committee.
3. The school board committee will decide if it accepts the appeal. If the school board committee declines to accept the appeal, the principal’s decision will stand. If the school board decides to hear the appeal, a hearing will be scheduled.
4. Once the hearing is scheduled, all parties involved will speak to the school board committee. The school board committee has the discretion to determine who will speak to the committee. At this time, the committee will listen to both sides, consider a recommendation from the principal and make a final decision.
5. The school board committee’s decision is final.

Periodically throughout the year, situations may arise which are not covered in the Student Handbook. Such instances will be handled on an individual basis and in a Christian manner with fairness and justice towards both the student and the school.

## DRESS CODE:

Students are expected to present themselves in a neat and professional manner during the school day. Following the uniform/dress code is a requirement of all students at O'Connell. This includes Club Day, Spirit Dress, and Free Dress.

### EVERYDAY ATTIRE – BOYS AND GIRLS

- Polo shirt. Red, black, white, or dark grey/graphite monogrammed with an official O'Connell logo or crest.
- Pleated or flat front khaki or black uniform pants or shorts. Girls may wear capris or skirt no shorter than 3" above the knee.

### BOYS – Mass attire

- White, long-sleeved, button-down Oxford dress shirt with embroidered/monogrammed school crest.
- Pleated or Flat Front Black dress pants.
- Red/Black plaid tie, sold at [www.landsend.com](http://www.landsend.com) or solid or striped, black, red, or gray tie.
- Belt (must be worn)
- Black or brown dress shoes. Topsiders would be acceptable. No athletic shoes

### GIRLS – Mass attire

- White, long-sleeved, button-down Oxford dress shirt with embroidered/monogrammed school crest.
- Red/Black plaid A-line skirt, available in juniors and misses sizes, sold at [www.landsend.com](http://www.landsend.com)
- Black or brown dress shoes – closed toes (ballerina flats, Toms, etc.). No athletic shoes, sandals, or excessively high heels.

### OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Solid Red or Black V-neck sweater vest or long-sleeved sweater, with OC crest.
- Girls only - Solid Red or Black cardigan with OC crest

### Guidelines and change:

1. All students must wear the OCPS uniform as outlined above. All shirts must bear the official OCPS logo.
2. Undershirts must be school colors and covered by an appropriate school shirt. Any writing on the undershirt cannot be visible.
3. Sweatshirts/hoodies must be official O'Connell gear, or be solid red, black, grey, or white. Jackets must be an O'Connell letter jacket or a solid jacket with school colors. No writing on the jackets or hoodies is permitted. Example: no sports team jackets, denim jackets, trench coats, or army jackets allowed.
4. All students, male and female, will be expected to wear uniform-style trousers. They can be in khaki or black. Girls may **not** wear yoga pants. Skin-tight pants/shorts of any kind are not permitted. No holes/tears, etc.
5. Pants, shorts, and capris must be khaki or black. Pants must have belt loops and cannot be jeans. Skirts must be the uniform plaid. Overalls are not allowed.

6. In cold weather, girls must wear skirts to Mass, but they may wear black tights. Slacks will not be permitted.
7. No platform shoes, high heels, or flip-flops. Shoes must have back straps.
8. No hats, caps bandanas, or sunglasses are to be worn during school hours.
9. Hair must be a natural color. Excessive hairstyles/colors are not permitted.
10. No tongue, eyebrow, nose, or any type of body piercings allowed. Belly button rings may not be exposed.
11. No exposed tattoos.

### **Guidelines for Boys**

1. One earring is permitted per ear. (small stone or post)
2. One ring can be worn (e.g., class ring)
3. Must be clean shaven. Mustaches, goatees, beards, or sideburns are permitted if they are neat and well-groomed.
4. Must wear appropriate tie on Mass Day with the top shirt button fastened and tie snug to the neck. Ties may be loosened after returning from Mass.
5. Hair cannot hang in front of eyes or cover face and must be of a natural color.
6. A belt must be worn with Mass uniform pants.
7. Pants must be worn at the natural waist.

### **Guidelines for Girls:**

1. Skirt/short length must be within three (3) inches of the top of the kneecap.
2. Appropriate make-up for school.
3. Blouses or shirts that only reach waist level are not permitted. The midriff must not be showing.
4. Pants, shorts, or skirts must be worn at the natural waist. Yoga pants, skinny jeans or jean-like pants will not be allowed. Skin-tight pants/shorts of any kind are not permitted. No holes/tears, etc.
5. Appropriate undergarments must be worn, but not exposed.
6. Hair must be neat and not hang in/over eyes, must be of a natural color. Excessive hair styles are not permitted.

In all cases, the Principal or Dean of Students can use professional discretion in what clothes are appropriate for school and whether personal appearance is appropriate for school.

**If a student arrives at school wearing an incorrect shirt/polo, he/she will be given a new one from O'Connell stock if the correct size is available, and parents/guardians will be billed for the cost.**

If a student is out of dress code, the possibilities are:

1. Receive a detention.
2. Lose Free/Spirit Dress privilege on Fridays.
3. Be sent home from school to change.
4. Call parent to bring appropriate attire to school.
5. Repeated dress code violations may result in suspension.

**SPIRIT DRESS/FREE DRESS/CLUB DAY:** O'Connell students have the privilege of having free dress and spirit dress on Fridays during the school year. If a student is out of dress code during the week, he/she will lose his/her free privilege for that Friday. They will have another chance to regain it when the new week starts. Principal has final discretion on what is appropriate during free dress/spirit dress days.

**Spirit Dress** – Jeans with an O'Connell themed shirt. Students are permitted to wear apparel with school colors. For example, a student can wear any shirt associated with O'Connell. On Spirit Dress days, students should still be appropriately dressed for instruction.

- Students may wear jeans, khakis, or khaki (uniform) shorts. Shorts must be no shorter than three inches above the knee. Jeans/pants may not have holes in inappropriate places. Basketball shorts and athletic pants are allowed but must be school colors and look neat and appropriate. No short shorts, pajama pants, etc. may be worn.
- Students may wear any O'Connell shirt. This would include any spirit shirts sold by the school, sports shirts for various teams, powder puff shirts, Student Council or NHS shirts, official school club shirts.
- Students may wear solid shirts in school colors. These shirts may not have any logos or writing larger than a 3X3 index card. Halter tops, tank tops, and shirts with spaghetti straps are not acceptable.
- Flip-flops may be worn on Spirit Dress days.

**Free Dress** –Free dress means students do not have to wear uniforms; however, it does not mean they are free to wear whatever they want. There are guidelines that must be followed. Students must still be appropriately dressed for instruction.

- No short shorts, pajama pants, yoga pants, etc. may be worn at any time. Jeans/pants may not have holes in inappropriate places.
- Shirts/hoodies with inappropriate logos (beer/alcohol slogans, sexual content, etc.) are not allowed.
- Halter tops, tank tops, spaghetti straps are not allowed for girls. Shirts may not be sheer.
- Girls' shorts must be no shorter than three inches above the knee.
- Tank tops, plain white T-shirts are not appropriate for boys.
- Crocs or flip flops may be worn on Free Dress days.

**Club Day**—Tuesdays are designated as Club Day. Students can wear jeans (no holes allowed) and a club T-shirt. This does not include sports shirts, Powder Puff shirts, or any other spirit shirt. Club shirts are for school-sanctioned clubs: Student Council, NHS, 4-H, Rachel's Challenge, Yearbook, German Club, Drama Club, etc. Students may NOT wear basketball shorts or athletic pants on Club Day.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Announcements provide important information and students are expected to listen to the announcements. The Pledge to the American Flag, the Morning Prayer, and announcements are made at the beginning of the second period class each day. Announcements may be made at other times when an emergency might occur and with the permission of the principal. Students may submit announcements to be made only after a faculty member and administrator have cleared them.

**ASSEMBLIES and MASS:** Students are expected to participate actively in Mass, assemblies, pep rallies, and special events scheduled at school. These are an integral part of the entire school program and are attended by all students.

**CAFETERIA:** Hot lunches will be available for students each full school day; however, students may bring a sack lunch from home when they come to school each morning. **Students are not permitted to order food for delivery, have fast-food/restaurant food dropped off for their lunch, or leave campus to pick up lunch.** Parents are not allowed to sign their child out for lunch or drop fast food off to them. Parents are allowed to bring food to the cafeteria and eat **with their child**. However, parents must sign-in at the front office before going to the cafeteria to eat lunch.

Food and drink will be consumed in the cafeteria. In consideration of others, students are to keep all areas neat by cleaning up trash from tables and disposing of it in the nearest trash can. **Parents are asked to not call the school to give the student permission to leave campus for lunch.**

**CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE:** The Campus Ministry Office is responsible for coordinating all aspects of the school's religious education program and the program of liturgical services. This office works closely with the counseling office in assisting students seeking counseling and community service.

**COUNSELING OFFICE:** The counseling office is located on the second floor of the main building. Counseling services are available to every student in the school. An effort is made to work with students in a variety of ways, including providing educational counseling, career counseling, and personal counseling. College catalogs and scholarship information are maintained in the counseling office.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES:** Electronic devices of any kind, are to be secured and stored by the student (in their pants pocket, backpack, purse, etc.) from the time the students reach the campus in the morning until the end of the regular school day. A student must have the cell phone turned off and out of sight during the regular school day. Cell phones will be taken up if they are used, observed, and/or heard during the regular school day. Teachers have the right to assign a zero for a test score if a student is observed using the phone during the test. Many teachers will require cell phones to be turned in before a test. If a student does not surrender his phone when requested, a detention will be given. However, there are times in the classroom where the teacher will permit cell phones (or other devices) for lessons and research.

The only other times these devices can be used by the student is during the student's lunch period and at the beginning of the school day while in the cafeteria before the first bell rings. If a student used any of these electronic devices any time other than lunch and morning before class, the item(s) will be taken up and delivered to the principal's office. If an electronic device is picked up, the student must pay \$15 to have the item returned. The amount increases by \$15, each time the phone is collected. Electronic devices are allowed to be used on campus after regular school hours. Please see the Cell Phone Policy at the back of the handbook.

**FIELD TRIPS:** (School-sponsored athletic/academic/extracurricular events): Students will have opportunities to participate in field trips to enhance the educational experiences received at school. These academic trips during school hours are part of the curriculum and must be supervised by a faculty member. If a trip is required for a course, the student is expected to participate. Notices are sent home regarding these trips according to guidelines related to leaving campus. All academic field trips and extra-curricular events must have written approval of the principal before the events can be scheduled. Students excused from classes for school-sponsored events are expected to get assignments from teachers ahead of time for classes they will miss and are expected to make up all missed assignments promptly. Please see and fill out the universal permission slip on page 41.

The school encourages student's mature and responsible participation in co-curricular programs; these off-campus trips contribute to the total educational development of the individual; *however, they ultimately constitute a privilege, not a right.* These opportunities are extended to student participants who maintain satisfactory scholastic, conduct and attendance records. The principal reserves the right to deny any student access to a field trip. Students going on field trips represent O'Connell College Preparatory School and must dress accordingly. If a student is not dressed appropriately, the student will not be allowed to go on the trip.

Students leaving campus at any time require parental and administrative permission. Faculty and staff are not authorized to permit students to leave the campus during regular school hours. Authorization must be obtained from the school principal. All co-curricular and extra-curricular sponsors and coaches must furnish each staff member with a list of the students who will miss class including the date of the event and the time the student is to be dismissed from class a minimum of one school day before the dismissal time for the event.

## **SAFETY –**

**FIRE DRILLS/EMERGENCY DRILLS:** In accordance with State law, drills are held throughout the school year so students will be familiar with the rules for an orderly evacuation of the building during an emergency. All students and faculty are required to participate in such drills. The fire and emergency alarm is only an alert and will not dismiss class. The fire or disaster drill signal for evacuation is 3 bells or alarm buzzer. Students and faculty/staff are to turn out the lights, close the doors behind them, and march out of the building in a quiet and orderly manner without rushing or crowding. The evacuation route is posted in every classroom.

A halt signal is 1 short bell; all stand at attention and listen for directions. Occasionally there will be an obstructed exit drill; in this case, students are to proceed to another exit (nearest to the one obstructed).

In the case of a drill, one long bell will signal that all students may return to their classrooms. Students are to remain quiet upon leaving and returning to the building.

In case of a tornado warning, students remain inside, away from windows/glass, preferably in an interior hallway on the lowest floor.

In case of a bomb threat, the fire drill procedure will be followed. Staff and students are not to touch or disturb any suspicious item but contact the principal who will contact the police.

For other emergencies, students will be given direct instructions based on the emergency. These instructions could range from evacuation of the building to immediate lock-down. Students are expected to follow the directions quickly and quietly. Parents will be contacted by the school via the IRIS alert system. Students will not be allowed to use their cell phones for any reason. Parents are asked to contact the school through the main phone lines.

**ENTRY AND EXIT:** Students will enter school **through the main front doors on Tremont(23<sup>rd</sup>) Street.** Those who park in the student lot on Avenue M may not enter and leave school through the breezeway gate. The gate will be locked at all times.

**ASBESTOS:** Current asbestos survey has been completed and the management report is on file with the school.

**HEALTH SERVICES:** Students who become ill during the school day are to report to the front office after obtaining a pass from the class teacher. If there is a necessity for the student to return home, the school will contact the parents/guardians. If a medical emergency arises, the student's parents/guardians will be notified immediately. If the parent/guardian is unable to be contacted, professional medical personnel will be called for emergency situations. Emergency contact information submitted by parents in the online enrollment packet will be referred to when necessary.

State law prohibits school personnel from administering any type of medication to students-including aspirin or other over-the-counter drugs. **Students are forbidden to carry or store in lockers any type of medication whatsoever.** Any parent whose child is required to take daily medication will have filled out and uploaded the Parent Consent for Administration of Medications form in the online enrollment packet, and should bring required medication, clearly labeled, to the front office on the first day of school. All medications will be stored and locked in the office at all times. We ask parents and guardians to respect that the school is not a pharmacy, and that O'Connell will not randomly dispense medications, OTC or otherwise, to any student without the above requirements being met.

Student immunization records are to be provided to the school office upon registration. Parents/guardians will be notified regarding any need to update those records.

**Students who are not in compliance with the state's immunizations requirements will be notified of the requirements. Students who do not correct immunization requirements within 30 days will be removed from school until the student is within compliance with the state's requirements. If a student refrains from immunization due to health reasons, an exemption letter, on letterhead, signed by a practicing Texas-licensed MD/DO must be furnished. No exceptions.**

**INSURANCE:** O'Connell College Preparatory School students are provided supplementary accidental insurance while representing the school in TAPPS extra-curricular activities, on or off school premises.



**LIBRARY:** Due to limited area space, the library is to be used for individual or small group silent study and may be scheduled for classroom groups depending on size of class. The library manager can assist students in using the resources of the library for independent research and course-related study. An atmosphere of study will be maintained in the library at all times.

Books may be checked out for two weeks and renewed for two additional weeks unless they have been reserved for another student. The care and replacement of damaged or lost books is the student's responsibility. Books which are kept beyond the due date will draw a fine each day (fines not to exceed the replacement cost of the book). Students must clear all book fines prior to receiving report cards. **Food drinks, or gum are not allowed in the library.**

**MASS/LITURGIES/PRAYER SERVICES:** Liturgies are held monthly for the entire school throughout the school year. Parents and other family members are always welcome to attend the on-campus liturgies. The students are to wear the Mass attire as laid out on page 26. Uniform sweaters may be worn over the Mass shirts during Mass. All male students and staff are required to wear a tie in the way it is classically intended; all female students are to wear Mass attire according to guidelines.

**LOCKERS:** Lockers are available for all students. Students will be assigned one locker and may not use empty lockers. Students may not move to another locker without permission from the office. The school has the right to inspect lockers, backpacks, or purses at any time throughout the year. Students are advised not to leave money, electronics, or expensive personal items in an unlocked locker or unattended backpack. **NO FOOD OR DRINKS ARE TO BE STORED OVERNIGHT OR DURING WEEKENDS IN LOCKERS.**

**SCHOOL PICTURES:** School photographs are scheduled in the fall, and senior cap and gown portraits are taken every spring as a service to the students for yearbook purposes. Information concerning the purchase of packets of student pictures will be sent home with students. The photographs and portraits taken at school are used in the school's yearbook. Substitute photos are not allowed.

**STUDENT PARKING:** Students who drive to school must register their Texas Driver's License number, proof of automobile insurance, and license plate number of the vehicle they drive at the principal's office at the beginning of the school year, see page 47 for the Parking Registration Form. Students may park along Avenue M and in the Student Lot on Avenue M. Please **do not** park in or block driveways. Students should not park on the east side of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street which is teacher parking. All student vehicles must display an O'Connell parking sticker.

#### **Drop-off/Pick-up/Parking –**

- Class hours are 8:00 a.m. – 3:20 p.m., and the OCPS office is open from 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. on school days. Students will not be admitted to the building before 7:30. At the end of the day, **they should be picked-up promptly at dismissal.** There are no faculty or staff available to supervise students after 3:45 p.m.

- You may drop off/pick up your student on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street or at the side of the school on Avenue M. The latter location is safer, slower, and less trafficked; however, the yard gate will be locked, and students must enter at the central main doors on 23<sup>rd</sup> only.
- No trunk loading/off-loading is permitted in the drive lanes. Please park in a proper space if you have any loading or off-loading to do.
- There are no “School Zone” signs or lights on our end of 23<sup>rd</sup> (Tremont) Street, but please drive slowly and adhere to speed limits when driving by the school.
- Please respect our neighbors and do not block driveways or park in no-parking zones. By state law cars may not be left parked and unattended in the fire lane in front of the school.
- Please do not engage in cross-vehicle chatting during the drop-off and pick-up time. This can unnecessarily congest the area, hold up other families waiting to drop off/pick up, and prevent the smooth flow of traffic.
- Be your child’s best example. Please be courteous and always follow all safety guidelines.
- Devote more time to your journey and be extra cautious on rainy or foggy days. Drive with your headlights on to see and be seen.

**SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS:** All support organizations must operate under the supervision of the principal and with the approval of the O’Connell Foundation Board. The following supportive organizations contribute significantly to the progress of O’Connell College Preparatory School:

1. **The Booster Club**, which operates to promote the growth and improvement of O’Connell in many ways, with the primary focus on the extra-curricular activities that revolve around the athletic program.
2. The Treasure Ball Association, which annually promotes the Treasure Ball and Pageant with proceeds exclusively benefiting the O’Connell College Preparatory School.
3. The Guardian Angel Committee, whose purpose is to determine eligibility for tuition assistance. Information available in the school office.
4. O’Connell Academic Excellence Club, which secures funds to purchase awards for the highest-ranking students at the end of the academic year.
5. O’Connell parents in each class are expected to coordinate, organize, and execute our four main events of the school year. The participation of all parents to some degree, is vital to the success of these important and treasured events:

Freshman Class	Junior Ring Ceremony
Sophomore Class	Graduation
Junior Class	Prom
Senior Class	Project Graduation

**TELEPHONES:** With office permission, students may use the office phone for required calls. Students will not be called to the telephone or be given messages during the school day except in case of an emergency.

**TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY:** O’Connell College Preparatory School is pleased to offer students access to technology resources for educational purposes, which may include computer hardware and software licensed to the school. To gain access to the technology resources, all students must obtain parental permission as verified by the signatures on this agreement.

**What is expected?**

Whether occurring within or outside of school, when a student’s use of technology jeopardizes the safe environment of the school, staff or students or is contrary to Gospel values the student can be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences including the expulsion of the student.

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school’s computer network just as they are in a classroom or anywhere on the premises. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will comply with Archdiocesan standards and the specific rules set forth below. The use of technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the school’s technology resources. The students are expected never to access, keep, or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see.

**Internet and E-mail**

Access to Internet and e-mail will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, museums, and other repositories of information and to exchange personal communication with other Internet users around the world. FAMILIES SHOULD BE AWARE THAT SOME MATERIAL ACCESSIBLE VIA THE INTERNET MAY CONTAIN ITEMS THAT ARE ILLEGAL, DEFAMATORY, INACCURATE, OR POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE. While the purpose of the school is to use Internet resources for constructive educational goals, students may find ways to access other materials. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet outweigh the disadvantages. Ultimately, however, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. Therefore, we support and respect each family’s right to decide whether to allow access to the Internet.

**Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)**

OC has Chromebooks and iPads that students are welcome to borrow while at school, however they will not be permitted to take them off campus. We recommend investing in a laptop for your child’s use at school and at home. Not all classes require the use of a device, but most do use them, at least minimally. Students can get a discount on apple devices if they go through the apple website, and there are usually back to school specials that often offer other free items with the devices. Target and Walmart are good places to check for Chromebooks and laptops.

BYOD shall follow the guidelines stated in this policy:

- The teacher is the instructional leader and determines when and how personal devices are to be used.
- Personal devices should arrive to school functional and fully charged.
- Students bring personal devices to school at their own risk, just like any other personal items.
- Personal devices should never be used in locker rooms, restrooms, or nurse’s offices.

- Students are not permitted to use any electronic device to record audio or video media or take pictures of any student or staff member without permission. Distribution of unauthorized media may result in disciplinary action.
- BYOD devices used in school are not permitted to connect to the server. Personal devices must access the internet through the school content filtered wireless network.
- Administration should govern which devices are allowed and how and which students can use them.

### **What are the Rules of Appropriate Use?**

Electronic Communication - Students may not use electronic communication in a way that jeopardizes the safe environment of the school, staff, or students or is contrary to Gospel values. This policy applies to all forms of electronic communications or depictions whether they occur through the school's equipment or connectivity resources or through private communication.

Personal Safety and Personal Privacy – Students will not post personal contact information about themselves or others unless otherwise indicated in the user agreement and parent permission form. Personal contact information includes their address, telephone, school address, etc. This information may not be provided to an individual, organization, or company, including websites that solicit personal information.

Social Networking - Accessing social networking websites, except those used for educational purposes, are off-limits on school property. The use of circumventors to get around school network security is prohibited.

Illegal copying - Students should never download or install any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto network drives, external devices or cloud-based storage. Nor should students copy other people's work or intrude into other people's files. The download/upload of any material in violation of any U.S., State, Board, Archdiocesan, or school policy is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted materials, threatening, violent, or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret.

Inappropriate materials or language – No profane, abusive, slanderous, bullying, or impolite language or images should be used to communicate, nor should materials be accessed which are not in line with the rules of school behavior. Use of technology resources for anything other than educational purposes is also prohibited. Should students encounter inappropriate material by accident, they should report it to their teacher immediately. A good rule to follow is never view, send, distribute, or access materials or images, which you would not want your teachers and parents to see. Use of any electronic device to transmit unacceptable language, images and/or photos that are harmful to self or others is prohibited.

**Succinct Advice:** These are guidelines to follow to prevent the loss of technology privileges and/or disciplinary measures at school.

1. Do not use technology to harm self, other people or their work.
2. Do not damage the network or any technology resource in any way.
3. Do not interfere with the network or computer operation by installing any form of software or permitting the spread of computer viruses.

4. Do not violate copyright laws.
5. Do not view, send, distribute or display offensive or bullying messages or images.
6. Do not share your passwords/personal information or in any way obtain another person's password/personal information.
7. Do not waste technology resources such as storage space or printing supplies.
8. Do not trespass in another's folders, work or files.
9. Do notify an adult immediately, if by accident, you encounter materials, which violate the Rules of Appropriate Use.
10. Do not attempt to circumvent network filters or security in any way.
11. BE PREPARED to be held accountable for your actions and for the loss of privileges if the Rules of Appropriate Use are violated.

**Parents and students must sign the Technology User Agreement and Parent Permission form at the back of the handbook and turn it in to the front desk.**

**TEXTBOOKS:** Textbooks are issued to students. They are the property of the school and are not to be written in. All textbooks will be covered throughout the school year. Teachers will keep a record of the condition of the textbook when it is assigned to the student and the book number, periodically check for lost or damaged books, and report that information to the office. Every textbook must be returned to the teacher who issued it. Lost or damaged book fines must be paid prior to grades being issued. Occasionally, students will be required to purchase novels being used in classes as part of the curriculum. Parents will be informed when this is needed.

**TRANSCRIPTS:** Graduating seniors who plan to attend college should request the registrar to send a final official copy of their transcript of grades to the school they plan to enter. Up to three copies of transcripts are free of charge to students upon graduation. There is a \$5.00 charge (payable to O'Connell College Preparatory School) for the service after three requests or starting one year after graduation.

**VISITORS:** All visitors, including parents and guardians, must enter through the main central doors on Tremont Street (23<sup>rd</sup>) and report to the front office, sign in, and receive a visitor badge which must be worn while on campus. Upon departure, visitors must return to the front office to sign out.

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:**

O'Connell College Preparatory School is concerned with the total development of the individual person including the student's intellectual, spiritual, physical, emotional and social growth. The extra-curricular program at O'Connell is designed to enhance and complement the mission of the school. The school encourages each student to participate responsibly, to his/her own potential, in the co-curricular programs. Through this participation, the student is expected to maintain a positive attitude towards his/her studies and to maintain a consistent commitment to each program.

As a participant in the extra-curricular program, a student assumes additional responsibilities for himself/herself and the school. In return, the student can receive a greater sense of self-worth and self-fulfillment, the development of individual skills and talents, and recognition from the school and community as a leader. To be eligible to participate continuously, a student cannot have any grades

lower than 70% at reporting periods. Additionally, the student is expected to maintain OCPS standards of conduct, including during participation at an event and as a passenger on school bus or van. Failure to meet these requirements will result in the student being removed from the extra-curricular program. Discipline and behavioral policies apply and are laid out on pages 20-24 of this handbook.

The sponsor/coach will provide a list of all students involved in an extra-curricular activity a minimum of two days before the activity. The list must be in alphabetical order including the grade level as well as listing the release and return times for the students. This will be distributed to all teachers via email and/or hardcopy. Students who participate in a school sponsored extra-curricular activity should realize that participation is a privilege, not a right, and must plan for make-up work prior to the activity. Failure to make prior arrangements for make-up work missed due to extra-curricular activities will result in a zero being awarded.

Some of O'Connell's extra-curricular activities include:

Athletics/TAPPS Athletic Affiliation	National Honor Society
Cheerleaders	Community Service Projects
Student Council	Drama Club
Bucco Belles	Rachel's Challenge
German Club	Robotics Club

**ATHLETICS:** A wide variety of athletic activities are available to students. All students are encouraged to participate either actively or as spectators. Whether as participants or spectators, students are expected to conduct themselves in a positive and responsible manner at all school-sponsored activities and athletic events. Christian sportsmanship and enthusiasm are essential ingredients of these activities. O'Connell College Preparatory School is a member of TAPPS (Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools) and is subject to its rules and regulations. In order to participate, students must (1) maintain amateur status as athletes, (2) follow eligibility rules relative to age and transferring schools and complies with all academic/school requirements, and (3) have undergone a physical examination and filled out and turned in TAPPS paperwork to the Athletic Director. Packets are available from the AD or from the front office. For more information on Athletics go to the TAPPS website.

### **ELIGIBILITY:**

6-12-18 RULE: students must accumulate a minimum of six (6) credits to be eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities for the first nine-week reporting period in the fall.

Ninth Grade:	Promoted to 9 <sup>th</sup> grade from the 8 <sup>th</sup> grade
Tenth Grade:	Accumulated a minimum of 6 credits during the previous school year
Eleventh Grade:	Accumulate a minimum of 6 credits during the previous school year or 12 credits total for the two previous years
Twelfth Grade:	Accumulated a minimum of 6 credits during the previous school year or 18 credits total for the three previous years.

Eligibility to participate in extra-curricular activities will be determined using the "No Pass/No Play" policy outlined below. This policy is based on TAPPS policy regarding eligibility for participation.

- All students are eligible to participate during the first nine weeks.
- After the first nine weeks grading period, students who fail no more than one class on their nine-week report card will be eligible for the following nine-weeks period, provided **the one failing grade is between 65-69**.
- The non-participation period will begin on the first school day following the end of the nine-weeks grading period.
- Students are expected to continue practicing with the team during periods of ineligibility, but may not dress out for games, or travel with the team to out-of-town contests. However, they may sit on the bench during home contests, but may not be in uniform.
- All students are eligible to participate in games during the Christmas break.
- A student may regain eligibility at the time progress reports are released, provided the student is passing **all classes** at that time. If eligibility is regained, he/she retains eligibility for the remainder of the nine-weeks grading period beginning on the first school day following the ineligibility period. If the student has not regained eligibility at progress report time, grades will be checked every Friday to determine eligibility. If eligibility is not regained for the remainder of the current term, eligibility will then be determined based on grades according to the rule of the end of the nine-weeks grading period.
- Students who are assigned ISS or OSS will be ineligible to participate in any contest or practices for the days they are serving the placement.

The timeline for ineligibility begins at 3:00 p.m. on the first Monday after the report cards are distributed. The student and parent/guardian will be notified of the ineligibility status. Honors, AP, and Dual Credit classes are exempt from the first failing grade if the grade in the advanced class is 60 or above. After the initial waiver for the first failing Honors, AP, or Dual Credit class, the minimum grade of 70 applies to all classes.

Honors, AP and Dual Credit classes are exempt from the first failing grade if the grade in the advanced class is 60 or above. After the initial waiver for the first failing AP class, the minimum grade of 70 applies to all classes.

## **Absence Guidelines for Extracurricular Activities**

To be eligible to play in a game or participate in practice, a student must be at school for two full class periods during the school day. The principal may excuse students with extenuating circumstances from the policy (doctor appointments may require a physician's note).

- It is the student-athlete's responsibility to notify his/her coach or athletic director of an event that is preventing him/her from being in school by the expected time.
- Student-athletes are expected to have all missed assignments completed on the day of return to class, and to meet with their teachers to discuss the expectations for turning in any missed assignments.

- Coaches reserve the right to withhold a student from competition and/or practices should that student fail to turn in late assignments by the expected due date.

**NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY:** The National Honor Society (NHS) of Secondary Schools recognizes students who have outstanding Scholarship as well as leadership, character, and service. The minimum weighted grade average for consideration for membership in NHS is a 92.

**STUDENT COUNCIL:** The Student Council represents all students at O’Connell, and its members are dedicated to working for their benefit. The Student Council is responsible for the smooth functioning of the school by promoting school spirit, school unity, and school pride. It sponsors a variety of activities to accomplish this effectively, including a number of community service activities to promote citizenship. Membership is more than an honorary position; it requires College Preparatory levels of effort and involvement. Student Council members are elected by the students of each class, (seniors, juniors, sophomores, and freshmen). It is comprised of class officers from each class and an Executive Council, which is the governing body of the Student Council. The Executive Council members must be seniors who have served in Student Council previously.

**VOLUNTEERS:** Schools depend on the consistent and loyal services of volunteers. Volunteers serve the school in many capacities such as in the clinic, office, cafeteria, or as athletic sponsors and drivers, etc. Volunteers represent the school and should always show support for the school and governing policies. Archdiocesan Ethical and Moral Conduct policies hold all volunteers bound by confidentiality.

The principal is responsible for appointing volunteer coordinators or chairpersons. Administration may terminate services of any volunteer who fails to uphold the policies and procedures of the school, or at the discretion of the Principal or Foundation Board. All comments and concerns should be addressed with school administration.

Volunteers and visitors are required to sign in at the office and receive a visitor’s badge before reporting to their work area. Please, make other arrangements for younger siblings as they may not be brought to school during volunteer hours. If you cannot be at school during scheduled times, please arrange a substitute. Upon completion of work, volunteers must sign out in the front office. Please refrain from visiting classrooms. Volunteers are encouraged to ask for assistance as needed. Volunteers who have regular access to children are required to obtain a criminal background clearance, participate in the Safe Environment training at CMG Connect. The Safe Environment training is an online training which replaces the previous VIRTUS training. Volunteers will sign in at CMG Connect and go to <https://galvestonhouston.cmgconnect.org> to register for an account and complete the training. This program instructs adults of the Church who interact with children that to protect children you must have continuous vigilance. This awareness session helps trainees understand:

- the dangers and signs of child sexual abuse,
- the methods and means by which offenders commit abuse,
- the methods of properly reporting suspicions of abuse,
- and five empowerment steps one can use to prevent child sexual abuse.



## **IRIS**

In the modern world, schools sometimes need to get information to parents as soon as possible. To facilitate this need, O'Connell College Preparatory School and the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston has partnered with a rapid communication system called IRIS-Immediate Response Information System. This system will deliver emergency messages to parents individually by the communication method(s) of your personal choosing. Should the school need to close early due to weather, for example, this system would notify you by your choice of home phone, cell phone, or email. In addition, the school may use the IRIS system to keep you up to date on important school wide information or changes relating to groups in which your child participates.

Parents will be asked to complete or update the IRIS information form at the beginning of the school year or as changes occur. Then a test run will be completed to ensure everyone receives a notice. Parents can find out more information about IRIS by viewing their website, [www.useiris.com](http://www.useiris.com). Contact information is available on this website should you have any questions regarding the system, or you can reach them by calling 281-263-6300.

## **SCHOOL GROUNDS AND FACILITIES**

The OCPS campus and its facilities are available to rent for certain private functions. Interested persons should contact the Finance Director to discuss events, availability, fees and rental agreement stipulations/provisos.

## **COVID-19 PROTOCOLS**

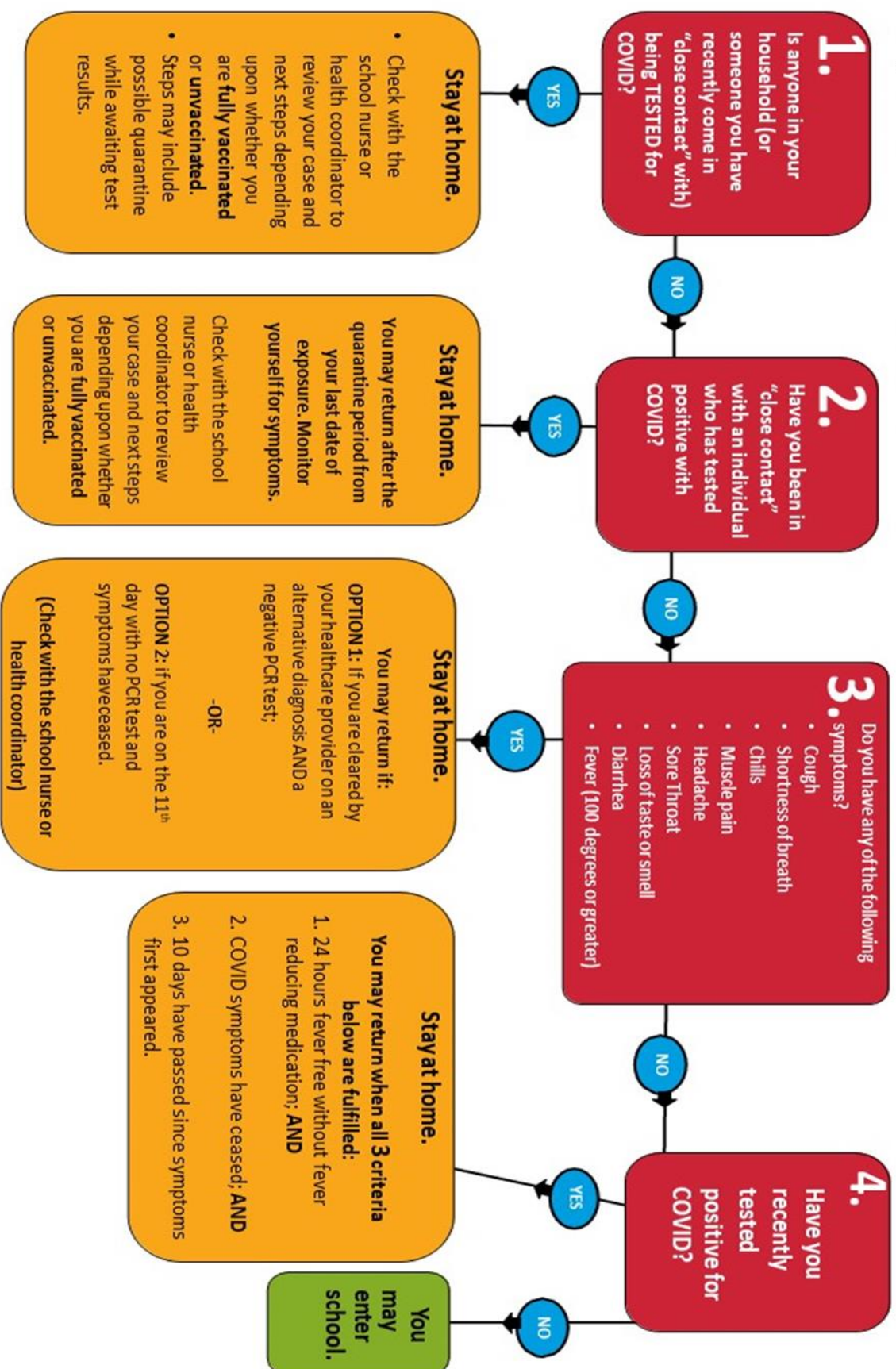
As we embark upon the new school year, the Catholic Schools Office has outlined COVID-19 safety guidelines for the Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston effective July 28, 2021. The guidelines will be reviewed and updated as needed throughout the year based on the most up-to-date information available. Per these guidelines, O'Connell College Preparatory School

- Will provide in-person instruction.
- Will implement masks as optional for all students and employees. Masks are encouraged and recommended for those not vaccinated.
- Will implement social distancing that maximizes the instructional experience for all students, and will limit close face-to-face contact, per the CDC guidelines.
- Quarantine requirements will follow CDC guidelines. Note: Those who are fully vaccinated - students and employees - and asymptomatic do not have to quarantine.
- Will request that parents screen their child for any COVID symptoms at home before allowing them to come to school (please follow the Questionnaire Screener on page 42). The same will be required of employees. Volunteers/visitors will be allowed on campus only after being screened in accordance with O'Connell's screening protocols.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in all classrooms and in various other places within the school. Classrooms, restrooms, hallways, etc., will be regularly cleaned, disinfected, and sanitized.

- Students and employees will continue with handwashing and hygiene protocols related to the prevention of the virus.
- Extra-curricular activities, including sports and clubs, field trips, and library services will resume.

Updated July 2021

# May I enter the school? Start with the 4 red questions below...



# Appendix 1

## COURSES OFFERED at O'CONNELL COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL 2021-2022

Religion:	Theology I – IV	
English:	World Literature I (Core/Honors) World Literature II (Core/Honors) American Literature (III) English III Dual Credit British Literature (IV) English IV Dual Credit Grammar & Composition w/Writing Emphasis	
Mathematics:	Algebra I Algebra II and Algebra II Honors Geometry, Geometry Honors College Algebra Prep Pre-Calculus and Pre-Calculus Honors Calculus AP	
Science:	Biology I Chemistry Physics, Physics AP, Anatomy and Physiology Earth and Space Science	
Social Studies:	World Geography and World Geography World History and World History U.S. History and U.S. History Dual Credit Government/Economics or Government/Economics Dual Credit	
Health:	Health I	
Physical Education:	Team Sports and Individual Sports Physical Education Alternatives Cheerleading P.E. credit equivalent Bucco Belles P.E. Credit equivalent Fencing P.E. Credit equivalent	
Speech:	Communication Applications	
Other Languages:	German I – IV Levels III & IV are Dual-Credit Spanish I – III	
Fine Arts:	Theater Yearbook 1-2 Music I-II	
STEAM Electives:	Robotics Engineering Horticulture Fine Arts: Art, Graphic Art, Music, Theater	Maritime Aviation Drone

## Appendix 2

### **MONDAY and WEDNESDAY BELL SCHEDULE:**

7:55 a.m.	Bell for students to go to first period
8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	First Period (A)
9:35 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Second Period (B)
11:15 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.	LUNCH
12:15 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.	Third Period (C)
1:50 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.	Fourth Period (D)

### **TUESDAY and THURSDAY BELL SCHEDULE:**

7:55 a.m.	Bell for students to go to first period
8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	First Period (E)
9:35 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Second Period (F)
11:15 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.	LUNCH
12:15 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.	Third Period (G)
1:50 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.	Fourth Period (H)

### **FRIDAY BELL SCHEDULE:**

7:55 a.m.	Bell for students to go to first period
8:00 a.m. – 9:10 a.m.	First Period (I)
9:15 a.m. – 10:30a.m.	Second Period (J)
10:35 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	Third Period (K)

### **BELL SCHEDULE FOR MASS DAYS:**

7:55 a.m.	Bell for students to go to first period
8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	First Period
9:30 a.m.	Head to Mass
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	MASS
11:00 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.	Journey back to school
11:10 a.m. – 12:05	LUNCH
12:10p.m. – 1:10 p.m.	Second Period
1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.	Third Period
2:20 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.	Fourth Period

# O'Connell College Preparatory School

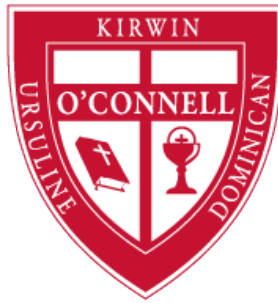
## Cell Phone/Electronic Device Policy

Cell phones/electronic devices and their use have become a huge issue at O'Connell. In order to respect the important work of the classroom and the teaching and learning environment, this document, which must be signed by students and parents/guardians, is to clarify the cell phone/electronic devices policy for the school. The policy is:

- ◆ Cell phones/electronic devices may be used before the morning bell rings, at lunch time and after school....Monday through Friday.
  - ◆ Cell phones/electronic devices must be turned OFF before you enter any classroom, office, library, locker room, lab, Mass, or theater, and must not be visible under any circumstances - even though they are OFF.
  - ◆ If a cell phones/ electronic device rings, vibrates, is used for any reason or is visible anytime during class time or you are caught using it during class time while walking around or in restrooms on campus, you will be asked to surrender it.
  - ◆ Phones/devices may be collected by teachers during a Quiz/Test, at the beginning of class, or at their discretion. You will be asked to surrender it.
  - ◆ Refusal to surrender your phone when asked is defiance. Defiance can result in suspension and your parent will be contacted.
  - ◆ **First Offense** ~ the device will be held in the main office and a detention will be issued. Cell phone confiscation incurs a retrieval charge of \$15. Devices may only be retrieved by a parent.
  - ◆ **Second Offense** ~ the device will remain in the main office; two detentions will be assigned. Cell phone confiscation incurs a retrieval charge of \$30. Devices may only be retrieved by a parent.
  - ◆ **Third Offense** ~ the device will remain in the main office until a parent retrieves it, and in-house suspension will be assigned. Cell phone confiscation incurs a retrieval charge of \$45.
  - ◆ There will be repercussions if any social media post is found to have occurred during school hours.
- \*Exception\*** From time to time, teachers may allow use of cell phones/devices for research and learning purposes in class. It is only under these supervised circumstances that usage is permitted in the classroom.

The faculty and staff of O'Connell College Preparatory School ask for your FULL co-operation with our policy. Students will not respect this policy if they believe their parents will bail them out of the consequence. Per the Student/Parent handbook –

**CELL PHONES:** Parents wishing to contact their child during the school day should call the office on (409)765-5534 and leave a message. The student will be notified of the message at the earliest possible time. Cell phones are **not** to be used during the school day or in the school building (other than at lunch time), must not be visible, and should remain in the off mode at all other times. **Therefore, parents may not contact their students using these devices during school hours except during lunch time.**



Dear Parents,

Your child has the opportunity to access technology resources at O'Connell College Preparatory School. With this educational opportunity also comes responsibility. It is important that you and your child read the Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP) on pages 31-33 and discuss it together.

When your child is given an account and password to use on the computer, it is extremely important that the rules be followed. Failure to follow the rules will result in the loss of the privilege to use this educational tool.

Remember that you are legally responsible for your child's actions. Please stress to your child the importance of using only his or her own account and password, and the importance of keeping it a secret from other students. Under NO circumstances should your child let anyone else use his or her account and password! Please refer to your school's parent/student handbook for policies regarding cell phones/I phones and handheld devices.

Although we have established acceptable use policies, please be aware that there may be unacceptable material, images, or communication on the Internet that your child can access. After you have read and discussed this with your child, please have both you and your child/children sign the following agreement and return it to the school office.

Sincerely,

**Patti Abbott**  
Principal

## TECHNOLOGY USER AGREEMENT and PARENT PERMISSION FORM

As a parent/guardian and student/s of OCPS, we have read the handbook information (pg. 34-36) on the appropriate use of technology at school and the appropriate use of electronic communication, and we understand this agreement will be kept on file. Whether occurring within or outside of school, when a student's use of technology jeopardizes the safe environment of the school, students, or staff or is contrary to Gospel values, the student can be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences including expulsion. This policy applies to all electronic communications or depictions whether they occur through the school's equipment or connectivity resources or through personal electronic devices.

Parent/Guardian Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

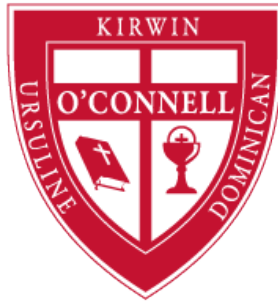
Student Name/Grade (print) \_\_\_\_\_

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

Student Name/Grade (print) \_\_\_\_\_

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





## O'Connell College Preparatory School Universal Permission Slip/Release of Liability

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, a student at O'Connell College Preparatory School. I give my permission for my son/daughter to participate in the field trips, sports practices and events, and any other school activities. I understand that although the students will be supervised by OCPS staff at a minimum ratio of one adult to ten students, I do assume the risk in my student's participation in any event. I acknowledge that I will not seek to hold O'Connell College Preparatory School liable in the event of any accident, injury, loss of property or any other circumstance or incident occurring during, or as a result of my son's/daughter's participation in the event. I hereby release and agree to hold harmless O'Connell College Preparatory School, its officials, agents and employees, from any claims arising out of my son's/daughter's participation in any event(s). I have read and understand and accept all the statements recited above and accept full responsibility as described.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Student Parking Registration Form**

***Please complete, tear out, and turn in to front office, if applicable. Remember to ask for your O'Connell car sticker!***

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License Number: \_\_\_\_\_

License Plate Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Make & Model of Car: \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e., Honda Accord)

\_\_\_\_\_ Copy of Proof of Automobile Liability Insurance

***Please note - Students are not permitted to park on Tremont (23<sup>rd</sup>) Street between Avenues M and M1/2***

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**HANDBOOK AGREEMENT FORM**  
**2021-2022 School Year**

**This Student/Parent Manual is subject to amendment as the school year progresses. Instances may arise which will require school administration and board to make necessary changes for the betterment of O’Connell College Preparatory School.**

**Dear Parents/Guardians,**

All students and their parents/guardians must indicate a willingness to accept and observe the rules and regulations required for attendance at O’Connell College Preparatory School. In general, anything that contributes to an atmosphere of educational progress for students is expected and anything that destroys or lessens this atmosphere should be avoided. The student signature below verifies that the student intends to comply with necessary rules, regulations, and procedures of O’Connell. The parent’s co-signature verifies that the parent received the handbook. Both will work toward acceptable standards. Content of the handbook may change during the school year and every effort will be made to notify parents/guardians, and students of these changes.

Please sign below and return this form to the front office by Friday September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

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Student Handbook Agreement

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Student Signature

Date

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Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

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Parent/Guardian Signature

Date