

St. Matthew Catholic School, San Antonio, Texas
2018-2019 Student- Parent Handbook
SECTION 3

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN ANTONIO

St. Matthew is governed by the policies of the Archdiocese of San Antonio. These policies are regularly reviewed and revised. Throughout the 2018-2019 St. Matthew Catholic School Student Parent Handbook you will notice there are starred (*) sections. These sections are taken directly from the Archdiocesan policy handbook and must be included in the policy handbooks of schools throughout the archdiocese.

COMPLIANCE WITH ARCHDIOCESAN POLICY 2106

All employees and volunteers of St. Matthew Catholic School are in full compliance with Archdiocesan Policy 2106, *Policy on Sexual Abuse on the Part of Church Personnel of the Archdiocese of San Antonio* (available at http://www.archsa.org/to_protect/). All employees and volunteers are required receive orientation on the archdiocesan sexual misconduct policy.

**HANDBOOK OF POLICIES AND REGULATIONS FOR
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

“The Catholic School is a most important locus for human and Christian formation. The declaration of the Second Vatican Council *Gravissimum Educationis* makes a decisive change in the history of Catholic schools: the move from school as institution to school as community. Catholic schools are no less zealous than other schools in the promotion of culture and in the human formation of young people. It is, however, the special function of the Catholic school to:

- develop in the school community an atmosphere animated by a spirit of liberty and charity;
- enable young people, while developing their own personality, to grow at the same time in that new life which has been given them in baptism; and,
- orient the whole of human culture to the message of salvation.”

Reference: General Directory for Catechesis, #259

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MORALITY

St. Matthew Catholic School abides by the following policies of the Archdiocese of San Antonio regarding morality.

PREGNANCY (see Archdiocese Policy 3304)

A primary purpose of Catholic education is to guide students' growth in Christian values and moral conduct. Catholic teaching stresses that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and that the sanctity of family life is enhanced through the fulfillment of God's plan as expressed by a loving and permanent commitment. Premarital sexual activity is contrary to these values. However, if a pregnancy occurs outside of marriage, the total school community seeks to offer support to the pregnant student and or the student father so that the pregnancy can be brought to term. The reality of the situation, in all its dimensions, is to be treated in a Christian and humane manner.

In order to insure the best interests of the student(s), parents and the school community, the following guidelines will be implemented:

1. When school personnel become aware of the pregnancy, the principal must meet with the pregnant student and then her parent or guardian.
2. The student must receive appropriate professional counseling consistent with Catholic teaching.

If the father-to-be is identified and if he is a student in the same Catholic school, the following guidelines will be implemented:

1. The principal of that school must meet with him and his parent or guardian.
2. The father-to-be must be involved in a counseling program similar to that provided the mother-to-be.

The school will assist the pregnant student in completing her education either by allowing her to continue attending classes or by referring her to an appropriate alternative program.

If the student is to remain in school, she will be allowed, with a doctor's written approval, to participate in all activities to the extent that her condition and the common good of the school dictate.

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If the student desires to return to the school after the birth of the child, the school will facilitate her continuance only with appropriate documentation from a health care provider.

The condition of pregnancy, itself, must not exclude the student from participating in the public graduation activities and events. However, the principal, in consultation with the superintendent, the parent or guardian, and in the case of parish schools, the pastor, must determine whether unique circumstances may necessitate pursuing an alternate action.

ABORTION (see Archdiocese policy 3305)

Abortion, which disregards innocent human life, is incompatible with and contradictory to the fundamental teachings of the Church, the mission of the Catholic school and the values that ought to permeate Catholic education. Catholic teaching does not accept that anyone may justifiably arrange for or procure an abortion for oneself or for another person, be forced or pressured into having an abortion or influence or coerce another person to have an abortion.

Therefore, the involvement of any student in procuring or assisting in the procurement of an abortion is cause for such student to be dismissed from school.

If it becomes known to any member of the school community that a student is contemplating or planning an abortion all reasonable encouragement must be given to the student to save the life of her unborn child. In all circumstances, the mother of the unborn child must be treated with compassion and respect.

MARRIAGE AND CO-HABITATION (see Archdiocese policy 3306)

When the marriage of a student is recognized as valid by the Catholic Church, the school administration will determine the status of the student within the school on an individual basis.

Such a marriage, in itself, is not cause for dismissal or sanctions against the student.

Co-habitation and a marriage not recognized by the Catholic Church may be causes for expulsion.