

MOTHER SETON ACADEMY



Parent-Student Handbook

2021-2022

MISSION STATEMENT

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

PHILOSOPHY

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

ADMINISTRATION

Principal: Dr. Karen M. Juliano

Administrative Assistant: Mrs. Stephanie Guida

ADMISSIONS

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

Admissions Process:

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

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

Requirements for acceptance/admission to MSA are:

- Student application
- Copy of student's birth certificate
- Copy of student's baptismal certificate (Catholic students)
- Recent physical /health form
- Immunization records – Per diocesan policy - religious exemptions are not accepted
- Applications for students entering Grades 1-8 must include:
 - Copy of most recent report card
 - Standardized test scores
 - Child Study Team evaluations (if applicable).

Completed applications are reviewed by the principal, and parents will be notified of their child's enrollment status in Mother Seton Academy. As part of the admissions process, a meeting with the student, parent, and the school administration may be required prior to acceptance. Mother Seton Academy may decline to admit a student if the principal believes MSA is not the best placement for the student.

All students accepted to Mother Seton Academy are on 60 days probation. Successful academic effort and conduct appropriate for Catholic school students are expected.

Non-Catholic students and families are welcomed into our Catholic school community. All students who attend Catholic schools are required to take religion classes which focuses on Catholic doctrine. Religion is a major core subject, not an enrichment course, and one cannot opt out. Students who attend Catholic school attend Mass. Non-Catholics are welcome to join the Communion procession to receive a blessing from the priest or Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, but only Catholics can receive communion. The sign to receive a blessing is arms crossed over your chest. Students who attend Catholic schools participate in various prayer services, celebrations, and traditions. If you have questions about these activities or our rituals and traditions, please feel free to ask.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

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

All pre-kindergarten students are to arrive through the cafeteria at their designated arrival time. Morning and full-day sessions begin at 9:15 a.m.

Students who ride buses are dismissed first at 3:10 p.m. Pre-K student are dismissed at 3:10 p.m. from the main doors of the school at 3:10 p.m. Students in K are dismissed from the main doors of the school at 3:13 p.m. Grades 1-8 are dismissed from the cafeteria doors at 3:15 p.m.

Bus Bus transportation for eligible Kindergarten - Grade 8 students is provided by MOESC (Monmouth Ocean Educational Services Commission.) Only authorized students may ride the bus.

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

EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM

Mother Seton Academy's Before and After-Care Program is held on days that school is in session, including early dismissal days. Exceptions are listed on

the school calendar. The program is held from 6:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. and from dismissal time until 6:00 p.m. Information regarding the program is sent home in September and is available on the school website.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is essential for success at Mother Seton Academy. Class time missed cannot be replicated. Missing school should be kept to a minimum; all appointments should be made after or before school, not during school, if possible. Parental cooperation is essential to ensure that student absences and tardies are kept to a minimum. It is the responsibility of the student and parents to ensure that consistent attendance at school is maintained throughout the school year. The school will communicate with the student's family regarding excessive absences and tardies.

When a student is to be absent for any part of the day, the parent must call the nurse's office before 8:45 a.m.

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

Arrangements for making up quizzes and tests, missed because of an absence, are to be made with the individual teachers.

In the event of an extended absence for illness is necessary, parents must contact the school for arrangements for classwork, assignments, and/or home instruction.

The school calendar provides for extended weekends and vacations throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt the child's learning process. Missed work will be assigned upon the student's return to school. Teachers are not responsible to assign work before the class receives the assignment or is taught the material. Parents assume the responsibility of teaching the material their child missed while on vacation.

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

CAFETERIA

Students in PreK-8 are to bring lunch from home. Students should have a thermos for drinks and/or food. In an emergency, a student who forgets his/her lunch will be provided one for that day.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE

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

COMMUNICATION

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

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

CURRICULUM

Mother Seton Academy upholds high standards for student learning through a well- rounded, value enriched curriculum that is reflected in standardized test scores and high school placement. Diocesan, National, and NJ Student Learning Standards are achieved through the various academic programs

offered and are starting points to ensure our students receive an excellent education as well as a framework for instruction. Teachers are responsible to follow the scope and sequence of the curriculum to meet the learning needs of every students. Teachers are also encouraged to integrate curriculum across disciplines to maximize instructional time and facilitate the transfer of skills and understanding. Areas of study include the following: Religion, English Language Arts, Math, Science, Physical Education/Health, Social Studies, Technology, World Language, Music and Art.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Compliance:

A spirit of Christ-like charity, respect for authority and mutual cooperation are essential elements for the leaning environment at Mother Seton Academy. Students are expected to act with courtesy and respect toward one another and toward all members of the staff. They must take seriously their obligation to develop lifetime habits of self- control and concern for the well being of others. Home and school will work together to help students to learn and live the qualities of responsible behavior and the elements of good citizenship.

When an individual's actions interfere with the right of teachers to teach and students to learn, discipline will be administered. A student who chooses to disrupt the good order of the school or to violate a policy or regulation must accept the consequences of those irresponsible choices. The principal determines the appropriateness of discipline. Accountability for uncooperative, disruptive or unsafe behavior may take the form of misconduct referrals or warnings; extra assignments; loss of privileges; detention; in-school suspension; out-of-school suspension; or expulsion. The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary matters in consultation with the pastors, and may waive any and all regulations for just cause at his/her discretion.

Students are expected to:

1. Accept the authority of all administration, faculty, staff, and volunteers, and cooperate with them and other students.
2. Respect all classmates and their property and possessions.
3. Respect all school property, including, but not limited to, the physical campus, furniture, textbooks and workbooks, and electronics, and keep their school neat and clean.
4. Dress in proper school uniform at all times.
5. Use only acceptable language.

6. Be honest, considerate and courteous to all with whom they come in contact.
7. Do nothing that may injure another person by word or by action.

Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation Policy

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

Bus Conduct:

Bus transportation for eligible Kindergarten - Grade 8 students is provided by MOESC (Monmouth Ocean Educational Services Commission.) Only authorized students may ride the bus to which they are assigned.

Students are expected to conduct themselves properly while riding to and from school.

Riding the bus is a privilege.

Whether riding the bus to school, from school, or on a field trip, all students are expected to:

1. Respect the bus driver and all passengers, and follow the MSA Code of Conduct
2. Remain seated, and keep backpacks and objects out of the aisle
3. Refrain from loud talking, shouting, or unnecessary confusion
- 4. Keep head, hands, feet, and objects to themselves, and inside the bus**
- 5. Do not litter or throw anything out of the windows**

Any notification – from the Bus Company, parents, or students of inappropriate behavior on the bus can result in disciplinary action which may include losing bus riding privileges.

Cafeteria Conduct:

Students are to walk in an orderly manner to and from the cafeteria. Students are to go to the designated area for their class.

Before being dismissed, the students will clean up their tables, dispose of lunch materials in an appropriate manner, and wait for their teacher before leaving the area.

Tables and floor areas are to be kept as clean as possible.

Teachers provide supervision during lunch period and recess time. Their directions should be followed in a prompt and courteous manner.

Classroom Conduct:

The classroom teacher determines classroom rules and designed to meet the behavioral expectations of Mother Seton Academy.

Cheating of any type will not be tolerated and is considered a serious offense. Incidences where cheating is suspected will be brought directly to the principal. Students who choose to cheat face a failing grade, detention, suspension, and/or expulsion from extra-curricular activities and/or school.

Drugs and Alcohol:

Students who possess drugs not prescribed for them and/or alcohol at school or at any school function face suspension and/or expulsion.

Gum:

Students must not chew gum at any time that they are in school. This includes before school, during school, and after school. Gum chewing is not allowed in the gym including during extracurricular activities/school events. Gum chewing in church, by anyone, is disrespectful.

Off-Campus Conduct:

The student is a Mother Seton Academy student at all times. A student who engages in conduct, whether inside or outside the school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school, may be disciplined. ~~by the school.~~

Playground/Recess Rules:

Playground rules are determined by the teachers and administration. Violation of these rules may result in loss of a portion or all of a recess, or further disciplinary action.

Restroom Conduct:

Students are required to:

- Use the restroom as needed, and not as a place to socialize or play.
- Keep the restrooms clean for the benefit of all.
- Flush the toilets when finished.
- Leave used paper towels in the provided wastebaskets.
- Leave pens, pencils, markers, crayons, etc. in the classroom.

- Maintain a clean appearance and wash their hands before returning to class.
- Turn off the water faucets completely before leaving the restroom.

CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Mother Seton Academy upholds high standards for student learning through a well- rounded, value enriched curriculum that is reflected in standardized test scores and high school placement. Diocesan, National, and NJ Student Learning Standards are achieved through the various academic programs

CUSTODIAL RIGHTS

It is the responsibility of the parents to provide any official custodial information decided through the courts or by mutually written consent that is legally recognized. Official custodial agreements will be kept in the office of the principal, and information provided to the necessary staff on a need to know basis. Documentation must include the specific arrangements with regard to legal and physical custody, and any restrictions thereof. Court documentation must include the sheet which contains the docket/case number. In the absence of any court or other legally binding document, the school will view each parent as having full legal custody of his/her child. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, non-custodial parents have the right to receive unofficial copies of records of their child's academic progress or lack thereof. It is a great benefit to the child to have both parents involved in his/her education.

DRESS CODE

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

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

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

BOYS (GRADES K-8):

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

GIRLS (GRADES K-3):

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

GIRLS (GRADES 4-8):

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

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

BOYS (GRADES K-8):

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

Girls (GRADES K-3):

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

GIRLS (GRADES 4-8):

- Maroon or white polo shirt with monogram*
- Maroon plaid skirt* **OR** Gray uniform shorts*
- Maroon knee socks or maroon stockings with school shoes

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

Plain black or white sneakers may be worn with the uniform shorts (**ONLY**).

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

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

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

SPIRIT DAYS – DRESS DOWN

Unless otherwise specified, a “dress down/spirit day will be jeans (no holes or tears) and an MSA t-shirt or sweatshirt – hooded sweatshirts may be worn but hood must be off from the time the students enter the building until he/she leaves at dismissal.

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

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

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

The principal is the final determiner of dress code violation.

FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

Tuition cost helps to defray the cost of educating a student at Mother Seton Academy. A tuition and fee notice is sent home in January indicating the cost for the next school year. There are fees for participation in athletics. PTA hosts several activities and fundraisers. Full cooperation by every family is expected in order to maintain the family tuition plan. All financial obligations must be kept current. Parents who do not pay tuition on time may be informed that their children must be transferred at the end of the marking period. School report cards will be withheld until all financial obligations are met. Refunds will not be given for any fees paid at registration.

Parents who experience unexpected financial difficulties should inform the

Business Administrator immediately to discuss options.

HEALTH/MEDICATION

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

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

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

The main phases of our Health Program are as follows:

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

activities.

9. Medications, both prescription and non-prescription, will be given by the school nurse to students during the school day only if the permission to administer is given in writing by the doctor and parent or guardian. Medication must be in a labeled prescription bottle with the student's name and required dosage. This permission must be updated yearly.
10. Children are not permitted to carry prescribed or over-the-counter medications, except inhalers, diabetic medication and Epi Pens with a doctor's note.
11. Injuries occurring at home will not be treated in the health office.
12. After an illness, children will be allowed to remain in the building at lunch time, only if they have presented a written request from home.
13. **After any absence, a note from the parents must be presented to the school.**

This note must state the student's name, the reason for the absence, the dates of the days absent, and the signature of the parent or guardian. After a four-day absence, a doctor's note must be presented to the school nurse.
14. If a child contracts a communicable disease, parents are asked to keep their child home from school until a physician gives permission for the student to return. The school must be notified immediately. State Law requires a doctor's certificate before a student's return if a communicable disease is the cause of an absence.
15. Children who are sent home for fever/vomiting must stay home for a minimum of 24 hours prior to returning to school.
16. If a student contracts lice, the parents must notify the school. After the child is treated, he/she must be checked by the school nurse before entering the classroom.
17. School insurance is provided for all students in September. This insurance is in addition to a family's regular health plan. The insurance covers students during school hours and while participating in school activities.

GENERAL POLICIES

BIRTHDAY and/or CLASSROOM PARTIES:

Request must be made to and permission granted by the classroom teacher for all parties. Food and goodies that will be shared with the class are to be left in the main office. They will be brought to the classroom for distribution.

If a student in the class has a food allergy, parents of children celebrating birthdays will be notified as to what snacks (such as peanuts) cannot be provided.

BIRTHDAY INVITATIONS

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

CELL PHONES/SMARTWATCHES/NON-APPROVED DEVICES:

Students are not to use the cell/Smartwatches/office phones from the time of arrival through dismissal unless the office has given express permission. These permissions are granted only in an emergency. Students do not call home to have a 'forgotten' item brought to school. It is a good practice for your child to have school materials organized the night before so as to be ready in the morning.

Please do not call the school to give students messages. Only in an emergency will a message be delivered to a child. Where the office deems it necessary, a child will be allowed to make a phone call.

Cell phones/Smartwatches are to be in the off position and upon arrival to each class are to be deposited in the numbered pocket-keeper provided. It is to remain there until the end of that class unless a teacher allows it to be used for class assignment. At the end of each class, the student may retrieve the device and move on to the next class repeating the same procedure. If these devices are observed being used, they will be confiscated by the faculty/staff member and turned into the main office. The parent will be required to pick it up from the main office.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Students may share information with a member of the faculty or staff in confidence. However, if it is a matter of health, life or safety, the faculty or staff member must tell the principal who will call the parents immediately.

EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS:

Throughout the school year there will be monthly Wednesdays that have been set aside for faculty meetings. Additional days may be set aside for professional development for all faculty as designated by the Department of Catholic Education. All early dismissal days are indicated on the school calendar. PreK students will be dismissed at 12:50 p.m., Bus riders 12:55 p.m., Kindergarten at 12:58 p.m. and grades 1-8 at 1:00 p.m. on these days.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

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

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

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

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

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

FIELD TRIPS:

1. Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals.
2. Field trips are re-evaluated each year to determine the trips compatibility with curricular goals.
3. **A field trip is privilege and not a right.**
4. Students must be up to date on all work in their classes, and be in good behavioral standing.
5. There are no "traditional" field trips. Class participation in a particular field trip over consecutive years does not mean that this trip has become a school tradition.
6. All grades do not always have the same number of field trips.

7. Field trips are permissible for all grades when advanced planning, location, and the experience insure a successful learning opportunity.
8. Individual teachers, in consultation with the administration, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to poor conduct.
9. A written **official permission slip**, signed by the parent, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip activity. Verbal permission **cannot** be accepted. Faxed documents are accepted prior to the trip. A **telephone call** will **not** be accepted in lieu of the proper field trip permission slip.
10. Parents may refuse to permit their child from participating in a field trip by stating so on the proper form. Students who do not attend a field trip will remain at home with the parent and will be marked absent for the day.
11. Students who are participating in the field trip must ride the bus to and from the field trip with their class. Students not on the bus may not participate in the field trip and will be counted absent for the day.
12. All monies collected for the field trip are **non-refundable**.
13. **Cell phones** are **not allowed** on field trips unless otherwise directed by the teacher and/or administration.
14. Parents who are not "official" chaperones may not drive their cars to a field trip destination with the plan of accompanying the class on the field trip. Our risk management insurance company ensures the "official" chaperones and participation by unofficial chaperones jeopardizes the protection for our students and all "official" adults on the trip.
15. Parents who chaperone a field trip may not bring pre-school or school-age siblings on the field trip.
16. The number of chaperones necessary for a field trip will be determined by the classroom teacher and the principal.
17. Anyone interested in being a chaperone must complete all Safe Environment requirements in order to participate. These must be completed 10 days prior to the trip.
18. A field trip generally occurs in a less controlled environment where allergen triggers may be present. In the event that a parent is concerned about a child's presence on a field trip due to his/her special health needs, a parent may choose to keep their child at home on the day of the field trip.

FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS:

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

requirements.

HOMEWORK:

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

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

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

INSURANCE:

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

LOST & FOUND:

Parents are encouraged to label student clothing, backpacks, and personal items. Any items found in the school building or on the school grounds should be brought to the Lost and Found container located in the school cafeteria. The school is not responsible for any items that are lost or stolen. **Items placed in the Lost and Found remain there until the last Friday of the month.**

PARENTS' RIGHT TO STUDENT RECORDS:

Mother Seton Academy adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy) regarding access to student records to parents with legal custody of their child/children. Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the US Mail or email. No records will be given to parents to transport to the new school.

Parents may review their children's records in the presence of the school principal. This request must be made in writing to the principal. The school will respond to the request within twenty-four hours. 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 custody section of the court order.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION:

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

The objectives of this organization are as follows:

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

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

PARENTS AS PARTNERS:

We, at MSA, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life---physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of Mother Seton Academy involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

As partners in the educational process at Mother Seton Academy, we ask parents:

To set rules, times, and limits so that your child:

- Gets to bed early on school nights;

- Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day;
- Is dressed according to the school dress code;
- Completes assignments on time; and
- Has lunch money or nutritional sack lunch every day.

Parents are expected:

- To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences;
- To notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy;
- To notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers;
- To meet all financial obligations to the school;
- To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health;
- To complete and return to school any requested information promptly;
- To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education;
- To support the religious and educational goals of the school;
- To attend Mass and teach the Catholic faith by word and example; Non-Catholic parents agree to support the Catholic education of their children by allowing them to attend Mass and other religious activities and agree that their children will take religion classes offered in the school.
- To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school;
- To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.

PARENTAL COOPERATION:

Parental cooperation is essential for the welfare of students. Normally, a child is not deprived of a Catholic education or otherwise penalized for actions of parents/guardians. However, the Principal may require the dismissal of a student when parents/guardians have been persistently and overtly uncooperative regarding school policies, regulations, or programs. Student dismissal may also be required when parents/guardians have interfered in matters of school administration to the detriment of the school's ability to serve their own or other children. If, in the opinion of the administration, parent/guardian behavior interferes with the teaching/learning process, the administration may require parents/guardians to withdraw their children and sever the relationship with the school. Harassment of administration, teachers, or students by

parents/guardians can result in parents being required to withdraw their children. In such situations, tuition and fees will not be refunded.

PICTURES:

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

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

RELIGIOUS EXERCISES:

The development of each child's faith life is fostered through times of prayer, participation in religious celebrations, liturgy, services, and the study of the scriptures, thereby providing a Christian foundation and climate of faith to mature. Children are encouraged to develop a daily prayer life, to receive the Sacraments on an on-going basis, and to perform acts of Christian service. Non-Catholic students are expected to participate in all religious activities except the Sacramental Life of the Catholic Church. Children in Grade 2 will be prepared to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. Students in Grade 8 will be prepared to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

GRADING

REPORT CARDS & PROGRESS REPORTS:

Reports cards for K-2 students are available to be accessed by parents using the Genesis Parent Portal three times during the school year in order that parents are informed of the status of their children with regard to academic subjects and personal traits. Discussions of pupil progress and grades are provided by parent-teacher conferences or by special appointments with teachers. A schedule for these meetings is issued in the beginning of the school year. Progress reports are issued to students in Kindergarten - Grade 2 between the marking periods to keep parents informed of the children's progress. Parents of students in Grades 3-8 receive access to their children's progress through the Parent Portal. Cooperation between the school and home is absolutely essential for the students' successful academic

achievement.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Grade 6-8 students will receive a numerical grade for each major discipline. Grades that are less than or equal to 69% are considered failing grades and do not meet curriculum expectations.

ACADEMIC HONOR ROLL:

Primary Honor Roll Requirements (Grades 2 & 3)

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

Gold Honor Roll Requirements (Grades 4-8)

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

Silver Honor Roll Requirements (Grades 4-8)

1. Grades 4-5 are required to have an (A) in at least three major subjects; no grade may be lower than a (B)
2. Grades 6-8 must maintain an average of a (90) in at least major

- subjects; No grade average may be below an (85)
3. Maintain a "2" in minor subject areas
 4. Maintain an "S" in conduct

Bronze Honor Roll Requirements (Grades 4-8)

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

SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE:

PreK – day begins at 9:15 a.m.

Kindergarten - Grade 8 are guided by the following times:

- 8:45 a.m. - First Bell
- 8:50 a.m. - Late Bell, Prayers and Announcements
- 9:00 a.m. - Classes Begin
- 2:57 p.m. - Students return to homeroom
- 3:05 p.m. - Prayers and Announcements
- 3:10 p.m. - Dismissal for Bus Students and PreK
- 3:13 p.m. - Dismissal for K
- 3:15 p.m. - Dismissal for Car Students

The school does not accept responsibility for students present before 8:30 a.m. Students may enter the building as they disembark from the bus.

Any students found in the building before 8:30 a.m. will be brought to the office and parents will be assessed a \$25 supervision fee. Students must leave the building by 3:30 p.m. When waiting for activities (athletics, social, etc.), the students must be supervised by an authorized adult (faculty/staff). Any student not picked-up on time after dismissal will be placed in the Extended Program where charges for that service will be incurred. Students may not be in the building at any other time unless they are supervised by an authorized adult. Periodically, students will be dismissed at 1:00 p.m. for staff development. Exact dates will be printed on the yearly calendar.

SCHOOL YEARBOOK:

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

SEARCHES:

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

STANDARDIZED TESTING:

The Department of Catholic Schools, Diocese of Trenton has selected Renaissance Star 360 assessments as the standardized testing tool. This comprehensive interim and formative assessment suite delivers fast, valid data on individual student progress in reading and mathematics. The computer-adaptive assessments will be administered each trimester in October, January, and May to students in Grades 2 through 8. Student scores are immediately accessible to teachers; ~~therefore~~, allowing for the monitoring of student progress and the adjustment of instruction to meet individual needs. Parents will receive reports each trimester showing student growth.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES/PROGRAMS:

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

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

TECHNOLOGY:

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

collaboratively across the disciplines.

All classrooms have interactive whiteboards that facilitate presentations to the entire class. In addition, a wide array of educational technology is available to each class, including Fire tablets, Chromebooks, digital microscopes, and scientific probes.

Student Participation on Social Networking Sites

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

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

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

TEXTBOOKS:

All textbooks are the property of Mother Seton Academy or the State of New Jersey. They are provided for student use at great expense. It is important to instill in the students a sense of responsibility in regard to the property of others. All textbooks and workbooks are to be kept clean, covered at all times, and handled carefully. If a book is lost, mutilated, or destroyed, the

parents must assume the cost of the book.

Every student must carry a school bag to and from school. The school bag should provide adequate protection for the books, especially during inclement weather. Rolling backpacks are not permitted.

TRANSFERS

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

USE OF THE SCHOOL LOGO and/or SEAL

The design of the school logo and seal must remain intact. No alterations, additions or deletions to any part of these items are permitted. Any individual, organization or company wishing to use the logo for any purpose must obtain the principal's permission to do so in writing.

VISITORS

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

RIGHT TO AMEND

The administration retains the right to amend the Parent/Student Handbook for just cause. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

Per the Diocese of Trenton:

Any action or comment that are viewed as scandalous or detrimental to the school, its students, the operation of the school or the reputation of the school in the community is subject to the school's disciplinary code, whether or not such actions or comments occur on school grounds, the internet or during the school day.