



# CHESTERTON ACADEMY OF THE FLORIDA MARTYRS

## Family Handbook Academic Year 2026-2027

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School Hours:	8:00 AM – 3:00 PM

### OUR VALUES

CAFM embraces and lives the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, which are defined and clarified by the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. We base our admissions, employment, and operational decisions on the Church's teachings on faith and morals, which promote the dignity of all persons created in the image and likeness of God.

CAFM admits students of any race, color, national origin, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, biological sex, national origin, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

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# I. Our Mission and Philosophy of Education

*“Catholic education is above all a question of communicating Christ, of helping to form Christ in the lives of others.” - POPE SAINT JOHN PAUL II*

Chesterton Academy of The Florida Martyrs (CAFM) was established to nurture the minds and the souls of our children through an integrated education. We believe that all truths are related to the central truth of the Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Faith and reason do not contradict one another, nor are they to be segregated from one another. Through the study of art, music, drama, literature, language, history, mathematics, science, philosophy, and theology, we want to prepare our children to think both rationally and creatively, to defend their faith, to contribute positively to society, and to promote a culture of life.

As faithful Christians, we are called to build a culture of life which means going against modern trends and fashions in almost everything, especially in our approach to learning. As G.K. Chesterton said, "A dead thing goes with the stream; only a living thing can go against it."

G.K. Chesterton represents the ideal of a complete thinker but also of a modern cultural warrior. At the beginning of the 20th century, he foresaw and addressed many of the destructive trends that have continued into the 21st century. As a recognized defender of the faith, a literary genius, and a stellar example of Christian charity, Chesterton is a perfect model on which to develop an integrated education. We are preparing our children for both temporal life and eternal life: to be good citizens and to be saints.

## MISSION

*Under the patronage of G.K. Chesterton and in partnership with families and the Church, the mission of Chesterton Academy of The Florida Martyrs is to foster a Culture of Life by forming a new generation of joyful leaders and saints, educated in the classical tradition and grounded in the truths of the Catholic faith.*

To that end we seek to give our students:

**Intellectual Formation** by teaching them not only the great classics of Western thought from Plato to calculus, but the interrelationship of the great ideas and how to think well;

**Character Formation** especially in the four cardinal virtues of Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude, and Justice which we believe are the foundations of leadership in professional life, the family, the nation, and in the service of Christ; and

**Spiritual Formation** utilizing the Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity to build up the Kingdom of God in this life and be with Him in everlasting happiness in the next.

In the words of G.K. Chesterton, we seek to teach our students that “there is a whole truth of things and that in knowing and speaking it we are happy.”

## II. Our Catholic Identity

According to the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, “In a Catholic school, everyone should be aware of the living presence of Jesus the ‘Master,’ who, today as always, is with us in our journey through life as the one genuine ‘Teacher,’ the perfect man in whom all human values find their fullest perfection.” Therefore, each school day (except Monday) at CAFM begins with the celebration of the Mass so that every student and faculty member begins the day with the Teacher in order to learn from Him and, with the grace given through the Eucharist, model their lives after Him. On Mondays, we begin our day with an assembly that incorporates prayer and reflection on the Word of God.

The education at CAFM serves a two-fold purpose:

1. To educate students so that they can live ennobled lives of service and witness to the truth of Jesus Christ in this world; and
2. To prepare them to be citizens of the next world.

Our education is aimed towards development of the whole person: intellectual, spiritual, and moral. Each subject is taught with the Catholic worldview highlighting the dignity of all human life and the truth that happiness comes only through Jesus Christ. This worldview permeates our discussions across all disciplines. It reveals that faith and reason are not opposites but, in fact, are complements that lead us to a depth of understanding about ourselves and the world.

The community life at CAFM is another expression of our Catholic identity. Please refer to Appendix A for an introduction to the Roman Catholic liturgy and overview of common prayers.

## III. Basic Expectations

- A. Attendance policy.** Students are expected to arrive at school each day that school is in session, on time. Excessive absences or tardiness erodes school culture and inhibits a student’s ability to learn and keep pace with our rigorous curriculum. Parents should assist the school in maintaining high expectations for attendance. The school reserves the right to withhold credit for any class that has an absence rate of more than 5% per semester, whether excused or unexcused.
- B. PraxiSchool.** PraxiSchool is our student information and learning management system. Before the beginning of the academic year, new families will be given access to their account. Parents and students are expected to review grades, communications, and disciplinary actions on a regular basis through PraxiSchool. This system is also the primary way for parents and students to communicate with faculty.

**C. SCHOOL HOURS AND BELL SCHEDULE.** Students arrive for Mass or morning assembly between 7:35 - 7:50 (drop off time) each morning. Staff will be present on campus by 7:35. Classes are dismissed for the day at 3:00PM. Staff will be present on campus until 3:30pm. Students may not remain on campus past 3:30pm unless prior arrangements are made by the parent and/or a club activity or school event is taking place.

The bell schedule is as follows:

7:35	-	7:50	Drop Off
8:00	-	8:40	Mass / Assembly (Mondays only)
8:45	-	9:30	Period 1
9:35	-	10:20	Period 2
10:25	-	11:10	Period 3
11:15	-	12:00	Period 4
12:00	-	12:30	Lunch
12:35	-	1:20	Period 5
1:25	-	2:10	Period 6
2:15	-	3:00	Period 7
3:00			Dismissal

**D. SCHEDULE CHANGES.** Due to changes in course load from the Fall semester to the Spring semester, it is possible, but not guaranteed, that students will release early one day per week in the Spring. This change will be announced by October of the current school year.

**E. MONTHLY FAMILY MASS.** Our host parish, St. Anne-Bellview has requested that our students sing for the morning Mass one day per month, usually on the last Tuesday of the month. On this day, students will need to arrive to school by 7:30am for warm-up/practice, in full Chesterton uniform. This is a wonderful opportunity for all of our students, parents and faculty to join together in the sacred liturgy for worship. This event is required of all students. Many parents coordinate to carpool for their students, and we encourage families to take advantage of this option should scheduling conflicts arise.

**F. TARDIES AND ABSENCES.** All absences or tardies must be reported before 8:00 AM by emailing [attendance@chestertonpensacola.org](mailto:attendance@chestertonpensacola.org) or calling/leaving a voicemail at the school number. When students arrive late during Mass, they must remain in the back of the Church until the Mass is opened by the priest, at which point they may report to their House Prefect. When students arrive late any other time, they must report to the main school entrance and sign in or otherwise report to their homeroom teacher as directed.

When absences occur, a student is expected to make up any work missed. It is the responsibility of the student to contact teachers to obtain missed classwork.

In-class participation, an integral part of our education, cannot be made up, and absences may adversely affect grades. If a student is absent for more than 6 periods (or 5%, whichever is greater) in any one course in a semester (even for medical reasons), the school reserves the right not to grant credit for that course. Unexcused absences and/or tardies will result in disciplinary action. Three unexcused absences or tardies in a semester will result in an automatic after-school or lunch

detention. Students are expected to take punctuality and attendance seriously. Punctuality is a virtue that we seek to develop in our students, and being punctual positively impacts overall school climate and culture. While emergencies come up, and we certainly understand that, more often than not chronic tardiness and absenteeism is the result of a lack of respect for oneself and others: “Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but [also] everyone for those of others.” (Philippians 2:3-4)

**Three (3) or more unexcused tardies and/or absences in a semester will result in an automatic lunch or after-school detention.**

We are retiring the attendance reporting app. Beginning next year, all tardies and absences must be reported by 8:00 AM on the day of through one of the following:

- Email: [attendance@chestertonpensacola.org](mailto:attendance@chestertonpensacola.org)
- Phone or voicemail at the school: 850-378-1303

Reporting by text has become too unwieldy as our staff grows, especially when notices need to be revised after the fact. Reporting by 8:00 AM allows us to notate attendance properly and keep our whole team informed. We ask that you follow this procedure rather than request exceptions. Genuine emergencies are, of course, an exception, and a doctor's note will excuse an absence — but "I forgot to report it" generally will not.

What Counts as an Excused Absence To be excused, an absence or tardy must be reported by 8:00 AM as described above and fall into one of the following categories:

- Personal illness (a doctor's note is required for an absence of two or more consecutive days)
- Medical, dental, or counseling appointments that cannot reasonably be scheduled outside of school hours
- A death in the family or attendance at a funeral
- Observance of a religious holy day
- A genuine family emergency
- Absences arranged in advance and approved by the administration (for example, essential family travel)

Anything outside these categories — oversleeping, non-emergency errands, unapproved trips, or simply forgetting to report — will be recorded as unexcused. The complete policy is in the updated Family Handbook; when in doubt, please reach out to us before the absence rather than after.

Please note that unexcused tardies and absences may result in a zero participation grade for the day or the loss of the opportunity to make up missed classwork.

- G. MASS PARTICIPATION.** Our school day includes the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, which is the source and summit of the Catholic faith. CAFM sees the daily participation at Mass as much a part of our curriculum as mathematics, history, science, or drama. Attendance is taken at Mass and all students are required to attend. Please refer to Appendix A for Mass guidelines and expectations.
- H. AFTER SCHOOL POLICY.** After school is dismissed, students are permitted to turn on their cell phones. Disruptive cellphone practices may be intervened upon by school staff, such as students gathering around cell phones or displaying inappropriate content. Cellphone use is generally discouraged after school, although we understand that to communicate with parents/rides, this creates the necessity for access.
- I. ADDITIONAL REQUIRED EVENTS.** From time to time, students are required to attend events off campus and/or outside of school hours. Please see official calendar for details (attached as appendix).

August	-	Parent Orientation (All Families)
October	-	Open House (Choral Performance)
December	-	Fine Arts Showcase
Jan/Feb	-	Drama rehearsals and performance
March	-	Mass for Life (required) - Walk optional
April/May	-	Annual Chesterton Vision Dinner/Gala
Monthly	-	Last Tuesday of each month, singing at Mass

If you have a serious conflict with any of these required events, please notify us immediately.

- J. ANNUAL DRAMA PERFORMANCES.** The arts are integral to the Chesterton experience. Our annual drama performances are big events put on by the school that requires involvement from all students, faculty, and many volunteers. While drama is offered as a class during the school week for a majority of the semester, the month leading up to the play will feature extra practice time both during and after school to ensure that we put on an excellent show. In the weeks leading up to the play, after school practices several days each week will be required. During tech week (the week of the performance) after school practices will run late into the evening, as students will be doing one night each of a full 1) Tech Rehearsal 2) Dress Rehearsal and 3) Performance Nights. These are often long days for students and staff, and may feature half instructional days, or delayed starts to the school day. We encourage families to remain flexible during these weeks leading up to the play, and encourage your students to get lots of rest and to practice self-care. While it can be a taxing experience for students, staff and volunteers, it is good preparation for “real life” where hard work is a virtue that pays large dividends. Our annual school plays are always a big hit in the community, and our students' hard work really pays off in the end.
- K. BUILDING COMMUNITY.** The Catholic educational community is, by its very nature, a social community. We are created to delight in relationships with people of varying personalities, interests, and backgrounds. While it is natural that we are drawn towards those who share our common interests, we at CAFM work toward growth in Christian unity by actively building strong friendships with all members of the community. Therefore, relationships which exclude any members undermines this effort. Examples of exclusive relationships are couples and cliques. These types

of relationships are strongly discouraged by the Academy. Romantic displays of affection between students (RDA) are prohibited. When this behavior is observed or suspected, the student will be coached on school policy and how to maintain healthy boundaries at school. If it becomes an ongoing issue, a parent will be notified and further disciplinary action may be warranted.

- L. UNIFORMS AND OUT OF UNIFORM ATTIRE.** With few pre-approved exceptions, all students are required to be completely in uniform dress while at church or on the CAFM campus. Modesty and professionalism are the primary guides in all matters of the required uniform. Students will be expected to present themselves in a way that reflects their great dignity, the dignity of their vocation as students, and the seriousness of our collective task. Therefore, they will wear the Academy uniform in a modest and neat way, avoiding all manner of ostentation. The uniforms must be clean, pressed, and in good condition with no rips, holes, or stains.

CAFM requires all students to dress according to the school uniform code and out-of-uniform code (see Appendices B, C and D).

- M. ELECTRONIC DEVICES.** Personal electronic devices tend to isolate individuals from the people around them. Since CAFM works to build community among its members, we want to eliminate distractions of devices that undermine that goal. For this reason, students are not permitted to use personal communication or listening devices, nor have them on their persons while in church or on the CAFM campus. A teacher may allow a student to access audio via bluetooth during a study hall at the teacher's discretion for an approved purpose, and this is a revocable privilege, not a student right. Rare use of electronic devices during class time is only permitted for instructional purposes when specifically authorized by a designated faculty member. If a parent allows their child to bring a personal communication device to school, it must be turned off and stored in the school's phone depository. After 3:00 PM, students may use their cell phones for essential communication but are expected to refrain from using personal electronic devices for social media, music, video streaming, and other non-essential purposes.

- N. LUNCH AND SNACKS.** Students must bring their own lunches to school where a designated area is provided for a common meal. Faculty supervise students during the lunch period and students are responsible for cleaning up after their lunch period has ended. There is no access to refrigerators at the school.

- Eating in the classrooms is not permitted. Students may have a snack in the hallway between classes and are expected to clean up after themselves. Abuse of the snack policy may result in the privilege being revoked.
- No gum chewing is permitted.
- Students may bring water into class in resealable containers only.
- Certain snack privileges and exceptions may be granted for "Junior/Senior" upperclassmen privileges, feast days or other special events, and may also be revoked due to abuse.

- O. SCHOOL CLOSINGS.** Parents are notified on all occasions when the school may be closed. In the event of inclement weather, the school day may be canceled by the headmaster or moved to virtual instruction. Official notice will be sent via email and text.

- P. FIELD TRIPS.** The school makes use of carpools for transportation to and from events and activities which take place during school hours. Where drivers are needed, the school will request volunteer drivers. Whenever carpools are utilized, the school provides details to parents about timing, pickup, and drop off points and drivers. All drivers must be at least 25 years of age and Safe Environment compliant for all Academy events.
- Q. MEDICATIONS.** Prescription medications may not be stored on a student's person. If a prescription medication must be taken during school hours, a parent must make arrangements with the school ahead of time and the prescription medication must remain in the original bottle. The medication will be securely stored and administered by Chesterton staff, unless special arrangements have been made. Students may keep over-the-counter medicine such as aspirin or ibuprofen in their backpack. Sharing or improperly using any prescription medication is strictly forbidden. Sharing of over-the-counter medication is prohibited..
- R. INJURIES AND ILLNESS.** CAFM has no school nurse available, and therefore our ability to accommodate illness and injury are limited. Injuries are treated with basic first aid. More serious injuries require parents to take students home or to the doctor. Emergencies are addressed via 911. We will make every effort to contact families using the emergency contact information on file. Students who become unwell may rest in the front office. If after one class period the student is not able to return to class, we ask that a family member come and take him or her home. If a family has students with particular medical needs, please notify us so we may proceed appropriately if and when becomes necessary..
- S. SOCIAL MEDIA.** The advent of various forms of social media has created potential difficulties for high school students. All students should be aware that the things they say on blogs, forums, Facebook, Instagram, X, group chats, etc. reflect upon their charity and virtue. No one should assume that remarks made via social media or group chats will remain private. Uncharitable, scandalous, or libelous remarks which harm the CAFM community may be subject to school discipline or even legal action.
- T. VISITOR POLICY.** CAFM is a closed campus and requires all visitors, including family members, friends, and alumni, to sign in at the Chesterton entrance. Visitors permitted to be on campus for any length of time will be given a visitor's badge.
- U. GRIEVANCE POLICY.** CAFM partners with parents to form their children in the faith and provide a Gospel-based, Catholic education for their children. The expectations for parents in this partnership is one of respect for their children's professional educators, and adherence to the school's existing problem-solving process. To address an issue or concern, a parent or student must follow the biblical chain of command stated below, remembering that any issue must first be discussed with the person(s) most directly involved.

*“If your brother sins against you, go and rebuke him in private. If he listens to you, you have won your brother.” – Matthew 18:15*

- Step One: Classroom Teacher  
 Step Two: Headmaster

### Step Three: Board of Directors

The Catechism of the Catholic Church gives us further instruction that we should all strive for in our relations with each other, and it is in these principles that we as a school community seek to form our students, our faculty and our families:

2478 To avoid rash judgment, everyone should be careful to interpret insofar as possible his neighbor's thoughts, words, and deeds in a favorable way:

Every good Christian ought to be more ready to give a favorable interpretation to another's statement than to condemn it. But if he cannot do so, let him ask how the other understands it. And if the latter understands it badly, let the former correct him with love. If that does not suffice, let the Christian try all suitable ways to bring the other to a correct interpretation so that he may be saved.

## IV. Mentorship, Discipline & The Formation of Students

### A. Our Approach to Formation

At CAFM, the formation of character and the discipline of students are not separate concerns. Both flow from a single conviction: that every young person carries “the power of redemption and the seed of happiness.” Our task is to draw that seed into flower.

All disciplinary and formational practices at CAFM are rooted in Don Bosco’s Preventive System, which he describes as follows:

*“Making known the rules and regulations of an Institute, and then supervising in such a way that the students are always under the vigilant eye of the Director and the assistants, who like loving fathers will converse with them, act as guides in every event, counsel them and lovingly correct them.”*

— Don Bosco, *The Preventive System in the Education of the Young*, 1877

This system, Don Bosco writes, “is all based on reason, religion, and loving-kindness,” and because of this “it excludes every violent punishment, and tries to do without even mild punishments.” Our primary goal is not to punish, but to prevent misbehavior through presence, relationship, and clear expectations—and when correction is needed, to offer it in a way that restores the student to right relationship with God, with the community, and with himself.

Don Bosco’s principle governs everything that follows: “The educator at work amongst his pupils should make himself loved, if he wishes to be respected.”

## **B. What We Expect of Students**

Students of CAFM are expected to show respect for the truth they are learning, for those assisting them in their education, for their fellow students, for the institution itself, and for themselves as children of God. These expectations are not a list of prohibitions but an invitation to virtue. They should guide every member of the Academy community, both on and off campus.

### **Code of Conduct**

Modeled on the example of Christ, students are expected to:

- Cheerfully obey the authority under which they are placed.
- Respect and honor one another.
- Tell the truth and honor academic integrity.
- Refrain from disrespecting the classroom and teacher by interrupting or arguing.
- Avoid spreading rumors or gossip.
- Admit to wrong actions without making excuses.
- Avoid cliques or activities that exclude others.
- Forgive others when they have been hurt.
- Take responsibility for their actions, including cleaning up any mess they make.
- Show reverence and respect for the Catholic faith and refrain from engaging in activities that conflict with the school’s mission.

### **Campus Rules**

All students are held to high behavioral and academic standards. School, campus, and classroom rules are taught clearly and enforced consistently, with logical consequences that aim to form virtue. Three rules are enforced, supported, and modeled by every student and adult on campus:

- **Be Safe.** Cooperate with your teachers and classmates.
- **Be Respectful.** Respect the rights and property of others.
- **Be Responsible.** Carry out your student responsibilities—keep track of books and assignments, start work on time, ask for help when needed, do your own work, turn work in on time, and accept responsibility for grades and consequences.

### Decorum and the Interior Life

Decorum at CAFM is not a matter of mere manners. How a student holds his body, speaks of his work, and treats those around him is a reflection of his interior disposition toward learning, toward others, and toward God. The following habits are expected of every student:

**Attentive presence.** Students arrive to class on time and enter quietly, preparing their minds for the work ahead. They sit upright, with feet on the floor, and give their full attention to the teacher and to one another. Private conversations, resting heads on desks, watching the clock, and packing up before dismissal all indicate an interior disengagement that is unworthy of a CAFM student.

**Reverent speech.** Students speak of their studies, their teachers, and their peers with respect. They avoid complaints about tiredness or workload, boasting of late nights, gossip, and any speech that undermines the community. Grievances are brought privately to a teacher or the headmaster, not shared among peers.

**A cheerful demeanor.** Scripture instructs: “When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face” (Matthew 6:17–18). Even when carrying personal difficulty, students are encouraged to contribute to an uplifting and supportive atmosphere.

**Academic responsibility.** Students complete assigned work thoughtfully and on time. When an assignment is incomplete, they communicate this to the teacher before class begins. When struggling, they seek help promptly rather than waiting for grades to be issued. When absent, they take responsibility for arranging makeup work. The appropriate question is not “Why did I get this grade?” but “How can I do better in your class?”

**Respect for authority and guests.** Students stand when a priest, administrator, or guest enters the classroom. They follow the directions of teachers and administrators promptly and respectfully, embodying the virtue of obedience even when they do not fully agree.

**Modesty in relationships.** Romantic hugging, kissing, holding hands, or inappropriate touching is never permitted at school or during school hours. Students do not display romantic interest or involvement in their conduct at school or school-sponsored events.

**Self-control in the classroom.** Talking out of turn, refusing to follow directions, speaking across the room, or persistently getting off topic disrupts the learning environment and is unacceptable, even when the content of the speech is not malicious. Every student is responsible for contributing to a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning for all.

**Representing the Academy well.** Students are representatives of CAFM at all times—on campus, off campus, and online. Their conduct should reflect the school’s mission and the dignity of their formation.

## C. How We Form Students Who Fall Short

What follows is a graduated approach to correction. Every step is ordered toward the student’s formation, not merely the management of behavior. Faculty should move through these steps understanding that the relationship between educator and student is itself the primary instrument of discipline.

### Step 1: Set Expectations Early

*“The Rector should make the rules well known, along with the rewards and punishments set down in the disciplinary policy, so that no pupil might be able to excuse himself by saying he did not know what was commanded or forbidden.”*

— Don Bosco, *The Preventive System*, 1877

Make expectations clear to the group and to individuals; have students repeat back or demonstrate what is expected. Classroom management begins with developing routines and procedures so that students know what to expect when they come into your classroom. Well-planned, well-paced, engaging lessons are themselves a form of prevention: “Give them ample liberty to jump, run, make a din as much as they please. Gymnastics, music, declamation, theatricals, hikes, are very effective methods for getting discipline.”

### Step 2: Reinforce Expectations Regularly

*“The basic reason [why young people get into trouble] is youthful fickleness which in a moment can forget the rules of discipline... For this reason, a child often commits a fault and deserves punishment, to which he had not given a thought, which he did not remember at all in the act of committing the fault, and which he certainly would have avoided had a friendly voice warned him.”*

— Don Bosco, *The Preventive System*, 1877

Publicly name the good behavior that students model, especially when you see it in those who typically struggle. Don Bosco teaches that “praise when something is done well, blame when there is negligence, are already reward and punishment.” When redirecting disruptive behavior, use the most private and least invasive intervention possible: “Except in very rare cases, corrections, punishments should never be given in public, but privately, apart from companions, and one should use the greatest prudence and patience to have the student understand his fault through reason and religion.”

### Step 3: Individual Coaching

*“The educator, having won the loving respect of his protégé, will be able to greatly influence him, warn him, counsel him, and also correct him.”*

— Don Bosco, *The Preventive System*, 1877

Speak with the student privately. Find out what happened. Have the student verbalize the incident. Help him take ownership of it. Coach him to contribute positively to classroom, hallway, and campus culture. The aim is what Don Bosco calls “speaking in the language of the heart”—not interrogation, but genuine conversation.

Create an agreement with the student about how he will behave going forward and what will happen if he falls short, including contact with parents. Student ownership of this agreement is essential. Remind the student of expectations at the threshold the next time, and praise him when he succeeds.

#### Step 4: Parent Communication — First Formal Consequence

*“Whatever might be the character, the attitude, the moral state of a pupil at the time he is enrolled, his parents can be secure in the knowledge that their son will not deteriorate, and one may confidently assert that one will achieve some improvement.”*

— Don Bosco, *The Preventive System*, 1877

Speak with the student again about expectations and tell him you will be contacting his parents. A phone call home is preferable to an email, though a brief email may be used to request a time for a phone conversation.

In the parent conversation, outline the steps you have taken so far and ask for partnership in shifting the behavior. Explain what the next consequence would be. Frame the conversation in the spirit of Don Bosco’s promise to parents: that through this process, you are working for their child’s improvement, not building a case against him. If this is not a student in your class, reach out to the Dean of Students or Headmaster and BCC the administrator in charge of student conduct.

#### Step 5: Referral — Second Formal Consequence

*“Being forewarned, the pupil is not disheartened when he does something wrong... Nor does he get angry from being corrected, or threatened with punishment, or even from actually being punished, because there has always been through the affair a friendly voice forewarning him, which reasons with him and generally manages to win his friendship, so that the pupil knows there must be a punishment, and almost wants it.”*

— Don Bosco, *The Preventive System*, 1877

Speak with the student again. Remind him that you have set expectations, spoken with him one-on-one, and spoken with his parents. Ask: “What would be a fair consequence at this point?” Because he has been part of every previous step—forewarned, coached, in agreement—this is not a moment of surprise but of shared understanding.

Where possible, pursue a service-oriented consequence: time with you during recess or lunch performing a service such as cleaning whiteboards or picking up trash. If no fitting alternative is available, issue the referral.

#### Step 6: Administrative Intervention — Restoration and Continued Formation

*“Indeed, certain youngsters who for a long time were the scourge of their parents, and were even refused entry into houses of correction, when cared-for according to these principles, changed their attitude, their character, they set themselves to live a decent life, and now fill honourable places in society.”*

— Don Bosco, *The Preventive System*, 1877

If the behavior continues despite the preceding steps, the classroom teacher issues referrals and notifies both the parents and the administrator in charge of behavior. At this stage, we escalate consequences while intensifying our investment in the student's formation. The objective remains restoration, not removal.

**Daily check-ins.** Some students may need to check in with teachers or the administrator daily to track positive and negative behavior. This reflects Don Bosco's core principle of vigilant, loving presence—the assistant who is always nearby, not as a supervisor but as a guide.

**Parent conference.** The administration will reach out to parents to share concerns and request a meeting. The conference is framed as a partnership—an opportunity to develop a plan for the student's success, not a notification of impending penalties.

**In-School Suspension (ISS).** The student is separated from peers for the day in the front office. The Dean of Students or Headmaster communicates with teachers in advance, and teachers provide materials so the student stays caught up. During ISS, the student completes a guided reflection with a staff member, examining the pattern of behavior, its effects on the community, and a concrete plan for re-entry. ISS is not isolation for its own sake but a structured space for the student to encounter the truth of his actions.

## D. Serious Offenses and the Administration's Authority

The graduated approach outlined above governs the vast majority of disciplinary matters at CAFM. Don Bosco himself recognized that punishment, while rare in a well-formed community, remains a legitimate and sometimes necessary expression of authority. Our commitment to prevention does not mean we lack the authority to act decisively when circumstances require it. Rather, we invest deeply in prevention precisely so that serious consequences remain rare.

Certain offenses, by their nature or severity, may require the administration to depart from the graduated approach and impose immediate consequences up to and including suspension or expulsion. In such cases, the Headmaster—or, in the Headmaster's absence, the Acting Headmaster—exercises full authority to determine appropriate action.

### Offenses Subject to Immediate Administrative Action

The following may warrant immediate suspension, expulsion, or other significant consequences regardless of a student's prior disciplinary record:

- Physical violence or credible threats of violence against any person.
- Bullying or harassment as defined by Florida law and school policy.
- Possession, use, or distribution of illegal substances, alcohol, tobacco, or vaping products on campus or at school events.
- Possession of a weapon on campus or at school events.

- Theft or intentional destruction of property.
- Serious or repeated academic dishonesty.
- Possession or distribution of pornographic or gravely scandalous material.
- Sexual misconduct of any kind.
- Behavior that endangers the safety of the student, of others, or of the school community.
- Persistent and willful defiance of authority following multiple prior interventions.
- Conduct—on or off campus, including digital or social media conduct—that materially damages the mission or reputation of the Academy.
- Any behavior the administration determines to be gravely contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church or the mission of CAFM.

### **Suspension**

In-School Suspension (ISS) or Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) may be imposed by the Headmaster, Dean of Students, or Acting Headmaster. Parents will be notified as soon as practicable, and the duration and conditions of the suspension are at the discretion of the administration. Teachers will provide materials so that a suspended student stays current with coursework.

For an Out-of-School Suspension, the administration will either hold a parent meeting in advance or will have clearly communicated beforehand that a suspension will result if the behavior continues. Before the student returns, a re-entry meeting will be held with the student, parents, and a staff advocate to establish expectations, supports, and a plan for reconciliation with any person harmed.

### **Expulsion**

Expulsion is reserved for the gravest circumstances—whether a single severe offense or a sustained pattern of behavior that the graduated approach has failed to correct. The decision to expel rests with the Headmaster, in consultation with the Board Chair as appropriate.

When a student is expelled, parents will be informed in person whenever possible, followed by written notice. The school will assist the family in identifying an appropriate alternative educational setting and will transfer academic records upon request. Don Bosco’s conviction that every young person carries “the power of redemption and the seed of happiness” does not end at our doors.

### **Administrative Discretion and Final Authority**

The Headmaster retains final authority in all matters of student discipline. The administration reserves the right to weigh the full circumstances of each case—the student’s history, the gravity of the offense, the impact on the community, and the student’s disposition toward restoration—in determining appropriate consequences.

Enrollment at CAFM is a privilege, not a right. By enrolling their child at the Academy, parents acknowledge the school's authority to exercise this discretion in service of its mission and the good of the community.

## **E. Specific Policies**

### **Bullying and Harassment**

We take accusations of bullying and harassment seriously. Under Florida law, bullying is defined as systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students—including teasing, social exclusion, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, theft, sexual or racial harassment, public humiliation, and destruction of property.

Harassment is any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of technology, or written, verbal, or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that places the individual in reasonable fear of harm, substantially interferes with a student's educational performance, or disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying or harassment outside of school premises or through digital means—including social media, texting, or other electronic communication—may also result in suspension or expulsion if it affects the school environment or the well-being of students.

When an accusation of this nature is received:

- All parties involved may be temporarily removed from school pending an investigation.
- Parents will be contacted immediately.
- The school will invite all involved families to meet and address the issue together.
- Any evidence of bullying or harassment may result in suspension with terms for reentry, or expulsion.

### **Physical Violence**

Physical violence or the threat of physical violence is not permitted at the Academy. Such behavior is grounds for consequences up to and including expulsion.

### **Cell Phones and Electronic Devices**

Cell phones are strongly discouraged. If a student brings a cell phone to school, it must be turned in to the office at the beginning of the day and will be returned at dismissal. The Academy is not responsible or liable for lost or damaged cell phones or other devices.

Any cell phone not turned in and found at school will be confiscated and returned only to a parent or guardian upon request. Student cell phone use is not permitted at school events run by the Academy, and phones may be collected by teachers or administrators at such events.

### **Unauthorized Articles**

Items that distract from instruction—including cameras, toys, games, radios, electronic games, and similar gadgets—are not permitted. Such items will be taken from the student and returned only to a parent or guardian upon request. The school is not responsible for unauthorized items brought onto campus or to any school event.

### **Food, Drinks, and Gum**

Gum chewing is prohibited at all times on the school campus. No food or drink, except water, may be consumed in the classrooms, hallways, or restrooms without permission from the administration. Open-container drinks are not allowed unless special permission is expressly given; such items will be discarded.

### **Off-Campus Conduct**

Students of CAFM are expected to conduct themselves virtuously as representatives of the school community. The administration reserves the right to discipline students for off-campus behavior that is detrimental to the reputation of the school, including conduct in cyberspace and on social media.

### **Other Prohibited Conduct**

Gambling, gang activity, lying, pulling fire alarms without cause, possession or distribution of pornography, and unauthorized recording devices are all inconsistent with the Academy's mission and the dignity of the human person. Students involved in these activities may receive consequences up to and including expulsion.

### **Parental and Family Conduct**

CAFM expects parents and family members to uphold the values and standards of the school community. Any threatening behavior directed toward the school, its staff, or its students by any family member—including threats to harm, harass, or smear the reputation of the school, faculty, students, or other student families—may be grounds for the dismissal of the student from the Academy. The school reserves the right to take appropriate action to ensure the safety and well-being of its community.

## **F. Faculty and Administrative Authority**

### **The Authority of the Faculty**

Consistent with the principle of subsidiarity, each teacher has the liberty to set his or her own classroom expectations and the authority to use appropriate discipline. For infractions of a serious nature, the Headmaster or Acting Headmaster shall be informed and will take appropriate action.

### **Disciplinary Authority**

The Headmaster, Dean of Students, or Acting Headmaster reserves the right to determine the appropriate level of disciplinary action for any misconduct. This discretion allows the administration to consider the individual circumstances of each case, ensuring that consequences are fair and proportionate. Consequences may range from verbal warnings and detentions to demerits, suspensions, or expulsion, depending on the severity and frequency of the offenses.

The goal in every disciplinary action is the restoration of the student in his relationship with God and with any other person involved, including teachers and classmates. The Academy often employs prayerful and creative measures to assist a student in restoring these relationships and growing in the pursuit of virtue.

### **Acting Headmaster**

In the absence of the Headmaster, any administrator—including the Dean of Students or another appointed individual—shall serve as the Acting Headmaster and assume the responsibilities and authority thereof.

### **Final Authority**

In addition to the matters addressed above, any behavior that runs contrary to the mission of CAFM or the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church is forbidden. The final arbiter of discipline at the Academy is the Headmaster.

## **V. Decorum**

At CAFM, we are committed to fostering an environment of respect, discipline, and reverence for learning. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the dignity and purpose of our educational mission. The following guidelines outline the expectations for student behavior both inside and outside the classroom.

### **1. Respectful Communication**

- **Avoid Complaints and Boasting:** Students should refrain from announcing their tiredness or seeking sympathy due to lack of sleep or overwork. Boasting about staying up late to study is discouraged. All members of our community, including teachers—many of whom have additional responsibilities—are dedicated to the collective pursuit of knowledge. Expressing fatigue can be disruptive and may suggest a lack of readiness to participate fully in class activities.
- **Positive Attitude:** As guided by the teachings of Christ, students are encouraged to maintain a cheerful demeanor, even when facing personal challenges. "When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may not be seen by others..." (Matthew 6:17-18). This principle extends to all aspects of school life, promoting a supportive and uplifting atmosphere.

### **2. Physical Conduct and Posture**

- **Attentive Posture:** Students should sit up straight during class, with feet on the floor, demonstrating readiness to learn. Leaning back excessively, resting heads on desks, or placing feet on chairs is inappropriate. The physical comportment of students reflects their inner attitude toward learning

and respect for the educational environment.

### 3. Academic Responsibility

- **Preparation and Participation:** Students are expected to complete all assigned readings and homework thoroughly and thoughtfully. If a student has not completed an assignment, they must inform the teacher before class begins. Proactive communication demonstrates integrity and responsibility.
- **Quality of Work:** Assignments should meet or exceed the minimum requirements. Submitting incomplete or substandard work may result in a failing grade. Students should strive for excellence, ensuring that their work is well-prepared, proofread, and adheres to the guidelines provided.

### 4. Classroom Etiquette

- **Punctuality and Readiness:** Students should arrive to class on time and be prepared to engage fully in the lesson. Entering the classroom should be done quietly to maintain a conducive learning environment.
- **Silence Upon Entry:** Once inside the classroom, students should remain silent to prepare their minds for learning. Silence fosters concentration and respect for the educational process.
- **Active Listening and Engagement:** During class, students should focus on the discussion or lecture. Private conversations—whether spoken, whispered, or non-verbal—are distracting and disrespectful to both peers and teachers.
- **Avoiding Disruptions:** Behaviors such as yawning loudly, checking the clock frequently, or packing up before class has concluded are considered disrespectful. If a student needs to yawn, they should do so discreetly and cover their mouth. Students should wait to be dismissed before preparing to leave.

### 5. Respect for Authority and Guests

- **Acknowledging Presence:** Students should stand when a priest, administrator, or guest enters the classroom, as a sign of respect and recognition of their authority and contribution to the school community.
- **Following Directions:** Students are expected to follow the directions of teachers and administrators promptly and respectfully, embodying the virtue of obedience—even if they do not agree with the instructions given.

### 6. Professional Conduct

- **Refraining from Negative Speech:** Students should speak of the school, its staff, and their peers with respect. Grievances or concerns should be addressed privately with a teacher or the headmaster, not shared among peers or expressed publicly in a manner that undermines the community.
- **Appropriate Inquiries:** When seeking to improve academically, students should ask, "How can I do better in your class?" rather than focusing solely on grades. This approach emphasizes personal growth and learning.

## 7. Responsibility for Academic Progress

- **Proactive Communication:** If a student is struggling with the material, they should approach the teacher promptly to seek assistance, rather than waiting until grades are issued.
- **Makeup Work:** It is the student's responsibility to arrange for makeup tests or quizzes if absent. Failure to do so may result in a zero for the missed assessment.

## 8. Commitment to Learning

- **Valuing Education:** Students should respect the task and work of education, conducting themselves with dignity and speaking of learning as a worthy goal. They should not glorify activities that are contrary to the virtues promoted by the Academy.

## 9. Community Respect

- **Upholding the School's Reputation:** Students are representatives of Chesterton Academy at all times. They should conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the Academy, both on and off campus.

## 10. Focus on Personal Growth

- **Seeking Improvement:** Students are encouraged to prioritize their personal and academic development. Constructive feedback should be sought respectfully, and students should take ownership of their learning journey.

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By adhering to these principles of decorum, students at CAFM contribute to a respectful, productive, and spiritually enriching educational environment. The Academy believes that cultivating these habits not only enhances the learning experience but also prepares students for future academic and professional endeavors.

# VI. Academic Expectations

CAFM strives to maintain an atmosphere of academic rigor and excellence by focusing students on the importance of their academic progress. We offer a core curriculum across the disciplines of math/science, humanities, fine arts and languages, and each student is expected to complete the full course work.

The Academy provides parents with access to an online student information system, PraxiSchool. The system can be accessed at any time and displays the current grades in all of a student's classes as well as

assignments. In addition, teachers may send emails periodically to parents whenever a student shows worrisome academic performance. Parents and students may also use PraxiSchool to communicate with teachers.

**A. ACADEMIC PROBATION / ELIGIBILITY.** We want to help students prioritize their many responsibilities as they grow academically in all fields. The goal is to help students and staff identify academic deficiencies before they become crippling and to aid in offering remedial measures. Approximately every four weeks, or at the discretion of the headmaster, the school will run academic reports on all students. Any student with an overall cumulative semester GPA of less than 2.0, or who is failing any class, will be placed on academic probation. Probation will result in a meeting of the student and parents with the headmaster to discuss reasons for the deficiency, the best steps for remediation, and the consequences of continued academic deficiency. In addition, students on academic probation will be required to use any and all study periods during the week. At the time that the student is placed on academic probation, the student may become ineligible for extracurricular activities. The ineligibility will remain in effect until a subsequent progress report shows a GPA of at least 2.0 and no failing grades.

**B. ADVANCEMENT AND RETENTION.** Students will receive full credit for all classes completed with a cumulative percentage of 60% (D- or above). Credit for year-long courses will be given one semester at a time. It will be possible for students to pass one semester of a year-long course and fail another. Where a student fails one semester of a year-long course, the student will receive credit only for the semester that was passed. The failed semester will be considered a deficiency. The grade given in any one semester of a two-semester grade will not affect the grade of the other semester.

In the event of any failing grades, students will be asked to attend summer classes or make individual arrangements to demonstrate adequate academic progress in the failed courses. The adequacy of any individual arrangements will be determined by the headmaster. In the event of promotion despite failing a course required for graduation, students will have to fulfill the goals of the Academy's graduation requirements before being granted a diploma or participating in the graduation ceremony (see section below on Graduation Requirements).

Students who fail a course during the school year may be subject to retention at the discretion of the headmaster. A retained student will repeat the previous year's course work.

**C. ACADEMIC VIOLATIONS.** Cheating and plagiarism are grounds for academic and disciplinary action. Academic cheating is defined as representing someone else's work as your own. It can take many forms, including copying or sharing another's work, getting or purchasing a term paper or test questions in advance, collaborating with another student or students during an academic exercise without the consent of the instructor, asking or paying another to do the work for you, or getting the information from an unauthorized source (such as the internet or an expert in the subject). It is important to realize that anyone who aids another in cheating is a participant in the deception and will be treated in the same way as the one who benefits from their work.

Here are some examples of actions that fall under the category of “cheating.”

- Copying another student’s work (with or without his knowledge) on a test, on a homework assignment, or on an in-class project or lab
- Copying, cutting, and pasting information from an electronic source
- Using any kind of notes during a quiz, test, or exam, unless specifically allowed by teacher
- Having a friend, sibling, or parent produce or complete any part of the assignment
- Copying the answers from the back of the book
- Inventing or counterfeiting sources
- Using any AI to complete assignments, including word processing systems that offer AI writing assistance; including, but not limited to, systems such as Grammarly

Plagiarism is the use of another person’s distinctive ideas or words without acknowledgment. The incorporation of another person’s work into one’s own requires appropriate identification and acknowledgment, regardless of how you got it. The following are considered to be forms of plagiarism when the source is not cited:

- Word-for-word copying of another person's ideas or words (even copying a three-word phrase can be considered plagiarism)
- Interspersion of one’s own words here and there while, in essence, copying another's work
- Paraphrasing an author’s original theory or idea without proper citation
- Re-submitting one’s own previously-written paper (or portion of it) for a different assignment (self-plagiarism)

Given the challenging nature of the curriculum, parents and other family members will often find themselves offering assistance to students. However, parents are asked to be conscientious in the extent of help that they provide. It is essential to our goal of educating students that the work they submit for evaluation is entirely their own.

Students will receive a zero on any assignment where cheating or plagiarism is evident and will have a meeting with the academic dean or headmaster. Repeated incidents of cheating and plagiarism may lead to more serious disciplinary actions such as suspension. Serious academic violations may be communicated to colleges upon request.

**D. ASSIGNMENTS.** Homework is just as important as class work. Here is where students work independently without the coaching and guidance of the teacher. Students should have a regular routine of time and place for homework. They should complete their own assignments, trying to develop independent study habits.

It is the practice of CAFM to be reasonable in the amount of homework assigned. An average student can expect roughly one to two hours of homework each evening. To ease the burden of homework, the Academy provides regular study periods throughout the week.

It is the recommendation of the Academy to penalize late work up to 20% for each school day it is late. Some assignments by nature will not be accepted when handed in late.

Work made up after an absence is not considered late. As a general rule, students will have as many school days (not class days) as they missed to make up missed work. Tests must be made up in the same way and may be penalized up to 10% for each school day they are late. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that work and tests missed due to absence are made up. Individual teachers may alter the late policy for individual assignments at their discretion.

E. **ASSESSMENT.** Teachers will evaluate student work by letter, percentage, or comment. The Academy is on a semester system. At the completion of each semester, report cards are issued. The grade given each semester is a composite of weekly quizzes, tests, written and oral assignments, achievements in various forms, the results of quarterly examinations, and participation.

F. **GRADING SYSTEM.**

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Percentage Correlation</u>	<u>GPA Equivalent</u>
A	93 and above	4.0
A-	90-92	3.67
B+	87-89	3.33
B	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.67
C+	77-79	2.33
C	73-76	2.0
C-	70-72	1.67
D+	67-69	1.33
D	63-66	1.0
D-	60-62	.67
F	0-59	0

G. **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES.** There will be parent-teacher conferences at least twice per year. Additional meetings with parents are most welcome. Appointments should be made if possible.

H. **TEXTBOOKS AND NON-TEXTBOOKS.** Textbooks assigned are valuable school property and are loaned for the convenience of the students. Textbooks should be cared for and covered. Damaged or lost textbooks may result in the assessment of fines for their replacement. Non-textbooks that are not the Academy’s property are the property of the student and are intended to be theirs for the building of his personal library. Students will be given a list of all the books at the beginning of each year. This list states which textbooks are school property and which non-textbooks are theirs to keep. This list also notes those non-textbooks that will be needed in subsequent academic years. It will also include replacement costs for lost or damaged textbooks. See Appendix D for the complete book list for each grade.

## VII. Miscellaneous

- A. **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.** CAFM believes that the maturation and development of our students is enhanced and further cultivated by encouraging their creativity and talents. To that end, we wish to make available extracurricular activities that reflect our students' interests. Given our limited resources, parental assistance and involvement in this effort is essential.
- B. **FAMILY FUNDRAISING COMMITMENT & VOLUNTEERISM.** The cost of educating a student at Chesterton Academy of The Florida Martyrs is not fully covered by tuition. The long-term financial health of the Academy depends in part on the success of our fundraising efforts. For this reason, fundraising is a shared responsibility of all families for the common good of the school.

Each family is asked to participate in the life and mission of the Academy through the following commitments:

- **Annual Fundraising Goal:** Each family is asked to help the Academy meet its annual fundraising goal. Families may meet this goal through personal giving, securing sponsors, or helping generate donations through school fundraising events.
- **Vision Dinner / Gala:** Each family is expected to serve as a table host at our annual Vision Dinner (gala). Table hosts play an important role in inviting guests and helping introduce new supporters to the mission of the Academy.
- **Volunteer Service:** Each family is asked to contribute 20 hours of volunteer service annually. Volunteer opportunities will primarily be coordinated through our House system and will support the operation of school events and activities.
- **Namestorming Event:** Families are expected to attend our annual Namestorming event in the fall, which plays an important role in building the Academy's network of supporters and potential benefactors.
- **Major School Events:** Families are asked to assist with major school events throughout the year, which may include fundraising initiatives, community events, recruiting efforts, and other institutional activities.
- **Committee Participation:** At least one parent from each family is asked to serve on either the Fundraising Committee or the Recruiting Committee to help advance the mission and sustainability of the Academy.

Volunteer service is as valuable as direct financial contributions, as it reduces operational costs and strengthens the community life of the school.

While families may contribute in different ways depending on their gifts and circumstances, we ask every family to participate generously in supporting the mission and growth of the Academy.

We recognize that families have varying professional and personal responsibilities, and that in some cases extenuating circumstances may make it difficult to fulfill the full volunteer commitment in a given year. Nevertheless, we ask every family to strive toward this expectation in a spirit of generosity and partnership

with the mission of the Academy. Our goal is not rigid enforcement, but a shared culture in which each family contributes meaningfully according to their ability for the good of the whole community.

C. 2026-27 ACADEMIC YEAR DATES.

1st Semester: August 10th, 2026 to December 18th, 2026

2nd Semester: January 5th, 2026 to May 26th, 2027

D. KEY CONTACTS.

HEADMASTER: David “Charlie” Johnson  
headmaster@chestertonpensacola.org

DEAN OF STUDENTS: Heather Renshaw  
hrenshaw@chestertonpensacola.org

ST. ANNE PASTOR: Fr. Chuck Collins  
(850) 456-5966

For a complete list of CAFM faculty and staff, visit <https://chestertonpensacola.org/about-us/faculty-staff>

WHO DO I CONTACT?

- A. Absences: attendance@chestertonpensacola.org
- B. PraxiSchool: office@chestertonpensacola.org
- C. Tuition & billing: office@chestertonpensacola.org
- D. Grades: the teacher (first initial, last name @)
- E. To reach the Board of Directors: the\_board@chestertonpensacola.org
- F. Volunteering and events: [recruiting@chestertonpensacola.org](mailto:recruiting@chestertonpensacola.org) OR  
marketing@chestertonpensacola.org
- G. Admissions or re-enrollment: office@chestertonpensacola.org

## E. SCHOOL PRAYER, PLEDGE, AND SONGS

Prayer For  
CAFM

Loving God, instill in us the same gifts of faith and courage which were instilled upon The Martyrs of La Florida. Let us be steadfast in the faith, on fire with the Holy Spirit, advocates for the Gospel, and filled with strength to defend the faith as they were. Let the death of these beloved martyrs not be in vain, but rather a beacon of inspiration and an example of how to carry out Your love into the world today. Heavenly Father, guide us on our path to sainthood, and may we all strive to follow in the footsteps of Antonio Inija and his Companions. We ask all this in Your name. Amen."

Beloved Martyrs of La Florida, Pray For Us!

## SCHOOL SONG – SALVE REGINA

Salve Regina, Mater Misericordiae Vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra salve.

Ad te clamamus, exsules, filii Hevae. Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes In hac lacrimarum valle.

Eia, ergo, advocata nostra, Illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte. Et Iesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, Nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.

O clemens! O pia!  
O dulcis! Virgo Maria.

*- Translation -*

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy: our life, our sweetness, and our hope.

To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve.  
To thee do we send up our sighs,  
Mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.

Turn then, most gracious advocate, Thine eyes of mercy toward us. And after this, our exile, Show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

O clement! O loving!  
O sweet Virgin Mary!

## Appendix A: Introduction to the Roman Catholic Liturgy

Like any activity, the proper worship of God in the Roman Catholic liturgy requires that we know certain things in advance. Just as one cannot show up to algebra class without knowing how to count, one cannot fully participate in the liturgy without knowing some basic facts. Just as a person is imperfectly educated if he has not had instruction on the proper way to write, so too, is he imperfectly educated if he has no guidance on the proper worship of God.

What follows is a brief catechesis on Catholic liturgy, as well as a guideline for Mass participation and common prayers. All of the questions and answers below are taken from *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and all citations reference the paragraph numbers in that text.

### A BRIEF CATECHESIS

*Who celebrates the liturgy of the Church?* The whole community of those who are united to Christ, both living and dead (1136, 1140). All those who are baptized therefore share in a “common priesthood” (1141). Not all members of the common priesthood have the same function in the liturgy, but some of its male members are called to act in the person of Christ for the service of the Church (1142).

*What other functions can people perform in the liturgy?* Servers, readers, commentators and members of the choir also exercise a genuine liturgical function (1143).

*What is the liturgy comprised of?* The liturgy is comprised of physical signs and symbols (1145). In particular, it is comprised of signs and symbols from creation (such as fire, smoke, water, candles), daily human life (eating, drinking and washing), and the history of salvation (the Passover meal) (1189).

*Why is the liturgy comprised of physical signs and symbols?* Because God, though he is invisible and spiritual (1159), speaks to human beings through the visible, physical world (1147). (God Himself became incarnate.)

*What criteria should we use to determine if liturgical music is appropriate?* There are three criteria (1157):

1. It must be beautiful and expressive of prayer.
2. Some of the music must be sung by the whole assembly.
3. It must preserve the solemnity of the liturgy.

*The Liturgy is also called “the sacrifice of the Mass.” Why is it a sacrifice?* The Eucharist makes Christ’s sacrifice on the cross really, and not merely symbolically, present (1366, 1374).

*What is the Eucharist?* The Eucharist is a sacrament of the Church in which Christ is truly, really, and substantially present, as both God and man, under the appearances of bread and wine. (1374)

*May anyone receive the Eucharist during communion?* Ecclesial communities derived from the Reformation and separated from the Catholic Church, “have not preserved the proper reality of the Eucharistic mystery in its fullness, especially because of the absence of the sacrament of Holy Orders.” It is for this reason that, for the Catholic Church, Eucharistic intercommunion with these communities is not possible. (1400) Out of respect for this ecclesial difference, non-Catholics should not receive the Eucharist at Mass.

*What should a member of the Chesterton community do when not receiving the Eucharist at Mass?* With the whole assembly proceed to the sanctuary and as a sign of not receiving the Eucharist, reverently cross your arms over your chest and bow your head for a blessing. Proceed with the whole assembly back to your seat and kneel in prayer.

*How often should the faithful receive the Eucharist?* The faithful should receive communion each time they are at Mass, so long as they have the required dispositions (1388).

*What should the faithful do to prepare to receive the Eucharist*

*well?* To receive the Eucharist worthily, a practicing Roman Catholic must be in a state of grace (i.e., has made a good confession since his or her last mortal sin). He or she should observe the fast required by the Church, and be sure that his or her behavior and clothing reflect the respect, solemnity and joy of the occasion (1387).

*What is a mortal sin?* A mortal sin is a violation of God's law that destroys the possibility of charity (1855). In order for a sin to be mortal, three conditions must be met (1858, 1859):

1. It must have grave matter, that is, it must break one of the Ten Commandments.
2. We must have full knowledge that what we are doing is a sin. If, for example, someone only has an imperfect awareness that he must go to Mass on Sunday it is not a mortal sin for him to miss it, even though to do so is against the Ten Commandments.
3. We must give complete consent to the sinful action.

*If someone commits a mortal sin, what must he or she do before they receive the Eucharist?* If a person commits a mortal sin, he or she must receive the sacrament of confession before they can receive the Eucharist (1385).

### MASS PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

Given the importance of the Mass, and by extension, the Eucharist as the source and summit of our faith, and remembering that we attend daily Mass as a school function, there are some basic guidelines to keep in mind:

**1. Be on time.** Be in your pew and quiet 5 minutes before Mass begins. Students who come late should quickly and quietly move into their assigned seats. Remember, this is the time we are dedicating to our Lord.

**2. Be reverent.** Genuflect when entering and exiting the pews at the beginning and end of Mass. Sit up straight and do not slouch. Remove any non-uniform jackets or sweaters. Avoid hands in pockets. Do not put your jacket on or close your hymnal while the recessional is being sung. Out of respect for our Lord, wait until the song is finished.

**3. Exit in a respectful fashion.** Others will remain to pray and the life of the parish goes on as we are leaving.

**4. Participate.** Sing the hymns when invited. Say or sing the responses. If you are uncertain about the Mass responses, use the card in the pews. Stand and

kneel when the congregation is invited to do so.

**5. Unity at Communion.** When not receiving, students are to go up for a blessing with their arms crossed, hands on shoulders. The priest or extraordinary minister will offer a blessing. Do not remain in the pew or aisle while others go up for Communion.

**6. Receiving the Eucharist.** When receiving our Lord, it is customary to bow reverently prior to reception and to respond to the priest or extraordinary minister with "Amen." Students may receive on the tongue or in the hand.

### COMMON CATHOLIC PRAYERS

#### Our Father

Our Father, Who art in heaven,  
 Hallowed be Thy name;  
 Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done  
 On earth as it is in heaven.  
 Give us this day our daily bread;  
 And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who  
 trespass against us;  
 And lead us not into temptation,  
 But deliver us from evil. Amen.

#### Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, Pray for us sinners, Now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

#### Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

#### Grace Before Meals

Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help or sought thy intercession, was left unaided.

Inspired by this confidence, we fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins our Mother; to thee do we come, before thee we stand, sinful and sorrowful;

O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not our petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer them. Amen.

The Angelus

V: The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R: And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

All: Hail Mary...

V: Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R: Be it done unto me according to thy word.

All: Hail Mary...

V: And the Word was made Flesh.

R: And dwelt among us.

All: Hail Mary...

V: Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R: That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V: Let us pray.

All: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that, we to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an Angel, may by His Passion and Cross, be brought to the glory of His Resurrection through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Appendix B: About Our Uniform Policy

The school dress code for member schools in the Chesterton Schools Network contributes to a sense of school unity and connection to the broader CSN community. Our dress code is designed to enhance and elevate the learning atmosphere, while adding a sense of pride and professionalism.

School uniform elements for purchase through our vendor, SchoolBelles, are outlined in Sections IV and V of this document. Uniforms should always be neat, clean, and fit appropriately. All students are to present themselves in a manner consistent with their God-given dignity. Students are to follow the dress code or uniform that accords with their biological sex.

### Why Uniforms?

One of the most common questions we receive is why member schools in the Chesterton Schools Network, like most private Catholic schools, require uniforms.

The tradition of uniforms goes back to Medieval times when caps and gowns were required at universities. All students, regardless of background, would dress alike, and all would show an outward sign of their dedication to the task of learning together within the university community. From the very beginning, school uniforms have helped achieve three goals: modesty, professionalism, and community. Our uniform policy aims to achieve the same three goals.

#### MODESTY

We have all heard the expression, “He/she is just being modest,” usually when someone resists drawing attention to themselves. This phrase captures the heart of modesty because modesty is a form of humility. Modesty resists calling undue attention to oneself in speech or in dress. We ask our students to dress modestly on campus whether they are in uniform or out of uniform.

#### PROFESSIONALISM

We ask the students to wear the uniform so they look professional. The work that we do at school is part of a student’s life that is extraordinary, set apart from the ordinary routines of life. In our Western tradition, we dress up for extraordinary events to show their importance. We dress up for Mass and for the work day, and we dress up for school. We ask that the uniforms are neat and clean. Our young men wear ties that are neatly fastened, with shirt cuffs rolled down and buttoned. Our young ladies wear skirts and choose accessories that are fitting for a professional atmosphere.

#### COMMUNITY

Finally, the uniform is an affirmation of community. When a student carefully adheres to the uniform code he or she is saying “Yes, I buy in. I am part of this team and I am proud to show it.” For our upperclassmen, this is an aspect of leadership, a way of showing the younger students that the right thing at CAFM is to affirm the importance of citizenship in our community and to bring new students into full membership in that community.

At CAFM, we strive together to learn the things important for our life in this world as well as in the next. Professionalism, modesty, and community are important parts of that effort.

### Uniform Vendor

The Chesterton Schools Network has selected SchoolBelles as its approved uniform vendor, based on pricing, quality, and service. Uniform components for ladies and gentlemen are detailed in the following pages.

“Out of uniform” guidelines are also provided for all Chesterton events, including those that occur outside of our normal school day.

## Appendix C: Ladies' Uniform Policy

ITEM	COLOR	DESCRIPTION	SCHOOLBELLES STYLE #
Blazer	Navy w/logo	Required to be worn daily beginning in October. At the school's discretion, students may take them off during the day	#5820
V-Neck Sweater or Vest	Navy w/logo	The sweater or vest are optional finishing items that may be required at the school's discretion.	#1983 Long sleeve pullover  #1964 – Vest
Oxford Shirt	White w/logo	Collar buttons must always be buttoned. The shirt must not gap in front, and there should be no pulling on the buttons. The sleeves may not be rolled at any time.	#1770 Short sleeve  #1771 Long sleeve
Skirts 9-10  11-12	Grey  Grey-Blue Plaid (optional)	Length required is mid-knee to below-the-knee. If full kneecap is exposed while standing straight, the skirt is too short. Skirts are to be no shorter than the crease of the back of the knee. This usually requires ordering a size Long. The skirt should be worn on the waist and not on the hip. Navy or black bike shorts should be worn under skirt.  Schools may elect to have ladies in grades 11-12 wear a different uniform skirt to distinguish them as upperclassmen.	#3521 [skirt style] Two kick pleated  Grades 9-10 #4204 - Grey Herringbone  Grades 11-12 #4104 - Grey/Blue Plaid (optional change)
Socks	Navy	Opaque, not cable. Knee highs must reach up to the knee. They should not be at mid-calf or lower.	#1640 Opaque Knee High  #1660 Opaque Tights
Shoes	Black	Must be a dress shoe, solid black leather dress flats with closed toe and full back. Must be polished and clean. Simple ornamentation allowed (e.g., bow, tassel), no tags/labels/symbols on outside of shoe. No moccasins, canvas, or suede. No Keds, Sperry, Vans, Toms, Converse or similarly styled shoe.	N/A
White Undershirt <i>Optional</i>	White	If needed for warmth. Plain white with no patterns or lace showing. Undergarments should never be visible.	N/A
Choir Attire	Black floor-length formal dress. Purchase from <a href="http://www.stageaccents.com">www.stageaccents.com</a> . #8655 Sarina Ladies or #5213 Sarina Girls black floor-length formal dress. Solid black dress flats. Dress should be hemmed to touch front toe of shoe. If questions, please ask before hemming.		

### GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Ladies should aim for a simple elegance that is appropriate for the high school years.
- Uniforms should always be clean and blouses always tucked in.
- Ladies should enter the building in complete uniform, and the uniform must be worn in full until leaving campus at the end of the school day.
- No sweatshirts, hoodies, or other non-uniform jackets should be worn over the uniform.

### HAIR GUIDELINES

- Hair should always be neatly groomed and clean.
- Hair color should be of natural hues. No streaks of unnatural colors (ex. reds, pinks, greens, etc.) on any part of hair.
- Hair accessories should be tasteful and professional. Color of hair accessories should complement the uniform.
- No hats may be worn inside of school buildings.

### MAKEUP GUIDELINES

- Makeup must be light, simple and natural-looking.
- Nail polish is allowed but should be muted, tasteful, and professional.

### JEWELRY AND OTHER ACCESSORY GUIDELINES

- All jewelry should be tasteful, professional, and not excessive in size or number.
- Traditional watches may be worn, but smartwatches are not allowed.
- Necklaces should be metal chains (no leather or woven materials). No tightly fitting necklaces such as chokers.
- Earrings should be in the lobe only. No gauges.
- No body piercings or tattoos are allowed.

## Appendix D: Gentlemen’s Uniform Policy

ITEM	COLOR	DESCRIPTION	SCHOOLBELLES STYLE #
Blazer	Navy w/logo	Required to be worn daily beginning in October. At the school’s discretion, students may take them off during the day	#5825
V-Neck Sweater	Navy w/logo	The sweater is a finishing item, along with the blazer. On October 15 through May 15, a finishing item is required all day (could be blazer, vest/sweater with blazer). Sweater or vest may be worn year-round.	#1993 – Long sleeve pullover #1994 – Vest
Oxford Shirt	White w/logo	Collar buttons must always be buttoned.	#5760 – Short sleeve #5761 – Long sleeve
Pants	Gray	Plain Front with Laurel Monogram Color 821 w/ small monogram (7322)	#5202 – Plain
Socks	Gray	May be purchased from another vendor as long as they are solid grey dress socks that match the pant color and are at least calf length. Ankle or calf may not be exposed at any time. Gold Toe Charcoal are the best and can be purchased at Kohl’s or online.	#1653 - #1645 Crew Sock Oxford Gray 3 pack better quality, also covered under lifetime guarantee
Shoes	Black	Must be a solid black dress shoe, including soles, and able to take a shine and have non-scuff soles. No obvious brand logos. Shoes are always required.	N/A
Belt	Black	Non-woven, leather belt with a simple buckle. This can be purchased at Schoolbelles or from any vendor.	#6305
Tie 9-10 11-12	Optional color change for 11-12	Color for ties must be either “Chesterton Stripe” or “Navy/Silver.” Schools may elect to have gentlemen in grades 11-12 wear a different color tie to distinguish them as upperclassmen.	#4827  Grades 9-10 <i>Chesterton Stripe</i>  Grades 11-12 <i>Navy / Silver (optional)</i>
Choir Attire	Black dress pants and suit coat, white dress shirt (not oxford) and solid black bow tie. Solid black dress socks (must be to mid-calf) and black dress shoes (polished and in good condition). Some gentlemen choose to purchase a tuxedo from Stage Accents ( <a href="http://www.stageaccents.com">www.stageaccents.com</a> ), the Premier Tuxedo Ensemble #ENSB. No patterns on bow tie and no pocket squares, lapel pins, vests, etc. allowed.		

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Gentlemen should aim for a simplicity that is appropriate for the high school years.
- Uniforms should always be clean, shirts ironed, and always tucked in.
- Only solid white tee shirts may be worn under the white oxford. No wording or pictures on the tee shirt should be visible.
- Gentlemen should enter the building in complete uniform, and the uniform must be worn in full until leaving campus at the end of the school day.
- No sweatshirts, hoodies or other non-uniform jackets should be worn over the uniform.

## HAIR GUIDELINES

- Hair should always be neatly groomed and clean.
- Hair color should be of natural hues. No streaks of unnatural colors (ex. reds, pinks, greens, etc.) on any part of hair.
- Hair must be trimmed above the eyebrows, ears, and collar.
- All young men should be clean-shaven with sideburns not extending beyond the middle of the ear. Facial hair is not permitted.
- No hats may be worn inside of school buildings.

## JEWELRY AND OTHER ACCESSORY GUIDELINES

- Traditional watches may be worn, but smartwatches are not allowed.
- Simple chains and medals should be tucked under the shirt.
- No earrings, body piercings, or tattoos are allowed.

## Appendix E: Out of Uniform Dress Code

We live a full life together within the Chesterton community, enjoying sporting events, dances, and fine art performances both on campus and off campus. We expect all students to present themselves in a way that reflects their great dignity, and to dress in a modest and neat way at all Chesterton events, including those that occur outside of our normal school day.

### 1. SCHOOL DANCES AND “MORE FORMAL THAN NORMAL” SCHOOL DAYS

#### LADIES

- Semi-formal dress required (dress, dress pants and tops, skirts)
- Dress and skirt length should match uniform skirt length, which is mid-knee
- If leggings are worn, they must be worn underneath a skirt or dress that reaches to the knee
- When sitting with feet flat on floor, skirt or dress should cover top part of knee
- Necklines of modest cut, and no exposed back, shoulder or midriff
- Dress shoes (no Keds, Vans, Sperry, Toms or Converse-type shoes)
- Sleeveless tops or dresses should have at least 2” of fabric on top of shoulder

- No visible undergarments

#### GENTLEMEN

- Semi-formal dress required (khaki’s or better slacks, dress shirt)
- No jeans, shorts, sleeveless shirts, t-shirts, athletic shoes or Sperry, Vans, Toms, Converse-type shoes
- Pants and shirts should be loose-fitting
- No visible undergarments

**NOTE:** At times our school dances may have themes that allow for students to dress in costume. Costume guidelines will be given prior to the dance.

### 2. CHOIR CONCERT PERFORMANCES, COMMENCEMENT, AND THE CHESTERTON VISION DINNER/GALA

Choir concert attire (see full choir uniform guidelines for complete description):

- Ladies - black choir gown, black heels or flats
- Gentlemen - black suit, white button-down shirt, black bow tie, black leather belt, dress shoes

### 3. OTHER SCHOOL EVENTS (retreats, drama productions, athletic events, field days, lectures, after-school extra-curricular activities)

- Dress and skirt length should match uniform skirt length, which is mid-knee
- When shorts are permitted, please adhere to the following guidelines: with arms by your sides, the hem of the shorts must reach below your finger-tips
- No tight-fitting pants or tops
- No midriff exposed
- At least 2 inches of fabric on each shoulder for sleeveless attire
- No ratty, stained clothing
- No undergarments showing at any time

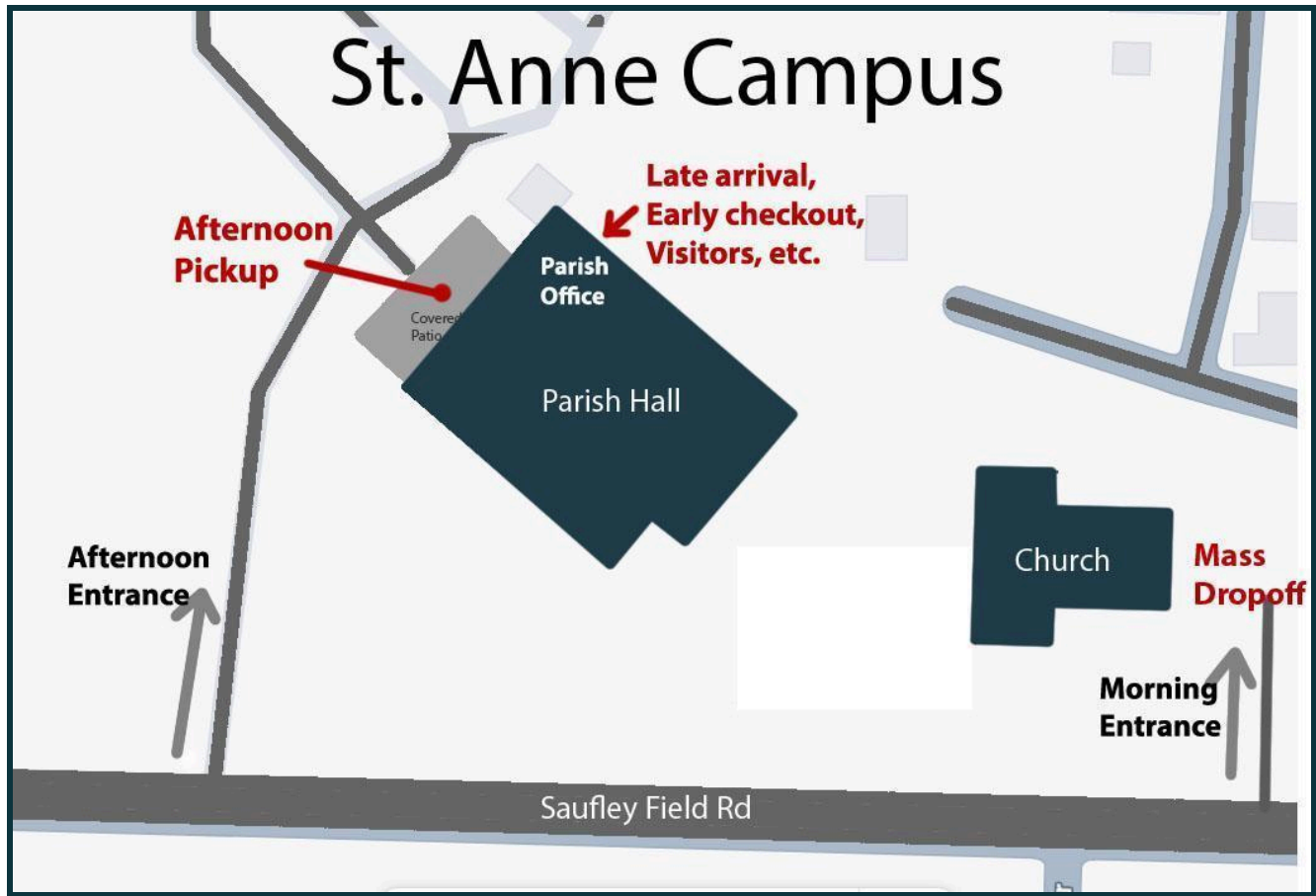
## Appendix F: School Supplies List 2026-27

Students may be asked to replenish supplies during the year as needed or to bring a few other supplies based on the specific needs of their classes. Students will also need access to a working printer for some assignments throughout the year.

### SUPPLIES REQUIRED FOR ALL STUDENTS

- Blue or black pens
- Mechanical or regular pencils
- 2 highlighters of different colors
- Pencil bag or box
- Two packages of college-ruled loose-leaf paper, 8 1/2" x 11"
- 1/2" black three-ring binder (NO "view front") w/ inside pockets – (for choir)
- Two packages, white, 3"x 5" note cards
- *Recommended: Cassell's Latin Dictionary*
- 3-5 book covers (brown paper bags or durable textbook covers)
- 1/2-inch three-ring binder, any solid color but black – (for drama)
- Graph ruled filler paper 8" x 10 1/2"
- Your math teacher will let you know if you need to purchase a graphing calculator (e.g., TI-84) during the first week of school.
- One notebook for each academic subject (appx 8)

## Appendix G: Campus Map



## Appendix H: School Calendar

# Chesterton Academy of The Florida Martyrs

## 2026-2027 School Event Calendar

### Teacher Attendance Required

Total Student Days	178	<b>Instructional Hours Req</b>	<b>900</b>
Total Teacher (Contract) Days	187	<b>Instructional Days Req</b>	<b>170</b>
Total Evenings Required (after 5pm)	6	<b>Instructional Days Calendered</b>	<b>178</b>
Total Weekend Required	4	<b>Instructional Hours Scheduled</b>	<b>909</b>

August 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

August		
1	Saturday	First Tuition Payment Due
3	Monday	Teachers Return
6	Thursday	Orientation 9, 10 & new transfers only (6:30pm)
10	Monday	9th & transfers start
11	Tuesday	ALL STUDENTS RETURN
15	Saturday	HDO - Assumption of Blessed Mary
25	Tuesday	Family Mass (students arrive 7:15)
28	Friday	Feast of St. Augustine (Augustine Spirit Wear)
<b>21 Faculty Days</b>		<b>16 Student Days</b>

September 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

September		
4	Friday	Noon Dismissal (students) - Teacher Inservice
7	Monday	Labor Day NO SCHOOL Feast of St. Chrysostom Observed (Chrysostom Spirit Wear)
11	Friday	Feast of St. Chrysostom Observed (Chrysostom Spirit Wear)
15	Tuesday	Mass of the Holy Spirit (students arrive 7:15)
23	Wednesday	School Picture Day
24	Thursday	Parents Night 6:30-8:00 (wine & cheese)
<b>21 Faculty Days</b>		<b>21 Student Days</b>

October 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

October		
8	Thursday	Half-Day - Parent-Teacher Conferences 12:15-5:00
9	Friday	1st Q.E.
9	Friday	NO SCHOOL - Fall Break
12	Monday	NO SCHOOL - Fall Break
17	Saturday	CAFM Open House - Teacher Contract Day
27	Tuesday	Family Mass - Students Arrive 7:15
30	Friday	House Games - Noon Dismissal (Spirit Wear)

**TBD TBD**  
**20 Faculty Days**

Upperclass trip to St. Augustine  
**20 Student Days**

November 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 2027						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2027						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

November		
1	Sunday	All Saints Potluck - Community/Social Event
11	Wednesday	Veterans Day - NO SCHOOL
12	Thursday	Namestorming - All Required (Evening)
17	Tuesday	Family Mass - Students Arrive 7:15
20	Friday	Noon Dismissal - Half Day (Teacher Meeting 1-3)
23-27		Thanksgiving Break NO SCHOOL
26	Thursday	Thanksgiving

December		
4	Friday	Advent Retreat - All FT & PT Teachers Required
7	Monday	Feast of St. Amrbose - Ambrose Spirit Wear
8	Tuesday	HDO - Immaculate Conception - Students Arr7:15
15	Tuesday	Fine Arts Night - 6:30 SAB
18	Friday	Christmas Brk Beg. - NOON DISMISS (Faculty Christmas 5:30)
21-31		Christmas Break

**15 Faculty Days** **15 Student Days**

January		
1	Friday	HDO - Solemnity of Assumption of Mary
4	Monday	Teachers Return - On Campus 9-2
5	Tuesday	Students Return
12	Tuesday	Family Mass - Students arrive 7:15
15	Friday	Noon Dismissal - Teacher Meeting 1-3
18	Monday	Martin Luther King Jr. Day NO SCHOOL After school rehearsal 19-21, 25-28

**14 Faculty Days** **14 Student Days**

February		
5	Friday	School Play (Tech week - student delayed start 2-5)
9	Tuesday	Florida Martyrs Prayer Breakfast
10	Wednesday	Ash Wednesday - Students arrive 7:15
11	Thursday	FACULTY RETREAT - NO SCHOOL
12	Friday	Mid-Winter Break
15	Monday	President's Day NO SCHOOL
19	Friday	NOON DISMISS - Parent-Teacher Conferences 12:15-5:00

20	Saturday	Placement Testing 9-12 - ALL FT Staff
25	Thursday	Parents Night 6:30-8:00 (wine & cheese - Falardeau's)

**18 Faculty Days**

**17 Student Days**

March 2027						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

March		
6	Saturday	Emerald Coast Walk for Life (MANDATORY - date pending)
11	Thursday	Half Day
12	Friday	3rd Q.E.   PREFECT ELECTIONS OPEN
12	Friday	Noon Dismissal - Teacher Meeting 1-3
23	Tuesday	Family Mass - Students arrive 7:15 Holy Thursday - Noon Dismissal (Seven Churches Visitation)
25	Thursday	
26	Friday	Good Friday - NO SCHOOL
28	Sunday	Easter
29-31	M-W	SPRING BREAK - NO SCHOOL

**19 Faculty Days**

**19 Student Days**

April 2027						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

April		
VISION DINNER TBD		
1-2	Th-Fri	SPRING BREAK - NO SCHOOL
9	Friday	PREFECT ELECTION RESULTS ANNOUNCED
16	Friday	Noon Dismissal - Teacher Meeting 1-3
27	Tuesday	Family Mass - Students arrive 7:15
30	Friday	Feast of St. Athanasius Obs (Athanasius Spirit Wear)

**20 Faculty Days**

**20 Student Days**

May 2027						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

May		
3	Week of	Teacher Appreciation Week
9	Sunday	Mother's Day
20	Thursday	CAFM Baccalaureate Mass & Commencement 11-1
26	Wednesday	Last Day for Students: 10am awards ceremony - NOON DISMISSAL: Teacher Meeting 1-3
31	Monday	Memorial Day

**20 Faculty Days**

**18 Student Days**

## Appendix I: AI Policy (student use)

AI Use is not permitted under any circumstances for the completion of school-assigned work. This includes:

1. Using AI to edit your writing
2. Brainstorming ideas
3. Creating outlines for assignments
4. Summarizing readings or creating notes
5. AI Chatbots to help write for you
6. If in doubt about whether it is a permitted use, err on the side of caution, or ask a teacher for guidance

A note on grammarly (and similar sites): grammarly offers several features which help a student detect spelling and grammatical errors, as well as re-write features. Grammarly may be used to detect and correct spelling errors, but should be avoided as a shortcut for re-writing and re-tooling because it does not actually *teach* correct usage of the English language. It too easily allows the user to blindly click through and correct errors in sentence structure without consideration for how they were made.

Teachers reserve the right to use proprietary systems that check for AI use. AI writing is generally easy to spot, however, as it tends to be vapid, overly general and non-specific, and lacks “voice”. Be ready to defend what you have written at the teacher’s request. Generally speaking, the best way for a teacher to detect AI writing is to read it and ask a student to defend what they have written. If you do not understand the words on the page, the arguments in the paper, or where you got your citations, this is a strong indication that the work is not your own.

We live in an age where AI use is prevalent, especially in academic settings. If a teacher suspects AI was used to complete student work, they reserve the right to question and ask for a defense of the work, as this should be standard practice in any academic setting anyway. If a teacher has reasonable grounds to believe that AI was used to complete an assignment, the teacher may require an oral defense or an in-class writing sample.

Think of High School as a time of formation essential for success in your future college or professional career. In college, or professional life, where standards may or may not be different as regards AI use, the assumption is that you have learned to write well and express your ideas clearly. Using AI in your high school studies undermines this process of learning to write and speak well. In other words, the *struggle* to write clearly and eloquently is part of the lesson.

To be clear, failure to follow this policy can result in:

1. A zero on the assignment
2. Parent conference
3. Supervised re-completion of the assignment
4. Further disciplinary action as directed by the headmaster.

*Our position is not that AI is “bad” or should be entirely avoided in life - it can be a tool used for great good, and it is something we can all marvel at. But its use by students in our particular curriculum would only serve to undermine the kind of formation we offer.*

For further reading:

- [“Rome Call for AI Ethics” \(Pontifical Academy for Life\)](#)
- [“Antiqua et nova” \(Note on the relationship between AI and the human person / moral dimensions\)](#)
- [Pope Francis, Message for the World Day of Peace 2024: “Artificial Intelligence and Peace”](#)
- [Artificial Intelligence and Care For Our Common Home](#)

## Appendix J: Our Commitment to Restoration and Reconciliation

*“If your brother sins against you, go and rebuke him in private. If he listens to you, you have won your brother.”* — Matthew 18:15

At Chesterton Academy of The Florida Martyrs, we believe that discipline is not primarily about punishment, it is about restoration. Every corrective action we take is ordered toward a single end: the healing of relationships and the renewal of the soul. This conviction does not arise from a therapeutic worldview or a desire to avoid hard conversations. It arises directly from the heart of the Gospel and the perennial wisdom of the Catholic Church.

### The Gospel Foundation

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches us that “this outpouring of mercy cannot penetrate our hearts as long as we have not forgiven those who have trespassed against us” (CCC 2840). Forgiveness is not optional for the Christian, it is the very condition by which we remain open to God’s grace. A closed heart, hardened by grievance or resentment, cannot receive what God desires to give. This is why Christ, in teaching us to pray, placed forgiveness at the very center of the Lord’s Prayer.

The Catechism goes further: “The Lord’s words on forgiveness, the love that loves to the end, become a

living reality” (CCC 2843). True forgiveness is not a feeling we summon by willpower. It is the fruit of a heart offered to the Holy Spirit, who “turns injury into compassion and purifies the memory in transforming the hurt into intercession.” This is the standard to which CAFM holds itself, and to which it lovingly holds its students and families.

### Conversion in Daily Life

The Church reminds us that conversion is “accomplished in daily life by gestures of reconciliation,” through the admission of faults to one’s brethren, fraternal correction, examination of conscience, and the acceptance of suffering. “Taking up one’s cross each day and following Jesus is the surest way of penance.” This means that every time a student is corrected, every meeting between families and faculty, every hard conversation between peers is an opportunity for the very sanctification our school exists to foster.

The goal in every disciplinary action at CAFM is to restore the student in their relationship with God and with any other person involved. Our faculty and administration are committed to applying consequences that are fair, proportionate, and always oriented toward this higher end. Punishment that does not point toward healing falls short of our mission.

### Charitable Interpretation and Right Process

The Catechism instructs us that “every good Christian ought to be more ready to give a favorable interpretation to another’s statement than to condemn it” (CCC 2478). This is not naïveté; it is the active practice of Christian charity. At CAFM, this principle governs how we handle conflict at every level. When concerns arise, we follow the biblical pattern given to us by Christ himself: first between the parties directly involved, then with the appropriate authority if needed.

This process — classroom teacher, then headmaster is a concrete expression of Matthew 18, structured to protect the dignity of all involved and to create the conditions most favorable to genuine reconciliation. Bypassing this process can threaten to undermine this process.

### Facilitating Direct Reconciliation

When conflict arises between students, between a student and a teacher, or between any members of our community, CAFM is committed to facilitating direct, face-to-face reconciliation whenever possible. We do not believe that the mere resolution of an external dispute constitutes true peace. True peace requires that the parties involved speak honestly with one another, hear one another charitably, and work together toward genuine healing. This is the way of Christ, and it is our way.

While the school will seek to handle student interpersonal conflicts at the school level in the first instance, parents are often an integral part of the reconciliation process. When the nature of a conflict warrants it, we may invite parents to participate directly, not to adjudicate or to advocate, but to model and support the Christian charity we are asking of their children. This may mean parents speaking with one another, family to family, in a spirit of fraternal charity and with a sincere aim toward reconciliation. We ask all families to approach such invitations with humility and openness, trusting that the school’s goal is always the good of every person involved.

### A Community Built on Mercy

Chesterton Academy is not merely a place where students learn facts and skills. It is a community of

formation, a place where students, families, and faculty practice, together, the difficult and beautiful work of Christian life. That work includes wrongdoing and correction, hurt and forgiveness, failure and restoration. We do not expect perfection. We expect sincerity, humility, and a willingness to seek reconciliation.

We will always use prayerful, creative, and proportionate measures to help restore students and relationships. We ask our families to embrace this same spirit, approaching every conflict with charity, following the proper process with trust, and never losing sight of the truth that in our school, every difficulty is an occasion for grace.

*“It is there, in the depths of the heart, that everything is bound and loosed.” — CCC 2843*