



WE ARE:
GRACE.

GRACE Family Handbook 2025-26

Refer to your GRACE school-specific Family Handbook for additional expectations, policies and practices.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Our Mission	2
Academic Calendar	2
Academics	2
• Promotion Grade 3 to 4	2
• Student Proficiency	2
• Star Assessments	2
Accreditation	3
Attendance	3
Bullying/Discipline	3
Child Abuse	4
Diocese of Green Bay Education Policy Manual	4
Enrollment	4
• Admissions	4
○ Preschool	
○ Kindergarten	
○ First Grade	
○ Eighth Grade	
○ Twelfth Grade	
• Waitlists	5
• Minimum Enrollment	6
• Grade or Program Changes	6
• Transfers within GRACE	6
• Exits	6
Facilities	7
• Asbestos Statement/General Notification	7
Food Service	7
Health Emergency Action Plans	8
Immunization Requirements	8
Medication Administration Policy	8
Nondiscrimination Statement	9
Parents as Primary Educators	9
Tuition and Fees	9
• Tuition Rates	10
• Payment Plans	10
• Tuition-Reducing Opportunities	11
• Active Parishioner Incentive	11
• Tuition Proration	11
Wellness - Snacks and Celebration	12

INTRODUCTION

The contents of the GRACE Family Handbook are to be accepted by parents/guardians and students as essential parts of the contract of GRACE schools. The enrollment of a student in a GRACE school is considered to be an agreement on the part of a student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) that they will comply with all school procedures, rules and regulations. Violation of its spirit, intent, philosophy, or rules will be just cause for administrative action.

OUR MISSION

“Building academic excellence and life skills while growing in our Catholic faith.”

GRACE is a ministry of our Diocese of Green Bay parishes with a mission to provide a foundational, Catholic-based, high-quality education that inspires and equips students to become the next generation of informed and dedicated servant leaders in Christ. We are proud partners of 23 Diocese parishes in the local, greater Green Bay area.

GRACE schools differ in size, unique learning programs, and location. Our overall curriculum is united as we utilize the Diocese of Green Bay teaching curriculum. Each school has a distinct history and parish connection. Yet together, every student, parent, teacher and family member of a GRACE school is GRACE. Our GRACE schools have strong momentum and continue to grow stronger as a community and unified system of quality schools. Standardized test scores outpace the region and state.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The academic calendar provides key dates for all GRACE schools and is posted on the GRACE system website- [LINK HERE](#). This calendar is subject to change when a change is in the best interest of a school or schools. Any change will be promptly communicated to parents.

ACADEMICS

GRACE offers a unified, faith-based curriculum for Preschool–8th grade, grounded in Diocesan standards and developed in collaboration with school leaders. We personalize learning to support all students, including advanced learners and English language speakers, and integrate technology to enhance instruction and build essential skills. Additional information may be found on the Curriculum web page on the GRACE system website- [LINK HERE](#).

Promotion Grade 3 to 4

As a school in the state of Wisconsin, we are required to prepare, adopt and publish a Promotion Policy for students from grades 3 to 4: [GRACE 3rd to 4th Grade Promotion Policy](#)

Student Proficiency

Student proficiency or grade level ‘on track’ learning is outlined in the [GRACE Proficiency Statement](#).

Star Assessments

GRACE System utilizes the Star Assessment in alignment with Green Bay Diocese requirements. The Star Assessment is created and managed through the Renaissance organization, which is dedicated to producing reliable, valid, and effective data points for teachers. This assessment test also aligns with our Catholic practices. All tests will be administered three times each school year (fall, winter, and spring). More information on Star testing- [LINK HERE](#).

ACCREDITATION

GRACE schools are accredited through the Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools Accreditation (WRISA).

Additional information can be found on the Accreditation web page on the GRACE system website- [LINK HERE](#).

ATTENDANCE

Daily attendance is essential to each child's success in GRACE schools. Students are expected to attend school unless there is good cause for absence as per Wisconsin state law.

A parent is required to give advance notice to the school for the student to be excused for any other type of absence. See your school office for the procedures to obtain an anticipated absence form. These forms should be returned three (3) days prior to an anticipated absence. This form need not be used for illness or appointments. Good causes may be ill health, serious illness or death in the immediate family, medical or dental appointments which cannot otherwise be scheduled outside the school day, special situations which occasionally arise for which written permission has been secured from the administration.

Parents are asked to schedule doctor and dentist appointments outside of school hours. When this is not possible, students will be excused for the appointments. Parents must notify the school office prior to the absence via email or phone message. Students are responsible for work missed during their absence upon their return. In most circumstances, there will be no work given prior to students leaving on vacation.

Unexcused absences demonstrate disregard for the educational program and are considered a serious matter.

Should attendance issues arise, families will hear directly from the school principal who is tasked with monitoring attendance monthly. In addition, GRACE Administration and local law enforcement resources are utilized as needed to ensure compliance with Wisconsin compulsory attendance requirements.

BULLYING/DISCIPLINE

GRACE schools are nurturing communities focused on building a foundation of faith and care for others. We are committed to making our schools safe and caring places for all. We will treat each other with respect, and we will refuse to tolerate bullying in any form at our schools. It is the responsibility of all parents and school staff to model kind actions and words toward and about others. The Diocese of Green Bay Education Policies apply to GRACE as a school system within the Diocese- [LINK HERE](#). These policies assist us to work through any level of discipline infraction.

Individual GRACE schools utilize a variety of general frameworks and programs to guide their discipline practices. Each and every interaction, positive or negative, is viewed as an opportunity to learn and grow. Please review the school's Family Handbook for further details related to the site-specific discipline programs.

CHILD ABUSE

At GRACE schools, we are firmly committed to the protection and dignity of every child, which reflects both our adherence to state laws concerning child abuse, neglect, and abandonment, and our deep moral obligation rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church. As stewards of God's children, we are dedicated to fostering a safe, nurturing, and Christ-centered environment where all students are valued, respected, and protected.

DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY EDUCATION POLICY MANUAL

As a school system within the Diocese of Green Bay, we work to provide a strong culture of Catholic discipleship and academic excellence within our schools in conjunction with our parishes. This Policy Manual applies to all GRACE schools, Parishes and Religious Education programs: [Diocese of Green Bay Education Policy Manual for 2025-26](#).

ENROLLMENT

Admissions

Admissions prior to the start of the school year: Enrollment opens in conjunction with Catholic Schools Week each year. At this time, families re-enroll their returning students and admissions is opened to “new” students- those children of siblings from returning families or of families new to GRACE. An online admission application is required for each child new to GRACE or the specific GRACE school. Applications are acted on in the order in which they are received and may require additional information and/or an interview. All application requirements must be fulfilled in order for a child to be considered for admission.

- **Preschool admissions:** Children must meet the preschool readiness criteria as follows for admission to the three-year old and four-year old preschool programs.
 - Student is able to take responsibility for own needs: (i.e. using the bathroom, blowing nose, dressing for outside, changing clothes)
 - Student must be the respective class age on or by September 1 of the enrollment year
 - Student must be potty trained and able to independently use the toilet. Pull-Ups are not allowed as GRACE schools are not licensed for diaper changing
 - Students are required to have age-appropriate immunizations as set forth by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
- **Kindergarten admissions:** State law, Wis Stat. Sec. 118.14(1)(a), specifies that a child must be 5 years of age on or by September 1 of the year s/he is proposed to enter the school.
- **First grade admissions:** State law, Wis. Stat. Sec. 118.14 (1), states that no child may be admitted to the first grade unless he or she is 6 years old, on September 1 of the year s/he is proposed to enter the school.
- **Eighth grade admissions:** Eighth grade admissions of children new to GRACE School System are not permitted at any time. Consideration may be given if special circumstances are present such as geographic relocation and religious conversion. The process of considering an eighth grade admission as an exception will include interviews with the prior school principal/teachers, review of grades and review of cumulative files in addition to review approval by GRACE administration.
- **Twelfth grade admissions:** Twelfth grade admissions of children new to GRACE Chesterton Academy of St. John Paul II Classical School is not permitted at any time.

Consideration may be given if special circumstances are present such as geographic relocation and religious conversion. The process of considering a twelfth grade admission as an exception will include interviews with the prior school principal/teachers, review of grades and review of cumulative files in addition to review and approval by GRACE Administration.

Admissions during the school year: All admission requests/applications received during the school year are subject to review and approval. All application requirements must be fulfilled in order for the child to be considered for admission. For all approved admissions, the parent/guardian must complete the enrollment process for the child and ample notice and arrangements must take place as appropriate prior to the child's first date of attendance. The child must be fully enrolled a minimum of two business days prior to being allowed to attend. All GRACE schools do not allow admissions during the last trimester of the school year (after March 1st) due to the potential disruption and the impact to the class. Special circumstances can be reviewed and are left to the discretion of the GRACE President.

Once accepted, the deadline to enroll is one week prior to the first day of school per the established academic calendar. Those families who wish to enroll or re-enroll - new or returning student - after this deadline will not be able to start on the first day of school are subject to review and approval of the school principal and/or GRACE administration with determination of the attendance start date. The child must be fully enrolled a minimum of two business days prior to being allowed to attend.

Additional information can be found on the How to Apply web page on the GRACE system website- [LINK HERE](#).

Admission applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the principal of the GRACE school in consultation with other resource staff and administration if needed. Admission application requirements must be fulfilled completely to enable consideration. Given available space, enrollment is offered in consideration of factors including, in part, siblings of currently enrolled students, children of faculty/staff, returning students (previously enrolled and exited), and date of completed application. Admission decisions may take into consideration the family's alignment with the school's mission, values, and educational philosophy.

Waitlists

When enrollment capacity has been reached at a grade level, a waitlist is established. This may occur at the admission or the enrollment level. Students are added to the admissions or enrollment waitlist in the order the application is received and reviewed or in the order of enrollment. Families are notified of their waitlist status by the school and counseled on options accordingly. There is no guaranteed placement for students on the waitlist.

Waitlists do not roll over from year to year. Families must reapply for admission each new school year if a spot was not offered.

Minimum Enrollment

Enrollment undergoes continuous monitoring. Classes are subject to a minimum enrollment and GRACE school system reserves the right to modify, combine, or cancel the class or program.

Families will be notified of any changes and alternative arrangements and will be counseled on options.

Grade or Program Changes

Grade or preschool program changes at any time require involvement and approval by the principal. For grade changes, the review and approval of GRACE Student Services is also required. Approved changes are communicated through the GRACE system via an Enrollment Change Form for which its completion by both parent/guardian and principal is facilitated by the school office. Ample notice and arrangements must take place as appropriate to the situation prior to the change taking effect.

Transfers within GRACE

GRACE school-to-school transfers at any time - prior to the beginning or during the school year - are permitted only if there are special circumstances and require approval by the principals and GRACE administration. At times, GRACE families request mid-year transfers between GRACE schools due to a variety of reasons. Often, these transfer requests occur due to residence relocation. Transfers between GRACE schools are subject to the discretion of the principals of the origin and destination schools and also require approval by the GRACE President. All GRACE schools do not allow transfers during the last trimester of the year due to the potential disruption and the impact to the class and the learning environment. Special circumstances can be reviewed and are left to the discretion of the GRACE President.

Exits

Exits are comprised of one of the two following two scenarios:

- **Exits prior to the start of the school year (Not Attending):** Any child enrolled or pending enrollment who will not attend the academic year.
- **Exits during the school year (Withdrawals):** Any enrolled student who has attended school during the academic year and exits during the academic year.

The parent/guardian is to contact the school principal to discuss the situation. An exit meeting between the principal and parents is required to address the reason. Upon a final decision, exits are processed through the GRACE system via an internal use only Enrollment Change Form for which its completion by both parent/guardian and principal is facilitated by the school office. This Enrollment Change Form will initiate the appropriate updates by GRACE staff including but not limited to, billing, enrollment, food service and technology.

If there is an admission or an exit (withdrawal or dismissal) for any reason during the academic year:

- The Activity Fee and the Technology Fee will be payable in their entirety.
- Tuition will be adjusted according to the established preschool and grade K-12 trimester formulas; please refer to the section on [Tuition and Fees](#) and contact GRACE Finance for additional information.

FACILITIES

Asbestos Statement/General Notification

In the past, asbestos was commonly used in building materials before the late 1970s. While intact asbestos generally poses no risk, damaged materials can release fibers, which can be hazardous if inhaled. The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) of 1986 requires schools to identify and manage any asbestos-containing building materials (ACBM).

Our GRACE schools, through the parishes as building owners, have conducted AHERA-required inspections. These inspections have identified the locations and conditions of any ACBM within our school buildings. Parishes have implemented a comprehensive Asbestos Management Plan to safely manage these materials. In accordance with AHERA, parishes conduct inspections every three years and periodic surveillance of all identified ACBM. Our current inspections are up to date.

This notification fulfills AHERA's annual requirement to inform parents, teachers, and employees. The complete Asbestos Management Plan for each school is available for review during regular school hours. For questions, please contact the building maintenance person for your school.

FOOD SERVICE

GRACE is committed to our Food Service mission: “Helping our students be healthy, well-nourished, balanced, confident and ready to achieve academic excellence and life skills, while growing in their Catholic faith.”

GRACE Food Service participates in the United States Department of Agriculture’s National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. Along with providing students with well-balanced meals, these programs provide students and families with additional resources, such as the Free and Reduced Meal Eligibility Program, and additional grant funding for our schools. Additional information can be found on the GRACE Food Service web page- [LINK HERE](#).

Meal Charge Protocol

Meal accounts are issued per student or staff member. Each meal account is prepaid and expected to maintain a positive balance. Prepayment is accepted via cash, check, or credit card. Checks can be made payable to GRACE. Food Service account balances are available through each student’s PowerSchool portal.

Meal Account Balances:

To maintain and encourage positive meal account balances, the following occurs:

- Weekly email alerts are sent to families when a student’s meal balance becomes negative. Alerts continue until the account reaches a positive balance.
- If payment is not received after weekly alerts and the meal account maintains a negative balance, families will also receive a phone call from GRACE Food Service to discuss payment options.

Student Transfers and Withdrawals:

- If a student transfers between GRACE schools, their meal account and balance (positive or negative) transfers with them.

- If a student withdraws to attend a school outside of GRACE or graduates from GRACE, their meal account is analyzed and the following occurs:
 - As applicable, all balances (positive or negative) are transferred to a sibling who attends a GRACE school.
 - If transfer to a sibling is not possible, GRACE will collect negative balances by following the protocol outlined above or issue a refund for the positive remaining balance. Families of students with positive meal account balances, who do not qualify for free or reduced meals, will also be asked whether they want to apply their remaining balance to families with outstanding balances.

Resources:

Families may apply for free and reduced price meals via paper application at any time during the school year. Applications are available in the school office, on the school website, and through GRACE Food Service. Payment plans for delinquent debt are available.

Questions related to free and reduced applications, payment plans, or the Meal Charge Protocol may be directed to Wendy Gierczak, Food Service and Finance Administrative Assistant, at 920-499-7330 ext. 1004 or wgierczak@gracesystem.org.

HEALTH EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS

Health Emergency Action Plans are available for chronic and emergency student health conditions. If your child has additional health concerns, please reach out to your school's administration for further discussion.

Allergy and Anaphylaxis Action Plan [HERE](#)

Asthma Action Plan [HERE](#)

Diabetes Action Plan [HERE](#)

Seizure Action Plan [HERE](#)

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

State law requires all public and private school students to present written evidence of immunization against required diseases within 30 school days of admission. These requirements can be waived only if a properly signed health, religious or personal conviction waiver is filed with the school. The parent is to contact their health care provider or school office for information concerning the required current State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services Public Health waiver form. The following are the minimum immunizations for each grade level- [LINK HERE](#).

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY

GRACE has adopted a School Medication Administration Policy which aligns with the Wisconsin School Medication Law, Section 118.29 Wis. Stats. Its intent is to protect your child(ren)'s safety. The GRACE Medication Administration Policy allows medication to be administered by trained staff and volunteers in compliance with the written instructions of a parent/guardian or practitioner.

All medications will be kept in the school office and administered by authorized school office staff. If the parent wishes for the student to self-administer or self-carry a medication, consent must be indicated on its GRACE Medication Consent Form. A parent/guardian must pick up any remaining medications within five days from the last day of school. Any medications not picked up with this five day period will be destroyed.

- **Non-prescription medication:** Parents must complete and sign the GRACE Medication Consent Form for each non-prescription medication. The non-prescription medication must be supplied in the original manufacturer's package, and the package must list the ingredients and recommended therapeutic dosage in a legible format. Written instructions from the parent or guardian are required.
- **Prescription medications:** Parents must complete and sign the GRACE Medication Consent Form for each prescription medication. **The student's physician MUST sign the Form as well.** The medication must be supplied in the original pharmacy-labeled package. The package needs to list the name of the pupil, name of the prescriber, name of the prescription medication, the dose, the effective date, and the directions in a legible format. All medications must be brought to school or taken home by a parent or guardian.

Medication Consent Form [HERE](#)

The GRACE Medication Consent Form for non-prescription and prescription medications can be obtained from the administration office of your child(ren)'s GRACE school or found on their website. New forms are required at the beginning of each school year.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

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

PARENTS AS PRIMARY EDUCATORS

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that parents are the first and foremost educators of their children:

"Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by creating a home where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and disinterested service are the rule. The home is well suited for education in the virtues. This requires an apprenticeship in self-denial, sound judgment, and self-mastery—the preconditions of all true freedom. Parents should teach their children to subordinate the 'material and instinctual dimensions to interior and spiritual ones.' Parents have a grave responsibility to give good examples to their children. By knowing how to acknowledge their own failings to their children, parents will be better able to guide and correct them." (CCC 2223)

We view the education of each student as a collaborative partnership between the school and the family. A strong, respectful relationship between parents/guardians and the school is essential to a student's growth in both character and academics. If, in the judgment of the school administration, that partnership is deemed irreparably damaged, the school reserves the right to require the withdrawal of the student.

Furthermore, high school students who reach the age of 18 during their enrollment at GRACE Chesterton Academy of St. John Paul II Classical School consent to continued communication between the school and their parent(s)/guardian(s) for the duration of their high school years through graduation. This consent includes, but is not limited to:

- Requiring parents/guardian signatures on all permission slips and school forms
- Parental involvement in all attendance-related matters
- Communication regarding student health and wellness
- Medication approvals
- Academic and discipline matters, etc.

We recognize and honor the vital role of parents and guardians in shaping the lives of their children and remain committed to working in partnership with you in this shared mission.

TUITION AND FEES

As a non-profit entity, Catholic schools are dependent upon tuition to meet their contractual obligations for salaries and benefits of staff as well as balance our budgets. Our GRACE schools do not charge the actual cost to educate a student, therefore every tuition dollar and fundraising dollar matters to help us maintain the operational vitality of our schools.

Tuition rates are established each year through the budgeting process approved by GRACE's governing Boards. Tuition scales, incentives and assistance differ for preschool versus the compulsory education grades of kindergarten through twelfth grade. Preschool costs are competitive with early childhood education/day care costs in the greater Green Bay area.

Tuition Rates

- Preschool: Rates for three and four year-old preschool are established each year and are in alignment with early childhood education/day care costs in the greater Green Bay area. Preschool offerings - days per week and times per day - vary at each GRACE school based on resources with commensurate tuition rates.
- Standard Tuition - Grades K-12: Standard tuition represents less than 75% of the actual cost of education. The remaining amount is covered by the generous support of GRACE parishes, Site Advisory Fundraising and strategic financial development and initiatives.
- Cost to Educate Tuition: During the enrollment process, families are given the option to select to pay the actual average cost to educate instead of the subsidized Preschool and Standard Tuition rates. Should a family be in a financial position to do so, by selecting this option, will commit to paying the full cost to educate their child for the academic year and will waive all tuition-reducing opportunities. A graphic, updated yearly after audited academic year financials, summarizes revenue sources in relation to the cost to educate per student; this graphic is available in the section on Cost to Educate on the Tuition and Fees web page- [LINK HERE](#).

Payment Plans

Various installment plans are offered for families to fulfill their financial obligation for the education of their child/ren. All tuition balances must be paid by the end of the respective academic year. Adjustments to payment plans require approval from the GRACE school system.

Tuition-Reducing Opportunities

Various incentives and tuition assistance are available to families as we work hard to make Catholic education affordable.

- Sibling Incentive
- Active Parishioner Incentive
- New Family Referral Incentive
- GRACE Financial Aid
- Wisconsin Parental Choice Program

Please refer to details on tuition and fees, incentives and assistance on the Admissions menu of the GRACE system website:

- Tuition and Fees web page- [LINK HERE](#)
- Tuition Assistance web page- [LINK HERE](#)
- Parish Verification Form web page- [LINK HERE](#)
- Wisconsin Parental Choice Program web page- [LINK HERE](#)
- New Family Referral Incentive web page- [LINK HERE](#)

Families must adhere to the requirements, terms and conditions, and deadlines for these opportunities.

Active Parishioner Incentive

This tuition-reducing opportunity for K-12 enrolled students is outlined on the GRACE system website - [LINK HERE](#).

The deadline for GRACE families to submit their completed Parish Verification Form each year is June 1st. After June 1st, all late submissions require review through contact with a designated GRACE staff member to address circumstances. A written letter of explanation may be required.

The absolute final deadline to submit a completed 2025-26 Parish Verification Form is October 1, 2025 or 30 days from the date of enrollment if accepted for admission and enrolled after October 1, 2025.

Tuition Proration

If there is an admission or an exit (withdrawal or dismissal) for any reason during the academic year:

- The Enrollment Fee is not refundable.
- The Activity Fee and Technology Fee will be payable in their entirety.
- Tuition will be adjusted according to established formulas administered by GRACE Finance (please contact GRACE Finance with any questions):
 - Preschool tuition is adjusted based on week
 - Grades K-12 tuition is adjusted based on trimester of entry or exit (example: an entry or exit during trimester 2 will result in financial responsibility for two trimesters in their entirety)
- Credits from tuition-reducing sources will be prorated in accordance with the tuition adjustment.

WELLNESS - SNACKS AND CELEBRATIONS

GRACE School System is committed to fulfilling our mission of providing a school environment where students are healthy, well-nourished, balanced, confident and ready to learn while growing in their Catholic faith. One of our efforts to promote this well-being includes classroom snack and celebration recommendations.

- Wellness Policy Triennial Assessment- [LINK HERE](#)

Keeping in mind dietary and allergy needs of students, GRACE encourages foods offered on the school campus (including before and after school care programs) to meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards, including those provided for celebrations, parties, and classroom snacks brought by staff or family members. Celebrations, excluding birthday celebrations, that involve food, will not exceed more than five times per classroom per school year. Birthday celebrations are encouraged to utilize non-food rewards.

The following list includes recommendations for healthy snacks and non-food birthday celebration ideas- [LINK HERE](#) Please consult with the building principal with any questions or concerns.