

# Student and Family Handbook

*Connelly Middle School of the Holy Child*



2019-2020



*A Letter from our Head of School, Shalonda Neeley Gutierrez*

Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to 2019-2020 school year. We are very excited to begin our 26<sup>th</sup> school year! For the last 26 years we have partnered with families just like yours to help ensure that all girls have the opportunity to fulfill their potential and to make their dreams a reality. We are excited to expand our CMS community with 20 new students, a combination of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders. If you family is joining Connelly Middle School for the first time, you have a lot to look forward to this year. Please take a look at our school vision statement so that we can all work together to help your student become her best self, realizing her full potential.

*We believe that Connelly Middle School combines a joyous holistic education that strives for academic excellence with a commitment to fostering a personal relationship with each student and her family. At CMS students aspire to the highest behavior expectations, embrace challenges, demonstrate tremendous effort, accept failure as a means to success, and work together as a family. –Through these things CMS students thrive and shine.*

We ask that you read this handbook thoroughly, as the details are essential in understanding our expectations. Our family handbook has been written to support our students and our families. Please take the time to become familiar with our policies regarding our attendance expectations, behavior and learning expectations, character building program, after school program, and school uniforms. In order to build a trusting partnership between your family and our school, we welcome and encourage family participation.

Please feel free to contact me or any other member of our team so that we may work together to meet your student's needs more fully.

In partnership,

Shalonda Neeley Gutierrez, Head of School



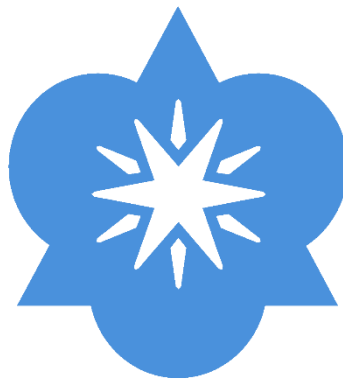
## **Mission and Philosophy**

The mission of Connelly Middle School of the Holy Child is guided by the philosophy shared by all educational institutions of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. Small classes and individual attention encourage and support learning in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust. Holy Child offers a secure and challenging educational environment that sustains hopefulness and encourages each student to become her best self. Thus students are encouraged to do their part to bring about a more just society, and the school aims to do so by creating an environment in which good habits of heart, mind and work are formed.

Since its founding in 1993, Holy Child educators have been committed to encouraging growth of all kinds. We believe in challenging classes that make students curious and in creative expression that makes them feel free and respected. We believe in creating an environment that most definitely allows this.

Cornelia Connelly said:

*Be yourself, and make that self all that God wants you to be.*





### **2019-2020 School Closings and Major Events\***

*Dates and times subjected to change. Please consult latest versions of calendars and notices emailed or sent home with your student for the most up-to-date and accurate information. This calendar only includes some of the many events that we hold throughout the school year.*

Wednesday, September 4	Students return (12pm dismissal)
Thursday, September 5	12pm dismissal
Friday, September 6	12pm dismissal
Monday, September 9	First full day of school
Monday, October 14	School closed, Columbus Day
Thursday, October 31	Halloween (12pm dismissal)
Friday, November 1	School closed, Staff Retreat
Monday, November 11	School closed, Veterans Day
Thursday/Friday, November 28 and 29	School closed, Thanksgiving
Monday, December 23-Friday, January 3	School closed, Christmas Holiday
Monday, January 20	School closed, MLK Jr. Day
Monday, February 17-Friday, February 21	School closed, Mid-winter Break
Wednesday, April 8	12pm dismissal
Thursday, April 9-Friday, April 17	School closed, Easter Break
Monday, May 25	School closed, Memorial Day
Tuesday, June 16	Last day of school (12pm dismissal)
Wednesday, June 17	Graduation

### **School Organization**

Connelly Middle School is organized into three parts:

1. The Lower School (grades 4 and 5)
2. The Upper School (grades 6, 7, 8)
3. The Graduate Support Program (GSP) – High school placement and support for 8<sup>th</sup> graders and all CMS graduates

### **School Day**

The school opens at 7:30am. Students will not be permitted into the building before 7:30am. Students gather in a designated area and may eat the provided breakfast, or breakfast brought from home. Students are expected to be in homeroom at 8:00am. This time is very important for preparing and organizing for morning classes. All-school assembly begins at 8:15am and classes begin at 8:45am. The **lower** school day ends at 3:00pm and the **upper** school day ends at 4:15pm. All students are dismissed on Fridays at 1:00pm.



### **Late Arrival**

Students who arrive after 8:00am are marked late. Students who arrive late will sign-in (via an iPad in the front office). Students who arrive during homeroom or assembly are required to wait with their belongings outside the assembly room, on the bench. When assembly concludes, late students must speak with the Assistant Head of School. Being on time and at school is extremely important for your student's success. We carefully monitor excessive lateness and/or absences. *Excessive lateness and/or absences is in violation of your student's scholarship agreement and could be a reason not to promote the student and/or invite the student to return for the following year.*

### **Late Pickup**

**Lower** School students are expected to be picked up at 3:00pm and **Upper** School students at 4:15pm unless scheduled for after school programming. If a student is a part of a sport or after school program, they should be picked up promptly when that program ends. *If you are running late, please inform the front office of your whereabouts.* The school office closes at 6:00pm. Students remaining at school later than 6:00pm will be walked to the local precinct to wait for their family or guardian.

### **Personal Appointments**

Friday afternoons, after 1:00pm, and days school is closed are the best time to schedule appointments. However, if it is necessary to schedule an appointment during the school day, the family or guardian must call the school to inform the front office before the appointment. As the student leaves, she will sign out in the office. Students should be in school **before** and **after** the appointment. Students who know about an appointment in advance are responsible for gathering their homework assignments from teachers prior to leaving.

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance is required and necessary. The interaction that takes place in the classroom between the teacher and students, as well as among the students, is essential to the students' progress and learning. CMS takes pride in its high attendance rate. High schools use attendance records to determine admissions.

### **Absences**

If a student is going to be absent, the family/guardian must call the school office between 7:30am and 8:30am. If a family does not call in a student's absence, the school will call home. A doctor's note must be presented when a student returns in order for the absence to be considered excused. In addition, families are asked to consult the school calendar before



making travel plans. Students are expected in school the days immediately before and after school vacations. Students are not permitted to miss school to go on vacation.

**When the student returns to school:**

1. She must bring a doctor's note and hand it into the front office in order to have the absence excused.
2. She must meet with her teacher's immediately to catch up on missed learning and assignments. This is the student's responsibility, not the teachers.

**Illness**

We do not have a nurse at CMS. Therefore, we cannot give over-the-counter medicine to students. If a student needs medicine, they will be sent home.

- Students that need to take prescription medication during the school day, must have the Authorization for Administration of Medication form filled out by a licensed health care prescriber.
- Sending a student with undocumented medication (i.e. Tylenol, Midol, allergy medication, etc.) creates a potentially unsafe situation for the school community. This is strictly prohibited at CMS.
- Students who use asthma pumps or wear glasses are required to have these items at school with them each day.
- Students with allergies that require medication are required to leave this medicine at school. This medication (i.e. EpiPens, Benadryl, etc.) will be kept locked in the front office.
- *Students who are sick and cannot participate in their class' learning will be sent home for the day. Students must be picked up when sick – the school is unable to keep sick students for the duration of the school day.*
- If a student is injured during the school day, her family will be called and notified and proper documentation of the incident will be made.

**Family Information**

Families are responsible for giving us updated contact and emergency information. Please call or send a note with your child if your home, work, or emergency phone numbers or addresses change during the school year. **The school does its best to communicate via email. Please provide an updated email address to ensure you receive all communication from the school.** Be sure that you are signed up with our School Messenger platform in order to receive the most up to date information (via email, text, and phone calls).



### **School Safety Plan**

If the Center was evacuated for any reason, students would be moved to one of two locations to ensure safety.

- Our first evacuation site is Most Holy Redeemer Church at 173 E 3rd St. (212-673-4224)
- If we need to go North our evacuation site is: Immaculate Conception School on 14<sup>th</sup> St. between First Ave. and Ave. A (212-475-2590)
- If we need to go to South our evacuation site is: Our Lady of Sorrows Church at 213 Stanton St. (212-673-0900)

### **Snow Days**

In the event of inclement weather, or any other circumstance that would potentially cause school to be closed, staff and families will be notified via School Messenger (phone call, text, and email). We do NOT automatically follow the New York Archdiocese or NYC Department of Education closing decisions, but will make our closing decisions independently. The school community should closely monitor their email and cell phones for any closing announcements.

### **Family Connections**

We value open communication with our Holy Child families. Please contact the school as soon as a question or concern arises.

- We make every effort to translate all school correspondence into Spanish
- All families have access to the online gradebook, Kickboard
- All families have access to staff email addresses
- The staff has an open-door policy
- We have conferences every trimester
- Families are welcome to attend morning assembly. If you plan to attend assembly, please check-in at the front desk and wait for assembly in the Family Waiting Area.
- Family Information Nights are held regularly. These nights are a great opportunity to learn more about our school community and interact with teachers and other families.
- Our school community gathers many times throughout the year for school-wide events such as Back to School Night, Potluck, and Awards Ceremonies



**Contact Information**

Our mailing address is:

Cornelia Connelly Center  
220 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, New York 10009

Our phone number is:

212-982-2287

**Staff Directory**

<b>Name and title</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Ext.</b>
Shalonda Neeley, <i>Head of School</i>	sneeley@connellycenter.org	104
Brittany Sachs, <i>Assistant Head of School, 7<sup>th</sup> grade Religion</i>	bsachs@connellycenter.org	105
Mariella Saavedra, <i>School Counselor</i>	msaavedra@connellycenter.org	160
Betsy Camacho, <i>Learning Specialist</i>	bvargas@connellycenter.org	162
Katie Gilmore, <i>4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher</i>	kgilmore@connellycenter.org	167
Arely Garcia, <i>4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher</i>	agarcia@connellycenter.org	172
Emma Salandra, <i>5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher</i>	esalandra@connellycenter.org	168
Rachel Wiggins, <i>5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher</i>	rwiggins@connellycenter.org	171
Catherine Morrison, <i>6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher</i>	cmorrison@connellycenter.org	169
Camilla Blanco, <i>6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher</i>	cblanco@connellycenter.org	166
Venezia Hyland, <i>7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> grade Humanities teacher, 7<sup>th</sup> grade homeroom</i>	vhyland@connellycenter.org	163
Danielle Surette, <i>7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> grade Humanities teacher, 7<sup>th</sup> grade homeroom</i>	dsurette@connellycener.org	170
Ellen Banks, <i>7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> grade Math teacher, 8<sup>th</sup> grade homeroom</i>	ebanks@connellycenter.org	165
Riley Ramage, <i>7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> grade Math teacher, 8<sup>th</sup> grade homeroom</i>	rramage@connellycenter.org	173
Jorge Garcia, <i>6-8<sup>th</sup> grade Science teacher, US PE teacher, Athletics Director</i>	jgarcia@connellycenter.org	164
Ms. Ryan, <i>6 + 8<sup>th</sup> grade Religion</i>	mryan@connellycenter.org,	174
Lisa Vega, <i>Graduate Support Director</i>	lvega@connellycenter.org	107
Taija Maldonado, <i>Graduate Support</i>	tmaldonado@connellycenter.org	108
Katie Casado, <i>Graduate Support</i>	kcasado@connellycenter.org	109
Caroline Erisman, <i>Executive Director</i>	cerisman@connellycenter.org	103
Jordyn Wolking, <i>Advancement Director</i>	jwolving@connellycenter.org	150
Genesis Torres, <i>Advancement Associate</i>	gtorres@connellycenter.org	151
Jessica Sanchez, <i>Finance and Operations Director</i>	jsanchez@connellycenter.org	106
Rita LaRosa, <i>School Secretary</i>	rlarosa@connellycenter.org	101
Jessica Grant, <i>Finance and Operations Associate</i>	jgrant@connellycenter.org	102





### **Daily Routine**

*While we do our best to maintain a consistent schedule for our students, this schedule may be changed depending on the day and/or any events we may host at school. Please feel free to ask your student or to reach out to your student's HR teacher for a day-to-day schedule for each individual grade.*

#### **Lower School:**

7:30-8:00am	Breakfast
8:00-8:45am	Morning Ritual (Homeroom, Assembly, Independent Reading, etc.)
8:45-10:15am	Core Instruction (Math and Humanities)
10:15-10:30am	AM snack
10:30-11:30am	Core Instruction (Math and Humanities)
11:30-12:15pm	Lunch/Recess
12:15-2:45pm	Further Instruction/Specials (including Religion, Science, Music, Dance, Girls Space, Yoga, Advisor etc.)
2:45-3:00pm	Pack-up
3:00pm	Dismissal

- LS students in University Settlement's after school program at P.S. 63 will be walked to after school at 3:00pm and must be picked up at dismissal time from after school at P.S. 63.

#### **Upper School:**

7:30-8:00am	Breakfast
8:00-9:00am	Morning Ritual (Homeroom, Assembly, Independent Reading, Advisory)
9:00-10:30am	Core Instruction (Math, Humanities, Science, Religion)
10:30-10:45am	AM Snack
10:45-12:15pm	Core Instruction (Math, Humanities, Science, Religion)
12:15-1:00pm	Lunch/Recess
1:00-2:30pm	Core Instruction (Math, Humanities, Science, Religion)
2:30-2:45pm	PM Snack
2:45-4:15pm	Specials (PE, Girls Space, High School Readiness, Arts Block, Study Hall, Advisory – Thursday PM only)
4:15pm	Dismissal
5:30/6:00pm	Dismissal from Sports and/or After School
6:00pm	School and front office closed

### **Arts and Special Classes**

Students participate in a variety of arts and special classes at CMS. Lower school students participate in Music, Dance, and Yoga.



Upper school students participate in PE, Girls Space, High School Readiness, and Art/Dance/Music on a rotating basis.

	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	7 <sup>th</sup> grade	8 <sup>th</sup> grade
Trimester 1	Dance	Music	Art
Trimester 2	Art	Dance	Music
Trimester 3	Music	Art	Dance

**Physical Activity**

All upper school CMS students engage in physical education classes. Our PE classes are held at the Cardinal Spellman Gym at 137 East 2nd Street. Students are expected to be in their PE uniform for all PE classes. Lower school students participate in Dance and Yoga classes at school all year long. In addition, all students will also participate in daily recess in our school lot. Please make sure that your student is dressed appropriate to play outside or walk to the gym. During extreme weather (rain and extreme cold below freezing), students will remain indoors during recess time.

**Advisory Program**

Each student at CMS is assigned an advisor (lower school = one of her homeroom teachers and upper school = a staff member from the Center) to partner with for the school year. This staff member is your student’s personal champion in person for the year. She will meet with this teacher to support her throughout the year. This teacher is also the first person families should contact if needed.

**Food/Beverages**

BEVERAGES ALLOWED – 100% juice, milk, or water. No other beverages are allowed. During afternoon snack, students will be permitted a free juice cup (provided by the school). Students are encouraged to bring a reusable water bottle to school each day (which can be refilled with our purified water coolers). Students who do not remember their water bottle may purchase one from the Assistant Head of School for \$0.50. Students may not bring juice bottles, soda bottles, or glass water bottles to school.

BREAKFAST – Cereal and a breakfast option is available for all students from 7:30am – 8:00am.

MORNING and AFTERNOON SNACK – Students may bring a snack and store it in the snack bin in their classroom or the refrigerator (if necessary). No desserts or candy are



allowed during snack. Any bottles must be plastic. No glass is allowed. Small snacks are available for student purchase from the school for \$0.50. Students who do not have money to purchase a snack will be able to borrow from the school. All borrowed money must be repaid. In the afternoon, all students are provided with a free snack.

LUNCH – Lower School students each at 11:30am and Upper School students eat at 12:15pm. School lunch is available for all students, or the students may bring lunch. Students bringing their lunch in a Tupperware should label their containers and/or bag with their name and grade. If you plan to drop off food for your student, it must be dropped off 30 minutes prior to her lunch (11:00am for LS and 11:45am for US), we cannot accommodate a family member bringing a student lunch during their actual lunch period. Nutrition is extremely important to the student's energy and learning. At lunchtime, supervising faculty strongly encourage each student to eat a reasonable lunch. School breakfast and lunch calendars are distributed monthly and posted in the cafeteria. Please consult the calendar often and help your student plan her lunch options accordingly. All students must eat something during lunch.

Families should report any food allergies to the school as soon as they are known. Supervising faculty will be alerted to student allergies.

### **Class Parties**

If a student wishes to celebrate her birthday at school, her family must first contact the homeroom teachers to work out the logistics of this celebration. Once the homeroom teachers know about the celebration, it is important to inform the front office about the party and coordinate appropriate details with your student's homeroom teachers.

In general:

- Students will be allowed to celebrate their birthdays with their class during snack or lunch. A teacher will need to help with the party.
- Families should keep the celebration simple, with only **one** treat. For instance, cake **or** pizza.
- We do not allow presents or goody bags during the party.
- *We do not allow students to give out separate party invitations in school or to verbally invite students to a party.* If your student is planning to have a birthday party outside of school, we recommend that invitations are sent to a student's home or a phone call is made. It is important to remember that our class size is very small and inviting some students but not all students to a party could create hurt feelings or conflict. Including all students is the best way to insure no one is left out.



**Uniform Policy**

Students are expected to wear the proper CMS uniform at all times (as outlined below). All uniform items can be ordered online via the school’s Tommy Hilfiger account. It is important that students take pride in their appearance by wearing a complete school uniform. If your student is out of uniform for any reason, she should speak with her teacher and/or the Assistant Head of School first thing in the morning.

**Uniform Guidelines**

<b>Shirt</b>	4-7 <sup>th</sup> grade = White CMS polo with blue school logo. 8 <sup>th</sup> grade = Gray CMS polo with white school logo.  Student may wear short sleeve or long sleeve polos. Students may not wear layers underneath their uniform shirts.
<b>Pants</b>	Navy uniform pants  <b>*The pants must be from the uniform vendor. Skinny pants are not permitted.</b>
<b>Jumper</b> <i>*LS ONLY</i>	Navy jumper
<b>Skirt</b> <i>*US ONLY</i>	Navy uniform kilt
<b>Sweater</b>	CMS navy sweater with the school logo
<b>Sweatshirt</b>	CMS navy crewneck <i>*Students may wear CMS issued athletic sweatshirts. However, there will be occasions (when being photographed) that they will be asked to remove this sweater or not wear it for a day.</i>
<b>Socks/Tights</b>	LS: Any color or print socks, knee-highs, or tights  US: White or navy blue socks, knee-highs or tights (8 <sup>th</sup> graders may wear socks, knee-highs, or tights that match their class polo)  <b>*Students are not permitted to wear leggings underneath their skirts, jumpers, or PE shorts.</b>
<b>Sneakers/Shoes</b>	Your choice of any safe sneakers or shoes.  <b>*Flip flops, sandals, or heels are NOT allowed</b>
<b>Jewelry</b>	Jewelry should not be distracting or excessive. The school maintains the right to not permit any jewelry deemed inappropriate.  <b>*No piercings (other than ears) or tattoos are allowed.</b>



<b>Eye wear and head wear</b>	Students may not wear glasses or contacts, unless they are prescription.  Students may not wear hats (unless given permission on a dress down day) during the school day.
<b>Physical Education/Yoga</b>	The PE uniform consists of navy uniform shorts/sweat pants and the blue uniform PE shirt. Students may wear a CMS crew neck sweatshirt over their PE shirt (they cannot wear layers underneath their PE shirt).  Students must wear their PE uniform and appropriate athletic sneakers on designated days.  <b>*Camp t-shirts are NOT allowed. Any other pants aside from the designated PE uniform pants are not allowed (i.e. leggings, yoga pants, etc.)</b>
<b>Water Bottle</b>	Reusable water bottle labeled with student's name

### Uniform Appropriate Personal Appearances

1. Shirts and blouses are to be tucked in
2. **Acrylic nails/tips are not permitted**
3. Makeup is not permitted (even on dress down days)
4. Skirts should be no more than three inches above the knee
5. Hair must be kept out of the student's face

### Dress Down Days

Students found to be inappropriately dressed will be given a school uniform to wear for the day. Every first Friday of the month is an all-school Dress Down Day. Sporadically, other days are designated as Dress Downs for special occasions. In addition, students may also earn Dress Down passes. The Assistant Head of School keeps track of these dress downs. Students should consult with the Assistant Head of School before wearing dress down (to ensure they do in fact have a dress down pass). On Dress Down days, students need to be dressed in **age appropriate** clothing. The following are not permitted:

- Clothing that shows undergarments, cleavage or stomachs/midriffs
- Excessively ripped clothing
- Heels, open back sandals, or flip-flops
- Short skirts
- Shirts with adult-themed images or messages



**Focus on Character**

Our character growth curriculum is structured around eight character strengths. Each student is encouraged and supported as they seek to develop each and every strength. Families receive character growth cards three times a year.



**CHARACTER GROWTH CARD**

Student  
Score

Teacher  
Score

**ZEAL**

- Actively participates
- Shows enthusiasm
- Approaches new situations with energy and excitement

**PERSEVERANCE**

- Finishes whatever she begins
- Tries very hard even after experiencing failure
- Stays committed to goals
- Keeps working even when she feels like quitting

**SELF-CONTROL (SCHOOL WORK)**

- Comes to class prepared
- Pays attention and resists distractions
- Remembers and follows directions
- Gets to work rather than procrastinating

**COMPOSURE**

- Remains calm even when criticized or otherwise provoked
- Allows others to speak without interruption
- Is respectful to adults and to peers
- Shows patience with others
- Adapts to different social situations

**OPTIMISM**

- When bad things happen, she thinks about how to make it better next time
- Believes that she can improve on things she isn't good at
- Stays motivated, even when things don't go well
- Believes that effort will improve her future

**GRATITUDE**

- Recognizes and shows appreciation for others
- Recognizes and shows appreciation for her opportunities

**COMPASSION**

- Is able to find solutions during conflicts with others
- Demonstrates respect for the feelings of others
- Knows when and how to include others

**CURIOSITY**

- Is eager to explore new things
- Asks questions to help her learn better
- Takes an active interest in her learning



### **Code of Conduct**

A Connelly Middle School student is expected to engage actively and completely in the life of the school. Our students aspire to be their best selves and know their actions matter not only inside and outside of the classroom but also inside and outside of the school itself. We expect our students to be positive and willing. We expect students to have a growth mindset and to be open to being challenged, as part of the learning process. Our students are dedicated to maintaining a peaceful and productive school community that appreciates and celebrates the uniqueness of all participants. If a student or member of our community knows of someone who is acting in a way that threatens themselves or our larger community, we expect them to look out for that student by alerting the school.

### **Our Discipline Philosophy**

Our discipline philosophy is steeped in the understanding that our students need to be safe, heard, encouraged, supported, valued, and loved in order to learn. Our philosophy is grounded in scientifically-based research and includes best practices. Our approach is one of non-punitive discipline – that ensures everyone’s physical and emotional safety and is free of shame and judgment. We believe that students are doing their very best to manage themselves at all times. Adults are responsible for figuring out what their behavior is communicating and what might be getting in the way of a student being their best self. We want all students to feel heard and that they are able to speak to adults to advocate for themselves. We work to provide a stable, predictable, calm, safe, and caring learning environment.

When our students fail to meet the expectations we have set at CCC, it is our responsibility to help them be reflective. We do not punish, we always assume that our students are doing their very best to manage themselves. We work to help students repair and grow from difficult situations.

Our first response to behavior challenge is a one-on-one conversation with the student. In this learning conversation, teachers ask students to “pause, think about what you are doing, and make a different choice.”

Some commonly used reminders to students include:

- “Please make sure you are in the right place at the right time.”
- “Are you making safe choices?”
- “How might your decision impact others?”
- “Mistakes happen and that is ok. How are we going to recover?”





### **Discipline Framework**

Generally, the following steps are taken to address behavior challenges at CCC:

1. Reminders and signals
2. Learning conversations
3. Documentation of behavior
4. Family communication

Throughout our framework we provide students with time to pause, take a break, and reflect before moving forward. Our goal in providing time is to teach a lifelong strategy for handling one's emotions during challenging situations.

*Connelly Middle School is committed to assessing each student and her situation on an individual basis using consistent strategies. Therefore, the school and administration reserves the right to handle each situation as deemed appropriate and reasonable. No situation is handled in isolation and all decisions are made collectively by the Center's leadership. In extreme circumstances, a student's scholarship may be reconsidered.*

### **Spirit Points**

As a way to generate positive school spirit and school identity, classes can earn spirit points. When a class demonstrates Holy Child values, teachers will then reward a class with Spirit Points. The spirit points are tallied throughout the school year. Once a class has earned a predetermined amount of spirit points, they earn rewards such as dress down days, parties, and other privileges.

### **Process for Communication**

Students and families have an important voice in the CMS community. When a student or family member has a concern or question, it is important that we follow the proper steps of communication so that all questions and concerns can be resolved in the best manner possible.

Steps to dealing with a concern or question:

1. Speak to the student about addressing the teacher with the concern and/or practice with the student at home how they will talk to the teacher about the situation (i.e. low test score/ issue with a peer).
2. Student contacts the advisor and creates a plan to move forward. They decide on a "check-in" date to assess the progress. If that doesn't seem to resolve the issue- the





family contacts the advisor and creates a plan to move forward. They decide on a "check-in" date to assess the progress.

3. Student contacts the Assistant Head of School. If that does not solve the issue, the family contacts the Assistant Head of School.
4. Student contacts the School Counselor. If that does not solve the issue, the family contacts the School Counselor.
5. Student contacts the Head of School. If that does not solve the issue, the family contacts the Head of School. At the end of each meeting with the Head of School or Assistant Head of School, a document will be signed by the family member and Head of School/Assistant Head of School to ensure we all have a record of what was discussed and our action plan.

If you have a general question or concern about CMS's various policies, please make an appointment to speak with the Assistant Head of School before meeting with the Head of School.

### **Student Safety Obligation**

If your student or another student has made it known to you that they want to harm themselves or others, you must notify the school.

### **School Counselor**

Informal counseling for a student or her family is available through a school counselor. Our school has a full-time counselor who services our students when needed.

In order to build trust with your student, the school counselor will keep information confidential with some possible exceptions. Since these services are provided to a minor in a school setting, understand that the school counselor may share information with families/guardians, the student's teachers, and administrators on a need to know basis, in order to better assist and support the student. The school counselor is also required by law to share information with families or others in the event the student is in danger of harm to self or others.

A student can confidentially self-refer or can be referred by a teacher, advisor, Assistant Head of School, or Head of School. The school counselor does not provide long-term or ongoing therapy. A family/guardian will be contacted by the counselor if a student needs to



be referred to an outside professional for evaluation or long-term support. The school counselor also oversees and teaches CMS's health and wellness program and curriculum, known as Girls Space.

### Learning Specialists

Our school has one learning specialist. Our learning specialist supports our IESP students and any other student that might need additional academic support in both literacy and math.

### Cell phones, cameras, smart watches, Wi-Fi-enabled devices, and electronics

Cell phones **must be off** and in book bags in students' lockers or on their hook. During the day, students cannot have their phones with them. The first time a student is seen with a cell phone (not being used) - a teacher/faculty member will hold onto the phone and return it at the end of the day. If a student is seen a second time with a cell phone in the school, she will be unable to hold onto her phone at school for the remainder of the year. She will deposit her phone in the front office every morning and pick it up at the end of the day for the rest of the year. If a student is discovered using a cell phone in school, the phone and the student will be taken to the Head of School to discuss.

No cameras, smart watches, Wi-Fi-enabled devices, or any other electronics are allowed to be used during the school day (from the moment a student walks in to the moment she walks out.) The same course of action for cell phone use will be applied to electronics. **The best course of action is to leave all electronics at home.**

### Chromebook 1:1 policy

The following information explains our Chromebook 1:1 Policy and what happens if your student loses or damages her Chromebook.

- Students are responsible for the loss of their school issued Chromebook. If the Chromebook is lost students will be assessed the cost of a replacement. **The \$200 fee will be added to the student's tuition bill and must be paid by the following month.**
- The student assumes responsibility for loss, theft, or damage at all times.
- Students are not permitted to loan their Chromebook to anyone for their use.
- This device is issued as an academic tool and should be treated as such. Students are not to modify their device in any way.
- Student Chromebooks are NOT permitted to be removed from the school ground for home use.



- If any faculty or staff finds an unattended Chromebook they have been instructed to take it to the Ms. Grant. Students will be able to recover it there. Disciplinary action may occur after 2 or more recoveries.

### **Social Media Guidelines**

CMS students are expected to set and maintain high standards in their use of social media. Since social media reaches audiences far beyond the community, students must use social sites responsibly and will be accountable for their actions. If a student sees anything of concern on a fellow student's social networking page or account, they should immediately contact the Head of School, or another adult within the CCC community.

1. In the online environment, students must conduct themselves as they would in school.
2. CCC reserves the right to request for images or content posted to be removed from the internet.
3. Social media venues are public and information can be shared beyond your control. Be conscious of what you post online as you will leave a long-lasting impression on many different audiences.
4. Do not post or link anything (photos, videos, web pages, audio files, forums, groups, fan pages, etc.) to your social networking sites that you wouldn't want friends, peers, family, or teachers to see.
5. When responding to others, remember to be respectful and avoid comments that may be hurtful. **Profane, obscene, or threatening language is not permitted.**
6. Once engaging in negative online activity, regardless if you initiated it or not, the school reserves the right to hold all students liable for any conduct that is in violation of the school's Code of Conduct.
7. Cyber bullying is considered an act of harassment. The use of violence in language is considered identical to the use of physical violence.

### **School Emails**

The school provides all students with a Connelly Center Gmail account. This account is necessary for many of the online academic sites we use. We also aim to teach our students professional email use during their time in middle school. However, students are able to



create social media accounts and other online accounts using this email address. Please be sure to monitor your students' online presence and ensure she does not use this account to set up any social media/ application accounts that your family does not permit.

### **Academic Expectations**

- CMS students actively participate and make a consistent effort in all tasks.
- CMS students complete work independently. Non-group work is expected to be completed individually and to the best of a student's ability.
- Students participating in group activities are expected to share an equal workload, with a sincere effort.
- Students are expected to keep trying even if they first encounter failure.

### **Homework Policy**

Homework is 20% of each student's grade. Students at CMS are assigned homework to strengthen and reinforce what is learned in the classroom. This also promotes responsibility and independent study skills. At CMS, we believe that homework should be used to develop fluency and automaticity with the material, and not as a means to teach understanding of a specific concept. Consequently, the homework your student receives has been developed to be done both independently and successfully.

Overall, homework should not take more than 20-60 minutes a night of focused work time in total per weeknight. In addition, each student must spend at least 20 minutes reading independently each night.

Notes from families do not excuse students from homework assignments.

### **Academic Honesty**

The only way for a student to learn is to do her **own** work.

#### **Definitions of Academic Dishonesty:**

*Cheating:* A student is cheating when she is dishonest on any exam/quiz/assignment or when she knowingly assists another on any exam/quiz/assignment. Looking at another student's paper, sharing answers, copying another student's paper, or talking during a test are all forms of cheating.



*Plagiarism:* A student is guilty of plagiarism when she copies another student's work, homework assignment and/or textbook material (including any published material in print or on the internet) and claims the work as her own. Claiming as your own another's idea is also an example of plagiarism.

*Signing someone else's name:* A student is guilty of dishonesty if she signs her family's name or gets someone other than the guardian to sign a document.

Instances of academic dishonesty are:

- Tracked throughout a student's time at the school
- These situations negatively impact your child's grade
- Teachers and the school leadership with support your student using the our discipline philosophy

### **Grading**

Teachers assess student learning in multiple ways. Teachers must have at least three major graded assignments for each trimester – however, they work hard to have a robust and well-rounded gradebook in order to accurately assess a student's progress.

A student's grade is determined using the following formula:

Formal assessments (tests, quizzes, performance tasks, projects)	40% of the grade
Informal assessments (classwork, journals, exit tickets)	20% of the grade
Homework (based on completion and effort, not mastery)	20% of the grade
Effort (including but not limited to participation, cooperation, etc)	20% of the grade

- Teachers also assess a student's conduct regularly throughout the trimester.
- 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders will take mid-year and end of year assessments to better prepare them for high school.

### **Trimesters**

There are three marking periods in the academic year. Progress reports are given at the middle of each marking period. At the end of each marking period, the student is evaluated on her academic and social progress at Holy Child through character growth cards and academic reports cards.

1st trimester September 4, 2019 – November 27, 2019



2<sup>nd</sup> trimester December 2, 2019 – March 13, 2019

3<sup>rd</sup> trimester March 16, 2020 – June 12, 2020

### **Assessments**

MAP Testing: Fall and Spring

The TACHS Exam for admission to Catholic High Schools is taken by all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.

Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, we no longer take the New York State ELA and Math Exams.

### **Monitoring of Academic Growth**

As a matter of promotion, students' academic progress is closely monitored throughout the school year. Students and their families who are not making adequate progress will be alerted and an action plan will be formulated and put into place.

### **Student-led Conferences**

Conferences are held twice a year, in November and April, to discuss a student's progress. Families must attend these conferences.

### **Kickboard**

Kickboard is our online grading system. This system allows you to monitor your student's academic and personal progress on a regular basis. The school uses Kickboard as a means of communication and expects all families to review regularly. Families are responsible for creating their own password for the system and sharing it with their students.

### **Character Growth Reports**

The "Character Growth Card" (CRC) evaluates students on their demonstration of key Holy Child qualities and values. This document is sent home at the same time as the students' academic report cards.

### **Report Cards**

Report cards are distributed at the end of each trimester.



Dear Families and Guardians:

Although we may not realize it, asbestos is a common material in almost every building in our society. It is a fireproofing material; it is found in floor tiles, it is used as an acoustical material to deaden sound. Under certain conditions, however, when it is damaged, asbestos can prove to be a concern.

Recently, because of that concern, the Federal Government asked every school in the country to conduct an inspection for all asbestos-containing materials.

The annual inspection of our school revealed all asbestos containing materials are in priority III condition indicating that only ongoing inspections are needed to assure proper maintenance for the future.

The Archdiocese has spent over 10 million dollars in the abatement of asbestos since 1983 (long before the current regulations), and will continue with its commitment to provide a safe environment for all our students and employees.

Sincerely,

Caroline Erisman  
Executive Director

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Dear Families and Guardians:

**Pesticide Neighbor Notification (PNN):** The School Pesticide Neighbor Notification Law requires all schools to notify families, faculty and interested parties prior to pesticide applications in instructional areas, administrative buildings and grounds, playgrounds and athletic fields. In addition to having a school employee act as the school pesticide representative, schools must establish written pesticide notification procedures as outlined in Section 155.24 of the Commissioner's Regulations.

We apply pesticide monthly throughout the school building. This process takes place when students are not present. If you would like to receive a forty-eight hour notice of all pesticide applications, please contact the Director of Operations.

Sincerely,

Caroline Erisman  
Executive Director





### Frequently Asked Questions

**What time does school start?** *School doors open at exactly 7:30am. Students will not be able to go inside the building before 7:30 am.*

**What time will my student be considered late?** *If your student arrives after 8:00am, she is considered late.*

**What if my student is late?** *If your student is late, she must stop by the front desk and sign in using our online system. She should then speak to the Assistant Head of School before going to morning assembly or her classroom.*

**What happens if my student is out of uniform?** *If your student is out of uniform, she will be given a uniform at the school and/or call home in order to have the correct uniform piece(s) brought to school.*

**Will I be called if my student is not meeting expectations?** *You may be called depending on the situation. As best practice, CMS communicated often with families in an effort to foster our strong relationships.*

**How do I get a message to the teacher?** *During the day teachers are in the classrooms, therefore, the best way to get a message to the teacher is email. You can also call the main office and leave a voicemail. Each teacher has their own phone extension and Connelly Center email.*

**What if my student tells me she has a problem with another student or the teacher?**

**Please follow the communications steps in order until a solution is achieved. Do not skip steps.**

1. *Speak to the student about addressing the teacher with the concern and/or practice with the student at home how they will talk to the teacher about the situation (i.e. low test score/ issue with a peer).*
2. *Student contacts the advisor and creates a plan to move forward. They decide on a "check-in" date to assess the progress. If that doesn't seem to resolve the issue- the family contacts the advisor and creates a plan to move forward. They decide on a "check-in" date to assess the progress.*
3. *Student contacts the Assistant Head of School. If that does not solve the issue, the family contacts the Assistant Head of School.*
4. *Student contacts the School Counselor. If that does not solve the issue, the family contacts the School Counselor.*
6. *Student contacts the Head of School. If that does not solve the issue, the family contacts the Head of School. At the end of each meeting with the Head of School or Assistant Head of School, a document will be signed by the family member and Head of School/Assistant Head of School to ensure we all have a record of what was discussed and our action plan.*

**Where do I pay my tuition bill?** *Tuition must be paid in the front office. Tuition invoices are sent home on the first Friday of each month. Generally tuition is due the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month and preferably paid with check or money order. Receipts are given after tuition payment has been received. Please hold onto the receipts for your*





*record keeping. If you have a question or need to share information concerning tuition, please contact Ms. Sanchez.*

**Are there specific times when to pay tuition?** *Yes, we ask that tuition **NOT** be paid during the busiest times in the front office, which are during arrival between 7:30 – 8:00 am nor during dismissal 4:30 – 5:00 pm.*

**What time is my student dismissed?** *Lower School students are dismissed Monday through Thursday at 3:00pm and Fridays at 1:00pm. Upper School Students are dismissed at 4:15pm Monday through Thursday and Fridays at 1:00pm (US students may stay after school for sports or other programming). Please make sure you note this so that she is picked up promptly at dismissal.*