

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL



2026-2027
PARENT/STUDENT
HANDBOOK
(618) 539-3930

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL
2 NORTH ALTON STREET
FREEBURG, ILLINOIS 62243
(618) 539-3930

INTRODUCTION

August 2026

Dear Parents,

Thank you for entrusting the spiritual and academic development of your child(ren) to our faculty and staff. It is our promise to you, to continue the tradition of academic rigor that has been the hallmark of the educational experience at St. Joseph Catholic School for over 150 years.

This handbook contains policies and procedures for the 2026-2027 school year. As it is impossible to address every situation that may arise during the school year, the school administration reserves the right to amend or revoke the policies and procedures in this handbook at any time as circumstances may warrant. When changes are made, parents and students will be informed of the changes in a timely manner. Please note, throughout the handbook the use of the term “parent” shall refer to the legal guardian of the child regardless of the biological relationship to the child.

The administration, teachers, and staff look forward to working with you in a school-parent partnership that provides many educational opportunities for academic development and faith formation for your child.

Blessings,

Charlotte Vielweber
Interim Principal

FACULTY & STAFF

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Mrs. Pam Hettenhausen	Cafeteria	618-539-3209 ext203	phettenhausen@stjcsil.org

Handbook Agreement: Each family receives a St. Joseph Catholic School Handbook electronically. It is also available on the school website. It is each family's obligation to review and comply with policies therein. **Families sign a Signature of Agreement that is kept on file in the school office.**

***The St. Joseph School Principal and Pastor retain the authority to amend the handbook for The betterment of the school community at anytime.**

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. Joseph Catholic School is to provide a well-rounded, faith-based curriculum that promotes the academic, spiritual, social, emotional, and physical development of each child in a safe and nurturing environment.

PHILOSOPHY

St. Joseph Catholic School, founded in 1869, provides an affordable, quality, Catholic education for the families of St. Joseph Parish in Freeburg, St. Agatha Parish in New Athens, and for non-Catholics who accept our mission and philosophy. Relying on the help and guidance of our Lord, the school works in partnership with families to pass on our Catholic values, traditions, and heritage. Emphasis is placed on the importance of Christian values, the development of a positive self-concept and a strong academic background through discipline, cooperation, and responsibility.

As a community of caring individuals working together, we continue to grow closer to God through loving, respecting, and serving one another, and by praying and worshipping together. The philosophy of our school is anchored in the belief that God creates men and women in His image and that He desires them to find happiness in knowing, loving, and serving Him. St. Joseph Catholic School focuses on teaching Catholic doctrine, building Christian community, and helping students acquire skills, virtues, and habits of heart and mind required for effective service to others. As a school community we strive to educate the whole person in an atmosphere of love, respect, and concern for one another. St. Joseph Catholic School is dedicated to maintaining high academic standards and to providing daily opportunities to live our Catholic faith.

OBJECTIVES OF ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Intellectual Development

- To provide academic programs which meet the needs of our students
- To challenge and encourage each student to develop their potential
- To encourage students to experience and accept consequences for their decisions

Social Development

- To develop an awareness and appreciation for each person's talents and abilities
- To develop an awareness and responsibility for the world in which they live
- To develop the willingness to serve others who are in need
- To teach and practice respect for life in all of its forms

Emotional Development

- To encourage development of a healthy self-concept
- To provide an environment where students feel safe, valued, and loved

- To encourage students to deal with their emotions in a healthy Christian way

Spiritual Development

- To provide instruction and example in living out the Catholic way of life
- To provide an environment for the development of Gospel values
- To provide opportunities for participation in prayer and Liturgical celebration

Physical Development

- To develop motor skills and coordination
- To provide instruction to increase fitness at each stage of physical development
- To provide activities that promote exercise and joy to the participants

AMENDMENTS

This Parent-Student Handbook contains established policies and procedures for the 2026-2027 school year. Since it is not possible for a Handbook to address every situation that may arise during a school year, the school administration reserves the right to amend or revoke the policies and procedures in this Handbook at any time as circumstances may require. When changes are made to the Handbook, you will be informed of the change in writing in a timely manner, as well as when the change will take effect.

PERSONNEL NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY (Diocesan Policy 5111.1)

In employment practices, the school and/or parish shall not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, unfavorable military discharge, marital status, and mental or physical handicap unrelated to ability to perform duties of the position. This policy shall be interpreted consistently with the religious mission and teaching of the Catholic Church. This policy applies to all professional and nonprofessional personnel hired by the school and/or parish.

SCHOOL CALENDAR (Diocesan Policy 5111.1)

The diocesan elementary school calendar, approved by the Bishop of the Diocese and the Diocesan Board of Education, is issued before the close of the current school year. It marks the beginning and closing dates, and all other dates pertinent to the school year. The diocesan elementary school calendar is to be followed by the schools of the diocese unless a different calendar is approved. Such approval will be given if sufficient reason is offered, e.g., dependence on local public school bus transportation. The school calendar is so arranged that it fulfills the requirements of the School Code of Illinois. It provides 176 actual pupil attendance days, 3 institute days, and 6 emergency days. Dates for local institutes are at the discretion of the local school. If the designated institute days are not used for institute days, they should be added to the actual pupil attendance days.

ADMISSION TO ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Attendance at St. Joseph Catholic School is a privilege and not an inherent right of students. It is equally important to note that St. Joseph Catholic School, in accordance with the Diocese of Belleville, admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. St. Joseph Catholic School does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, national, and ethnic origin in the administration or educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and local programs, athletic and other school administered programs.

St. Joseph Catholic School is committed to providing a quality, affordable Catholic education to the children of St. Joseph Parish, St. Agatha Parish, and any family in the Freeburg, Illinois area that seeks a quality education for their children. All students are expected to accept the total program of the school, including religious instruction and attendance at liturgical service.

Pre-Kindergarten Admission Policy

St. Joseph Catholic School has established a priority for Pre-Kindergarten registration. First priority is given to St. Joseph and St. Agatha Parish families and siblings of families currently enrolled at St. Joseph Catholic School. If maximum enrollment levels are not reached after parish families have registered, open registration will be held. When maximum levels are reached, a waiting list will be established with students accepted in the order of placement on the waiting list.

Pre-Kindergarten students must be fully potty-trained prior to admission to St. Joseph Catholic School. This means the child knows how to go to the bathroom without being reminded to do so and is capable of cleaning/wiping their body sufficiently without any aid from a staff member. Continuous bathroom accidents may jeopardize a child's enrollment status in the Pre-Kindergarten program.

Age Requirements

- A child who is three years of age (by September 1st), fully potty-trained, and meeting all other admission requirements may enter the Pre-Kindergarten program.
- Children five years of age or a child who will reach the age of five by September 1 may enter kindergarten of the current school year (DP 5111).

Required Paperwork for Admissions

- An original copy of your child's birth certificate (a copy will be made for the child's school file)
- Baptismal certificate (children baptized at St. Joseph Parish already have a certificate on file)
- Completed online enrollment
- Registration fee (to be paid at the time of registration)
- Signed Tuition Agreement Form
- All health examinations (physical examination, immunization record, dental examination, and eye examination shall be required as stipulated by the

Administrative Code of the Illinois State Board of Education)

- Proof of Insurance Form (must be submitted no later than the first day of attendance)
- The following form is also required prior to the first day of attendance:
 - Application for Reduced/Free Lunch (if applicable)

Proof of Insurance

The St. Joseph Pre-Kindergarten Program, in accordance with the policy of the Diocese of Belleville, requires that all students have insurance coverage, and parents must sign a statement to this effect at the start of each school year. Children whose parents refuse to sign this statement concerning proof of private coverage and release of liability, or who refuse to purchase insurance, will not be accepted into St. Joseph Catholic School. (DP #5143)

Open Enrollment Period

St. Joseph Catholic School hosts an annual open enrollment period for all grade levels during the months of May through August for the coming school year. During this time, families may register their child or children by contacting the school office. A registration packet will be provided. The contents as well as all other required paperwork and fees for admissions must be returned to the school office prior to the first day of student attendance.

Mid-Year Enrollment Procedures

St. Joseph Catholic School does accept mid-year transfers during the school year using the following process. Prospective families are asked to schedule an appointment with the school principal and receive a tour of the facility. A registration packet will be provided to school families interested in midyear enrollment at the end of the tour. A spend-a-day visit for the student will be scheduled providing an opportunity to meet possible classmates and teachers. After the spend-a-day visit, all required admissions paperwork and fees must be provided to the school office, including a request for student records from prior schools, in order for the child to be eligible for admissions. Families should allow one or two weeks for the school to verify all admissions paperwork. After such time, a mutually agreed upon start date will be set by the prospective family and school administration. Tuition rates will be prorated based on the agreed upon date of admittance.

Probationary Enrollment

Any transfer student who registers to attend St. Joseph Catholic School shall be considered probationary. This probationary status will remain effective until such time as the student's school records are received from the transferring school, and a sufficient period of time has passed to assure that any special needs of the child can be met by existing school curriculum and resources. The school reserves the right to deny enrollment, at any time, to any student with needs that cannot be met by the existing curriculum or staff. All students who transfer at the 7th or 8th grade level are accepted conditionally and shall remain on probation for the entire academic year.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition for the 2026-2027 school year for children enrolled in Kindergarten through grade 8:

- 1 child in family \$5,049
- 2 children in family \$7,344
- 3 children in family \$9,486
- 4 children in family \$11,424

There is a one-time \$500 voucher available to any incoming kindergarten student baptized at St. Agatha or St. Joseph

* Please note, this does not include the non-refundable registration fee of \$75 required at the time of registration, or the \$250 book/technology fee required for each student due on or before July 31, 2025. Registration after April 11th will increase to \$100/child and after May 30th it will increase to \$125/child

Tuition for the 2026-2027 school year for children enrolled in Pre-School:

<u>Family Size</u>	<u>3 Day</u>	<u>4 Day</u>	<u>5 Day</u>
One Child	\$4,437	\$5,697	\$6,825
2 Child Family	\$7,982	\$9,206	\$10,302
3 Child Family	\$10,634	\$11,858	\$12,954
4 Child Family	\$12,878	\$14,102	\$15,198

**Please note: The above listed amount does not include the \$75 non-refundable registration fee which is due at the time of registration, or the \$200 art/snack fee which is due by July 31, 2025. Registration after April 11th will increase to \$100/child and after May 30th it will increase to \$125/child

Payments

Tuition is payable in one of several ways. Payment may be made monthly, quarterly, bi-annual, or annually. We highly recommend/prefer payments are made online through our tuition billing system, FACTS. We do not accept credit or debit cards at school, only cash or check. Checks are to be made out to St. Joseph Catholic School.

Monthly payments are to be paid either on the 1st or 15th of the month. Quarterly payments are to be made at the beginning of each school quarter. Bi-annual payments are to be made in August and January. Annual payments are to be made in August.

Tuition Assistance

St. Joseph Catholic School is committed to providing an education to any child who meets the admission requirements regardless of financial need. In the event that a family has the need for financial assistance, the family must fill out an application on FACTS for financial assistance by June 1 when re-enrolling students.

Confidentiality of applicants is assured. When you have submitted all required information, the Principal will send a letter, call or email to you with the amount of tuition assistance granted to your family.

Baptism Discount

St. Joseph will grant a \$500 education voucher for all children baptized at St. Joseph or St. Agatha Catholic Church. This one- time voucher is valid toward tuition at St. Joseph Catholic

School beginning with enrollment in kindergarten only.

STUDENT TRANSFERS

Parents planning on transferring their child from St. Joseph Catholic School must notify the principal of the withdrawal from school. St. Joseph Catholic School follows the procedures determined by the Diocesan Office of Education in regards to transferring and maintaining all records. A copy of these regulations (DP 5119r) is available from the principal upon request.

Parents will be asked to complete the withdrawal form available in the school office. Written permission from a parent must be given before information can be sent to another school. All textbooks and property of St. Joseph Catholic School must be returned. Once all financial obligations to the school are satisfied, the official permanent records of the student (health records, report card, and attendance record) will be forwarded to the new school. This includes students graduating from St. Joseph Catholic School and enrolling in the ninth grade at another school. If excess funding remains on a student's account (i.e. tuition or lunch account), the school will reimburse the family via check no later than June of the current school year.

ATTENDANCE (Diocesan Policy 5113.1)

Regular attendance is essential for academic achievement. Teachers are required to keep a daily record of attendance for the students' permanent record. This information is tracked on FACTS communication portal. If attendance is not possible, we ask that you please contact the school office prior to 8:30 AM.

Absenteeism

When a child is absent from school the parent is to notify the school office before 8:30 AM. Failure of the parent notification to the school via phone or email may result in an unexcused absence. In the event of an unexcused absence the child may be granted no more than two days to complete any work missed, including tests, during the time of the unexcused absence regardless of the length of absence. Upon a child's return to school, a parent note must be provided to the teacher to file as part of the child's yearly absenteeism records. In the event of student absence of more than 20 days in a given school year, a meeting will be held with faculty and administration to discuss the possibility of student retention. If sufficient evidence is provided to consider retention, a parent meeting will be called immediately to discuss the findings as well as ways to best meet the child's needs.

Planned Absence

St. Joseph Catholic School discourages planned absences during the school year. However, the school realizes that there may be circumstances that require a student to be absent. When it is known ahead of time that a student will be absent from school, the parent is to notify the school office and the child's teacher(s) of the upcoming absence.

Family Absences

Family travel during the school year interrupts a student's regular progress. However, it is also recognized that the nature of the travel may have an educational value for the student. When family travel can be shown to have an educational value for the student,

five (5) travel days per school year may be allowed as excused. Any days after five (5) school days will be unexcused. At least two weeks notice of the travel must be given to the teacher to accommodate students during that period. It will be the student's responsibility to obtain all missing work from their teachers during their absence. Some assignments may not be available until the student returns to school. All student work shall be completed and returned to the teacher within two weeks. Work not completed within two weeks shall receive a zero in the grade book.

Please note: If sufficient notice is not given prior to a planned travel or absence, the teacher will not be required to prepare and provide classwork or assignments in advance.

Excused Absence and Unexcused Absence

Both Excused Absences and Unexcused Absences are tracked yearly by the student's homeroom teacher and can be viewed by parents in FACTS. In Illinois, a valid cause for absence is defined as illness, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family (nuclear family, maternal and/or paternal grandparents, Direct aunts, uncles and/or first cousins), family emergency, and shall include such other situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the administration, or such other circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent for the safety or health of the student. Under any of these circumstances, students are considered to have an excused absence from school. In any case, however, a parent must inform the school of the child's absence. Failure of a parent to notify the school of an absence, including a planned absence, shall be considered unexcused. Absences for reasons other than those stated above may also be determined as an unexcused absence.

Students who are absent from school for five or more consecutive or non-consecutive days due to illness may be required to have a physician's note in order to excuse the absences. All work missed during an unexcused absence, including tests, may receive a zero unless prior plans were discussed with faculty and administration. Furthermore, if any of the above procedures regarding attendance, absenteeism or tardiness, are not followed, the student will be considered unexcused and any work not completed within two days of the unexcused absence will result in a zero.

Truant Absences

Truancy is defined as absence without a valid cause for one or more periods of the student's school day. Parents/guardians may be notified following 3, 5, and 9 days of absence or tardies within a school year, and a school intervention may be initiated. After the 9th school day (5% of regular attendance days) on which a student is absent without valid cause, he/she is deemed to be truant under Illinois law. Interventions to address truancy may include attendance letters, parent/teacher/principal conferences, student counseling, and/or involvement of the county truancy officer and/or local law enforcement. No punitive action, including out-of-school suspensions or court action will be taken against the student, or offered to the student and refused. Any person who has custody or control of a child subject to compulsory attendance who knowingly or willfully permits the child to persist in truancy, if convicted, is guilty of a Class C misdemeanor and may be subject to up to 30 days imprisonment and/or fine up to \$1,500.

Student Leaving School Early

When a student must leave school for any reason (appointments, extracurricular activities, etc.) before the dismissal time, the school office must be notified of the reason and the time that the student(s) is to be released from school along with the expected time that the student(s) will return to school. The parent or authorized person picking up the student must come to the office and sign the student out. The student must report to the office upon his/her return to school and be signed in to school by the parent or authorized person.

Neither the principal nor any teacher shall permit a student to leave the school grounds before the time for dismissal without a written request from the parent or guardian. The request should state the reason for dismissal. Students should never be sent home for homework or books or sent on errands during school hours. (DP 5113.1)

Tardiness

A student is considered tardy if he/she is not in their designated homeroom by 7:55 AM. The only exception is those students who arrive by school bus after 8:00 AM. Students arriving late must report to the school office before proceeding to the classroom. If it is a day that the student's class is attending mass, the student is to go to the office, NOT directly to church. A staff member will get the student to church after they have been signed in by a parent. Quarterly tardy and absence totals will be provided under the Conduct portion of a student's report card. Excessive tardiness will be addressed to the parent by the homeroom teacher. Should the pattern continue, the administration may ask to meet with parents to discuss possible solutions.

The following guidelines are used when a student is tardy or absent:

- When a student arrives after the start of school but within one hour of the start of the school day (8:30 AM) the student will be considered tardy.
- When a student arrives at school one hour after the start of the school day (8:31 AM) the student will be considered half-day absent.
- When a student arrives at school and leaves to go to the doctor or other appointment and returns within one hour, the student will not be considered as absent. If the student is absent for more than one hour, the student will be considered half-day absent. If a student leaves school within one hour of normal dismissal (after 2:00 PM), the student will not be considered absent. If a student arrives late to school because of a doctor or dental appointment, a note from the doctor or dental office is required. (DP 5113.1)
- For every **five (5) tardies**, one (1) **absence** will be recorded. Consistent punctuality is important for student success.

Attendance at Eucharistic Celebration

Attendance at and participation in the Eucharist is expected of all Catholic students. Students will have the opportunity to celebrate and receive the Eucharist on a regular basis. Parents and other family members are invited and encouraged to celebrate the Eucharist with the children whenever possible. Non-Catholic students are expected to attend Mass, but they may not participate in the Eucharist.

Extracurricular Eligibility

If a student is considered half-day absent or more due to illness, tardiness, or without an excuse, the student will not be permitted to attend any of the day's extracurricular events or school functions, including club activities, performances, or sports. In the event a student participates in violation of this rule, a student will be exempt from the next two events. A second violation will result in the student's removal of eligibility from any and all remaining events in regards to that extracurricular activity.

ARRIVAL / DISMISSAL

The school day begins at 7:55 AM and concludes at 3:00 PM. Students should not enter the school building before 7:45 AM. When a student arrives at school, they should proceed directly to their classroom. If there are items to drop off in the office, they may send them down at the start of the school day. Once a student is on the school grounds, he/she may not leave the grounds without the expressed written permission of his/her parent.

Students in grades K-8 are to be picked up by their parents at 3:00 PM on regular school days. Students may remain after 3:00 PM if arrangements are made by the parents with the principal or school secretary; however, any student remaining in the office after 3:15 PM will be sent to After Care where regular fees for this service will be applied. Students who are at school after 3:00 PM on regular school days without specific arrangements will be sent to After Care, and the regular fees for this service may be charged to the parents. Students leaving school at times other than the regular dismissal time must be signed out of school by the parent or a person designated by the parent before being dismissed from school grounds.

Students in the Pre-Kindergarten program will be individually dismissed to their parents or designated adult at the end of their school day, 2:30 PM. The parent or designated adult must sign-out the child in the appropriate classroom before leaving school. The teacher needs to have met and have the names of the designated person(s) who picks up the child. If the designated person changes, a phone call and email or note signed by the parent must be made to the teacher. The teacher will not release any child to someone unknown to the teacher and who is not designated by the parent.

Before Care

Before care will be available to families. Hours for this service are 7:00 AM to 7:45 AM. This service is offered free to our families.

Extended Care

Registration Fee: \$15.00 for one child; \$5.00 for each additional child in the family. Please note that the registration fee will not be charged until the first visit. Any application must be turned in each year for this service.

Daily Fees

Child	3:15 – 4:30pm	After 4:30 until 5:30pm
One Child	\$10	\$15
Two Children	\$15	\$20
Three Children	\$20	\$25

Morning Drop Off

Parents are allowed to drop off their children in the designated area between the Parish Center and the School's Main Entrance; however, if a parent is to park and leave their vehicle, they must use one of the full-line parking spots in the middle of the parking lot. Parents are not to use the short-line spots directly in front of the Parish Center. This area is to be kept clear to create a safe lane for parents to drop off their children in a quick and orderly manner. Please pass this information on to anyone picking up or dropping off your child.

Bicycles and Scooters

Bicycles are to be parked in the racks available for this purpose. To avoid bike borrowing or theft, bicycles should be padlocked. Bikes may never be ridden on school grounds during school hours. For safety precautions, students should walk their bicycles across the school grounds.

Office Hours

On regular school days, the main office is open from 7:30 AM – 3:30 PM. After this time, the school is locked down for the day. After hours, please know that the phone call button at the front door is inactive after 3:30 PM.

RETENTION/ACCELERATION

When a teacher and/or parent believe that retaining or accelerating a student would be in the student's best interest, the following procedure is used:

1. The teacher shall inform the principal when he/she is considering retention or acceleration of a student. The teacher is to provide reasons (and documentation) for this consideration. If the request for retention or acceleration of a student comes from the parent, the teacher shall inform the principal of the parent's request and the reasons for this request.
2. The teacher and parent shall meet during the school year to discuss the student's attitude, behavior, and academic progress. Discussion of the student's progress should take place every four weeks with a written account of meetings kept on file. The teacher shall inform the principal of the times and dates of these meetings prior to each meeting. The principal may attend the meetings.
3. The principal shall see that the student is evaluated through adequate testing to discover a student's academic and emotional needs, abilities, strengths, and weaknesses. The level of the student's physical, social, and psychological growth must also be taken into consideration and evaluated.
4. The decision to retain or accelerate a student should be a cooperative one of parent,

student, teacher, and principal, with the final responsibility for a student's retention (or acceleration) resting with the principal.

5. Before a final decision is made to retain or accelerate a student, the case must be reviewed by the Office of Education. Parents must be informed at least nine weeks before a final decision is made to retain a student. (DP 5123)

GRADUATION

All students must meet the requirements set forth by the school's administration to be eligible for graduation from St. Joseph Catholic School. Information such as student report cards, standardized testing, and faculty input may be used in assessing a student's readiness for graduation upon completion of the 8th grade curriculum. Students are required to pass both a state and federal constitution exam. Students are also expected to average a passing score in all core curriculum areas including mathematics, science, history, language arts, and religion.

HOMEWORK

Homework is used to re-enforce concepts discussed in the classrooms. It is not intended as punishment; nor should it be busy work. All homework assignments should be purposeful. Aside from the academic component, homework promotes time-management skills, responsibility, and prepares students for future success at the high school level.

Students are responsible for completing assignments in a timely manner and submitting homework to the teacher on the day that the work is due. When students are unable to submit completed homework assignments on the date it is due, the grade for the assignment may be lowered. Each teacher will set guidelines for turning in homework and publish these guidelines on their course syllabus. All late work policies should be clearly outlined by each teacher during the first week of each semester. Parents will be notified by the teacher in the event any grade is lowered due to late work.

Students are encouraged to make use of study time and homeroom periods. During this time, teachers are available to assist students with their daily homework assignments. In many cases, students will be provided time to begin their homework at the end of a given class period. Students are encouraged to review the assignment and discuss any questions they have about the assignment with their teacher during this time.

When a child is absent due to illness it is the parent's responsibility to arrange for the child's assignments, books, notes, and supplies to be picked up at or before dismissal time. Children have two days each day they are absent due to illness to complete and return their work and make-up any tests. Work and/or tests that were assigned before the student's absence is due the day the child returns to school.

COMMUNICATIONS

FACTS

FACTS is the electronic system used by the school to communicate reports, memos, emails, calendars, important dates, events, lunch menus, tuition information, tuition payments,

required forms, extracurricular activities and schedules, and report cards. FACTS also contains an automated telephone system component that is used to relay emergency messages to parents, including school cancellations due to inclement weather conditions. Because this system relies on accurate telephone numbers, parents are responsible for notifying the school when telephone numbers change or when numbers need to be added or deleted from the system. This system is tested at least once a year for parents to verify they are correctly placed into the system.

Parent-Teacher Communication

Parents may contact their child's teacher via email or by phone. Phone messages may be left after school hours for the teacher. If it is an immediate matter during the school day, call the main office to relay the message to your child's teacher. Please allow 24 hours for a teacher to respond to a message. Teachers are on campus until 3:30 PM each school day. Parents are welcome to discuss matters with a teacher before this time. If a later time is needed, parents are encouraged to schedule an appointment in advance. If a parent is having difficulty reaching a teacher, or the teacher has not responded in a timely manner, please contact the principal at 618-539-3930 ext. 111.

Distribution of Materials

St. Joseph Catholic School will not distribute information to parents or students in any form that has not been approved by the principal.

School Cancellation

School cancellations will be announced via telephone and an email sent through FACTS. Please note, we do not always follow FCHS snow day closures. In the event of school cancellation, remote learning plans may be put into effect. If a remote learning plan is used, students will be responsible for attendance, participation and assignments set forth by St. Joseph faculty.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences shall be scheduled at the discretion of the principal, at least once a year and whenever parents, teachers, or principals deem necessary. (DP 5124) Parent-Teacher Conferences are generally held in the fall of each school year after the conclusion of the first quarter. In order to build and continue the necessary parent-school partnership necessary for maximizing student achievement, it is important that all families attend this event. If you cannot meet on the designated event date, you are encouraged to contact your child's teacher to schedule a conference on another day. Teachers or parents may request additional conferences as necessary.

REPORTING OF STUDENT GRADES

Student grades are available to the parent at any time throughout the school year via FACTS. Due to this feature, progress reports are not issued for grades 1-8. Report cards are available online through FACTS at the end of each quarter. For a paper copy, parents may contact the school office at any time. The Grading Scale for St. Joseph Catholic School Grades 1-8 is:

A+ 100% A 94-99% A- 93%
B+ 92% B 87-91% B- 86%
C+ 85% C 79-84% C- 78%
D+ 77% D 71-76% D- 70%
F Below 70%

G (Good), S (Satisfactory), and N (Needs Improvement) may be used in Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and Grade 1. The G/S/N scale is used at all grade levels for courses such as P.E., Spanish, and STEM. This scale is also used for a student's overall conduct grade.

HONOR ROLL

An honor roll acknowledges the scholastic achievement of students in grades 5 through 8 and will be determined each quarter of the school year. The criteria for achieving honor roll are determined by assigning a number to each letter grade: A = 4 B = 3 C = 2 D = 1 F = 0

The average of a student's grade in Math, Science, History, Language Arts, and Religion are used to determine honor roll. A student achieves Honor Roll if the average is 15.0 or higher. A student will not be on the Honor Roll if he/she has any grade lower than a C or if he/she receives an N (Needs Improvement) in conduct or any subject listed on the student's report card.

STUDENT RECORDS (Diocesan Policy 5125)

Catholic elementary schools in the Diocese of Belleville are required to keep a written record of each student who is currently attending or has attended the school. During the time a student is officially in attendance, the record is considered to be active and is to be kept in the local school file. There are two parts to each record: a permanent record and a temporary record.

All student records are kept according to federal, state, and Diocesan guidelines and procedures. Release of information from a student's record to someone other than the student is only done according to federal and state guidelines. (DP 5125)

St. Joseph Catholic School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of the non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

In the event a student or parent acting on behalf of their child believes a school policy or procedure has been violated, they have the opportunity to file a formal complaint. A true violation is either a misapplication or misinterpretation of a school policy. An example of a formal complaint is when a student disagrees with how a teacher responded to a situation

based on pre-determined protocol. The following formal process is used to resolve the issue to the point of clarity. The purpose is to provide an equitable and orderly process to resolve any such issues. To maintain good relationships, these steps should be initiated and processed as rapidly as possible. Whether there is an academic or non-academic issue, students and their parents should follow the following procedure:

1. Communicate your concern as clearly as possible to the teacher or staff member. If necessary, communicate the matter in writing.
2. Schedule a time with the teacher or school personnel to discuss the issue further, as appropriate.
3. Make every effort to reach an understanding with the other party. Prayerfully, these efforts will result in a satisfactory mutual understanding and resolution.
4. If the matter cannot be resolved, advise the teacher or school personnel that you wish to refer the matter to the principal. If the matter involves the principal instead of a teacher, you may refer the matter to the Pastor if the situation cannot be resolved through a conference.
5. Submit a request to meet with the principal within ten days of the meeting with the teacher or school personnel.
6. The principal should respond within four weeks and take the appropriate steps to work with both parties to resolve the matter.
7. The resolution determined by the principal or Pastor is final.

STANDARDIZED TESTING PROGRAMS

Prior to a student's enrollment into Kindergarten, a screening is conducted by the school's Kindergarten teacher. The results of this assessment are shared with parents and used as a measurement of a child's Kindergarten readiness. Students who do not test well on the readiness screening may be screened at a later date. Poor results may result in required remediation prior to accepted enrollment into the Kindergarten program, which could include an additional year in the Pre-Kindergarten program.

ITBS

All students in grades 2 through 8 shall participate in the Diocesan standardized testing program administered in the fall. (DP 6162.5) At St. Joseph Catholic School, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) is administered to grades 2 through 8 in the fall and again in the spring to grades 2 through 8.

ACRE

In order to ensure an effective evaluation of the religious education programs in Diocesan schools, an evaluation instrument will be administered yearly as determined by the Office of Education. (DP 6162.5) At St. Joseph Catholic School, the Assessment of Catholic Religious Education (ACRE) is given on a rotating basis to students in grades 5 and 8.

High School Entrance Exams

High school placement tests are administered to 8th grade students. Students interested in attending Althoff Catholic High School or Gibault Catholic High School are to attend one of the

scheduled entrance exams days at the respective school. Students interested in attending Freeburg Community High School will take their high school entrance exam on campus at St. Joseph Catholic School at a designated date. Students interested in any other high school must check with the other high school office for entrance exam information.

FAITH FORMATION

To encourage growth in the faith formation of the child, St. Joseph Catholic School provides religious instruction as well as the opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and other forms of prayer and worship. Effort is made to help the child integrate his/her faith into the daily activities of life.

Children preparing to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation are involved in a sacramental preparation program. A child usually receives the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist in the second grade. The Sacrament of Confirmation is usually celebrated every other year while students are in either the seventh or eighth grade.

As the children spend time in class preparing for reception of a sacrament, it is expected that the parents also participate in the sacramental preparation program. Parent meetings are held to educate the parents and to give them assistance and support as they work at home to prepare their child for the reception of the sacrament. Parent attendance at all meetings for sacramental preparation is required. Parents will receive a letter informing them of the required meetings.

Children in grades 3 through 8 participate in a Family Life Program as part of their Religion classes. This program focuses on respect for life, human development, and human sexuality. Parents are encouraged to review this curriculum with their children at every grade level.

STUDENT CONDUCT (Diocesan Policy 5142)

Attendance at Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the Diocese of Belleville is at the will and discretion of the particular school. As such, attendance and enrollment may be terminated at any time when the school determines that continued enrollment would not be in the best interests of the students, the school, or the educational purposes of the school. All students who attend a Catholic school in the Diocese of Belleville are expected, as a condition of continued enrollment, to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the policies and principles of the school.

Conduct by a student in which a school determines is contrary to, or inconsistent with, the Catholic/Christian principles of the school, is grounds for terminating the student's enrollment in the school. These principles and expectations apply to students both on campus and off campus during school and non-school sponsored programs and events. These principles and expectations apply during and after school hours, and during times when school is in session and when school is out of session.

The students' interest in receiving a quality, morally-based education can best be served when students, teachers, and school officials all work together and set a proper example. In some instances where differences cannot be resolved, the school may find it necessary, in its

discretion, to require parents/guardians to withdraw their child/children from the school. (DP 5131)

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Children are expected to respect themselves and other students. They are expected to respect and obey all administrators, teachers, substitute teachers, supervisory personnel, volunteers, maintenance workers, cafeteria workers, coaches, bus drivers, guests of the school, etc. Students are expected to respect school property and the property of others. Reimbursement may be required for any damage to or loss of school property and/or learning materials such as textbooks and library books. Students not meeting expectations may be referred to by faculty or staff for support services such as counseling or other means of student support available at the school.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

A safe, respectful, and pleasant environment that is conducive to prayer, faith formation, and learning is the highest priority for all schools in the Diocese of Belleville. (DP 5142) In accordance with Diocesan Policy 5144, St. Joseph Catholic School has established the following policy in regards to school discipline. Problems which occur when the rules and regulations are violated are to be resolved between the student and the teacher. If efforts at this level are ineffective, the teacher will contact the parent. When contact with the parent has failed to resolve the problem, the principal will be notified.

Parents can help foster attitudes of respect for persons in authority by not criticizing policies or disciplinary measures at school. When differences of opinions occur, the parent is to contact the teacher for an appointment to discuss the situation. If the result of the conference with the teacher is unsatisfactory, the parent is to contact the principal. If the result of the conference with the principal is unsatisfactory, the parent may consider contacting the Pastor. Serious infractions, such as fighting, cursing, possessing a weapon, cheating, vandalizing school property, continued class disruption, disrespect or insubordination toward authority, disrespect toward other students, or repeated offenses of any nature, may result in but not be limited to:

- Notification of the parent by the teacher and/or principal
- Appropriate punishment, withholding of privileges, detention, suspension, or expulsion
- Professional counseling of the student after referral by the principal (parents shall be responsible for any and all expenses incurred as the result of professional counseling)
- Notification of the appropriate authorities or police
- Minor offenses may result in but not be limited to:
 - Discussion with the teacher and parents
 - Temporary withdrawal or altering of privileges
 - Removal of the student from the situation
 - Lunch detention
 - Before-school detention

Weapons

The carrying or use of any type of weapon is banned. Weapons include, but not limited to firearms, ammunition, sling shots, any type of knife, mace, or any other object or device which the principal determines may cause bodily harm or disrupt school activity. Such things as pocket knives may not be brought to school even if the intent is not to use it in a harmful manner. Suspension or expulsion may be leveled on any student who is found to be carrying a weapon to, from, or within the school; or to, from, or at any school activity.

Threats of Physical Harm

A student's written or verbal threat of violence toward another student and/or person within the school will be taken seriously and Diocesan policy will be followed. The principal will take immediate action upon learning that a threat occurred. This action includes non-disciplinary suspension of the student into the custody of a parent or guardian until a satisfactory psychological evaluation by a licensed mental health professional is completed and the principal agrees that the student may return to school. The local police will be promptly notified of the threat. (DP 5142.1)

Harassment and Bullying

Harassment and bullying are prohibited in all Catholic schools of the Belleville Diocese. Violation of this policy shall subject an employee or student to disciplinary action up to and including discharge or expulsion. (DP 4116.2)

Harassment is defined as any unwelcomed, unprovoked discriminatory behavior toward an individual(s) based on any one or more of the following real or perceived characteristics or legally protected categories: race, color, national origin, sex, gender, ethnicity, or disability.

Bullying is defined as harassing behavior that is severe, persistent, or pervasive to the extent that it affects an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program and/or creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive environment. Cyber-harassment and cyber-bullying employ the use of computers, cell phones, and any other electronic devices to harass or bully an individual.

Harassing and bullying behaviors are contrary to the teachings of Jesus Christ and they destroy respect for the dignity of the person, undermine the Christian atmosphere of the school, and deprive the person of a safe and caring learning/working environment. St. Joseph Catholic School is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment and bullying of any kind. We believe that every person should feel safe and secure and be accepted regardless of race, gender, disability, popularity, athletic ability, or academic achievement.

Examples of harassment and bullying behavior include but are not limited to: pushing, shoving, hitting, spitting, graffiti, name calling, jokes, rumors, notes, cartoons, text messages, and postings that intimidate, humiliate, or inflict emotional harm of any kind; unwelcomed touching, excluding someone from a group, and threatening someone. It is important to note that harassing and bullying behaviors are not determined by the intent of the perpetrator but rather by the effect(s) such behaviors have on the recipient. To dismiss an action(s) as "only a joke" or "just kidding" or "kids will be kids" does not excuse nor does it diminish the seriousness of the offense.

It is a violation of the policy for any student, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel to harass or bully a student, fellow school personnel, volunteer, or any other person under the supervision of the school. It shall also be a violation of this policy for any teacher, administrator, or other school personnel to tolerate harassment or bullying of a student by a student, teacher, administrator, other school personnel, or by any third party who is participating in, observing, or otherwise engaged in activities, including sporting events and other extracurricular activities under the auspices of the school.

Any student or parent of a student and any employee or person under the supervision of the school who believes that he or she has been the victim of harassment or bullying is encouraged to immediately report the alleged act(s) to the school principal. Any teacher or other school personnel who have witnessed or who have received notice that a student, employee, or person under the supervision of the school has been victimized by harassment or bullying should promptly notify the school principal. If the complaint involves the school principal, the complaint shall be made directly to the Pastor. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of harassment, cyber-harassment, bullying, or cyber-bullying will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades, learning or working environment, or work assignments. In the case of cyber-bullying, Illinois law states that if a school has a reasonable cause to believe a student's account on a social network contains evidence that a student has violated the school's disciplinary rule of policy, even if posted after school hours, the school may conduct an investigation and may require the student to share content in the course of such an investigation.

A written report of the investigation shall be prepared by the principal or Pastor. This report should include the findings of the investigation, a determination of whether the acts were verified as harassment and/or bullying, and the outcome of the investigation, including the intervention and disciplinary action. The school promptly investigates all complaints of harassment and bullying and will promptly take appropriate action to protect an individual(s) from further harassment or bullying. The school will take appropriate action to discipline any student, teacher, other school personnel, and any other person under the supervision of the school who is found to have violated this policy. The school will take prompt, appropriate action to address and remediate the violation. These actions may include counseling, awareness training, parent-teacher conferences, warnings, suspension, expulsion, and termination. The school will also discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, other school personnel, or person under the supervision of the school who retaliates against any person who reports an allegation or who assists or participates in a proceeding or investigation. Likewise, the school will discipline or take appropriate action against anyone who maliciously makes false allegations against any student, teacher, other school personnel, or person under the supervision of the school.

Possession or Use of Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco (Diocesan Policy 5114.1)

To protect the health, safety, and welfare of the student body, the possession, use, or distribution of alcoholic beverages and/or illegal or illicit drugs is prohibited on the school bus, in school buildings, in the parish center, on school grounds, and at all school functions. The use of look-a-like substances and the misuse of prescription and over-the-counter drugs shall be a violation of this policy. All medicine, including prescription and over-the-counter medicine that is to be taken at school must be brought to the school office in its original packaging, and the proper forms for medication at school must be on file in the school office.

A student found to be in possession of medicine may be considered in violation of this policy. The only exception to this policy is asthma medication. By law students are permitted to self administer and self-carry asthma medication if the child has a valid prescription and a parental permission form for self-administration and self-carry-on file in the school office. Any teacher suspecting possession of drugs or alcohol by any student may search the desk of the suspected student. The principal should be informed of any such searches. In the event a student, under the school's jurisdiction is found to distribute, possess, or use alcohol, drugs, or other health endangering compounds, parents will be immediately contacted. Local police may be notified by school authority and the student will be referred for appropriate action. The student will be suspended for three to five days, during which time the student may be required to go through an assessment and/or receive counseling from an outside professional agency or establishment. If required to go through an assessment and/or counseling, the student must show proof that an assessment has taken place before the student will be readmitted to school. A conference with the student, parents, principal, and Pastor will be held to determine what further course of action will be taken. The principal and/or Pastor may choose to expel the student.

Search and Seizure (Diocesan Policy 5115)

The administration of the school is free to enter a student's locker, desk and school bag any time to search for questionable items. Students shall not have any expectation of privacy as it relates to school lockers, school bags, or desks. The school is owner of all lockers and desks and shall retain full control of their use and content. Therefore, the school reserves the right to search them at any time without notice. Searches may also be selective and carried out even if there are no reports of wrongdoing. If illegal or improper items are found in a student's locker, desk, or school bag (i.e. non-prescription drugs, weapons, stolen property), they will be turned over to law enforcement authorities. Any items (personal possessions) that violate school rules will be kept by school administration and returned to parents.

When a situation arises that requires a search of a student; a student will be asked to empty his/her pockets or purse. If a student voluntarily empties his/her pockets and/or purse, this will not be considered an invasion of the person. Body searches will not take place. If a student does not voluntarily comply with the administrator's request, the student's parents will be called and expected to come to the school and conduct the search in the presence of a school administrator. A parent's refusal to comply with the request is grounds for immediate expulsion. (DP 5115)

Cheating

For grades Kindergarten through Grade 2, students will be disciplined in an appropriate way relevant to the age of the student. Teachers will also notify the principal of the incident and the student consequence. For Grades 3-8, cheating is a serious violation and will be dealt with in the following steps.

- 1st Violation: Student receives a zero on the assignment; Assignment cannot be dropped when averaging grades; Student must still do the assignment; Teacher notifies parents and principal
- 2nd Violation: Student receives a zero on the assignment; Assignment cannot be dropped when averaging grades; Student must still do the assignment; Teacher notifies parents and principal; Student serves a one-hour detention

- 3rd Violation: Student receives a zero on the assignment; Assignment cannot be dropped when averaging grades; Student must still do the assignment; Teacher notifies parents and principal; Student serves a one day in-school suspension and an additional day for each subsequent violation

Suspension from School (Diocesan Policy 5114.1)

A student may be suspended by the principal for gross disobedience and misconduct. Each suspension will be in proportion to the seriousness of the offense and in consideration of other circumstances. Each suspension shall not exceed ten school days. Class assignments will be given and must be completed before a student is readmitted to class. While many situations will call for an in-school suspension, it may depend on space and available supervisory personnel. For any out-of-school suspension, students will not be permitted on school grounds. Students will not be allowed to participate in field trips and extracurricular activities while serving a suspension. Suspensions will be served as close to the time of the infraction as possible. No student will be sent home on suspension unless the parent has been contacted and is able to pick up the child or make arrangements for the child to be picked up from school. Any suspension will be reported to the Pastor.

Expulsion from School (Diocesan Policy 5114.1)

Expulsion of a student is a very serious matter. An expulsion shall be the result of a student seriously violating moral principles or seriously endangering the safety and welfare of other students or school personnel. It is generally not expected that expulsion will be the first action invoked against a student. However, there may be cases in which one incident is serious enough to warrant immediate suspension followed by expulsion. When repeated infractions have occurred, a written record will show that there were previous incidents which took place prior to the expulsion and that documented conferences were held with the parents. Accurate records of the time, place, and substance of the issues discussed will be kept by the principal. In the event of an expulsion, the principal will cooperate with the parents in attempting to make arrangements for the future education of the pupil in another school.

The procedure for expulsion is as follows:

1. The student will be suspended for a period of time not to exceed ten days.
2. The parent(s) shall be immediately informed in writing of the suspension and that expulsion is being considered.
3. When a decision for expulsion has been determined, the principal shall review the decision with the Diocesan Director of Education, along with the pastor before an expulsion can be implemented.
4. Parents who are dissatisfied with the action taken by the principal shall have recourse to the Pastor. However, decisions can only be overturned when local and Diocesan policies and regulations were not appropriately followed.

All parties involved in determining a suspension or expulsion of a student shall keep all information confidential. (Diocesan Policy 5114)

Uniform Code and Preschool Dress Code

The school uniform is more than just clothing in Catholic schools. The school uniform reflects values, identity, and school community spirit by fostering a sense of belonging. Adherence to the Code shows respect for oneself, others, and the school itself.

Enforcement of the Preschool Dress Code and the School Uniform Code begins in the homes. Preschool children and older students are expected to be in full compliance with their respective code when they leave home to attend school.

Preschool teachers and homeroom teachers will observe the children and check for compliance with the respective code as attendance is taken in the morning. An email will be sent by the teacher to the parent or guardian of a child (student) who was not in compliance with the code. A second infraction of the code will prompt another email to the parent as well as to the principal. A parent conference with the principal will be required should there be a third infraction.

SCHOOL DRESS CODE

All students in grades K-8 shall follow the uniform code below:

Polo Shirt

- Solid Navy or White & logo free
- Short or long sleeve
- 5th-8th grade: must be tucked in

Pants

- Solid Navy or Khaki
- Flat-front or pleated

Shorts

- Solid Navy or Khaki
- Flat-front or pleated

Belt

- Solid Brown, Black
- No ornamentation
- K-4th grade: optional
- 5th-8th grade: Required if loops are present

Socks

- Solid white
- Worn above ankle support of shoe

Jumper

- School plaid
- Hemline longer than the midpoint between the hip and knee; leggings or shorts underneath
- K-4th grade: girls only
- 5th-8th grade: not allowed

Skirt

- School plaid, navy, or khaki
- Hemline longer than the midpoint between the hip and knee; leggings or shorts underneath
- Girls only

Leggings

- Solid Navy or Black
- Worn underneath shirt/jumper; cannot be worn alone
- Girls only

Sweatshirt & Sweater

- Solid navy, black & logo free except from St. Joseph Spirit shop
- Button-up, cardigan, pullover and hoodie styles worn over uniform shirt

Accessories

- The only make-up accessories permitted are non-distracting nail polish and lip gloss. Artificial nails and press-on nails are prohibited.
- Only post earrings are allowed and may need to be removed during P.E. and recess for safety concerns

P.E.

- Students will not be required to change out of uniform for P.E. day

Weather Specific

Only solid navy or black sweaters, navy or black buttoned cardigans or navy or black pullover sweaters, navy or black sweatshirts (with or without a hood) with no visible logos are allowed over a collared uniform shirt during the school day, with the only exception being sweatshirts from St. Joseph Catholic School or St. Agatha Catholic School Spirit Wear.

Spirit Days

Spirit Days are held on the home opener of boys and girls athletic events. Spirit day shirts can be worn with uniform bottoms. Due to Mass day and nonattendance days, Spirit Day may be moved in a given month. St. Joseph Catholic School or St. Agatha Catholic School Spirit Wear are allowed on spirit days; tournament t-shirts from various athletic events are allowed but needs to represent the Hawks/Jaguars. Plain, solid denim blue jeans or shorts, athletic pants or shorts may be worn if they are not torn, ripped, frayed, holed, stained, or contain

ornamentation. Shorts must have a hemline longer than the midpoint between the hip and knee. If the jeans have belt loops, a solid-colored uniform belt is required for 5th-8th grade. Leggings are allowed, as long as the shirt they are wearing covers back and front. Solid white socks must be worn at all times (in accordance with uniform sock requirements) with tennis shoes. Students choosing not to wear spirit wear must wear their regular school uniform.

Non-Uniform Days

Throughout the year, dress down days or dress up days may be held in conjunction with various events or fundraisers. Guidelines for these days will be sent home via email.

Prohibited Attire

The following is NOT permitted on ANY day of the school year for any child preschool through 8th grade:

- Cargo shorts, painter pants or shorts, or any pants with flared legs, pajamas
- Flip flops, sandals, slippers, crocs, or boots
- Unnatural hair colors or highlights
- Dangling earrings due to safety concerns
- Clothing that exposes the midriff or undergarments
- Clothing containing stains, holes, tears, or does not have a hem
- Tank tops, spaghetti strap clothing, or sleeveless shirts and blouses
- Any clothing or accessories thought to be inappropriate by the principal
- Artificial nails, press-on nails, colored nail polish
- Jewelry is prohibited except for post earrings which must be small enough so as not to cover the earlobe
- Stick-on tattoos and makeup

Preschool Dress Code

Preschool children may wear the school uniform, but it is not required. Children should wear comfortable clothes. Costumes may be worn only on specified days authorized by the school. If your child is unable to button his or her pants, please use pants with an elastic waist. It is also required that parents provide a change of clothes in the event of bathroom accidents. Accidents will be handled discreetly. Spirit wear attire may be worn on Spirit Days. Spirit Days are held on the home opening day of boys and girls sports.

SCHOOL HEALTH

All Catholic schools in the Diocese of Belleville shall follow the Illinois Department of Public Health Rules for School Health Exams and Immunizations, Illinois Department of Public Health Rules, and the Control of Communicable Diseases. The only exception to this policy is in the case of a medical exemption. Exemptions from the physical examination or immunizations on religious grounds are not accepted for students in a Catholic school in the Diocese of Belleville because the Catholic Church holds no position in opposition to immunizations. Therefore, all students who attend the Catholic school must be immunized regardless of religious affiliation.

An exemption may be granted on the basis of medical reasons if verified by a Medical Doctor (M.D.), or Doctor of Osteopathy (D.O.) in written documentation. This is to be sent to the Office of Education for approval prior to the acceptance of the student in the school. (Diocesan Policy 5141.3)

Health Examination (Diocesan Policy 5141.3)

A health examination, including a health history and immunization record, shall be submitted by students entering pre-kindergarten, kindergarten or first grade, and by students entering the sixth grade. The examination shall be conducted within one year prior to the date that the student enters school. Students transferring into an Illinois school from an out-of-state school must present copies of their current health record and such records in accordance with Illinois requirements. Transfer students have thirty days to submit the required health records.

Health examinations shall be recorded on the Certificate of Child Health Examination form as required by the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois State Board of Education. The health history portion of the physical examination form must be completed and signed by the parent in order for the student to be in compliance with the health examination requirement. Lead screening is a required part of the health examination for children age 6 years or younger prior to admission to kindergarten or first grade. Please note that a sports physical may not be accepted as proof of compliance with the health examination required for entrance into pre-kindergarten, kindergarten or first grade, and the sixth grade.

Immunizations (Diocesan Policy 5141.3)

All students attending a Catholic school in the Diocese of Belleville are required to be in compliance with the law of the State of Illinois with respect to health examinations and immunizations, including but not limited to the Illinois School Code, 105 ILCS 5/27-8.1 (or any successor provisions), and regulations promulgated thereunder, including but not limited to the Department of Public Health's Child and Student Health Examination and Immunization Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code Part 665 and 695) (or any successor provisions), as well as the Communicable Disease Prevention Act (410 ILCS 315/0.01 et seq.) (or any successor provisions) and regulations promulgated thereunder, including but not limited to the Department of Public Health's Control of a Communicable Diseases Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code Part 690) (or any successor provisions.).

Medical Objections

If the parent or legal guardian of a student who attends a school in the Diocese of Belleville refuses to vaccinate a student and claims a medical exemption for doing so, the school shall follow these procedures:

1. The school shall determine whether a valid medical objection has been made;
2. If a valid medical objection has not been made, the school shall within a reasonable time inform the parent or legal guardian that the student may not be present at the school until either
 - a. a valid medical objection is made; or
 - b. the student is vaccinated in accordance with applicable Illinois law;
3. If a valid medical objection has been made, the school shall inform the parent or guardian of the Diocese of Belleville's Office of Education Exclusion Procedures and

shall attach the documentation of the medical objection to the student's health record and place the record in the student's permanent record.

In determining whether a valid medical objection has been made, the school shall comply with the Illinois Department of Public Health's Child and Student Health Examination and Immunization Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code Part 665 and 695) (or any successor provisions). The school shall assess the requirements of a valid medical objection, including but not limited to:

1. The objection must be made by a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches or an advanced practice nurse or physician assistant responsible for the performance of the student's health examination;
2. The objection must indicate the medical condition of the student which makes administration of one or more of the required immunizing agents medically contraindicated;
3. The physician or advanced practice nurse or physician assistant responsible for the performance of the student's health examination must sign the student's health examination form indicating medical objection.

The procedures for determining the validity of a medical objection are subject to change without notice, including (but not limited to) upon the occurrence of a change in Illinois law regarding the same.

Religious Objections

If the parent or legal guardian of a student who attends a school in the Diocese of Belleville refuses to vaccinate a student and claims a religious objection for doing so, the school shall follow these procedures:

1. The school shall determine whether a valid religious objection has been made;
2. If a valid religious objection *has not* been made, the school shall within a reasonable time inform the parent or legal guardian that the student may not be present at the school until either
 - a. a valid religious objection is made; or
 - b. the student is vaccinated in accordance with applicable Illinois law;
3. If a valid religious objection *has* been made, the school shall inform the parent or guardian of the Diocese of Belleville's Office of Education Exclusion Procedures and shall attach the documentation of the religious objection to the student's health record and place the record in the student's permanent record.

In determining whether a valid religious objection has been made, the school shall comply with the Illinois Department of Public Health's Child and Student Health Examination and Immunization Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code Part 665 and 695) (or any successor provisions). The school shall assess the requirements of a valid religious objection, including but not limited to the requirement that the parent or legal guardian must present to the school a Certificate of Religious Exemption, in a format consistent with that promulgated from time to time by the Illinois Department of Public Health, setting forth the specific religious belief that conflicts with the examination, test, immunization, or other medical intervention that is the subject of the parent or legal guardian's objection.

The Certificate of Religious Exemption must be signed by the health care provider responsible for the performance of the student's health examination and stated that the health care provider provided the parent or legal guardian of the student with information regarding

1. the required examinations
2. the benefits of immunizations, and
3. the health risks to the community from the communicable diseases for which immunization is required in Illinois.

These procedures for determining the validity of a religious objection are subject to change at any time without notice, including (but not limited to) upon the occurrence of a change in Illinois law regarding the same.

Exclusion Procedures

All Catholic schools and childcare facilities in the Diocese of Belleville shall maintain an accurate list of all students who have not presented proof of immunity against any or all diseases for which immunization is required under Illinois law.

The following Exclusion Procedures apply when the parent of a student attends a school in the Diocese of Belleville has claimed a valid medical or religious objection to vaccinating the student in accordance with applicable Illinois law.

Upon the occurrence of a case or suspected case of one or more communicable diseases, from which a student has not been vaccinated pursuant to a medical or religious objection, at the school where the student attends, the school may exclude a student who has not been vaccinated against the communicable disease(s) from entering the school's premises for a reasonable period of time in accordance with applicable Illinois law, including but not limited to the Control of Communicable Diseases Code (77 Ill. Admin. Code, Part 690) (or any successor provisions) to ensure the safety of the student as well as other individuals.

If a student who has claimed a valid medical or religious objection to one or more vaccinations becomes a case or suspected case having a communicable disease, the school may exclude the student from entering the school's premises for a reasonable period of time in accordance with applicable Illinois law, including but not limited to the Control of Communicable Diseases Code (77 Ill. Admin. Code, Part 690) (or any successor provisions) to ensure the safety of the student as well as other individuals. These Exclusion Procedures are subject to change at any time without notice, including (but not limited to) upon the occurrence of a change in Illinois law regarding the same.

Immunization Requirements for Pre-Kindergarten

- Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus: 4 doses of DTP/Dtap
- Polio: minimum of 3 doses of IPV
- Measles: 1 dose received on or after the 1st birthday (usually given as MMR)
- Mumps: 2 doses, one received on or after the 1st birthday and the second no less than four weeks (28 days) after the first dose (usually given as MMR)
- Rubella: 2 doses, one received on or after the 1st birthday and the second no less than 28 days after the first dose (usually given as MMR)

- Hepatitis B: 3 doses received at required intervals
- Haemophilus Influenza B: Hib vaccine appropriate to age
- Chickenpox (Varicella): 2 doses, one received on or after the 1st birthday and the second no less than 28 days after the first dose; or physician's statement verifying disease history, or laboratory evidence of varicella immunity.

Immunization Requirements for Kindergarten

- Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus: 4 or more doses of DTP/Dtap with the last dose qualifying as a booster and received on or after the 4th birthday
- Polio: 4 or more doses of IPV with the last dose qualifying as a booster and received on or after the 4th birthday
- Measles: 2 doses (first dose received on or after the 1st birthday; second dose no less than 28 days later- usually given as MMR)
- Mumps: 2 doses (first dose received on or after the 1st birthday; second dose no less than 28 days later- usually given as MMR)
- Rubella: 2 doses (first dose received on or after the 1st birthday; second dose no less than 28 days later- usually given as MMR)
- Hepatitis B: no requirements
- Haemophilus Influenza B (Hib): not required after 5th birthday
- Chickenpox (Varicella): Immunization required prior to entrance to kindergarten if child did not attend pre-school; 2 doses (first dose on or after the 1st birthday and the second no less than 228 days after the first dose), or physician's statement verifying disease history, or laboratory evidence of varicella immunity

Immunization requirements for Grades 1-5

- Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus: 3 or more doses of DTP/Dtap or Td with the last dose qualifying as a booster and received on or after the 4th birthday
- Polio: 3 doses or more of IPV with the last dose qualifying as a booster and received on or after the 4th birthday
- Measles: 2 doses: the first dose received on or after the 1st birthday; second dose no less than 28 days later (usually given as MMR)
- Mumps: 2 doses: the first dose received on or after the 1st birthday; second dose no less than 28 days later (usually given as MMR)
- Rubella: 2 doses: the first dose received on or after the 1st birthday; second dose no less than 28 days later (usually given as MMR)
- Hepatitis B: Required for pre-school and grades 5-8
- Chickenpox (Varicella): Varicella immunization is required prior to entrance to grades 1 through 5: 2 doses (the first dose received on or after the 1st birthday; second dose no less than 28 days later), or physician's statement verifying disease history, or laboratory evidence of varicella immunity

Immunization Requirements for Grades 6-8

- Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus: 3 or more doses of DTP/Dtap, with the last dose qualifying as a booster and received on or after the 4th birthday. Beginning school year 2012-2013, any student entering the 6th grade is required to show proof of receiving one dose of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis) vaccine regardless of the interval since the last DTap, DT, or Td dose
- Polio: 3 doses or more of Polio vaccine with the last dose qualifying as a booster and received on or after the 4th birthday
- Measles: 2 doses: the first dose received on or after the 1st birthday; second dose no less than 28 days later (usually given as MMR)
- Mumps: 2 doses: the first dose received on or after the 1st birthday; second dose no less than 28 days later (usually given as MMR)
- Rubella: 2 doses: the first dose received on or after the 1st birthday; second dose no less than 28 days later (usually given as MMR)
- Hepatitis B: 3 doses received at proper intervals (first two doses shall be received no less than 28 days apart, the second and third doses shall occur within a two month period, and the first and third doses shall occur within a four month period), proof of prior or current infection if verified by laboratory evidence may be substituted for proof of vaccination
- Chickenpox (Varicella): Varicella immunization is required prior to entrance to grades 6-8 for the first time (the first dose received on or after the 1st birthday; second dose no less than 28 days later), or physician's statement verifying disease history, or laboratory evidence of varicella immunity
- Meningitis: all student entering grade 6 are required to show proof of receiving one dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4) on or after 11 years of age

Compliance

The completed Certificate of Child Health Examination form which includes the physical examination, immunization record, and health history must be submitted on or before October 15 in order for the child to be in compliance. Students needing immunizations after October 15 must submit to the school a signed appointment schedule from the person administering the immunizations. Students who fail to receive the immunization(s) at the appointed time will be considered in non-compliance. Students who are in non-compliance with the health examination and/or immunization requirements will be excluded from school until compliance is met.

Dental Examination

Before May 15 of the school year, each child in kindergarten, second grade, and sixth grade shall present to the school proof of having been examined by a dentist in accordance with Section 27-8.1 (1.5) of the Illinois School Code. The examination must have taken place within 18 months prior to May 15 of the school year. A dental examination form must be submitted, verified, signed, and dated by a licensed dentist. The dental examination shall be recorded on the Illinois Department of Public Health Dental Examination Report form. If a child in the second or sixth grade fails to present proof of having been examined by a dentist by May 15, the school may hold the child's report card until the child presents proof of a completed dental

examination or the child presents proof that a dental examination will take place within 60 days after May 15.

Eye Examination

All children enrolling in kindergarten and any student enrolling for the first time in school shall have an eye examination. Each of these children shall present proof of having been examined by a physician who performs eye examinations or an optometrist within one year prior to the date of entering school. Students transferring in from an out-of-state school have 30 days of enrollment to submit proof of an eye examination. The required form for eye examinations is the Illinois Department of Public Health Eye Examination Report. The eye examination requirement does not apply to children enrolling in prekindergarten.

Children who show an undue burden or a lack of access to an optometrist or to a physician who provides eye examinations shall receive a waiver from the requirement for an eye examination. An undue burden or lack of access to an optometrist or to a physician who performs eye examinations includes, but is not limited to:

- The child is enrolled in medical assistance/ALL KIDS
- The child does not have any type of vision/eye insurance coverage and does not qualify for medical assistance/ALL KIDS

The Eye Examination Waiver Form shall be submitted to the school before October 15. If the waiver form is not submitted before October 15, the school may hold the child's report card until the Eye Examination Waiver Form is submitted. (Section 665.650 IL School Code)

Vision and Hearing Screening

The purpose of the vision and hearing screening is to identify children who may have a visual or a hearing impairment and make appropriate referrals for follow-up testing and diagnosis. Vision and hearing screenings are required under the Child Vision and Hearing Test Act. At St. Joseph Catholic School, we provide annual vision and hearing screenings for all grade levels.

Vision screening shall be provided annually for all pre-kindergarten children 3 years of age and older, all school age children who are in Kindergarten, 2nd and 8th grades, and any child referred by a teacher. Vision screening is recommended in grades 4 and 6. Hearing screening shall be provided annually for all pre-kindergarten children 3 years of age and older, all school age children in Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade, and any child referred by a teacher. Hearing screening is recommended in grades 4, 6, and 8.

Vision screening will be done, as mandated, for the children in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, second, and eighth grade in the beginning of the school year. Vision screening is not a substitute for a complete eye and vision evaluation by an eye doctor. The child is not required to undergo this vision screening if an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months and that evaluation is on file at the school. This notice is not a permission to test and is not required to be returned. Vision screening is not an option. If a vision examination report is not on file at the school for your child in the mandated grade, your child will be screened.

Sports Physical

An annual athletic physical is required for children participating in any interscholastic sport. The IHSA physical form must be completed and on file in the school office before the child is permitted to participate in the sport, including practice sessions. It is important to note that the sports physical is an annual physical and must be submitted each year that the student participates in interscholastic sports with the exception of students entering Kindergarten or 6th grade when the required Certificate of Child Health Examination is submitted in lieu of a sports physical.

Health Insurance

The St. Joseph Catholic School, in following the policy of the Diocese of Belleville, requires that all students have insurance coverage, and parents must sign a statement to this effect at the start of each school year. Children whose parents refuse to sign this statement concerning proof of private coverage and release of liability, or who refuse to purchase insurance, will not be accepted into St. Joseph Catholic School (DP #5143)

Medication

The administration of medication to students during regular school hours and during school-related activities is discouraged unless absolutely necessary for the critical health and well-being of the student. Under no circumstances shall teachers or other school employees be required to administer medication to students. Only school personnel authorized by written permission of the principal may administer medication to students during regular school hours.

Only those medications which are necessary to maintain the student in school and must be given during school hours may be brought to school. All medicine, including prescription and over-the-counter medicine that is to be taken at school must be brought to the school office.

This includes cough drops. All medications, including non-prescription drugs, given in school shall be prescribed by a licensed prescriber on an individual basis as determined by the student's health status. All prescription medication brought to school must be in its original container with the prescription label attached. Nonprescription, over-the-counter, medication shall be brought to school in containers with the manufacturer's original label with the ingredients listed and clearly visible; and the student's name affixed to the container.

A written order for the prescription and non-prescription medication must be provided to the school from the student's licensed prescriber. Prescriptions will only be valid for not more than one school year. In addition to the licensed prescriber's order, a written request shall be obtained from the parent requesting the medication be given during school hours. The parental request form and the physician's order form are available in the school office. It is the parent's responsibility to assure that the licensed prescriber order, written request and medications are brought to school.

Medications will be stored in a separate locked cabinet. Medications requiring refrigeration will be refrigerated in a secure area. The parent will be responsible at the end of the treatment for removing any unused medication from school. If a parent does not pick up the medication by the end of the school year, the medication will be discarded. If a child requests a medication for an acute ailment, the parent will be called and assumes responsibility for bringing the medication to school, refusing the request for medication, or taking the child home. Students with asthma are permitted to keep their inhalers with them and self-administer medication as

prescribed. A written order for the inhaler and a written authorization form must be completed and signed by the parent before a child can self-carry and self administer asthma medication.

All health forms, including the physical examination form, sport's physical form, dental form, eye examination form and eye examination waiver; emergency form, health insurance form, physician's and parent's authorization forms for medication, and asthma inhaler authorization form are available in the school office.

Medical Cannabis (Diocesan Policy 5141.2)

Diocesan schools shall allow a parent, legal guardian, or any other individual registered with the Department of Public Health as a designated caregiver of a student (who is a registered qualifying patient) to administer a medical cannabis infused product to the student while on school premises or before or after normal school activities, including while the student is being transported on a school bus or is attending before- or after- school care on school property.

All medical cannabis infused products administered at Diocesan schools pursuant to this policy must have been purchased by a qualifying patient/caregiver from a licensed dispensing organization, must be in a verifiable container from a licensed dispensary, must be properly labeled with qualifying patient information, and must be packaged according to the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act.

Under this policy, acceptable medical cannabis infused products include oils, ointments, foods, patches, and other products that contain usable cannabis and are supported by applicable law(s). Medical cannabis infused products may be ingested orally, applied topically, dissolved under the tongue, or administered in another manner supported by applicable law(s). However, medical cannabis products may not be smoked or vaped at any time, in any circumstance pursuant to this policy. The Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act (the "CRTA") prohibits the possession or use of marijuana, in any form, on a school bus, on the school grounds of any preschool, primary or secondary school, in a public place or knowingly in close physical proximity to anyone under the age of 21 by anyone who is not otherwise authorized under the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act. All Catholic schools in the Diocese of Belleville will abide by the CRTA.

General information concerning use of any medication on school property can be found under Policy 5141.1.

Contagious Illness

Any student diagnosed with any of the following contagious diseases must be excluded from school for not less than the period of isolation set by the Illinois Department of Public Health:

- Chickenpox
- Strep Throat
- Pinkeye
- Pediculosis
- Fifths Disease
- Diphtheria
- Scarlet Fever
- Infantile Paralysis
- Smallpox
- Scabies
- Rubella
- Impetigo

- Measles
- Mumps
- Tuberculosis
- Typhoid Fever
- Whooping Cough
- Ringworm
- COVID-19

Any student who has had any of the following contagious diseases must present a physician's statement attesting that the student is no longer contagious before being readmitted to school:

- Diphtheria
- Tuberculosis
- Fifth Disease
- Impetigo
- Typhoid Fever
- Measles
- Whooping Cough
- Ringworm
- Rash of undetermined origin

In addition, we ask that you please DO NOT bring your child to school if they have had any of the following symptoms within the last 24 hours:

- Sore Throat
- Fever
- Rash
- Swollen Glands
- Vomiting
- Skin Sores
- Earache
- Respiratory Infection
- Head Lice
- Diarrhea

In the event of a positive COVID test, the school will follow the guidelines set forth by the IDPH and the Diocesan Office of Education with regards to quarantine and return to school.

Students are to be fever free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

Head Lice

Children found to have possible symptoms of head lice may be asked to leave and see a physician. If a case is confirmed, students are to be held from school until the day after the first shampoo, lotion or cream rinse pediculicide is properly applied. When head lice are found in multiple students throughout the building, the school will provide examinations to all students by a licensed professional.

Disposition of Minor Illness or Minor Injury

If an injury or illness is minor, it may be appropriate to retain the student in school for the remainder of the day. The principal, or designee, will contact the parent to inform him/her of the situation. If the parent cannot be reached, the alternate contact provided by the parent on the emergency form will be contacted. If a student requires medical attention, the parent will be notified and the parent will be asked to arrange for treatment. In non-emergency situations, if efforts to reach the parent or contacts provided on the emergency form are not successful, the student will be kept in school under the observation of a staff member or principal.

Disposition of Major Illness or Injury

If a major illness or injury occurs, the parent will be contacted immediately. If the parent cannot be reached, the alternate contact on the emergency form will be contacted. If the illness or injury is thought to be serious enough to warrant emergency care, an ambulance will be called to transport the student to the emergency room. The protocol is to transport people to the nearest emergency room.

Emergency Form

An emergency form must be completed for each child enrolled at St. Joseph Catholic School. The emergency form is part of the registration packet and must be completed at the time the student is registered for school. It is the parent's responsibility to keep all information accurate and current and to contact the school office of any changes.

Pregnancy Policy

The principal will inform the Pastor immediately upon knowledge of a pregnant student. The Pastor and the principal, in consultation with the Diocesan Office of Education will make final judgment as to whether or not a pregnant student should be enrolled or continue enrollment in the school. In light of compassion and mercy, each case will be considered individually with the student and parents. Counseling will be recommended. If the biological father is enrolled at St. Joseph Catholic School, consultation will take place with him and his parents, and recommendations will be made to appropriate counseling resources. All of this will take place within the confines of confidentiality.

Allergy Management Policy

The administration understands the increasing prevalence of life-threatening allergies among school populations and recognizes that the risk of accidental exposure to allergens can be reduced in the school setting. St. Joseph Catholic School is committed to working in cooperation with the parents, students, and physicians to minimize risks and provide a safe educational environment for all students. The focus of allergy management shall be on prevention, education, awareness, communication, and emergency response. There are a variety of student care plans and accommodations that are appropriate to use for students that experience health conditions that may impact a student's school day and academic program. It is the policy of the school to provide students, through reasonable accommodations where required, the opportunity to participate in all school programs and activities.

It shall be the responsibility of the parent to:

- Inform the school of a child's allergies prior to the opening of school (or as soon as possible after diagnosis)
- Provide documentation of the allergy from the child's physician
- Teach the child not to share food, drinks, or utensils
- Sign release for school personnel to consult with family physician/allergist/ and all medical providers
- Provide the school with the Allergy Action Plan completed and signed by the child's physician
- Meet with school officials to review the Allergy Action Plan

- Complete and submit all required medication forms
- Provide the school with all necessary medication
- Provide the school with current emergency information and maintain updated emergency contact numbers and medical information
- Consider providing a medical alert bracelet for the child
- Provide safe snacks in the classroom for the child
- Accompany the child on field trips and extracurricular activities whenever possible
- Inform the school of any changes in the child's health status
- Provide the school with the physician's statement if the student no longer has an allergy

It shall be the responsibility of the school to:

- Follow Diocesan policies and guidelines
- Develop and maintain an Allergy Management Packet that includes the following forms:
 - Allergy Assessment
 - Authorization for Emergency Care of Student with Allergies
 - Allergy Action Plan
 - Medical Alert Letter to Parents
 - Medical Alert for Teachers and Substitutes
- Familiarize teachers and other school personnel with the Allergy Action Plan on a need-to-know basis
- Provide mandatory in-service training and education on reducing life-threatening allergy risks, recognizing food allergy symptoms, and emergency procedures for appropriate staff to include:
 - A description of severe allergies
 - The signs and symptoms of Anaphylaxis
 - The correct use of Epinephrine
 - Specific steps to follow in the event of an emergency
 - Ensure that all personnel know where medication is located in the school
 - Ensure that substitute teachers are informed of students with severe allergies

HIV – AIDS

St. Joseph School follows practices and procedures established by the U.S. Center for Disease Control, Illinois Department of Public Health, the American Red Cross, the U.S. Catholic Conference, and the Diocese of Belleville concerning students infected with HIV. Students with HIV enrolled or seeking enrollment in grades K through 8 will be permitted to attend school. Exclusions will not occur unless exceptional conditions are evident and warranted.

When a student is infected with HIV, the principal and the Pastor must be informed by the student's parents or guardians. The principal and Pastor, in consultation with the student's parents or guardians, physician, public health personnel, and the Diocesan Office of Education, will determine the type of educational and care setting the student will require. Personnel who will be required to care for the student and to detect situations where potential for transmission may increase will be informed of the student's condition.

DIOCESAN CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

All adults working with children at school must be in compliance with the Office of Child Protection requirements. The school secretary is the liaison between the school, the parish, and the Office of Child Protection. She/he is responsible for reviewing that all of the following requirements are met:

- Application for Volunteer Service on file
- Cants form completed every 2 years
- Proof of completion of the Initial Protection Policy training
- Successful completion of the annual refresher course (done each year)

Mandated Reporter/Abuse and Neglected Child Reporting

The Abuse and Neglected Child Reporting Act (1982) mandates suspicion of child abuse or neglect be reported to the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). The law covers all children up to the age of 18. All parish and school personnel, including, but not limited to teachers, administrators, volunteers, coaches, staff, teacher aides, and others to work with children are to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect to DCFS. The DCFS may ask that licenses/certificates be suspended and/or revoked if it has proof that professional personnel had knowledge of child abuse and/or neglect and did not report. When a suspected case is reported to the DCFS, the person reporting the case should inform the school principal. If the principal is unavailable, the Pastor should be informed. (DP 5141.4)

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

St. Joseph Catholic School considers it a privilege and not a right to permit students to bring electronic devices, including cell phones, to school. The principal shall determine which electronic devices are acceptable for use at school. Students may have electronic devices at school provided a parent has signed the proper permission form and the student adheres to the regulations of their usage.

The electronic device use agreement verifies that a student must comply with all school policies. In particular, it is to be understood that: any use of computers, phones, or any device at school are primarily for educational purposes; that there is no privacy in regards to computer files or devices (administration may search at any time); that students should never give their password or device to anyone else and are responsible for anything done under their login session or on their device, and that students may never use a computer or any device, and social media for any reason that would be contrary to Catholic values, injurious to another person, or for any type of malicious, violent, or sexual purpose.

Electronic device use agreements will be included in the registration packets each year. The permission forms for electronic devices are updated annually with copies available in the main office. Students who fail to abide by school regulations will lose their privilege to bring a device to school. If a student is found using the device in violation of this and other school rules, the device will be confiscated and kept in the school office until it is picked up by the parent. The school or any of its employees will not be held liable for any damage to or loss of a student's electronic device(s) that are brought to school.

Cell Phones

Parents must sign an authorization form in order for students to bring cell phones to school. Cell phones must be turned off and kept in the students' backpacks during the school day. A student in violation of this rule will have his/her cell phone confiscated and kept in the school office until it is picked up by the parent. Students/parents who need to contact each other during the school day must do so through the school office.

School Computers

All students will have access to the use of the school computers. Students will be required to sign an Authorized User Policy (DP 1341) for the use of the Internet. A copy of this policy will be given to the students to sign at the beginning of each school year. School equipment (Desktops, Chromebooks, Kindles, etc.) is intended to remain on school grounds unless permission to complete assignments. Students will be responsible for device(s) assigned to them and are expected to return it to school on the next school day in good working condition.

Computer Policy Violations

Students using electronic devices are to follow all school and diocesan policies. When a student is found in violation of any of these policies, disciplinary action will be taken. In minor cases, the classroom teacher will follow the appropriate grade level disciplinary plan. In other cases, students may lose computer privileges for a set period of time. If a student has lost computer privileges, they may not be able to complete class work using school computers. Any such assignments may be sent home for completion, or a student may be given an alternate assignment that can be done without the use of computers.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Asbestos Abatement Act

The Asbestos Abatement Act (P.A. 83-1325 and amended by P.A. 84-1096) requires all schools to be tested for asbestos and have a management plan for their buildings. St. Joseph Catholic School buildings have been inspected for asbestos-containing building materials by a licensed inspector. In addition, an Asbestos Management Plan has been prepared by a licensed Management Planner. The Inspection Report and Management Plan are on file in the main office and open to anyone for review during regular school office hours. The report states asbestos containing materials were found, and copies of these reports are available upon notification of the facility administrator along with a payment of a fee to cover copying costs.

Deliveries to Students during School Day

Any type of delivery to a student during the school day must go to the main office (i.e. lunch,

books, clothes, etc.). The office will get the item(s) to the student at an appropriate time that does not disrupt class time. A child's teacher and the main office should be notified of any special delivery in the middle of the school day (i.e. birthday treats, flowers, etc.). In general, calls will not be made home for things other than glasses, medication, or student illness.

Field Trips

Field trips are privileges afforded to students. No student has an absolute right to a field trip. Students can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements. A parent may refuse to allow a child to participate in a field trip. The child will then be assigned to another teacher at the school and given the appropriate work for the day. Students will not be permitted to participate in a field trip when serving a detention or suspension. Only signed official permission forms from the school office will be accepted for a child to go on a field trip. Telephone calls, emails, or notes will not be accepted in lieu of the official form. (DP 6153) Permission slips should be returned by the designated deadline in order for students to be eligible to participate on the field trip.

Parents are encouraged to chaperone on field trips. Please note that any parents or adults who chaperone will need to have completed a Volunteer Form and complete all required information outlined by the Diocesan Child Protection Policy. If a parent is driving students, a driver information and insurance sheet must be on file in the main office. Verification of participation in the Safe Driver training module must also be done prior to the field trip. For younger students, proper car seats are required in all parent vehicles for student transportation. Parents may not bring additional non-St. Joseph students (including younger family members) along with them if they are attending as a chaperone.

Extracurricular Activities

Moderators, coaches, and volunteers must ensure all guidelines are adhered to when charged with supervising an extra-curricular activity. Students shall always be supervised in any part of the school, parish center, or playground. Students should never be left alone at school while waiting for a ride home. Parents may not leave/drop off students to any school activity without a designated supervisor present. Students may not leave practice, games, or school-sponsored events and return without the expressed consent of the parent and the permission of the moderator, coach, or volunteer in charge. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that exemplifies a student of St. Joseph School.

Moderators, coaches, and volunteers in charge of activities must be at least 18 years of age. Should any difficulties arise during this supervision, the moderator, coach, or volunteer in charge must notify the principal. In the event of inclement weather, activities may be cancelled. If school is cancelled, all extracurricular activities are also cancelled for the day. Participation in extracurricular activities is considered a privilege and not a right. Eligibility for participation is determined by policy of the Diocesan Board of Education and St. Joseph Catholic School. If a student is considered absent from school (1/2 day or more) due to illness or without an excuse, the student will not be permitted to attend any extracurricular events for the day. Students suspended from school cannot participate in any school-sponsored activity. Participation in school clubs and activities during the school day requires permission from the child's teacher(s).

In accordance with the Diocesan directive based on the athletics policy, no extracurricular

activities shall be scheduled more than four days within a seven-day period resetting every Sunday. Non-liturgical events are prohibited on Sundays to ensure each child has the opportunity to attend activities tied to a school or parish liturgical event.

Classroom Interruptions

Classroom time is not to be interrupted by parents or visitors. The office is to be contacted for messages, etc. If it is necessary to bring something for your child to school, the item is to be brought to the school office. This includes but is not limited to books, homework, P.E. clothes, lunches, glasses, etc.

Library

Preschool and students in kindergarten through 4th grade visit the library weekly to check out books. Librarians staff the library on the days preschool and students in kindergarten through 4th grade visit the library. Middle school teachers who teach reading take their students to the library as required. All books checked out from the library must be returned to the library on the due date. A book may be renewed on the due date provided the student has the book and brought it to the library for renewal. Books not renewed will be considered overdue. Librarians will notify teachers of students who have overdue books. Students with overdue books will not be permitted to check out books. Teachers will notify the parents of students who have overdue books. Fines are not collected on overdue books, HOWEVER, if after six weeks the overdue book has not been returned to the library, the book shall be considered lost and the parent shall be responsible for the cost of replacing the book in the library. The cost of replacing the book shall be determined by the current retail price of the book. The replacement cost of the book is considered a library fee owed to the school. The student will not be able to check out books from the library until the library fee is paid.

All library books must be returned to the library by May 1 of the current school year. Books not returned on or before May 1 shall be considered lost. Parents will be notified of the books not returned to the library. Parents are responsible for the cost of replacing the book. The replacement cost of the book is considered a fee owed to the school.

Students may begin to show interest in reading books from the Young Adult (YA) section of the school library after beginning grade 6. These books may contain content that is inappropriate for the child's age/grade level. Permission from a parent must be given before a 6th grade child is allowed to check out books from this section. Once students reach the 7th grade, they are considered a Young Adult Library Patron and may check out books from this section without parental permission.

The school library's Advanced Young Adult Section houses books for a more mature reader. The books in this section are written for the high school and adult audiences. These books may contain content that is inappropriate for the student's age/grade level. Permission from a parent must be given before a 7th or 8th grade student is allowed to check out books from this section.

Books from city or other local libraries as well as personal AR books from home are not permitted for student use during school hours unless the title is approved by the teacher.

Damage to School Property

Fines will be assessed to replace or repair damaged property. The amount of damage done

to school property will determine the fine. Students who lose textbooks and library books will pay the cost of replacement.

Lost and Found

Apparel and personal items should be marked to facilitate return if they become lost. Articles which have been found are placed on the Lost and Found rack near the entrance to the school. Apparel not claimed by the end of the school year will be given to charity. Personal items not identifiable will be discarded.

Lunch

Students will have the opportunity to **pre-order lunch from Poettker's Catering Service every day school is in session for a full day beginning on the first day of school and ending the third week of May. Parents must order the food on Thursdays for the following week. Payment is due at the time the order is placed.** Milk is provided with the lunch; extra milk or milk bought by students who bring their lunch costs \$.75. Students who bring their lunch must also bring their utensils. Lunches brought from home must be cold lunches. Microwaves are not available for heating or reheating food. Soft drinks (soda) is not permitted in lunches.

Chewing gum is not permitted at lunch- time or any other time during school hours.

Snacks and Treats

On special occasions such as a birthday, a student may bring a treat to share with his/her classmates or participate in the PTF birthday program. Parents should bring the items to the school door if delivering during the day. The student's parent must inform the teacher no less than a day ahead of time if bringing/sending a treat to school. It is important to check with your child's teacher to know if there is a child with food allergies, including peanut allergies, in the classroom. **According to health regulations, treats brought to school shall be pre-packaged store-bought snacks.**

Recess

Students in grades Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 3 have a mid-morning recess. All students will have a recess either directly before or directly after lunch. A note signed by the parent must be sent to the school office if a child is not to go outside for recess due to illness or injury. If the student is to be excused from recess or P.E. for more than one day a doctor's slip will need to be turned in to the office. All students need to dress properly for the given season in order to participate in outdoor recess. Students cannot participate in recess or other outdoor activities without coats on colder days as determined by the principal. Instead, students will either use the gymnasium or the school building for an indoor recess.

Video/Photograph/Taping of Students

A written parental consent form must be obtained by the school in order to use any videos, photographs, slides, audio tapes or any other visual or audio reproductions in which their child may appear. The consent form releases the school, parish, and the Diocese of Belleville from any liability connected with the use of any visual or audio formats as part of any promotion, recruitment or fundraising program. The consent form is part of the FACTS online enrollment process. Only those children whose parents have signed the consent form will be photographed

or taped.

Parent Volunteers

Parents and volunteers are an important part of St. Joseph Catholic School. A parent may volunteer to be the room parent or may be asked by the teacher to serve as the room parent. Parents will be contacted by the teacher or room parent to assist with special projects, field trips, and holiday parties. All parents and volunteers who are in contact with children at St. Joseph Catholic School must complete all required information outlined by the Diocesan Child Protection Policy. Parent volunteers will park in the teacher parking lot.

Family Volunteer Hours Requirement

Beginning with the 25-26 School Year, St Joseph Catholic School is implementing the requirement for each family in Grades Pre-K-8 to provide a minimum of 20 volunteer hours within a school year. Not only will you be helping the school, but you will be able to get to know other families in our community. The hours can be served by a parent, grandparent, or a family member who is 18 years of age or older, with current Criminal Background Clearance and Child Protection Compliance on file in the School Office. Volunteer hours must be completed between August 1st and May 14th.

Families may accumulate service hours in many ways such as volunteering for:

- Committees
- Classroom Assistance
- PTF Events (sign up genius will be sent out)
- Dinner Auction
- Recess Duty
- Fish Fry
- Sports Activities
- Parish Events
- Church Picnic

If you are in need of service hours, please look in the Friday newsletter for service hour opportunities or contact our school office.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

All parish and school advisory councils in the Diocese of Belleville are consultative boards. A consultative board is established by the Pastor to assist him and the principal in the governance of the parish education program. The board's responsibilities are in policy matters. They are not responsible for administration or the details of administration. The board has responsibilities in the following areas: Finance and Budget, Policy and Strategic Plan, Development, Marketing, PTF Liaison. Eight members serve three-year terms. The school advisory council is comprised of members from St. Joseph's and St. Agatha, with at least, one member being a parishioner of each parish without a child in the school. The principal and Pastor are ex-officio members of the council. If a parent or guest would like to address the Council, arrangements shall be made no less than one week in advance with the President of the Council and the Principal. The topic to be presented shall be noted on the agenda.

PARENTS-TEACHERS-FRIENDS (P.T.F.)

The P.T.F. organization supports the school in a variety of ways. All parents, teachers, and

friends of St. Joseph Catholic School are considered members and are invited to participate in this organization. This group meets monthly throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to be active in the school's parent organization. It is required that families help with at least three school or P.T.F. events throughout each school year.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

Parents are the child's primary teacher and St. Joseph Catholic School recognizes the importance of parents working with their children to help assure that children are prepared for school and for a lifetime of learning. It is important that parents:

- **READ** to their elementary age school children and set an example that reading is fun. Read stories, nursery rhymes, bible stories, road signs, cereal boxes, etc.
- **ENCOURAGE** your children to complete age-appropriate tasks around the house...picking up after oneself, setting the table, putting clothes in clothes hamper, taking care of family pet, household chores, etc.
- **PRACTICE** good health and safety habits...always wear a seat belt when riding in a motor vehicle, have children wear a helmet when riding a bike, keep a consistent bedtime, exercise and play with children, eat healthy snacks, help children develop healthy routines such as showers and brushing teeth, have and practice an escape route from the home in the event of fire, help promote internet safety, discuss safety habits when home alone, etc.
- **DISCUSS** your child's day with them. Hear about their educational experiences by asking about favorite subjects and activities from the week. By encouraging students to tell stories, this practice can assist in developing stronger writing skills. These discussions can also lead to areas in which parents can help students with school work or with issues a student may be having at school. Keeping an open dialogue at a young age can encourage continued discussions throughout adolescent years.
- **COMMUNICATE** with your child's teachers and the school office. Let us know what is going on and what we can do to help ensure your child receives the best education in a safe and nurturing school environment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please Detach and Return to the School Office by Sept. 1, 2026

**I have read and understand the information contained in the Revised St. Joseph Catholic
School Parent Student Handbook.**

Parent/Guardian

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Parent/Guardian

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Name of Student(s) and grade:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____