

**Saint Virgil Academy
Parent/ Student Handbook
2010-2011**

Acceptance of the Handbook as Contract

I accept the provisions of the 2010-2011 St. Virgil Academy Parent-Student Handbook, which contains the policies, rules and procedures for St. Virgil Academy. I have read the Handbook, and agree that the provisions contained herein are binding, are established for the benefit of all students, and are administered and enforced by the administration of St. Virgil Academy.

I understand my responsibility to support the policies of St. Virgil Academy and to ensure that my daughter/son abides by the rules and regulations in the Handbook. I also understand that the Handbook is subject to change as determined by the school administration, that these changes will be communicated to parents and students, and that the school administration may take actions that are not specifically stated in the Handbook as a situation may warrant.

Name of Student: _____

Signature of Student: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

PASTOR, St. Virgil Parish – Monsignor Francis J. Duffy

The Pastor is the spiritual and temporal head of the parish school and, as such, is responsible to the Bishop for the effective maintenance and operation of the school. He is assisted by the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools, who seeks to support the parish in its mission. The Pastor employs the Principal and the school faculty and staff, and seeks their collaboration, together with the parents and students, so that the school may be a vital part of the parish and a school community of faith, learning and love. To this end, the policies of the parish are directed to provide an environment where the students may be educated in academic knowledge and in the Gospel of Christ and the Catholic Church, while ensuring that the school as an institution has the resources it needs to continue its mission well into the future. Our doors are open for education and Christian teaching regardless of race, creed or religion.

PRINCIPAL, St. Virgil Academy - Mr. Gerard Fazio

The Principal serves as a member of the parish’s leadership team heading one of six ministerial departments of the parish. The Principal represents the Pastor and is charged with the day-to-day observations of the parish school. The Principal is accountable to the Pastor for his ministerial and professional performance and is the academic head of the school. By his ministry, the Principal is to supervise the faculty, guide the implementation of the academic frameworks and curriculum of the diocese and of the state, and in collaboration with the Pastor, strengthen the academic, spiritual, social, and communal life of the school, and its students, faculty and families.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

PRINCIPAL’S OFFICE:	973-539-7267 X 216
SCHOOL OFFICE:	973-539-7267 X 215
TUITION OFFICE:	973-538-1418 X 210
AFTERCARE PROGRAM:	973-539-0188
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:	973-267-1366
SCHOOL FAX NUMBER:	973-292-5157

SAINT VIRGIL ACADEMY VISION

PHILOSOPHICAL OBJECTIVE:

The goal of a Catholic education is to work with parents in the intellectual and religious formation of their students. A Catholic school will create a community that fosters intellectual curiosity, search for truth, moral growth, Christian spirituality and healthy physical development, while allowing each student to experience strong supportive relationships with others who hold common values in a climate of mutual respect and caring.

Catholic education bears the dual responsibilities of providing a high quality academic education comparable to the best secular schools while at the same time not only teaching the students the Catholic faith but also providing the spiritual atmosphere which allows that teaching to be integrated into students’ lives.

A Catholic School should nurture children spiritually and academically in an environment of Christian caring and respect and provide young people with a firm faith foundation as part of solid, challenging fundamental education.

The immediate goals of Saint Virgil Academy include the following:

Intellectual/Academic

- To foster a community that values and nurtures each student, and cares for their individual needs.
- To review, revise, and enrich the curriculum in order to provide a strong preparation in the liberal arts as appropriate for each grade level.
- To improve upon the current academic formation in order to allow the student to achieve his/her highest potential and allow them to attend his/her choice of Catholic or private high schools in the area.
- To set academic standards which exceed those available in local public education.
- To develop a curriculum that teaches students to make balanced, well reasoned judgments about themselves, others, their society and culture, as well as their current or past history.
- To extend learning opportunities so that St. Virgil Academy is regarded as one of the top parochial schools in the diocese.
- To direct the school program to seek out the gifts of each student and to develop them appropriately, helping the individual to achieve their full potential. An integral formation of every dimension of the human person will be emphasized, including physical education (*mens sana in corpore sano*).

Spiritual

- To foster an environment that is guided by, exemplifies, and embodies the Gospel.
- To create a community where administration, parents, and faculty work together to form students in true justice and holiness.

Moral/Virtues

- To focus on the formation of St. Virgil Academy graduates as young men and women of virtue and integrity. They should be prepared to use their freedom well.
- To help form the conscience of students so that they are guided by Gospel charity.

Communal/Social

- To make St. Virgil Academy a dynamic partner in a Christian community of students, faculty, parents and parishioners.
- To abide by pedagogy that is primarily directed by charity as opposed to fear.
- To become a focal point of growth in Catholic life for parents, faculty, students and parishioners.
- To develop channels of communication between parents, teachers, and administration.

Our school life comprises four essential areas: **spirituality, academics, community building** and **extra-curricular** activities. Finances enable us to have the resources (faculty, administration, technology, instructional tools and text books) to keep our school mission and purpose vital and growing. Topics pertaining to these four areas are discussed in the following sections.

THE CATHOLICITY OF OUR SCHOOL: BEHAVIOR AND SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality is to have a moral conscience, self-respect, a reverence and respect for others and their property, and health of body and soul. The Gospel of Jesus is binding on all students, parents, faculty, staff and administrators. The mandate of Jesus calls us to a life consistent with the Lord we worship. All are bound to this Gospel mandate. It is meant to be not only our teaching, but more importantly our practice. Therefore, when we fail through sin or human weakness, we are each called to repentance, reform, and new beginning. Those who cannot accept this lifestyle should seek other educational alternatives. At no time are we free to amend or change this practice to permit the spiritual or academic well-being of the school to be threatened, the school's Catholic mission of the Gospel to be compromised, or individuals to be ill-treated, degraded or threatened. These **Twelve Essentials** are our Rule of St. Benedict and represent a distillation of the Gospel. They are well rooted in our Catholic tradition and are the hallmark of our School.

1. Continual reverent mindfulness of God and His watchfulness over our behavior and inner thoughts.
2. Desire to live in accordance with (and with an acceptance of) God's will.
3. Willingness to respond out of love of God to the directions of our leaders (even in difficult, or unfavorable, or unjust circumstances).
4. Quiet acceptance of suffering in life without giving in to anger or vengeance, depression or despair or the desire to run away.
5. Straightforward revelation of our inner thoughts, good and bad, to our confessor or spiritual director, recognizing that God may have given wisdom to another, for our benefit.
6. Contentment with what God has provided so that we feel neither betrayed nor left out and instead can focus on the development of our Christian character.
7. Sincere and peaceful acknowledgement in our heart that we are not better than others, and may well be worse than them.
8. The desire to live in the school and parish community with the Catholic Church and its pastors and ministers as our teachers in life so that we do not become a law unto ourselves but instead desire to grow in love, service and the bond which unites us.
9. Capacity to refrain from speaking on every topic and in every situation, or to have the last word.
10. Avoidance of snide remarks, sarcastic speech, demeaning laughter or gossipy conversation.
11. That we speak with a velvet heart, a pure mind, gentle hands and a godly tongue.
12. That we accept ourselves as God accepts us, so that we have no need to impress others, dominate them, or put them down.

GENERAL CONDUCT

Children are to be educated in reverence for God and in courtesy and respect for others and for school resources. Conduct and behavior are the fruit of faith and spirituality. Respect is taught at home and is expected at school for all faculty members, priests, custodians, aides, bus drivers, classmates, and all visitors. Courtesy and cooperation should be shown to them at all times. Children are taught to respect themselves and to give respect to others, the possessions of others and the property they have been entrusted with for their own use. Our students are encouraged to greet any adult in our building in a courteous and welcoming manner. Likewise, teachers, staff, parents and administrators are to be held to the same standard of mutual respect. Lack of courtesy, or gossip or personal attacks cannot be accepted or excused.

The purposes of discipline are:

1. To promote a genuine human development spiritually, morally, academically, and socially so that Christian virtues, right living, self-control and self discipline are second nature and misguided behavior is redirected.
2. To provide protection and respect for others.
3. To increase respect for duly constituted authority, and
4. To provide a common ordering of community life which allows and encourages a classroom situation conducive to learning and that fosters mutual respect among students.

The parish school reserves the right to discipline students, who, through their lack of responsibility, behavior and conduct, infringe upon the rights of others in the school community. Parents are expected to be supportive of these policies and of the

administration and teachers. If there is any question of a disciplinary action, communication with the teacher is strongly encouraged. The school reserves the right to terminate educational services for a student or family when the student's behavior interferes with the rights and well-being of others, or when the student's parents no longer support the school's code of conduct.

All students are expected to comply with all school regulations including those regarding the dress code, cafeteria and schoolyard conduct, bus conduct, gum chewing, absences, lateness, and leaving school property as well as all other policies published through the principal's office.

CELL PHONES, PAGERS/BEEPERS AND CD PLAYERS

Students are not permitted to have earphones, cell phones, pagers/beepers, CD players/radios at school or school-related activities (e.g. field trips, aftercare, sports events, and cultural events). All such items will be taken from the student's possession and returned to the parents.

SERIOUS INFRACTIONS

The following behaviors constitute a serious infraction of the School's Code of Conduct:

1. Possession of weapons, knives or firearms.
2. Possession of illegal controlled substances
3. Possession or use of alcohol or tobacco
4. Vandalism of parish property or the property of others.
5. Bullying others.
6. Disrespectful behavior toward adult authority.
7. Violation of the state law.
8. Leaving parish and school grounds without permission or leaving adult supervision on field trips.

Any violation of these infractions makes the student liable to dismissal from the school. Parents shall be informed and guidance offered to parents to assist the parents in making an appropriate response to their child's behavior and obtaining the resources needed. The student and his/her parents shall cooperate with any measures (including therapeutic) which the Pastor and Principal deem necessary.

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

When a student has violated the School's Code of Conduct, the school reserves the right to exercise any of the following measures to address the student's actions, to help him or her to recognize the seriousness of their actions and their need for repentance and reform.

1. Probationary Period (Student is warned. Any subsequent violation will require further disciplinary action).
2. Restitution for Damages Caused.
3. In-School Suspension.
4. Detention (after School or on Weekends)
5. Out of School Suspension
6. Dismissal from School

The parents will be informed of the discipline and are expected to support the School in its remedial endeavor to form student's conscience and redirect student's conduct. When detention is used, parents will be notified in writing of the date and time. Parents must provide transportation, or write a note giving the student permission to walk home. For Out-of-School Suspension, the Parents will be notified in writing of the dates that the student is to be absent from classes and school activities.

In the event of an action occurring between students from both St. Virgil Academy and Morris Catholic Junior School, both the Principal and Dean of Students will determine the appropriate consequence together.

STATE AND FEDERAL LAW CONCERNING STUDENT VIOLENCE OR THREATS

State and Federal law requires that violence or threat of violence be reported to the proper law enforcement agencies, even when such violence or threat comes from a minor. Law enforcement officials determine whether the child can continue in school or not, and whether a psychological evaluation is needed for the student's return to school. Parents should help their children to understand the seriousness of violence or threat of violence, and not to joke about threatening another person with any harm.

POLICY ON CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

Cheating and plagiarism are violations of academic integrity, and also expressly contradict the moral, intellectual and academic objectives of St. Virgil Academy. Students who are caught cheating by any means on tests or exams will be disciplined according to the school standards.

Plagiarism is defined as the representation of the work of another as one's own, without proper references or acknowledgement of sources. Technological advances provided by the Internet and other electronic tools often facilitate the occurrences of plagiarism. Research papers, book reports, or any other student work that utilizes outside sources, must contain proper documentation that reflects these sources of information.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students of St. Virgil Academy have access to a wide range of school and parish property, from textbooks and desks, to lockers, lunchroom facilities, bathrooms, computer hardware and software, etc. Students should take pride in being able to use these resources and should use them with care and respect, as if they were personal possessions. Negligent use of school and parish resources which result in damage or disrepair constitutes vandalism, and students who engage in this behavior shall be disciplined according to the school standards.

CONDUCT AT THE AFTERCARE PROGRAM:

The same rules of school conduct and discipline apply to all children entered in the Aftercare Program.

SCHOOL SAFETY:

All entrances to our school are locked throughout the day, once school begins. The double aluminum doors facing the parking lot are open between the hours of 7:15 AM and 7:45 AM. To enter the building when doors are locked, ring the bell located to the right of the double doors. When you hear the buzzer ring, pull the door on the right to enter building. All visitors must obtain a pass at the main door of the school and then report to the school office immediately afterward to sign in.

HEALTH SERVICES AND PRESCRIPTION DRUGS:

The County Educational Commission provides nursing services to St. Virgil Academy. The nursing program includes weight and height measurements, vision and hearing tests, and scoliosis screening. Accurate health records are kept on all students. The nurse carries out the local Board of Health rules regarding communicable diseases and acts as a resource person to assist the teachers in implementing health education projects.

Parents will be contacted immediately if an accident occurs or a child becomes ill during school hours. No child will be permitted to leave the school unless accompanied by a parent or responsible adult who must sign the release book in the school office. For this reason, it is extremely important that the emergency form be completed carefully and thoroughly. Please keep our records current by informing the school office immediately of any change in any health data.

When medicine is required to be taken in school, it should be sent to the nurse or office in the original prescription bottle accompanied by an explanation note from the doctor. This medication is to be taken in the presence of the nurse or a staff member.

It is preferred that a parent accompany a child with any special medical needs or someone designated by the parent, on any school outing/field trip, or field day.

INSURANCE PROGRAM

Students should be covered by accident insurance and parents are responsible to make provision for such insurance.

On a voluntary basis, student accident insurance program is offered through the C.W. Bollinger Insurance Company. This program is voluntary; however we encourage use of it as a protection for both, the student and the school. Neither the Diocese nor the Parish (or the insurance carriers) offers Student Accident Insurance. Doctor's bills, hospital costs, etc. cannot be paid by the school for school-related injuries. Please investigate your personal need for this type of insurance.

For students enrolled in the Bollinger Program; when a student receives an injury on school premises or during a school activity elsewhere that requires medical care, the Parents should (1) notify the Principal, and (2) request the School to send the Bollinger Accident Insurance form for reporting and claim purposes. Some form of insurance must cover all students participating in after school sports activities or in the after-care program.

FAMILY DEVOTION AND PRACTICE

Parents of Catholic Students are:

1. To bring their school age children to Mass in the Parish Church every Sunday.
2. To give good example to their children
3. To respect the Church's teaching, ministries and traditions.
4. To foster family prayer at home.
5. To bring themselves and their children to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
6. To use offering envelopes and to give for financial support of the parish community, including Sundays and Holy Days, and
7. To volunteer in the work of the Church and its apostolate. (*Based on the Precepts of the Church*)

The school day begins with Morning Assembly, which is primarily Scripture, prayer for the Holy Father and Church's ministry, the morning offering of self to God's service and providence, and a devotion. Students should arrive to school in sufficient time to attend Morning Assembly. The help of the parents to this end is an extension of the family's devotion and the parents' witness. Students are tardy if they arrive after Prayers have begun and are not eligible for perfect attendance awards.

GUIDELINES FOR SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS

FIRST EUCHARIST (*Contact the Religious Education Office*)

1. Age for Reception of Sacrament: Ordinarily, children in grade 2 will be prepared both by the parents and in religion class.

2. Readiness:
 - A. That the child understands the following: God the Father's greatest gift to us is his own Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus gave His friends and us the great gift of Himself in Holy Communion. He changed bread and wine into His Body and Blood. We share in the family meal of Jesus at Mass.
 - B. That the child desires to receive Jesus in Holy Communion.
 - C. That the child is able to distinguish between ordinary bread and the Eucharist Bread.
3. Sunday Eucharist: Regular participation in Sunday Mass with family or guardian is required for each child preparing for First Eucharist.

RECONCILIATION (*Contact the Religious Education Office, 973-267-1366*)

1. Age for First Reconciliation may occur in grade 2.
2. Readiness:
 - A. That the children clearly understand: The Scriptural meanings of sin and forgiveness; that they are responsible for the decisions they make and that these decisions affect others; that the Church is a community of faith; that Baptism, Penance, and Eucharist are sacraments through which the community celebrates forgiveness; that we experience God and His healing power through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
 - B. That the child desires to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
4. Regular attendance at Sunday Mass with family or guardian is required for each child preparing to receive First Reconciliation.

SCHOOL UNIFORM:

Our school uniform is a sign of self-respect. Secondly it is a sign of pride in our school. The proper and correct uniform is to be worn at all times. Uniforms are purchased through the Co-Ed Uniform Company, 100 Broadway (Route 4), P.O. Box 184, Elmwood Park, NJ 07407, telephone (201) 796-4220

Grade K-5 Girls	Grade K-5 Boys
Plaid jumper	Navy or khaki trousers and belt
White dress blouse (long or short sleeve)	White dress shirt (long or short sleeve)
V-neck pullover or cardigan sweater (with embroidery)	Navy vest or pullover (with embroidery)
Navy knee socks	Plaid tie
Sensible shoes	Navy socks
Navy tights (optional)	Sensible shoes (no work boots)
Slacks (navy or khaki)	Warm weather shorts (navy or khaki)
Warm weather shorts (navy or khaki)	Warm weather polo (navy or white)
Warm weather polo (navy or white)	

No sneakers of any kind or color will be allowed. Jackets and sweatshirts are not part of the daily uniform.

Warm Weather Uniforms During the months of September - October, and April 15th through the end of school in June, students may wear the warm weather uniform. This consists of a short-sleeved white or navy knit polo shirt with embroidery, and khaki or navy shorts.

Gym Uniform: All students in gym classes must wear the regulation gold gym T-shirt (*with logo*) and regulation school navy gym shorts (*no short shorts*), sneakers and white socks (*must cover entire ankle*). Regulation school solid navy sweat suits may be worn over Gym clothes.

Grooming

- Jackets and/or sweatshirts are not part of the daily classroom uniform. Only the school sweater may be worn over the uniform.
- Shirts are to be worn inside slacks and skirts.
- Make-up and nail polish are not permitted and may not be worn at school.
- Jewelry is to be limited to small earrings and simple necklace, medal or chain.
- Hair: Boys' hair is to be neat and may not be streaked or colored in any way. Boys' hair must be cut above the collar. Girl's hair is not to be highlighted, streaked or dyed.

ACADEMICS

As an academic institution, we strive to do our best and to enjoy the discovery and learning of all that God has made.

CURRICULUM

The Parish School follows the standards of the State of New Jersey and the Diocese of Paterson, while reserving the right to exceed these requirements in academic matters. Additionally, in Catholic schools this curriculum is carried out in a religious

atmosphere. Although religion is taught formally in the classrooms, Christian principles are an integral part of the entire curriculum, the relationships and school life.

SUBJECT AREAS TAUGHT

- Religion
- Language Arts: Reading, Literature, English Grammar, Spelling, Penmanship, Composition (*including Creative Writing and Essay Composition*).
- Mathematics (*including Pre Algebra and Algebra*)
- Science
- Social Studies
- Geography
- World Language- Spanish: Grades Pre-K to 5th
- Latin: Grades 6th to 8th
- Fine Arts: Art, Art/Technology, Music (*Vocal and Instrumental*)
- Physical Education
- Study Skills 5th to 8th
- Library Use
- Computers

HONOR ROLL – GRADES 4-8

PRINCIPAL'S LIST: All A+ grades
FIRST HONORS: All A grades
SECOND HONORS: At least 2 A's and the rest B's or above
BENEDICTINE SPIRITUALITY AWARD: Two students from each grade (K-8) will be recognized quarterly for outstanding achievement.

REPORT CARDS

Report Cards are issued four times a year as indicated on our school calendar. Parents are asked to examine the report card carefully and return it to the school with their signature. Important aspects of the report cards are the conduct column and the teacher comments column. A student's grade can and will be affected by his/her attendance record. Excessive absences or tardiness will be reflected in the grades received. Negative conduct marks may keep a student from Honor Roll. Interim Progress Reports are sent between the regular report periods.

There are four communications concerning grades prior to the end of January. All students receive a progress at the halfway point of the first marking period. In addition to the report cards at the first and second quarters, there is a parent-teacher conference in November.

FAILURE NOTIFICATION

If a student is in danger of failing a class, the teacher will send a written warning home to the parent and may suggest a parent/teacher conference in order to determine a course of action. Progress reports in the second, third, and fourth quarters are sent to those students who are in academic jeopardy.

EXAMINATIONS AND TESTING

School-wide examinations take place twice yearly. Mid-term examinations are held generally during the second week of January. Final exams take place during the second week of June. Students who miss an exam must present a doctor's note upon returning to school, and must reschedule the exam in conjunction with the teacher.

Terra Nova testing takes place in March. Please see the school calendar for specific dates.

TUTORING

After-school enrichment or remedial work is available upon request in English and Math.

HOMEWORK

Homework assignment policies, including time spent each evening, vary by teacher. Students are strongly encouraged to incorporate independent reading into their daily homework activity.

MEDIA CENTER

The school media center is under the supervision of the teachers and parent volunteers. Students have regularly scheduled media center times as part of the weekly curriculum, and may use the center for their informational needs at other times as specified by the principal/teachers.

MEDIA CENTER RULES

1. Students in grade 1-5 are taught how to check out a book themselves. All students are reminded that their signature on a book card makes them fully responsible until the borrowed book is returned.
2. Two books may be borrowed for one week and renewed until the student has an opportunity to finish the material.
3. Pre-K and Kindergarten may only borrow one book a week. Nothing may be checked out if the child has an overdue book. A letter will go home to parents if there is a problem.

4. Reimbursement will be expected for damaged library books, materials or property. Failure to make restitution or to pay fines may result in report cards and registration being withheld.
5. No books or reference materials will be taken from the library without being signed out by the student's teacher.
6. If a book is lost or destroyed, the student will be required to pay for it at cost.
7. Students are reminded to be considerate of others when using the Media Center.

ATTENDANCE AND SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Please call the school office between 8:00 AM and 8:30 AM if your child is going to be absent. A dated note, stating the reason for absence, and signed by a parent must be submitted to the child's teacher following each absence. Since absence from school interferes with the student's progress, parents should not ask that children be released from class except for an emergency. When such request is necessary, they should be made in writing through the school office. Children leaving the school before regular dismissal time, for any reason, must be accompanied by a parent or guardian who must first sign the release book in the school office. Please plan weeklong vacations to coincide with those on our school calendar (*i.e., Christmas Recess and Easter Recess*).

TARDINESS

Students are expected to arrive on time (*that is by the first bell for morning assembly at 7:45 AM*). Any student arriving after 7:45 AM will be marked late in the Late Book. Lateness is extremely discouraged. Having a child arrive late for class interrupts the entire class and delays the progress of the class. The child arriving late is also deprived of learning the value of promptness. This is true of any child, pre-K through grade 8th.

ARRIVAL - MORNINGS

Morning drop-off time begins at 7:15 AM. Students who arrive by bus enter the building via the Fairchild Avenue entrance by the 7th Grade classroom. Students who arrive by car are dropped off in the parking lot car line that enters and exits via Hanover Avenue. Every student in grades K through 8 is to report directly to the auditorium when entering the school. Students should be on time for Morning Prayer and Assembly and should gather in groups by grade level. Students may not enter classrooms before school. Parents who wish to remain at school for Morning Prayer are welcome to do so, and must exit the gym via the side door.

Parents of Pre-Kindergarten students who are driven to school must park in the school parking lot and escort their children directly to the classroom. Pre-Kindergarten classes begin at 8:30 but students may be dropped off as early as 7:45 AM.

DISMISSAL

Please plan timely transportation for your children at the end of the school day. Full-day afternoon dismissal begins at 2:30 PM. Students who depart by bus exit the building via the Fairchild Avenue entrance. Students who walk home are dismissed via the Speedwell Avenue entrance. Students who depart by car are picked up in the parking lot car line that enters via Hanover Avenue and exits via Fairchild Avenue. Students who remain for after care are escorted there by their teachers. Students should leave the parish buildings and grounds promptly at 2:30 PM unless they are remaining for extracurricular activities or for aftercare. Any student not picked up and remaining on the grounds will be automatically sent to aftercare. Parents will be billed a full day's rate for this service. No child may be unattended on Saint Virgil's Property. (*At the conclusion of an after-school activity, students should be picked up promptly*)

Pre-Kindergarten students who depart after the morning session at 11:00 AM, or after the lunch period at 12:30 PM, are dismissed via the doors by the library.

BUS TRANSPORTATION/STUDENT CONDUCT ON BUSES

Bus service or reimbursement is provided by the respective Boards of Education for students residing in Randolph, Denville, Parsippany, Hanover Township, and some sections of Morris School District (*2 miles distance for courtesy busing*). Bus schedules are sent directly from the public school to the families concerned.

Each bus is under the direct supervision of the driver. In the best interest of safety and courtesy, parents are asked to instruct their children in good habits of bus behavior.

BUS CONDUCT

Students are to observe the following regulations:

- Be seat-belted at all times.
- Be courteous, respectful, and cooperative with the bus driver.
- Observe the same conduct with one another that is expected on school property (*including no profanity or vulgar language*).
- Do not eat or drink in the bus.
- Keep the bus clean.
- Students are not permitted to ride any bus but their own.

The following procedures will be followed when a student violates the regulations:

First Offense: A warning is sent to the parents describing the nature of the misconduct and the parents will be called.

Second Offense: The student will be suspended from riding the bus for a period of five days.

Third Offense: The student will be suspended from riding the bus for a greater length of time.

FIELD TRIPS

Each class participates in at least one field trip during the academic year. Grade-appropriate trips are planned by each teacher with the grade's class parent(s). Trips are generally funded via the activities fee, but if additional money is needed, this communicated in advance to the parents. Each student must present a permission slip prior to the trip, signed by his/her parent(s) in order to participate in a field trip.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of a severe snow or ice storm, school closings or delayed opening and bussing are announced through the Honeywell Instant Alert System. Saint Virgil Academy is located in the Morris School District and is governed by the District's decisions. If a two hour delay opening is announced, buses will begin pick-up two hours later than usual. On such days, the children will be given a short lunch break. Children may not be dropped at school prior to 30 minutes before the announced hour of delayed opening.

EMERGENCY CLOSING

If weather or other conditions warrant the closing of the school (*or delayed opening*) before school opens for the day, the Honeywell Instant Alert System will be put into place. Information for joining this system will be updated periodically to the parents through the white envelope. Parents will be expected to enter and update their contact information for the alert system on line.

For delayed openings, students may not arrive at school earlier than 30 minutes before the announced time of delayed opening. For school closings after the opening of the school day, each family will be contacted through the Honeywell Instant Alert System.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

At the beginning of the school year, through a form in the white envelope, each family is asked to provide updated contact information to the school office (*cell phones, pagers, and work numbers*) for parents and adult contacts designated by the parent(s).

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Registration for the next school year begins in January or February. Positions cannot be held for (new or returning) students for whom registration information is incomplete. A child being registered for Kindergarten must be five years of age by October 1st. First graders must be six years old by October 1st. Pre-K 4 students must be four years old by October 1st. Pre-K3 students must be three years old by October 1st. At the time of registration, the child's birth and baptismal certificates must be presented and the appropriate forms completed. A \$250.00 fee is required at the time of registration. Transfer cards must be obtained from the sending school for any child entering grades one through eight.

APPOINTMENTS FOR PARENTS & TEACHERS

Communication between school and home is a very important factor in the education of children. Any parent who wishes to make an appointment with the Principal or a teacher is asked to call the office or write a message to the person concerned and arrangements will gladly be made. Appointments or telephone conferences will be schedule when the teacher is free from classroom responsibilities.

DOCTOR AND DENTIST APPOINTMENTS

Please make these appointments outside of school hours unless there is an emergency. Children who are to be dismissed during the school hours must be picked up at the office and signed out by the parent.

NUT-FREE SCHOOL

St. Virgil Academy is a nut-free school. All lunches, snacks, party food items, or any other foods brought to school must be without any kind of nut. There are a number of students with serious food allergies. Epi-pens are kept at the nurse's office, as well as in the backpacks of the affected students. All faculty and staff are trained in epi-pen use.

VISITORS

Parents and visitors are always most welcome at the school. However, they are not to disturb the teachers or children while class is in session. Anyone coming into the building during school hours is to report to the office. Business is transacted through the secretary. No parent may visit a teacher during school hours.

STUDENTS' TELEPHONE CALLS

Students may not receive calls during school hours. Should an emergency arise, the message will be relayed. A student may place an outside call from the school office only in emergency circumstances. Students are strongly discouraged from calling home to ask a parent to bring a forgotten item to them at school. Students may not have cell phones.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

It is very important for emergency and administrative reasons that every family keeps the school up-to-date with current address, telephone, and email information, including the individuals to be contacted in an emergency if a parent is unavailable and current medical information and physical information. Please notify the school immediately if you have a change of address or telephone number during the school year.

PRE-SCHOOL

St. Virgil Academy offers a three-day Pre-K3 program and a five-day PreK4 program. Both programs offer a half-day or full-day option, as well as an extended lunch period. After-care is available until 6:00 PM.

TECHNOLOGY MISSION STATEMENT

Administrators, faculty and staff will use technology to enhance the philosophical objective of St. Virgil Academy: to work with parents in the intellectual and religious formation of their students. All classroom instruction will be enhanced by technology, through the use of Smartboards, PowerSchool, and other tools. The St. Virgil Academy community will advance its competence in the use of technology so that the appropriate tools can be selected for, and taught to, the students.

INTERNET AND COMPUTER USE POLICY FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (FALL 2004) - CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF THE PATERSON DIOCESE

St. Virgil Academy lets students use Computers and the Internet at school. These pages tell you how you are allowed to use the computers and other electronic tools of the school. Even though we say "computer" and "computer system" in these pages, what we say applies to all school owned computers and other electronic equipment (like TV's, VCR's and DVD players, telephones) that are here at school. These rules also apply to any information and software programs, not just to the actual equipment. The Internet system here at school is for school activities only. There are things that you might be allowed to do using the Internet and computers at home that you are not allowed to do here at school. What you do using the computers here at school has to go along with what you are learning in your classroom. St. Vigil Academy can tell you what you are allowed to do, and what you are not allowed to do using the computers at school. These are rules that we have made to help keep you safe, and to be sure that you use computers and the Internet the right way while you are in school. We want you to use the computers and the Internet in a way that is Christian and doesn't break any laws. You shouldn't use the computers and Internet at school to buy or sell things, and you can only use the computers and the Internet at school with the permission of your parents, the principal, and your teachers. Later on, we will ask you to sign your name to show that you understand these rules, and that you are promising to follow them. We will also ask your parents to sign so that we know that they agree with these rules, and have talked to you about these rules. Your parents also have to give you their permission to use the Internet while you are in school.

Here are some things that you are not allowed to do:

1. Keeping Yourself Safe

- You will not tell other people on the Internet where you or any of the other students live, or how they can find you or any other student.
- You will not send your picture or pictures of any other students to other people on the Internet.
- You will not tell anyone you meet online that you will meet them somewhere in person. If someone you meet online says they want to meet you in person or talk to you on the telephone, you will tell your teacher and parents.

2. Not Doing Things That Are Against the Law

- You will not try to use any computer, or anything on a computer at school without permission. If you have a password, you will not share it with anyone else. If you know someone else's password, you will not try to use it to get to their files and other stuff on the school computers.
- You will not try to do anything on purpose to the computers at school that would make them stop working or mess up any information that is kept on the computers.
- You will not try to change anything on the school's computers without permission. This means that you won't try to change any computer settings or software settings.
- You will not use the school's computers to do anything that is against the law.

3. Keeping the Computers Safe

- Your school might give you a special place to keep your files and other stuff on the computers in school. You should be careful to keep other people from being able to go to that place to use your special files and other stuff. If you have a special password that the school gave you, you will not give it to anyone else.
- If something does not seem to be working right, or if you have any problems with the school computers, you will tell your teacher right away.
- You are not allowed to download or copy anything from another computer or from the Internet without your teacher's permission. You should not try to add any programs or software to the school's computers without the permission of the person who is in charge of the computers at your school.

4. Not Using Bad Language

- Any time that you use the computers or Internet, you will remember that you are a student in a Catholic school. You will only use good language, and will never use words that someone else might think are mean or dirty. You will not use language that shows disrespect or that would make someone else afraid or uncomfortable.
- You will not send or post information that puts someone else in danger, or is like an insult or attack on someone else.
- You will not annoy or pester other people online. If someone asks you to stop doing something online that they find annoying or that makes them upset, you will stop doing it right away.

5. Respect for Privacy

- You will respect the privacy of other students by not telling or writing about what someone else told you without permission of the person who sent you the message. But if an adult you meet online asks you to keep something secret or private, you ask your teacher and parents what to do.
- You will not tell private information about yourself or another person.

6. Being Fair About Using Internet and Computers

- You will use the computers at school only for school work.
- You will share computers with others, and will only use the computers for as long as your teachers allow.
- You will not send annoying or unnecessary message to people.
- You will use e-mail only with the permission of your teacher. If you have your own personal email, you will not try to send mail or check your mail at school using the school's computers.
- You may use the communication tools of the internet (email, chat, instant messaging, and other things like that) only if your principal and teacher allow it. This will only be allowed if it is part of your school assignments or classes.

7. Not Copying or Stealing Things

- You will not copy words or ideas that you find on the Internet and try to pretend that they are your words or ideas.
- You will respect the rights of people who own things. You will not copy things that you find on the internet, like pictures or music, without the permission of the person or company that owns it. If you are not sure, you should ask your teacher.

8. Be Careful of Where You Go Online

- You will not use the school's computers to go places or download things that are dirty, or against the law, or that talk about hating or hurting other people.
- Your parents might tell you about other things that they want you to stay away from while you are online. The school wants you to do what your parents' tell you about this.

9. Other Things You Should Know About What You Can and Can't Do Online

- The school can tell you what you can and can't do while you're using the computers at school. This also means that the school can keep you from using the computers and the Internet while you are at school. Whenever you say or do anything while you are online at school, you must remember that you are a student in a Catholic school, and must act like a Christian.
- Remember that your principal and teacher are allowed to look at anything that you have stored on the computers at school, and anything that you make using the internet or computers while you are in school.

If the police or any other government officials need to look at information on the school computers to investigate a crime or something against the law, the school will help them. If you do anything that is against any of the things talked about in these pages, the principal and your teacher may punish you. They may also stop you from using the computers or Internet while you are in school.

The school can't promise that the computers or Internet will always work at the school. You should always make a copy of anything you keep on the computers at school in case it is lost or damaged. You should always check with your teacher about any information you get from the Internet - sometimes it may not be right. If you do anything while you are online at school that costs money, you and your parents are responsible for paying for it. If you do something that breaks the computers, or costs the school money, you and your parents will have to pay for it. The school expects that you will follow the directions of your teachers and other school authorities when you use the computers and Internet at school. Any time that you use the computers or the Internet, you must show a respect for others. Your actions must also show that you understand that every person is important and that we are all God's children and are brothers and sisters.

POLICY ON POSTING OF INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET - CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF THE PATERSON DIOCESE

The Internet is a public forum with unrestricted access. For this reason, the school restricts permission for the posting of information related to the school, our staff, and our students on the Internet. No person is permitted to use images of the school, the school logo or seal, school staff, or students in any form on the Internet or in any form of electronic communication without specific written permission from the administration. The posting of any such information on any website, bulletin board, chat-room, e-mail or other messaging system without permission, or the posting or transmission of images or information in any format related to the school, staff, or students that are defamatory, scurrilous, pornographic, or which could be construed as threatening or impugning the character of another person is prohibited and will make any person involved in the posting or transmission of such material subject to disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the administration at the parish, school, and/or by the Diocese of Paterson.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

As a community, we strive to serve the needs of one another, to live in patience with one another and to try to build up the bonds that invite us to fellowship.

BUDDY SYSTEM

In an effort to foster camaraderie and mutual-service among the students, we have a Buddy Program. It pairs children in upper grades with children in lower grades. The buddies usually come together for the school Liturgies, assemblies and various other activities throughout the year. They plan sharing projects with and for each other.

LUNCH PERIOD

A hot lunch program is available for students each day. Menus are sent home once a month. All orders must be placed in advance. Milk, other beverages, and snacks are available for daily purchase.

Parent volunteers assist staff in managing the cafeteria.

CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

1. Proper table manners are expected of each student.
2. Students are to remain seated unless they are going to buy lunch.
3. Students are to clean their area before the prayer and thanksgiving after lunch and leaving the cafeteria for recess or the classroom.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

"Aftercare" program for children in grades PreK3 through 8th grade is available each day (*including half days*) from school dismissal until 6:00 PM. Registration is required and is available in a variety of plans including three days a week, four days a week and five days a week. Parents who normally use the program only three or four days a week may from time to time add another day for the appropriate fee. Some form of insurance must cover all students participating in the aftercare program.

Any child in grade PreK4 to grade 8 that is not picked up from school will be sent to Aftercare. Parents will be billed for a full day's service. No child may remain unattended on Saint Virgil's property.

The same rules of school conduct and discipline apply to all children entered in the Aftercare Program. When parent(s) or legal guardian(s) come to pick up their children between the hours of 2:30 PM and 6:00 PM, the double aluminum doors should be used to enter the building and children must be signed out before leaving the building.

BIRTHDAY TREATS AND INVITATIONS

When sending party invitations for younger children, please use the school directory and mail the invitations. If invitations are sent to school, the invitations are to be given to the classroom teacher, who will distribute them at the end of the school day prior to dismissal. Inviting the entire class is encouraged. At a minimum, boys must invite all the boys in their class and girls must invite all the girls in the class. The teacher will check to see if there is an invitation for each child. If not, the invitations will not be distributed.

Birthday treats sent in with the "birthday child" (*must be nut free*) should be just for the children in that child's class. Each homeroom teacher will decide on the best time for the treats to be shared. July birthdays may be celebrated in June and August birthdays may be celebrated in September.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Through our extra-curricular activities, we strive to develop ourselves intellectually, emotionally, physically and morally. We rejoice in the talents and abilities we have been given, and respect those talents and abilities which God has given to others.

Altar Servers	Grades 4 – 8
Band, music	Grades 4 – 8
Basketball	Grades 3 – 8
Cheerleading	Grades K - 3
Forensics	Grades 5 – 8
Musical Theatre	Grades Pre-K – 8
Soccer	Grades 3 - 8
Softball (Girls)	Grades 3 – 5, 6 – 8
Student Council	Grades 4 – 8
Talent Shows	Grades Pre-K – 8
Track Team	Grades 4 – 8

STUDENT COUNCIL

Student Council members are elected each year and serve for a period of one year. Class representatives are elected from grades 4 through 8.

FINANCIAL

We are grateful for those who have gone before us and built our parish and school. We strive to do our part to follow their example that those who come after us may have the benefits we have been afforded.

FINANCES: Tuition and fees should account for 75% of school expenses. The parish contributes 20% of every dollar received in ordinary income (Sunday and Holiday collections, Christmas, Easter, Mass stipends, Baptism, Weddings, Funerals, and parish fundraising) to offset school expenses. The Home and School Association contributes an amount equal to 7% to 10% of school costs. Donations as well as auxiliary programs provide income equal to 5% of school expenses. Sending parishes (the home parishes to students from neighboring parishes) provide an additional 1% or 2% of the funds needed.

TUITION: Tuition payments are made through SMART Tuition Program. The Parish Office should be notified if there is a financial problem as soon as difficulty arises. It is Diocesan policy that school services will be discontinued for students whose families do not adhere to the tuition policy. Parents are obligated to pay any costs for attorney fees, collection agencies, and late fees in connection with late tuition payment or the necessity of using courts or credit agencies to collect tuition.

Tuition Policy states:

- Unpaid tuition from a prior tuition year will be grounds for not permitting a child to be admitted to class in September for the new academic year, and that tuition must be paid since uncollected tuition raises the rates of tuition for other families in the school.
- Grade Eight transcripts will not be sent to the high school until all financial responsibilities are fulfilled. Diplomas will not be granted at graduation exercises.
- Parents/guardians are obligated to pay the tuition and fees for the year, unless the student(s) are withdrawn from school due to family relocation resulting in a distance of 25 miles or more from school.
- Completed Financial Aid applications are due in the parish office by May 1st, 2010 for the SY 2010-2011 and incomplete applications with missing information cannot be considered. Please call the parish office to obtain an application form. Financial assistance should be sought first from the parish where the family is registered and also from the Tri-County Scholarship Fund administered by the Diocese.
- Saint Virgil Academy and Parish may use (in addition to SMART) a collection agency or third party to assist in the collection of tuition. Any collection costs or legal fees which Saint Virgil Academy and Parish incur in collecting past due tuition from parent(s)/guardian(s) will be paid by the parents.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) will contact the bookkeeper in the parish office when they cannot make payments as scheduled in order to arrange a new payment plan. Tuition is normally payable in ten equal payments: Fees are billed during the summer preceding the September opening of school and should be paid by Labor Day.
- Parents are obligated to: (1) Contribute \$100 to the Gift Auction or donate a basket of items worth \$200, **and** (2) Complete the Volunteer Service Agreement or pay \$1,000 to opt out of the volunteer commitment.
- Parents are also expected to responsibly support their parish communities, including use of collection envelopes at Mass.

FINANCIAL AID: Financial aid forms are available to any family who expresses the need to the Parish Office. The form should be requested from the Parish Office and returned to the Pastor in a sealed envelope. The form will be reviewed and together, the family and the Pastor will come to a mutually acceptable manner of payment. Application must also be made to the Diocesan program Tri-County Scholarship. Information is available from the bookkeeper. Tri-County deadline is May 1st. We regret that applications that do not provide complete information cannot be considered. We make every effort to see that no child is denied a Catholic education simply due to financial hardship.

HOME SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Membership of the Association

All parents, guardians, teachers, the Pastor and the Saint Virgil's Parish Board of Trustees are members of the Association.

Objectives of the Association

1. Strengthen social ties among parents and families of St. Virgil Academy, past and present.
2. Raise awareness of the academic and spiritual opportunities at St. Virgil Academy within the local and surrounding communities to maintain full enrolment.
3. Organize fundraising activities in order to help offset the cost of tuition.
4. Coordinate parent volunteer efforts in the service of the schools.

Home School Association Board

The Board is comprised of the Principal, four officers appointed by the Pastor and Principal, four committees each comprised of two parents nominated by the parents and faculty, and a faculty liaison appointed by the Principal. Board members serve a two-year term with the Vice President serving one year.

Five Officers:

President, Vice President for St. Virgil Academy, Vice President for Morris Catholic Junior School, Secretary, Treasurer

Four Committees:

Advancement, Communications, Stewardship, Family Life

The **President** coordinates and oversees the business of the Parent Association. The President prepares the agenda for and presides at meetings of the Association and of its Board. It is the responsibility of the President to advise all Board committees that may be in need of assistance. The President communicates with school parents at Parent Information Meetings as well as through the Newsletter. The President with the input of the Board sets the HSA calendar for the upcoming year.

The **Vice Presidents** assist the President as needed and perform the duties of the President in the absence or incapacity of the President. The Vice Presidents work with the President in providing assistance to committees and in creating the calendar for the following school year. The Vice Presidents remain in contact with the Chairs of various fundraisers throughout the year to ensure that appropriate resources are available. The Vice Presidents work closely with the Class Parents and Committee Chairs, organize monthly Class Coordinator Meetings, and record and distribute minutes from these meetings. The Vice Presidents coordinate the activities and events involving the classes in their schools (SVS, MCJS). The Vice Presidents meet with the SVA Principal and MCJS Dean of Students before the monthly Class Coordinator meetings.

The **Secretary** organizes meetings, sets agenda with the President, records and publishes the minutes of HSA meetings and facilitates communication between school parents and the Board.

The **Treasurer** oversees the finances of the HSA and presents the HSA budget report at Board Meetings. The treasurer may approve distribution of funds for Association activities approved by the Board and for the obligation to the School Operating Budget as requested by the Parish Bookkeeper. The Treasurer works with the Parish Bookkeeper who maintains records for bank reconciliations performed on bi-monthly basis in accordance with Diocesan requirements and cooperates with Diocesan audits (*as required*).

The **Advancement Committee** works with the Pastor, Principal and parents to identify opportunities to increase awareness in the community and build enrollment. Advancement Co-Chairs develop and implement annual Community Awareness Plan including reaching out to various target audiences and sending parish communities. The Advancement Committee organizes and executes, with Board assistance, Open House activities throughout the year.

The **Communications Committee** consists of Web Communications and Print Communications. **Web Communications** works in coordination with the Advancement Team to develop, organize and implement an up to date school web page (including key events, calendar, school handbook, HSA meeting minutes, lunch menus and other appropriate information). **Print Communications (publicity)** works in coordination with the Advancement Team to ensure press coverage and exposure of school events. Print Communications organizes photos and article generation (by class, event, etc.)

The **Stewardship Committee** manages the parents' volunteer commitments, recording the commitments in spreadsheets, distributes information to various activity coordinators as needed, and records volunteer activity as reported by the coordinators of various activities and events. The Stewardship Committee assists the Committee Chairs in contacting and organizing volunteers for specific activities as needed. In addition, the Stewardship Committee reviews the parent volunteer form with the Board and coordinates any changes for the following school year.

The **Family Life and Activities Committee** coordinates activities that strengthen the relationships within the school community, including matching new families with experienced families in the Buddy System. The Family Life Committee organizes hospitality for key events (i.e. New Family Orientation, Potluck Suppers, School Picnic, and others).

The **Class Coordinators** (formerly Class Parents) for each class work with the respective St. Virgil Academy / Morris Catholic Junior School VP's. Class Coordinators coordinate class events, parties, field trips, etc. with the teachers. Class Coordinators work with the teachers to solicit help from parents for class events and special projects. The Class Coordinators distribute information to parents within their class, attend monthly class coordinator meetings run by the Vice Presidents, and communicate to parents concerning events and projects for their class.

The **Faculty Liaison** provides a teacher's perspective to Board discussions and communicates Board discussion with the faculty to obtain input.

USE, POSSESSION, AND DISTRIBUTION OF CONTROLLED DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES

Definitions:

Controlled Dangerous Substances are defined in sections I through V of the NJ Criminal Code. They include but are not limited to: marijuana, cocaine, heroin, and anabolic steroids. The term controlled dangerous substances shall also include alcohol.

Under the Influence: A student is judge to be under the influence whenever she/he exhibits physical or physiological symptoms (*including but not limited to unsteady walk, dilated pupils, slurred speech, erratic or uncharacteristic emotional reactions*) that

are commonly associated with the use of controlled dangerous substances, whether incurred or observed on or off school property.

Possession is defined as knowingly or purposely obtaining or possessing, actively or *constructively a controlled dangerous substance or drug paraphernalia:

- a) On or off school property.
- b) On the person.
- c) In an accessory (*including but not limited to purse, book bag, gym bag or knapsack*)
- d) In a locker or desk, and
- e) In a privately or school-owned vehicle.

*Constructive possession refers to a student who intends the capacity to exercise control over the drug/paraphernalia even if she/he does not have physical possession of the item. For example, who hides drugs on school property or asks a classmate to hold drugs for him/her, constructively possesses the drugs.

Distribution is defined as sharing, selling, or dispensing a controlled dangerous substance.

- a) On or off school property
- b) With or without receiving payment; and
- c) To individuals enrolled or not enrolled in the school.

Possession with Intent to Distribute applies regardless of whether or not the student intended.

- a) To receive payment
- b) To distribute the controlled dangerous substance to an individual enrolled or not enrolled in the school; and
- c) To distributed the controlled dangerous substance on or off school property.

Student Concerns

In setting forth a comprehensive policy regarding substance abuse, it must be remembered that a Catholic school desires to assist the student who may be involved in abuse to healthy living and a return to the school community. Primary approaches advancing this belief shall focus on preventive and therapeutic education including formal and informal discussions with staff, health education programs in the curriculum, and the utilization of referral and resource agencies.

The school may require students who have abused controlled substances to participate in appropriate professional counseling and/or rehabilitation programs before returning to the school community.

If a student is receiving treatment or rehabilitation from therapeutic agencies, the school will make a cooperative effort to be of assistance to those agencies in effecting the student's rehabilitation.