



41 East First Street
Waconia, MN 55387
Phone: 952-442-4500 Fax: 952-442-3719
Email: brichards@stjosephwaconia.org

March 28, 2023

Hello SJS parents,

Please join me in praying for the victims of the Tennessee school shooting that took place yesterday. If you are able, I invite you to join us this Thursday morning at 7:15 in the church for a holy half hour of prayer for the victims of this school tragedy.

I want to assure you that there are a number of steps that we have in place to ensure that our school is a safe environment. Here are some of those measures:

- Every morning our staff are visible and welcoming students as they are dropped off on the street, we greet them at the school entry, and the teachers meet the students at the classroom door.
- We work to maintain a safe and caring school through clear behavioral expectations, positive behavior interventions and supports, crisis planning and preparedness, and on-site school counseling.
- We conduct a formal review of all school safety policies and procedures to ensure that emerging school safety issues are adequately covered in current school crisis plans and emergency response procedures.
- Our school facilities committee audits our equipment. Just this year we updated our camera system, we re-keyed the school entries, and we have keyless access points where only staff are able to get into the building.
- We review communication systems within the school and parish and with community responders. We are currently updating our communications system and a new system will be put in place this summer.
- We regularly connect with community emergency responders to be present in our school.
- We provide crisis training and professional development for staff based upon needs assessment.
- We use violence prevention programs and curriculum in school.
- We work to create a caring school community in which adults and students respect and trust each other and all students feel connected, understand expectations, and receive the behavioral and mental health support they need.

St. Joseph's School mission is to inspire and empower all learners to become the person God intends by integrating Catholic Virtues, Prayers and Service with 21st Century Learning.



41 East First Street
Waconia, MN 55387
Phone: 952-442-4500 Fax: 952-442-3719
Email: brichards@stjosephwaconia.org

In order to keep our students and staff safe, we have the following measures in place:

- There is limited access to the school building, including a designated entrance with locks to the internal school, and all other access points locked from the exterior.
- The Carver County sheriff regularly patrols the school area.
- We conduct several response drills throughout the school year that we call "Lock-down" drills. (We just practiced one a week ago).
- Staff members monitor and supervise areas such as hallways, cafeterias, and playgrounds.
- Guests must report to the main office, sign in, and wear badges; and staff members are instructed to escort and report unfamiliar people to the school office.
- Building level teams regularly review crisis and emergency plans.
- All staff members participate in annual training and drills, including intruder alerts, weather and fire emergencies.
- Teachers and other staff know how to respond to students' questions and support them following a crisis. In addition, threat assessment and risk-assessment procedures are in place for teams.
- Our school provides school-wide behavioral expectations, caring school climate programs, positive interventions and supports, psychological and counseling services, and violence prevention programs such as bully-proofing, social skill development, and conflict mediation.
- We promote compliance with school rules and encourage students to report potential problems to school officials and resist peer pressure to act irresponsibly.

I can assure you that in the event of a crisis, our team is ready to act and do everything possible to keep our students safe.

Any time there is a school tragedy, our hearts break.

Our students, your children, are so precious to all of us. We love them dearly and we are committed to keeping them safe while preparing and equipping them for this world and empowering them to become modern-day saints who will spend eternity in heaven.

If you have concerns or would like to be part of our school facilities team that creates and monitors our systems and procedures, please email: SJSschoolboard@stjosephwaconia.org and share your thoughts, ideas, questions and requests.

Peace everyone,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bruce Richards", written over a blue circular scribble.

Bruce Richards EdS.

St. Joseph's School mission is to inspire and empower all learners to become the person God intends by integrating Catholic Virtues, Prayers and Service with 21st Century Learning.