



**OUR SAVIOR'S**  
**CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**  
*Reaching hearts. Teaching minds. Building futures.*

# Kindergarten through Grade 8

## Parent Handbook

### 2024-25

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## **FORWARD**

Parenthood is a special, God-given position which carries tremendous responsibilities. We at Our Savior's are eager to assist you in fulfilling these responsibilities through an educational program designed to provide guidance and direction for your child's spiritual development along with his or her mental, physical and social growth.

This Parents' Handbook is intended to help you understand the program of Christian education offered at Our Savior's Christian School (hereinafter OSCS). Many of the basic procedures and policies of your school are presented in this booklet. Please take time to become familiar with these policies and to discuss them with your child.

*Your* Parents' Handbook serves as an open invitation for cooperation between the home and the school. Cooperation based on mutual respect and understanding is most beneficial in the development of a child's positive attitude toward school. We hope to build on a relationship of trust and understanding so that together, as parents and educators, we may lead each child to approach his or her full potential as a redeemed child of God.

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## SECTION 1 – Foundational Information

### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Our Savior’s Christian School is to build a solid foundation in each child by reaching hearts with Biblical truth, teaching minds through strong academics and cultivating both in partnership with families to build their future through a Christian world-view.

### VISION STATEMENT

Our Savior’s Christian School will be known throughout the Capital Region as a premier multi-denominational Christian school, Pre-k through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, committed to serving an ethnically and economically diverse community. We will be recognized for our distinctive family atmosphere and culture, innovative academic programs, and extraordinary and nurturing faculty. Our graduates will be Christian leaders fully prepared for high school and to impact the world for Christ.

### STATEMENT OF FAITH

- **We believe** that the Bible is the Word of God. Through it, God reveals Himself to us. The entire Bible is God-breathed and God-inspired. The Old and New Testaments are the norm and guide upon which we base our faith (2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:21).
- **We believe** that God the Father created the universe. He is holy and just, and also loving and compassionate. His deepest desire is to live in a close relationship with all people (Gen. 1:1, 1 Pet. 1:15, 16).
- **We believe** that because of His desire to live in a relationship with us, He sent His own Son, Jesus Christ, who became a human being, born of a virgin. He is fully God and fully man. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus made it possible for all people to live in a relationship with God. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Through Him, and Him alone, can people enter into a relationship with God (John 3:16-19, John 10:33, Romans 3:23, Romans 5:8-9, Ephesians 2:8-10).
- **We believe** in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life (Romans 8:13-14, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Ephesians 4:30, Ephesians 5:18).
- **We believe** in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, Galatians 3:26-28) as the larger Body of Christ. As His Body, we are called to worship with Him, serve Him, and be the instrument through which the Good News in its fullness is shared with the world.
- **We believe** in the worth and value of life and every human being. Created in God’s image, humans matter to God. Their worth is dependent, not on accomplishments, but on God’s love for them. Because God sees mankind as worth dying for, we affirm and acknowledge the dignity of every human being (Jeremiah 29:11, Psalm 139:13-14, Ephesians 2:9-10). At the same time, we acknowledge that mankind is separated from God because of sin (Romans 3:23). We joyfully proclaim the Good News that because of Jesus Christ, forgiveness is possible through faith in Him (Romans 5:8, 1 John 1:9). It is this forgiveness that restores fallen humanity’s worth (Romans 6:23, 10:9-10).
- **We believe** that the term *marriage* has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Genesis 2:18–25). We believe that God intends relations to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Corinthians 6:18, 7:2–5; Hebrews 13:4).
- **We believe** that God wonderfully foreordained and immutably created each person as either male or female in conformity with their biological sex. These two distinct yet complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26–27).

## **HISTORY**

In 1956, Our Savior's Evangelical Lutheran Church – LCMS, felt led to establish a school to provide a program of quality Christian education in the church and to the surrounding communities. The name was originally Our Savior's Lutheran School. Then in the Fall of 2019, through prayer and under the direction of the Lord, the church voted to drop the word Lutheran from its name. The school followed suit and changed its name to Our Savior's Christian School, thus reflecting the outreach to more than 37 churches in the Capital Region. The school has a renewed vision for the future, although that original goal to provide a program of quality Christian education in the church and to the surrounding communities, still rings true. From its inception, Our Savior's Christian School has been rooted in this Scriptural Truth: *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."* Because of this truth, a major emphasis at Our Savior's Christian School is to lead each student to grow in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and further develop their love for God and appreciation for others.

## **STANDARDS**

Our Savior's Christian School (hereinafter OSCS) is fully accredited and in good standing with Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (the Commission on Elementary Schools) and the Association of Christian Schools International (largest Christian accrediting body in the world) until July 2024. In the 2023/24 school year, we underwent the re-accreditation process, which included a self-study and a site visit (April 2024). OSCS received a full 7 year re-accreditation, expiring in June 2031. Knowing the need for excellence in education, affiliation with these organizations allows us to be in a constant state of improvement. The faculty and staff is able to remain fresh and culturally relevant by participating in professional development conferences and webinars through ACSI. Furthermore, the faculty at OSCS is continuously involved in curriculum review and development.

## **CURRICULUM**

Curriculum consists of the total learning experiences of the child within the school environment and meets and/or exceeds all required New York State standards in English Language Arts (Reading, writing, Grammar, Spelling), Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Music, Art, Computer/Technology, Physical Education and Spanish (5-8). Central to these learning experiences at OSCS is the daily Biblical integration in every subject throughout the entire school. This is culminated in a weekly Chapel service, where students experience God's love and forgiveness through exposure to worship, an understanding of the Christian faith which contains knowledge of historical truths of the Bible (non-denominational), and a challenge to apply these Biblical truths in attitude and actions.

All these subjects are taught from a Christian perspective which declares that learning apart from God is meaningless. Both cooperative and individualized learning activities are provided in efforts to challenge each student to do his/her best.

## **SCHOOL to HOME RELATIONSHIP**

In today's highly technological society, communication between parents and teachers is more important than ever. The OSCS faculty has a great tool for communicating with parents and it's called FACTS Management (formerly RenWeb). FACTS is a one stop shop for families of OSCS that has all the key components for your child's education experience. One such component is our school website, which includes teacher pages, our academic calendar, upcoming events, the monthly lunch menu, weekly announcements, pictures of student life, and a parent portal with access to student records (including grades) and family financial accounts.

**Parent-teacher conferences** will be scheduled twice during the school year, providing parents with further opportunities to dialogue directly with their child's teacher. Individual appointments may be made with teachers throughout the year. All parents are urged to become active members of the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO). Providing educational programs designed to help Christian parents, the PTO also gives parents many opportunities for fellowship with the teachers and other parents.

## **CLASS SESSIONS**

OSCS operates on the quarter system, with each quarter consisting of approximately 45 days. The school year begins September 6th and ends June 14th. The school day begins promptly at 8:15am and ends at 3:10 pm, with the exception of half-day kindergarten which dismisses at 11:45 am.

## **AMENDMENT POLICY**

Although it is our intent to follow what is in print in this document for the entire school year, occasionally new situations arise that warrant a change in policy or procedure. Therefore, OSCS administration reserves the right to amend the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook with reasonable notice.

## **SECTION 2 – Admission Information**

Enrollment at OSCS is a privilege and not a right. It is our intent to partner with parents in the education of their children by discipling them in an atmosphere that is academic and Christian in nature. Therefore, we seek to enroll students/parents who desire faith in Jesus Christ and who regularly attend a Christ-centered church and who support the mission of the school. If at any time a student's conduct, academic progress, or cooperation with the school administration or faculty is not acceptable, the school reserves the right to dismiss the student from enrollment from OSCS. This action will also apply to parental conduct and cooperation with the school administration.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATORY STATEMENT**

Our Savior's Christian School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origins in the administration of its admission policies or other school policies and procedures.



## **ADMISSIONS**

In accordance with local (South Colonie) school district regulations, children entering OSCS kindergarten must be five by December 1<sup>st</sup> of the year in which they enroll. All incoming students will be screened for grade readiness to ensure that OSCS can properly meet the needs of each student. All applicants will be approved by administration prior to enrollment.

## **FINANCIAL POLICY**

The annual tuition may be paid in one of four ways: payment in full on or before June 1<sup>st</sup> for a 4% discount, on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> for a 2% discount, semi-annual August and January, or ten equal installments, August – May through FACTS Management online. Please note there is a one-time annual fee from FACTS of \$50 for the ten monthly payment options and a fee of \$20 for the two payment options and no charge for payment in full before September 1<sup>st</sup>. Any deviation from these options must be submitted in writing with valid reasons for the request to the Principal prior to the school year (this must be a rare exception and not a norm).

Delinquent payments place an undue burden on the operation of the school. If payment cannot be met, parents should discuss this immediately with the Principal or Accounts Specialist.

Academic reports and transcripts may not be released until all outstanding financial obligations (including tuition, After School Program and any other financial obligation) to the school have been met.

## **SECTION 3 – Safety and Security**

Parents have entrusted OSCS with the Christian education, care, and safety of their children during the academic school day. All staff have been instructed, trained and practice prudent security measures to maintain a safe and secure learning environment for students.

For the security of the students, staff, and faculty, no persons, including parents will be able to enter the lobby freely to drop off or pick up their children. There shall be no parents in the school building without an appointment.

### **SECURITY SYSTEM**

The entire school facility is locked during the normal school day (Monday – Friday, 7:30 am – 6:00 pm). All visitors (including parents) must enter through the main school office door, which is monitored by the school office personnel. All persons entering the school must stop by the school office window, with a valid photo ID and obtain a visitor's pass before visiting a classroom or any other part of the building. We use a program called Raptor to screen all persons coming into OSCS.

To help maintain a secure environment please do not open or hold any perimeter door for others between the hours of 7:30 am and 6:00 pm, M-F.

## **FIRE DRILLS**

Fire drills will be held at various times during the school year in compliance with NYSED. An Emergency Evacuation Map is posted in each classroom. When the alarm sounds, students exit the building quietly, following the teacher to a designated location. They will remain lined up until the clear signal is given by administration.

## **SAFETY DRILLS**

Because we value the safety and security of our students, we will conduct unannounced drills with the students to familiarize them with the proper procedures during any emergency. The following four drills are standard FEMA protocol: 'Hold', 'Secure', 'Lockdown', 'Evacuate', and 'Shelter In Place'.

## **RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

Parents must provide OSCS with the names of persons authorized to bring or pick up their child. It is the parents' responsibility to update the FACTS Management database. We will rely on this information for daily dismissal and in the event of an emergency. The school reserves the right to ask to see valid photo identification for anyone picking up a child.

# **SECTION 4 – Student Information**

## **ACADEMICS**

The State of New York recognizes OSCS as a non-public, accredited school for the education of children in Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. OSCS is "substantially equivalent", meaning we are recognized as having courses of study which meet all of the NYS requirements. Furthermore, we Biblically integrate into all subjects, thus providing our students with a Christian worldview (these are noted under Curriculum – Section 1).

### **Academic Testing**

Testing is considered an important component in the instructional process at OSCS. Teachers regularly use pre-tests and post-tests to help focus instruction and assess progress. Both commercially prepared tests and teacher-made tests are used for diagnostic purposes.

OSCS participates in the New York State Testing program for Math and ELA by administering these tests to grades 3 through 8. We also administer the NY State Science test to grades 5 and 7 and the Regents exams to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in Earth Science and Algebra 1. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade Spanish students will take the checkpoint A as a proficiency exam for Spanish 1; upon passing the class and this exam they will receive 1 foreign language high school credit.

### **Academic Recognition**

OSCS recognizes and encourages outstanding academic achievement by establishing a quarterly Honor Roll for students in 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Students must achieve a grade of 90% or above in all subjects to receive this honor.

## Academic Grading Scale

Kindergarten uses the following scale for report cards:

- M – Has met an objective (Child has met and mastered this skill.)
- W – Working on Skill (Child is still working on this skill and it has not been assessed at this time. This may be noted in multiple quarters because we are still working on the skill, and we are not ready to check for mastery. It does not mean your child is struggling in this area. We work on many objectives a good portion of the year, and they will not be assessed until closer to the end of the year.)
- I – Improvement/Practice Needed (Child has made improvements, but still needs to work on this skill.)
- NA – Not Assessed (We have not worked on this skill yet, therefore it has not been assessed.)

Grades 1st through 4th grade are a standards-based scale of 1, 2, 3 or 4.

Level 1 = student has demonstrated some of the required knowledge and skills. Achievement falls much below the standard.

Level 2 = student has demonstrated some of the required knowledge and skills. Achievement approaches the standard.

Level 3 = student has demonstrated most of the required knowledge and skills. Achievement meets the standard.

Level 4 = student has demonstrated the required knowledge and skills. Achievement level exceeds the standard.

Grades for 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade are percentage-based.

A = 90-100    B = 80-89    C = 70-79    D = 60-69    F = below 60

## Academic Records

A cumulative file is maintained for each student attending OSCS. All academic grades are entered on the student permanent records and they are kept in a locked cabinet at all times.

## ACTIVITIES

Throughout the school year special events and activities are planned, involving the students, parents, and the teachers. The purpose of these events is to encourage the development and expansion of the children's talents, to promote a sense of community among the school families, to broaden the students' learning experiences, and to proclaim God's grace among His people.

These events are led and coordinated by designated members of the faculty and supported by parents and members of the School Board. We are so very grateful for our volunteers as the success of many of our programs are dependent upon them.

## ATTENDANCE

*Regular attendance* is vital to student success. Parents should make every effort to have their children in school to help support us as we seek to prepare them spiritually, academically, and socially. In all circumstances where students are not in school, a note from the parent/guardian will be required. **Please call the school office at (518) 459-2273 or email [salfons@oursaviors.com](mailto:salfons@oursaviors.com) by 9:00 am if your child is not coming to school that day.** Students are required to bring a note from home excusing any absence or tardiness. These notes are kept on file in compliance with the New York State attendance regulations. Legal absences are generally limited to: sickness, impassable roads, or death in the family. Students who accumulate 100 hours of excused/unexcused class time may be retained in their current grade, according to NY State education requirements. If parents intend their child to miss school for a personal trip or vacation, you are expected to inform the classroom teacher in advance. Teachers, at their discretion, may prepare work beforehand. It is unrealistic to expect all work before an extended absence. All missed work will be expected to be made up in a timely manner.

*Late (Tardiness)* – Two important disciplines taught at OSCS are promptness and preparation. Promptness denotes that students are in their proper place on time, and preparation denotes that students are ready for class each day with the necessary materials and completed assignment(s). A series or pattern of tardiness or a lack of preparedness for class does jeopardize a student's success.

**All students should arrive at school by 8:15 am** and go directly to the classroom or gymnasium as directed by the day of the week. This allows all students to be fully prepared for the school day. Teachers pick up their class from the gymnasium at 8:15 am. There is a 15-minute grace period for students to arrive at school in the morning. Should a student arrive at 8:30 am or after, they **MUST** obtain a late slip from the office and be signed in by a parent/guardian. Should a student arrive late 3 times in one quarter and it is unexcused, the parent will be asked to meet with the Principal. After 15 tardies or absences, a parent meeting with the principal will be scheduled to determine the reason and corrective action necessary. Should absences and/or tardies continue past 30% of the school year, a second meeting with the principal and/or department chairperson will be scheduled to determine passing to the next grade level.

## BOOKS AND SUPPLIES

Most books are made available through the public school district in which the student resides. Some districts will not supply all books, therefore the parents will be charged for any books that were not provided from the school district. We expect each child to take care of the books entrusted to him or her. The classroom teacher will send you a list of supplies that you will need to provide for your child. Textbook request forms must be signed and submitted to the school office or requested online by June 1<sup>st</sup> for the coming school year.

## CHAPEL

There is a weekly Chapel service for all students; K-4<sup>th</sup> is on Friday and 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> is on Thursday. These experiences in group worship and biblical teaching encourage the spiritual development of each student. A freewill offering is taken during this weekly service and is used for a variety of mission projects.

## DRESS CODE

The dress code at OSCS is designed to serve as a guide to parents and students on the appropriate clothing for all students to ensure a healthy academic environment. Studies have shown that when students are dressed appropriately for school then achieve more. We recognize that student dress and grooming can be a matter of personal choice, however, biblical principles of Christlikeness (modesty, purity, obedience, and respect) will be the applicable standard (*1 Cor. 10:31; Romans 12:2*).

These standards for grades K-8 reflect “common sense” and an understanding for each child’s comfort, safety, cleanliness, and a sense of modesty. Except in cases of special events (spirit days, etc.), dress should not cause too much attention to the wearer. Therefore, OSCS student dress code standards will be as follows:

### Shoes (feet)

The proper shoes will be worn at all regular school activities. Shoes must cover the toes and heels to protect the foot.

- Open toe shoes, crocs, clogs and flip flops are not acceptable shoes for school.
- Athletic shoes (ie. tennis shoes) should be worn on gym day.
- Snow boots or rain gear are not acceptable in the building during class.

### Pants (bottoms)

- Pants must fit at the natural waistline. Underwear should not be showing.
- Length and size of pants cannot compromise safety. No oversized baggy or saggy pants are allowed.
- Jeans with holes may not be worn to school.
- Leggings may only be worn with a shirt, skirt or dress that fully covers the student’s bottom.
- In grades 5 through 8, sweatpants and workout bottoms are not considered regular dress and should be reserved for special events only (spirit week, etc.).
- In grades 3 and 4, athletic wear are allowed on gym days only

### Shorts

Students will be allowed to wear shorts that are the appropriate length and material.

- Shorts must be no shorter than 4” above the knee. Knee length shorts are highly recommended.
- Khaki or denim material is acceptable.
- Athletic shorts, swimsuits and cut-offs are unacceptable.

### Shirts (tops)

Students must wear shirts at all times that are not see through and fit the body appropriately.

- T-shirts, polo shirts, oxfords, dress shirts, pullover or button-down tops are all acceptable tops.
- Halter tops, tube tops, crop tops, tank tops and cut-offs are unacceptable.
- Low cut tops are unacceptable. Undergarments should never be visible.

- Sweatshirts and hoodies are acceptable as long as the hood is not worn.
- Shirts with graphics or writing are acceptable. However, shirts with messages or graphics depicting demonic, vulgar, or discriminatory inferences or messages (implied or stated) are unacceptable to the general school population will not be acceptable.

### **Hats (heads)**

Students may not wear hats, caps, or hoods during the school day, except during special events.

### **Snow Clothing:**

- When playing outside in cold, wet, or snowy weather, students should be equipped with warm clothing, including snow pants, coats, hats, and gloves or mittens. They must wear boots to play in the snow. This is in addition to their normal school shoes. Please label clearly with the student's name.
- Outdoor clothing, (including, hats, boots, snow pants, coats etc.) are not to be worn in the school building, except as a student enters and leaves the building.

### **Physical Education Uniforms**

- Only approved OPCS uniforms are to be worn in 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade for PE class. These uniforms will be purchased through the school.

### **Parent Responsibility**

- Since we partner with parents, it is the parent's responsibility to understand and fully explain this policy to their students.
- Should a student be out of dress code they will be sent to the office for a check.
- If the student is out of dress code, a call will be made to the parent.
- The student may remain in the office until the proper clothing is brought.
- Should the parent choose to remove the student from school instead of bringing dress code appropriate clothing, the student may not be allowed to miss makeup missed work for the day.
- The administration reserves the right to amend the dress code as needed, and, if a needed change is in order, the parents will be notified via email.

Thank you for your willingness to partner with us in the implementation of this dress code.

### **DISCIPLINE – Standards of Conduct for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grades**

OPCS fosters a performance that focuses on the heart of the child, while teaching principles that mold and shape the behavior of each student. This includes discipline guidelines from scripture that include both proper and improper behavior. Christian discipline is a major objective of Christian education. Parents are encouraged to be familiar with the following sections of Scripture and review them with their children: Ephesians 4: 1-3, 15, 25-33; Colossians 3: 12-17; Galatians 5:16, 22-26.

Teachers have classroom discipline policies, and they will be communicated to the students in class at the beginning of the year. Should a classroom policy be exhausted, students will be referred to the principal's office. When students have been referred to the office, it will be documented, and parents will be notified. If

the behavior persists, the parents will be asked to meet with the principal and their child.

### **Student Code of Conduct - expectations**

Regulations governing student behavior at Our Savior's grow from consideration and respect for others, as expressed throughout Scripture. (See Colossians 3: 12-17; Ephesians 4: 1-3, 15, 25-33). Following are some basic guidelines for student behavior at Our Savior's:

1. Consideration for others shall be expressed by quiet, orderly movement throughout the building.
2. Students and teachers will speak in a respectful, courteous manner, reflecting love and kindness in their language.
3. Students will respect school property and the property of other students. Failure to care for school property or books entrusted to the student will lead to an assessment for repair or replacement of the damaged item.
4. Students will come to class with the proper books and assignments carefully completed. They will have the adequate supplies for the day's work. If students are unable to complete assignments, they may have to forfeit recess time or complete their work after school hours. Parental cooperation will be sought in helping students fulfill their school responsibilities. Work that has been carelessly prepared may have to be done over. Students and teachers alike should strive for excellence in their learning and instruction (Does not apply to preschool).
5. Students will maintain a neat, orderly desk and will share the responsibility of keeping their classroom and other areas of the school neat and clean.
6. No gum chewing is allowed in school. Children will refrain from bringing in items unrelated to their learning activities in school (e.g. radios, toys, cell phones/electronic devices). "Show and Tell" time in the lower grades may be an exception to this rule.
7. Playing outside is limited to specified areas reviewed in each classroom at the beginning of the year. Safety and consideration for others are key guidelines governing outside activities.

### **CHEATING POLICY (Plagiarism)**

Students of OSCS are expected to conduct themselves honestly and with integrity in their schoolwork. All forms of cheating and plagiarism are prohibited. Plagiarism is defined as follows: "In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source."

This definition applies to texts published in print or online, to manuscripts, and to the work of other student writers (Council of Writing Program Administrators-<http://www.wpacouncil.org/node/9>). Avoiding plagiarism/cheating is an essential part of maintaining academic integrity. Written work should reflect the individual student's ideas.

Cheating behavior that is unacceptable includes, but is not limited to:

- Copying another student's homework, quizzes, tests, etc.
- Working with others on projects that are meant to be done individually
- Allowing another student to copy answers from your homework, quizzes, tests, etc.
- Copying information from a source without proper attribution
- Taking papers from other students, publications, or from the internet.

1<sup>st</sup> Offense:

1. Zero for assignment
2. Student meets with principal before returning to class

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:

1. Zero for assignment
2. Student is suspended pending a meeting with the principal and parents. A behavioral contract will be signed between the student and the school.

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense:

1. Student is expelled from OSCS – at the discretion of the principal.

### **ANTI-BULLYING and ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY**

It is the policy of OSCS to maintain a safe learning and work environment that is free from bullying and harassment. Students, staff, and the school community are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful, Christian manner, and demonstrate a level of respect and dignity towards others on school property, or at any school function or school-sponsored activity.

Harassment and bullying are defined as any electronic, written, verbal, or physical act of conduct toward another person which is:

- 1) Based on any of the following actual or perceived traits or characteristics: age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status; and
- 2) Creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:
  - a) Places the person in reasonable fear of harm to person or property
  - b) Has a substantially detrimental effect on the person's physical or mental health
  - c) Has the effect of substantially interfering with academic or job performance
  - d) Has the effect of substantially interfering with the person's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by this school

### **RECOGNIZING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NORMAL PEER CONFLICT AND BULLYING**

<b>Normal Peer Conflict</b>	<b>Bullying</b>
Equal power or friends	Imbalance of power; not friends
Happens occasionally	Repeated negative actions
Accidental	Purposeful



Not serious	Serious with threat of physical or emotional harm
Equal emotional reaction	Strong emotional reaction from victim and little or no emotional reaction from bully
Not seeking power or attention	Seeking power, control, or material things
Not trying to get something	Attempt to gain material things or power
Remorse – will take responsibility	No remorse – blames victim
Effort to solve the problem	No effort to solve problem

**AWARENESS:**

- As part of in-service training for all school staff, the principal or designee shall arrange for Bullying and Harassment Awareness and Response Training. Because adults must take the initiative in combating bullying and harassment, they must be watchful for warning signs, closely supervising children on the playground, in the classrooms, hallways, rest rooms, gym, etc.

**DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS:**

Any person who believes he or she has been subjected to bullying or harassment should report it immediately to an appropriate superior.

- Depending on the severity and/or recurrence of the infraction, possible disciplinary steps by the teacher for any/all discipline code infractions are:  
Prayer with the student, private conversation with the student, seat rearrangement, verbal warning, time-out, loss of recess, call/note home, detention, parent conference
- At the teacher’s discretion, a student may be referred to the principal. The principal will administer disciplinary actions as he deems appropriate under the circumstances.

All suspected bullying or harassment will be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the principal or his/her designee. Criminal charges will be handled by civil authorities. Any person who is determined to have violated this policy will be subject to corrective action and discipline.

**FIELD TRIPS**

Throughout the school year teachers will schedule various field trips to expand their learning experiences beyond the walls of the classroom. It is understood that all students will participate in these field trips as they are a part of the curriculum. A general **Field Trip Permission Slip** will be issued at the beginning of the school year.

Although it is generally preferred to take a bus on all field trips for safety and security reasons, parents may also be requested to provide transportation for some of these field trips. If personal vehicles are taken, it needs to be understood that two factors are in effect: one, that we must have a copy of a valid driver’s license and insurance before that parent may drive; and two, the parent must understand that the school’s insurance is secondary coverage on all field trips.

## **LOCKER USE (Grades 5-8)**

Student lockers are issued to all students in grades 5 through 8 and are considered the property of the school and can be opened by the administration at its convenience. Students are expected to keep lockers clean (both inside and outside), and all contents, including books, pictures and personal materials must adhere to all expectations of a student at OSCS. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy regarding student lockers.

## **LUNCH-MILK**

Parents should pack a lunch of reasonable proportions so that each child may be expected to eat his/her entire lunch. A hot lunch option will also be available for purchase. These lunches are ordered one month in advance. OSCS participates in the federally subsidized milk program and offers milk at a reduced rate. To expedite bookkeeping, children are requested to purchase milk cards through the school office. The cost for a milk card is \$15.00 and provides a child with 40 half pints of milk. Milk may be paid for with cash or a check made out to OSCS. This may be sent in with a student in a marked envelope.

## **PLAYGROUND RULES**

In an effort to maintain a safe environment on the playground, we have established the following rules:

1. Play should occur on the playground and field. Avoid climbing trees or fences.
2. Students may not play on pavement or near the garbage bins.
3. No standing on top of the monkey bars.
4. Line up quietly by class before coming inside the building.
5. Keep hands and feet to self
6. Keep hands to self unless playing an approved game, such as tag.
7. Only 1 person may be on a swing at a time.
8. A maximum of 4 children are permitted on teeter-totter at a time.
9. Wood chips or stones may not be thrown.
10. No running on equipment, including playing tag.
11. No throwing of snow or ice.
12. Slide down the slide (students are NOT permitted to climb up a slide).
13. Students may not jump from the swings.
14. Students may swing by sitting on the swing, not lying on their stomach.
15. Flag football may be played on the playground, tackle football is not allowed.

## **PLANNER POLICY (Grades 1-8) – provided by OSCS**

### **Student Expectations**

- \* Organize and maintain a neat and detailed planner.
- \* Write in homework and important information daily.
- \* Ensure all homework and studying is completed on time.
- \* Have a parent/guardian see your homework once completed and get him/her to sign that day.

### **Parent/Guardian Expectations**

- \* Check your child's planner and homework daily.

- \* Sign planner (for students in 1st - 6th gr) to communicate with faculty that you are aware – students will be held accountable.
- \* Assist your child with homework or studying when needed.
- \* Attach any notes or information into the planner on the day it needs to be submitted.

### **HOMEWORK POLICY (Grades 3-8)**

- \* All homework is to be neat, include the proper heading, and complete before it is turned in. Incomplete work will not be accepted.
- \* Homework is due at the beginning of each period.
- \* Any work not turned in at the start of class is considered missing. Students will report to the homework room for their lunch period to begin work on the assignment.
- \* Homework slips (or sticker) placed in the planner are issued for ALL missing assignments and ***must be signed by parents.***
- \* Missing work is graded 10% lower for every day it is late. After 3 days a zero will be given.
- \* No long-term assignments will be accepted late unless prior arrangements have been made. Long term assignments are posted a minimum of two weeks in advance of the due date through Google classroom.

### **TELEPHONE USAGE/ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Students are not allowed to use cell phones and electronic devices during the school day (**7:30am-3:30pm**) unless otherwise directed by a teacher or administrator. Any time a student needs to make a phone call, **it needs to be from the office**, with permission from the teacher and office personnel. All electronic devices in use between these hours may be confiscated and held until a parent can pick them up from the office. OSCS is not responsible for the loss or damage of electronic items brought to school. Aftercare is an extension of the school day and therefore students attending aftercare (3:20-5:30 pm) may not use cell phones until they are checked out of aftercare.

### **TECHNOLOGY**

The privilege of using the technological resources provided by OSCS is accompanied by the responsibility of using it properly and for appropriate purposes. Please know that **each student and parent are required to sign our Technology Policy** indicating acceptance of the rules. Inappropriate use will result in suspension of the students' privileges and, if deemed necessary, further disciplinary actions.

### **IN SCHOOL GUIDELINES**

School access to the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and that entails responsibility. Each school year students will be instructed on proper and improper use of the Internet before they are allowed access.

Guidelines for using school technology:

1. Technology may only be used to perform schoolwork.
2. Information stored on school equipment or systems is not private and may be viewed or traced, by school personnel as necessary

Students are expected to:

1. Act in a responsible and respectful manner and take reasonable care of school technology.
2. Maintain the security of their accounts. Students may not change passwords on any assigned email

account

3. Follow copyright laws by properly citing sources.

Students should not:

1. Engage in cyberbullying.
2. Students may participate in only those Internet exchanges approved by school personnel. Any Internet security problems must be reported to a teacher.
3. Alter or change settings, system configurations or equipment.
4. Access another individual's account.
5. Create or intentionally spread computer viruses.
6. Provide personal information.
7. Access inappropriate materials, bypass security / filtering software, visit gaming sites and/or make purchases, enter chat rooms, personal websites, or blogs (much of this sort of activity is blocked by Sonic Wall)
8. Attach personal equipment to the network. Students can connect removable storage drives and personal devices with wireless capability for school purposes.

### **AT HOME LEARNING GUIDELINES**

***With respect to online learning at home, students and parents must follow the guidelines and expectations for OCS learning platforms, including, but not limited to Zoom, All applications in Google Suite, Seesaw, Khan Academy, Zearn, XtraMath, Epic etc...***

If a student is absent for an extended period, for just cause, they will have the ability to learn from home. Students are responsible for:

1. Logging into their Google Classroom to keep up with posted work and join any potential video meetings scheduled.
2. Student should work to the best of their ability and with integrity and honesty
3. Student/parent should communicate effectively with teachers should there be a roadblock in completing assignments on time.

In regard to live video lessons, (ie...Google Meets or Zoom)

4. Children should be dressed appropriately, in a quiet space (preferably at a desk or table), with the least number of distractions (please refrain from allowing pets, siblings & food/drink as video instruction time is limited.)
5. Students are expected to be fully engaged, while being mindful to not cause distraction to others who are learning online or in class.
6. Unless instructed otherwise, students should enter the meet with the microphone off to eliminate background noise.

***The following uses of school computer technology resources and Internet access are not permitted:***

- a.) To access, upload, download, or distribute vulgar, pornographic, obscene, sexually explicit, ethnically offensive, or any other inappropriate material.
- b.) To transmit obscene, abusive, harassing, sexually explicit, or threatening language.
- c.) To violate any local, state, or federal statute.
- d.) To vandalize, damage, or disable the property of another individual or the school.
- e.) To access another individual's materials, information, or files without permission.
- f.) To violate copyright laws.
- g.) To use the Internet for any illegal or commercial (profit making) purpose.

***Violations may result in loss of access as well as other disciplinary action.***

Users should not expect that files stored on school electronic devices or portable storage devices are private. Administrators and faculty may review files and internet use histories to maintain system integrity and insure that users are acting responsibly.

Our Savior's Christian School will not be responsible for the accuracy, nature, or quality of information gathered through school-provided Internet access. OSCS will not be responsible for unauthorized financial obligations resulting from school-provided access to the Internet.

**NOTICE:**

- This policy and all its provisions are subordinate to local, state, and federal statutes.
- A contract signed by a student and parent/guardian will stipulate agreement to this policy. The contract will be renewed each year the student attends Our Savior's Christian School.
- Students are responsible for any assigned/borrowed electronic devices

**OUR SAVIOR'S CHRISTIAN SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

***Our Savior's Christian School Board Policy for School-Provided Access to Computer Technology Resources and the Internet.***

Our Savior's Christian School is pleased to offer its students' access to the Internet with its excellent and up-to-date information resources. Today, the development of electronic information skills is fundamental to the preparation of citizens, future employees and even servants of Christ.

We're all aware that some material accessible via the Internet contains items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or offensive to Christian people. While the intent of the school board and faculty is to make Internet access available to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials as well. Our Savior's Christian School has taken precautions to restrict access to inappropriate materials. We are using the Sonic Wall 500 filtering appliance. The Sonic Wall uses a combined hardware/software approach; a dedicated, specialized hardware device with fully integrated web filtering programs plus a content-aware URL database, which is continually, and automatically, refreshed. [TECH NOTE: Our hardware device is NOT configured as a proxy web server, but as a transparent bridge placed between our router and our network.] All internet traffic, inbound and outbound, must pass through our Sonic Wall web filter. Even so, OSCS cannot guarantee that the Sonic Wall will be sure to restrict access to all controversial materials, nor that students will comply with the OSCS Internet Acceptable Use Agreement. However, the school board and faculty believe that the benefits to students of access to the Internet exceed the disadvantages. Ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using any kind of media and information sources, in and out of school. Each family has the right to decide whether to apply for access. Students without access will be provided with alternative educational activities.

In making decisions regarding student access to the Internet, the faculty at Our Savior's Christian School will consider its own educational mission, goals, and objectives. The faculty will blend thoughtful use of the Internet with accomplishment of curriculum goals and will provide guidance and instruction to students in its use. As much as possible, access from the school to Internet resources will be structured in ways that point students to sources that have been evaluated prior to use.

To remain eligible as users of school-provided Internet access, students must demonstrate responsible behavior on-line

and use the Internet in a manner consistent with the educational objectives of the faculty of Our Savior's Christian School.

## **WEAPONS**

The possession of any object that can be construed as a weapon at OSCS is strictly forbidden. It will be dealt with immediately and may result in immediate expulsion. These objects include guns, knives, box cutters, pepper spray, mace, matches, and lighters. Students are forbidden to possess any kind of weapon on school property, in any transportation to or from school, or at any school-sponsored event.

## **SECTION 5 – Health Information**

### **SCHOOL NURSE / INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS**

OSCS has a nurse on duty, provided by South Colonie School District, part of the week, to care for our students' needs. In the event your child suffers an injury, she will provide care and attempt to contact you immediately when appropriate. She is responsible for protecting and promoting the health of all the students and works closely with administration, teachers, and parents to maximize each child's potential to learn and grow. Parents should share information and concerns regarding the student's health to assist the nurse in providing quality care either in person or via FACTS Management SIS System.

### **ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

Through the registration fee, students are covered by accident insurance while school is in session. This is a supplemental insurance policy to help cover a student in the event of an injury which occurs on school property. This is a secondary coverage in addition to a student's primary health insurance coverage. School-related accidents should be promptly reported to the school nurse and principal. The office will send claim forms home to a student's parent/guardian.

### **ILLNESS**

To control the spread of illnesses and maintain a healthy school environment, children who exhibit the following conditions are *not* to be brought to school:

- Fever, diarrhea, or vomiting any time within the past **24 hours**
- Runny nose with thick yellowish or greenish discharge
- Frequent or heavy coughing
- Wheezing or severe sneezing
- Skin Rash
- Any COVID-19 related symptoms
- Contagious diseases or condition\*\* such as:
  - ☒ Chicken Pox
  - ☒ Ringworm
  - ☒ Impetigo
  - ☒ Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
  - ☒ Strep Throat
  - ☒ Measles
  - ☒ Mumps

- ☒ Head Lice
- ☒ Pinworms
- ☒ Meningitis
- ☒ Staph Infections

**\*\*Please notify your child's teacher, through the school office at (518) 459-2273, immediately if your child is diagnosed with any of these illnesses so that the teacher and the parents of the students in your child's class may be informed of the possibility of exposure when deemed necessary.**

Specific information regarding re-entry into school, following one of these illnesses, should be obtained from the school nurse. If your child becomes ill or displays any of the above symptoms, while at school, we will contact you to pick up your child immediately.

### **IMMUNIZATIONS**

Each child is required, by Public Health Law 2164, to have a current, official copy of his or her immunization record on file at OSCS. Failure to provide this form will delay your child's enrollment and (if not kept current) their attendance at OSCS. Evidence of required immunizations must be submitted before entering school. Acceptable proof includes a written certificate on record signed by a physician or documentation of medical exemption only. As of June 13, 2019, parents may no longer opt for a religious exemption in the state of New York. Please deliver a copy of immunization records to your child's teacher or the school nurse, as your child receives them.

### **STUDENT HEALTH EXAMINATION**

OSCS is required to have a current Student Health Examination form on file for each child entering kindergarten, second, fourth, and seventh grades, and all new students to OSCS. A physical is considered current if it has been performed within 12 months of the first day of school. As your child receives updated exams, please provide the school office/nurse with a current, completed form.

### **MEDICATIONS**

It is preferred that parents administer both over the counter and prescription medication to their child at the designated times. If this is not possible, the school nurse may be able to dispense over-the-counter medications if (and only if) an Annual Authorization to Dispense Medication form has been completed and added to your child's file. The medicine must be in its original container with a current date and/or prescription on the label, and clear, written instructions are included.

**Please deliver any necessary medications directly to the school office and do not leave in lunch boxes or backpacks where children can access them.**

If a student needs to be excused from Physical Education or recess activities, a note from a parent needs to be given to the school nurse before the gym class. The school nurse will then fill out a gym note for the student to give to the PE teacher. **A student may miss one gym class with a parent written note. A written note from a physician will be needed for any additional request.**





## SECTION 6 – Parent Information

### DROP OFF PROCEDURE (not busing)

Safety Alert: Enter the parking lot at 10 mph or less, go around the right side of the island, proceed along the sidewalk in front of the church and slowly turn right, proceed to the front of the school and drop off your child at the main school entrance. Then slowly proceed out the right driveway, along the bus line, and around the right side of any cars parked in front of the church office/preschool entrance and out of the parking lot onto Mountain View Ave (30 mph or less). **Please do not cut across this parking area as there may be preschool families getting out of their car.** We cannot stress enough the importance of going slow in the parking lot, even if you are running late. No life is worth someone rushing.

- Parents are to drop off their student at the front door of the school. They may not enter the building, unless approved by administration.
- Students may arrive at the school entrance between 7:30 am and 8:15 am and go directly to the gymnasium. The students line up by grades at 8:00 am (M/F) and 8:15 am (T/W/TH) and are picked up by the classroom teacher.
- Due to the number of food allergies in the building, we ask that students refrain from eating during early care at drop off.
- Technology (including electronics and cell phones) are not allowed during before care
- Any student arriving between 8:15 am and 8:29 am should go directly to their classroom.
- **Tardy** – is defined as arriving at 8:30 am or later. When this happens, the parent must come into the school entrance with the student and sign them in. The student is given a tardy pass, then sent to class.

**DISMISSAL** - All students registered for bussing through their school district will be dismissed to their appropriate bus at dismissal time (11:45 am for half day kindergarten and 3:10 pm for full day students kindergarten through 8th grade).

### PICK-UP PROCEDURE – Bus

- If your child is not riding the bus please call your bus garage and notify them in advance that your child will not be riding. Also, if your child is not riding the bus in the am, **please notify the bus garage.**

### PICK-UP PROCEDURE – Carline-ALL

**[\*Please notify the teacher/office if the student will be switching from car or bus before 2:00 pm]**

Safety Alert: Enter the parking lot at 10 mph or less and go around the island with the digital sign to the right. If you are lining up for the highly efficient **carline** pick up, stay to the outside edge on the right as you enter the parking lot, along the front of the church (against the sidewalk curb). **Watch carefully for any person in the crosswalk entering the preschool main lobby, and yield for any pedestrian walking.** Proceed slowly around the corner to the school main entrance. Students will be placed at one of three cones for dismissal. They will get in your car as you slowly pull up to the vacant numbered cone (1, 2 or 3). Once your student is in the car, you may safely exit, using the right lane at 10 mph or less. If you need some additional

time to secure your child in a car seat, please pull ahead to a parking spot along the bus line and take your time. When ready to exit go around to the right of any cars parked in the spaces in front of the church office/preschool entrance. Then enter Mountain View Ave (30 mph or less) and proceed.

ALL parents picking up via the carline:

- Parents picking students up after school will be issued a family name placard. This placard needs to be visible to the staff person dismissing students (preferably passenger's window).
- Student dismissal begins at 3:10 pm and takes approximately 10 minutes. For student safety parents will use the carline and remain in their cars. No inside in-person pickup during carline dismissal.
- At 3:20 pm, when the carline is completed, all remaining students will be taken to Aftercare. After 3:30 pm, when the school office is officially closed, parents may then enter through the Aftercare door, located at the two doors to the right of the main school office.

#### **PICK-UP PROCEDURE – In Person**

- Parents may only pick up their student in person separate from the normal dismissal time and prior to 3:00 pm. Parents must park in a designated spot, then enter the first section of the main school entrance to sign out their child. If you arrive after 3:00 pm, we will ask you to wait until the carline is fully dismissed before picking up your child. There will be no regular daily pick-up outside of the car line.

In the interest of courtesy, safety and security please make every effort to pick up your child in a timely manner. Thank you for your cooperation in making daily arrival and dismissal of OSCS students safe and efficient. Also, any student going home with another student must have a written note sent into the school office or given to the student's teacher.

#### **SNOW DAYS**

In case of inclement weather and we must close school or go on a 2-hour delay, you will be notified through the School Closing Network, FACTS (School Information System), via school email, or text via the Remind App. You may also listen to announcements about school closings on local radio and television stations. When it comes to delays or closings, we follow South Colonie School District, as that is our district of residence. We reserve the right to decide independently of South Colonie should it be necessary to do so. Please note that your local school district is not required to provide transportation when its schools are closed due to the weather. There may be times when OSCS is in session even though your local district will not provide transportation. Two-hour delays will close morning Kindergarten and morning preschool.

## **AFTERCARE PROGRAM**

After school care (3:20-6:00 pm) is available for enrolled children of OSCS on days that school is in session. OSCS's After School Program consists of supervised study time, recreation, and snacks.

Entrance to the building for After School pickup needs to be through the After School entrance on the side of the building (exterior door with outside staircase.) A buzzer and camera system have been set up for security at that entrance for the After School Program. Children need to be "signed-out" with the teacher before leaving the school. If the after-school coordinator does not answer the buzzer when pressed, you may reach them by calling the school at **(518) 459-2273**, and pressing 3 for After Care.

Aftercare charges are as follows:

1. A daily rate: \$15/day per child will be billed at the end of each month through Facts Management Incidental Billing.
2. A prepaid discounted card may be purchased for \$250 for 20 visits; You will be notified by the Aftercare Coordinator when your card is getting low and billed for another card through Facts Management. Please notify Alma Brustle at [abrustle@oursaviors.com](mailto:abrustle@oursaviors.com) if you would like to purchase a prepaid card. A family with more than 1 child in the program may purchase 1 card per family at a time.

Aftercare closes at 6:00 pm. If a child is picked up after 6:00 pm, a late fee will be assessed of \$5.00 for every ten minutes after 6:00 pm.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Students in New York State are entitled to transportation through their local public school district if they reside within a 15-mile radius from OSCS. We will be happy to provide you with information to contact your district so you may plan for transportation. The cities of Albany, Schenectady and Watervliet are exempt from providing transportation outside of their city limits. **Parents must make transportation requests by April 1<sup>st</sup> for the upcoming school year** (exceptions may be made if you are new to the school district).

Please note: Parental support is needed to develop courteous, considerate behavior on the bus. **It is right and courteous for you to contact your bus carrier if your child will not be riding to or from school on a given day.**

## **PARENT – TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

Parents wishing to contact teachers during the day should anticipate teachers being in class. We can accept messages, but **email** is the preferred method of contacting teachers. Teachers will return voicemail messages and emails in a timely manner when available to do so. Please note, that you may not get an immediate response as a teacher's sole priority is educating children in their classroom while maintaining a safe and secure environment.



## Parental Statement of Support

*The mission of Our Savior's Christian School is to build a solid foundation in each child by reaching hearts with Biblical truth, teaching minds through strong academics and cultivating both in partnership with families to building their future through a Christian worldview.*

The staff of OSCS (i.e., the school), are partnering with you, as the parents, in the education of your child (ren). Please understand that this is a partnership, whereby we work in tandem together, not clients contracting a service. In the spirit of collaboration, it is key that we work together and in a positive structured manner to achieve the mission stated above. Thank you for taking the time and reading through this entire document.

We agree to cooperate with school personnel in a positive and supportive manner concerning the operation of the school ministry and the implementation of the education programs.

We agree to apply the biblical principles from Matthew 18:15-17 in resolving any questions or matters of disagreement. Matthew 18 requires direct communication with the persons involved as opposed to general discussions with other parents or teachers who are not directly involved in the matter.

We agree that the spiritual development of our child involves home, school, and church, and we will endeavor to be involved in each of these areas.

We agree with and will support the purpose, policies, and procedures of the school as outlined in the school handbook.

We understand and will encourage the importance of our child developing and maintaining a proper respect and response to God-given authorities.

We understand and will encourage the importance of our child developing and maintaining honor and respect for the rights and property of others.

We understand and will encourage the importance of our child developing and maintaining a desire to pursue their God-given potential in academics, arts, and athletics.

We agree to uphold and support the academic standards of the school by encouraging the completion of homework and assignments.

We understand that it is our obligation to ensure that our child arrives at school by 8:15 am each day. We further understand that it is our responsibility to see that regular attendance is maintained.

**We have read and agree to all that is stated above and acknowledge we have received the school's handbook and understand it is our responsibility to read and comply with the policies and procedures (must be signed by both parents/guardians).**

Student name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date