



# FAMILY HANDBOOK

*“Our 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.”*

Included in this document is our ***Family, Activities & Athletics, and Volunteer*** handbooks.

Please read the handbooks and [sign and return the Handbook form](#) to your child's teacher by fall conference time.

Thank you for choosing to partner with St. Joseph Catholic STEM School for your child's education.

Click the links below to jump to each section.

## **Family Handbook**

- Intro, Mission, Vision and Philosophy
- Faculty and Staff
- Absences and Attendance
- Accreditation
- Admissions Policy
- Christian Behavior Expectations and Conduct
- Academic Probation, Suspension and Expulsion
- Student Bullying/Harassment Policy
- Birthdays and Treats
- Child Safety
- Communications – Office and Teacher
- Conferences
- School Closure Policy
- Publication of Images and Family Directory
- Uniform Policy
- Field Trips
- Fair Share/Fundraising
- Grading
- Grievance Policy
- Faculty, Staff and Community Harassment Policy
- Health Services
- Media Use Policy and Student Electronics/Cell Phones
- Drop off and Pick up Procedures
- Pet Policy
- Physical Education
- Protection of Children
- Recommended Transfer
- Recruitment Incentive
- Report Cards
- Scholarship Opportunities
- School Board
- School Schedules
- School Safety Procedures
- Special Services
- Standardized Testing
- Student Records

Technology Policy  
Tuition Policy  
Anticipated Absence Form

## **Acknowledgement Signature Forms & Technology Policy Forms**

(all families must sign and return to the school by Fall conferences)

## **Athletic Handbook**

Mission and Nondiscriminatory Policy  
Activities Offered  
Level of Instruction  
Equitable Playing Time  
Procedures for Participation  
Sportsmanship  
Expectations of Students, Coaches and Parents  
Attendance Policy  
Uniforms  
Standards and Procedures

## **Volunteer Handbook**

Characteristics and Expectations  
Background Checks  
Opportunities  
Responsibilities

## **Saints, Inc. Handbook**



41 East First Street  
Waconia, MN 55387  
Telephone 952-442-4500 • Fax 952-442-3719  
email: [schooloffice@stjosephwaconia.org](mailto:schooloffice@stjosephwaconia.org)

Website: <http://school.stjosephwaconia.org/>

Dear Families:

I am pleased to present the *Family Handbook*. In addition to formal policies, it holds useful information on how the school operates. The Family Handbook consists of the Student/Parent Handbook, the Athletics Handbook, and the Volunteer Handbook. Between editions of the *Family Handbook*, we use the school newsletter to inform you of new policies or procedures.

This handbook is part of the contract that exists between the school and its parents and guardians. Therefore, please discuss the handbook with your children, then sign and return the agreement page found at the end of this book. Together, we share the responsibility for your children's understanding of the rules and regulations that flow from our mission.

Thank you for entrusting your children to St. Joseph Catholic STEM School. We are committed to the highest standards of education, to our Catholic identity, and to a safe and secure environment for your children.

God bless you and your family this year and always!

Sincerely,

Bruce Richards

Principal

*Note: This handbook is subject to revision and updating according to the policies and procedures of the Archdiocese of St. Paul/Minneapolis.*

***Vision Statement of St. Joseph Catholic Community***

***To know, love and serve the Lord.***

***Know and celebrate our Catholic Faith***

***Love God and our neighbor***

***Serve as disciples of Jesus***

***Mission Statement of St. Joseph Catholic School***

Our 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.

### ***Philosophy***

The community of St Joseph's School believes in integrating Catholic virtues, prayers, liturgies, celebrations and service with our Core Values of Living Faith, Embracing Family, Inspiring Learning, Celebrating Service and Achieving Excellence. We combine these with 21st Century Learning strategies & philosophies, Christian behavior expectations and state-aligned curriculum standards that prepare our students to be lifelong learners and contributing members in their families, churches, and communities. Our students are supported on their journey to God's ideal by the prayerful communication and collaboration of our pastor, our staff, our parents, our parish, our Archdiocese, and the communal Catholic church.



*Photography by Maren Delaney Photography*

### ***Faculty and Staff***

Pastor

Father Stan

Mader

Principal

Bruce Richards

Director of

Communications

Katie Moore

Director of

Advancement

John Bannigan

Administrative Assistant

Enrollment & Volunteer Coordinator

Kindergarten

First Grade

Second Grade

Third Grade

Fourth Grade

Fifth Grade

Therese Rademacher

Jenny Donato

Tiana Moyer

Yvonne Litfin

Bonnie Triplet

Brooke Maciaszek

Jenn Klein

Erin Bovee

*Middle School (grades six thru eight)*

Grades 6-8 Science, Grade 7 PBL, Grade 7 Faith

Grades 5-8 Social Studies, Grade 8 PBL

Grade 6 Faith, Grades 6-8 Reading

Grade 6-8 Math, STEM Integration

Grade 8 Faith

Janice Matlon

Tyler Sieh

Casey Shay

Amy Gallus

Bruce Richards

### *Specialists*

Reading Specialist  
Physical Education (K-8)  
Activities Director  
Vocal Music (K-4)  
Band (5-8)  
Art  
Media Center Specialist  
Technology Specialist  
Reading Intervention & Tech Teacher  
School Counselor  
Custodians

Virginia Gelhar  
Given Kalipinde  
Shawn Sutherland  
Lexie Kruse  
Matt Kapka  
Nicole Safratowich  
Jackie Jager  
Jessica Jantzen  
Eric Ehalt  
Jane Brill  
Don Stacken  
Curt Heldt

Lunch Program  
*Saints, Inc.* Coordinator

Asha Singh  
Lisa Johnson

### ***School Board***

Greg Fruhwirth – Chair  
Dr. David Sorkin – Vice Chair  
Peg Philp – Vice Chair  
Danielle Hedlof – Secretary  
Aaron Davis – Finance  
Mary Olson – Enrollment

Father Stan Mader, Pastor  
Chuck Palm – Facilities  
Logan Haskins - Facilities  
                                – Advancement  
Kristen Iverson - Activities  
Bruce Richards, Principal

## **Parent/ Student Handbook**

### **Attendance: General**

School attendance is mandatory by the State of Minnesota. Students are expected to arrive at school on time each day. Students are tardy if they are not in their classrooms when the 7:55 bell rings for the start of the day, and with each class session during the day for middle school students. If you know in advance that your child will be tardy or absent, please call the school office at (952) 442-4500 before 7:45 am on the day of absence. Leave the reason for your child's absence. (e.g. "Johnny is home with a fever." "Sara has strep throat.") Please do not just say they are ill. Knowing what is wrong with your child helps us to better take care of all our students. At that time, you may request homework assignments by stating your child's grade and teacher. Homework assignment requests will be filled by the classroom teachers and made available for parent pickup at the end of the day. The homework sheets will be placed on the Receptionist's counter in the school office.

### **Attendance: Unexcused absences and Vacations**

*According to state statute, seven unexcused absences are consistent with educational neglect. As a mandated reporter, the school is required by law to report educational neglect, and student truancy to social services.*

### Excessive absences

- Students missing 10% or more of a school year have significant learning loss.
- 40 days or the equivalent of 40 days including tardies, can be a cause for a student to be retained in the current grade for another year.

Research related to school attendance tells us that:

- Students who attend school on a regular basis receive higher grades.
- Students who graduate from high school have a greater chance of getting a job.
- Regularly attending school leads to increased self-esteem and a stronger friend group.
- A high school diploma pays out for a lifetime and is linked to better health of the students, families, and the community in which we all live.

Carver County Health and Human Services works closely with the schools within our communities to intervene early when school attendance becomes a struggle for youth and their families.

For planned absences, please contact the office and your child/ren's teacher(s) via **written** notice at least one week prior to the **planned** absence using the [Anticipated Absence Form](#). Vacations are considered unexcused absences unless approved by the administration.

### What Happens If I Miss School?

- 3 unexcused absences: The school sends home a notification letter.
- 5 unexcused absences: The school will send home a second notification letter and a pre-diversion meeting will be set up with you, school personnel and the County Truancy Social Worker.
- 7 unexcused absences: The school files truancy paperwork with Carver County Health and Human Services and a Truancy Case is opened with the County. Truancy cases are open for at least six months.

### What to Expect if Referred for Truancy

- A truancy meeting will be held at school with the Social Worker, student, parent/guardian and school personnel.
- The student, parents, school staff and the Truancy Social Worker will create and sign the truancy contract.
- There will be monthly face-to-face meetings with the Truancy Social Worker at school and at home.
- Regular communication between the school, parent(s), student, and the Social Worker will be necessary to ensure that the plan is being followed.
- The Truancy Worker will monitor attendance on a weekly basis.

- Failure to follow the plan will include consequences that may include:
  - Community Service
  - Random drug testing
  - Chemical Health or Mental Health Referrals
  - Potential court action which could lead to out of home placement.

*Note: Absence during the school day requires non-participation in athletics/events in the evening.*

Arrangements for regular classroom tests and assignments missed because of an absence are to be made with the individual teachers. These tests should be taken within one week of either the original test date or return to school.

### **Attendance: Tardies**

Three tardies are equal to 1 half day absent. At five tardies, you will receive a letter from the school office explaining the effect of excessive tardiness on your child. If no attendance improvement is seen, you will receive a second letter explaining your child's attendance problem, the law regarding school attendance, and a request to discuss the problem with the principal.

### **Attendance: Doctor/Dentist Appointments**

Parents are requested to make doctor and dentist appointments for children outside of school hours. If it is necessary for a child to keep such an appointment during school time, he/she must bring a note from parents/guardian with the time of the appointment. The parent/guardian must check in with the school office, the student will be called to the office and must be signed out at the office before he/she can leave school. Likewise, the parent/guardian must sign in the student upon return. For their safety, students will not be allowed to walk to appointments, or to leave the building for any reason during school hours, without being signed out by a parent/guardian.

Students who are away from the school for an appointment three times for a half hour or more per trimester, will be counted absent for a half day. Three early withdrawals per trimester, each of which are less than 3 hours, are considered absent for one half day.

### **Absence - Other notes**

During the school year, our teachers are prepared to instruct each and every student each school day. Removing students from school for vacations or trips hinders the instructional design offered by our teaching staff. We do realize children may miss school for family emergencies.

St. Joseph's School staff and School Board believes that you as the parents of your children hold the ultimate responsibility for your child's educational growth. This responsibility permits you to take your child out of school, however, truancy may be reported if this is done repeatedly or without prior written notice.

St. Joseph's teachers have been instructed to permit make-up schoolwork in the following



manner:

1. Teachers are not required to prepare an individual's work in advance of a vacation, but, whenever possible, will provide anticipated missed work for the child prior to the absence. Students are expected to complete this work during their absence and be prepared to make up any additional assignments.
2. Upon returning to school, the student will receive all the work that was missed. ***The child will have one full week to complete this work.*** The child may request special help from a teacher, which most likely will include spending time after school.
3. If work is not completed after one week, the student will be expected to stay after school to complete the work.

When parents leave children under the care of another responsible person while out of town, the office must be notified in writing with the names, relationship, phone numbers and permission to contact the responsible person. In an emergency, the office needs to be aware of changes of contact information.

### **Accreditation**

St. Joseph School is accredited through the Minnesota Nonpublic School Accrediting Association. We renewed our accreditation in 2021. We are committed to continuing improvement and excellence. We complete yearly reports and we completed the process of self-study and strategic planning in 2021 and we will have an onsite Accreditation team visit during the 2027-28 school year. The accreditation team examines all areas of the school curriculum and environment including: Catholic identity, mission and philosophy, teaching and learning, climate for learning, communication and community relations, personnel, leadership, administration and governance, and a School Strategic Plan.

### **Admissions Policy**

No child whose parents desire to enroll him/her in St. Joseph School will be denied based on race, color, ethnicity, financial status, gender, disability status, or religion.

Kindergartners must be 5 by the first of September of the calendar year in which they intend to enroll. St. Joseph School requires an Early Childhood Screening between the ages of 3 1/2 and 4 1/2 for your child, with results available to the school. This assessment will assist the administration in determining placement and ability of St. Joseph School to serve the student.

St. Joseph School may admit new students at any time during the school year. Prior to such admission, St. Joseph School and the parents must reach an agreement on all tuition obligations and expectations concerning completion of the school year.

*Every effort is made to provide each child the opportunity to attend a Catholic school regardless of the financial situation of the family. Families should seek the advice of the principal or parish administrator if a financial difficulty arises that impedes the ability to meet tuition obligations. All applications for financial aid are kept confidential.*

2024-2025 Early Enrollment Deadline: February 1st, 2024

Pre-kindergarten students are accepted for enrollment in Kindergarten based on the above guidelines.

If a family currently in the school has not registered by the due date prior to the next school year, priority will go to families based on the above guidelines. If at any time there are more students than classroom space available, classrooms will be filled based on the above guidelines for all enrollment applications received by the due date, in an unbiased manner. No child is considered registered unless arrangements have been made for payment of all fees from the previous year and all required registration information has been submitted. Registrations received after the due date will be enrolled by date priority based upon the date by which registration materials have been received.

### ***Registered Parishioner***

A family shall be considered registered parishioners of the Church of St. Joseph and therefore eligible for parish automatic support, under the following conditions:

1. The family is registered at the Church of St. Joseph.
2. The family is active in the life of St. Joseph Parish in an identifiable way.

Being active in the life of the parish may include a combination of the following:

- Giving of one's time and talent by volunteering in some aspect of parish life (e.g., Parish ministries, Parish committees, music ministries, Parish fundraising, Parish social events, Faith Formation, spiritual growth, facilities maintenance, administration assistance).
- Volunteering in the parochial school in a role that significantly affects the overall school program (e.g. Marketing Committee, Endowment, School Advisory Board, or other committees)
- Sharing one's treasure by contributing financially to the Church of St. Joseph.
- Praying with the community through weekly Mass participation, Eucharistic Adoration, or other parish/school prayer opportunities.

Note: If a family has recently moved into the area, they must commit to being active in the life of St. Joseph Parish in an identifiable way.

### ***Answering Service***

St. Joseph School has a voice mail service that benefits parents and others needing to contact the school. If voicemail is responding to calls during the school day, it indicates Office Staff is conducting school business in other areas of the school, helping a sick or injured child, or on another line. It could also mean that all school lines are busy at the time of your call. Messages are checked frequently throughout the day.

### ***Activities and Athletics***

*Mission Statement:* St. Joseph School provides programs where all students have the opportunity to learn, play and have fun while promoting positive self-esteem, sportsmanship, and Christian behavior.

A Director, assisted by the Committee, oversees the extracurricular sports and activities offered by St. Joseph School. These include but are not limited to: volleyball, Robotics, basketball, fall & spring soccer, baseball and softball. Fees are charged to cover expenses. *See also the St. Joseph School Activities and Athletics Program Handbook, as*

*part of this book.*

## **Background Checks** –see *Protection of Children and Reporting Abuse*

### **Behavior Expectations**

The purpose of all discipline is self-discipline. St. Joseph's discipline policy is designed to assist the individual student in learning to make correct decisions, to be responsible, and to respect and treat others with fair and equal actions. Students should understand that observing rules fosters thoughtfulness, respect, and consideration of others.

The primary responsibility for all training comes from the home. The school's efforts, therefore, must be to augment or supplement this training.

The principal, teachers, and other school personnel, share the responsibility for the maintenance of discipline in the school. The principal is aware that each teacher is the most effective agent for establishing and maintaining discipline with the pupils.

St. Joseph's personnel promote a positive Christian learning environment. School and classroom rules will be explained to students in the first week of school. Positive reinforcements are used to encourage success and Christian behavior. Students also learn that they are responsible for their own behavior. Because we encourage self-discipline and good choices by our students, St. Joseph's staff has implemented a behavior curriculum and a school-wide behavior plan.

Classrooms are first and foremost to be places of learning. St. Joe's teaches young people the skills needed to make appropriate choices in their daily activities. The school-wide behavior expectations are Scripture-based and communicate our Christian Behavior Expectations for students in our school.

The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rule for just cause at his or her discretion.

### **Christian Behavior Expectations**

The seven principles of behavior with their scriptural basis remains the foundation of behavior norms and character development in the school.

The seven principles of the Christian Behavior Expectations follow:

St. Joe's students are prompt and prepared.

- Be on time.
- Come with appropriate materials.
- Bring assigned work to class.

*Be on guard, therefore. The Son of Man will come when you least expect it. Luke 12:40.*

St. Joe's students respect authority.

- Listen to authority.
- Follow directions promptly.
- Accept responsibility for behavior.

*Pay attention and you will have understanding. What I am teaching you is good, so remember it. Proverbs 4:2.*

St. Joe's students respect the rights of others.

- Use appropriate voice.
- Listen to speaker.
- Respect the opinion and point of view of others.

*Whatever you do for the least one of these, you do for me. Matthew 25:40.*

St. Joe's students respect property.

*Every good gift and every perfect present come from God. James 1:17.*

St. Joe's students display a concern for learning.

- Remain on task.
- Allow others to remain on task.
- Complete and return assignments on time.

*If you want to be wise, keep the Lord's commandments, and He will give you wisdom in abundance. Sirach 1:26.*

St. Joe's students display appropriate social skills.

- Cope with disagreement, teasing, and criticism.
- Display courtesy.
- Display tact.

*Love your neighbor as yourself. Matthew 22:39.*

St. Joe's students display positive and productive character.

- Live by high standards.
- Go beyond what you expect from others.

*Each one as a good manager of God's different gifts must use for the good of others the special gifts he or she has received from God. 1 Peter 4:10.*

## ***Christian Behavior Expectations – Lunchroom***

St. Joe's students are prompt and prepared.

- Have your lunch number ready.

St. Joe's students respect authority.

- Listen to and follow the supervisor's instructions.

St. Joe's students respect rights of others.

- No throwing food.
- No playing with food or taking it from others.

St. Joe's students respect property.

- Care for and return dishes and silverware to proper area for cleaning.
- Treat tables with care.

St. Joe's students display a concern for learning.

- Demonstrate proper table manners.

St. Joe's students display appropriate social skills.

- Use appropriate voice level in talking with your tablemates.
- Remain seated until excused by the supervisor.

St. Joe's students display positive and productive character.

- Clean up your area.
- Take turns cleaning the table.
- Offer help when help is needed.
- Eat the food you take.

### ***Christian Behavior Expectations - Physical Education***

St. Joe's students are prompt and prepared.

- Have the proper clothing and shoes for participation.
- Change clothes quickly before and after gym.

St. Joe's students respect authority.

- Listen to and follow the teacher's instructions.

St. Joe's students respect rights of others.

- Play fair.
- Praise your classmates' efforts.

St. Joe's students respect property.

- Handle gym equipment as instructed to by the teacher.
- Keep locker rooms clean.

St. Joe's students display a concern for learning.

- Listen, follow and participate in activities.

St. Joe's students display appropriate social skills.

- Accept the decisions of the teacher without arguing.

St. Joe's students display positive and productive character.

- Help care for the gym equipment.
- Demonstrate acceptance of various physical abilities.

## ***Christian Behavior Expectations - Playground***

St. Joe's students are prompt and prepared.

- Respond immediately to all instructions and bells.
- No loitering in the building before and after school.

St. Joe's students respect authority.

- Listen to and follow the supervisor's instructions.

St. Joe's students respect rights of others.

- Play fair.
- Include others in your games and take turns.
- Keep hands off others at all times.
- No teasing.

St. Joe's students respect property.

- Handle playground equipment as instructed to by the supervisor.
- Hands off others' clothing.
- Share playground equipment.

St. Joe's students display a concern for learning.

- Demonstrate cooperation between and among classes in games.

St. Joe's students display appropriate social skills.

- Be inclusive in play.
- Display courtesy and acceptance in play situations.

St. Joe's students display positive and productive character.

- Be a positive role model.

## ***Conduct, Off-Campus***

The administration of St. Joseph School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not in line with behavior expectations of its students expected during the school day. This off-campus behavior includes but is not limited to cyber-bullying. Field trips are considered extensions of the classroom and Christian Behavior Expectations apply to these learning experiences.

### **After School Activities and Field Trips**

It is expected that all students attending after school activities and field trips (including extended day(s) trips) be able to follow classrooms rules and expectations. Students who cannot abide by the rules and regulations in the classroom may not be afforded the opportunity to attend these experiences. The safety of your child and others is our utmost concern. These activities and trips are privileged experiences.

Students must also be in good academic standing before activities and the Monday before leaving for their trip. Students must have combined GPA of C- or better and have no more

than 3 missing assignments in all classes combined. Students with special needs will be given consideration in the implementation of this policy.

### **Academic Probation**

The purpose of extracurricular activities at St. Joseph School is to develop good sportsmanship and to build good relationships among students. Students must maintain at least a C- (1.8) overall grade point average in their academic studies. A student may be placed on probation if they have missing assignments, their grade point average (GPA) has slipped below 1.8 or if they are receiving an "F" in any subject area, even though their overall GPA may be acceptable. A student may also be placed on probation for Christian Behavior Expectation Violations.

When a student's grade significantly slips, it will be reported to the parents, principal, and pertinent activities director. The student will be placed on probation for one week during which the student can demonstrate improvement. During academic probation a student may attend activities. If there is no improvement after one week of probation, a conference will take place with the parents, student, and principal, to decide the eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities. The pertinent activity director will be informed of the decision. Students with special needs will be given special consideration in the implementation of this policy.

### **Suspension, General Considerations**

Suspension refers to a period of time during which a student is excluded from activities, classes, or a combination of in-school or out-of-school time. Students may be suspended for serious or continuous misconduct, bullying, or serious off-campus misconduct. Generally, suspension is used when other means of correction have failed to bring about proper conduct, or for serious misconduct, or for investigations of serious misconduct. Examples of serious misconduct include but are not limited to the following: theft, property destruction or vandalism, leaving the school grounds without permission or a pass, fighting, alcohol/chemical misuse or abuse, inappropriate or profane language, or cyber bullying.

Suspension may assume various forms and may vary in length from one class period up to several days. Only the principal or pastor can suspend. Suspension may serve as the basis for expulsion. Students are told that they are suspended and why. Parents and legal guardians will be notified by telephone and in writing.

### **Suspension, Process**

In cases where the *absence of immediate* disciplinary action (suspension) would pose a real threat to the *health and welfare* of another student, the students in general or school staff, the principal may remove the student from class, the yard, or other school situation and notify the parent/legal guardian as soon as possible. In these requirements, the standard due process requirements, as stated below, will be adhered to *after the fact*. In all other cases where suspension is necessary, but no real or immediate danger to the health and welfare of another student or the students in general or school staff exists, the following procedures are followed:

Notice: The student is told that he/she is going to be suspended, informed of which

school rule or regulation has been broken, and further informed that such violation is a suspendable offense.

Evidence: The student is made aware of information the principal has which would lead the principal to reasonably believe that a rule has been broken *and* that this student is the one who is responsible.

Hearing: This refers to an informal give and take between student and principal. The student has an opportunity to speak and respond. Then, the principal may make a decision based on the evidence and the student's responses to the presentation of such evidence.

Parent/Legal Guardian Notification: Parents or legal guardians are informed of the procedures followed, including a review of the steps above. Where possible, parents/legal guardians might be included in these steps so that they are aware of the total situation prior to a decision to suspend. When not possible, they have a right to be informed of the specifics of the procedure within a reasonable time period.

Right to Appeal: As stated in Grievance Policy.

### **Suspension, Types**

1. Activity Suspension: Student attends class but loses the right to participate in a school or class activity on or off campus.
2. In-school Suspension: Student is suspended from a class or classes and is required to report to a specific, supervised place on campus for that time.
3. Out-of-school Suspension: Student remains at home. Academic work may be assigned. If deemed necessary or advisable, a parent or guardian is called to come to school and take the student home for the remainder of a day. Parents are directed as to re-admittance of suspended students. Possibilities include a family conference with the principal, mandatory counseling, and provisions for an alternate program.

No student will be suspended from school for more than five (5) school days at a time unless exceptional circumstances exist, such as to complete an investigation when the student's return poses a threat to the safety of others. The student will be given the opportunity to make up work that was given during the time of the suspension.

### **Expulsion Policy**

"Expulsion" means the permanent exclusion of a student from school. Failure to abide by school policy may result in a recommendation for expulsion. If a student's violation of school rules threatens to continually or, in any given instance, disrupt the daily academic process or if the student's presence poses a danger to himself/herself, other persons, or property, the Principal will take the following action:

1. Notify the student of the punishable violation
2. Notify the parents/guardians of the student's punishable violation
3. Arrange for a hearing with a person or persons.
4. The designee shall make recommendation to the Principal and Pastor who shall then



render a decision regarding expulsion.

## ***Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation***

### **ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY**

#### **Preamble**

Created in the image and likeness of God, each child shares a fundamental human dignity. A Catholic school provides an environment dedicated to protecting and fostering the development of that dignity. The school helps children learn how to exercise their God-given freedom responsibly, with the goal that good choices become good habits, that is, *virtues*. The highest virtue is charity, which God both requires and makes possible. "Here is my commandment," says Jesus, "that you love one another as I have loved you." As bearers of the divine image, members of the school community deserve care and respect from all. Bullying and retaliation are not to be tolerated.

This policy serves as a guide for when expectations of respect are not met, and for when reconciliation and restitution are needed.

#### **Definitions**

For purposes of this Policy, the following definitions shall apply:

"Aggressor" means a student who engages in bullying or retaliation.

"Bullying" is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, that is objectively offensive, is directed at a Target, and that:

- causes physical harm or emotional harm that results in clearly identifiable physical symptoms to the Target or places the Target in reasonable fear of such harm;
- causes damage to the Target's property;
- places the Target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself, or of damage to his/her property;
- creates a Hostile Environment at school for the Target;
- infringes on the rights of the Target at school, including defamation and invasion of privacy; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

*For the purpose of this Policy, whenever the term "bullying" is used it is to denote either bullying or cyberbullying.*

"Cyber-Bullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication,

which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature, including a post on a social network, internet website or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device.

“Hostile environment” means a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to materially and substantially alter the conditions of the student’s education.

“Retaliation” means any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against any person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

“School grounds” mean property on which a school building or facility is located or property that is owned, leased or used by a school for a school-sponsored activity, function, program, instruction or training.

“Staff” includes, but is not limited to, educators, faculty, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletics coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, and paraprofessionals.

“Target” is a student against whom bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

### **Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation**

The school expressly prohibits bullying in all forms, either by an individual or group of aggressors.

Bullying, including cyber-bullying, is prohibited:

- On School Grounds owned, leased or used by a school;
- At any school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off School Grounds;
- At a school bus stop;
- On a school bus or any other vehicle owned, leased or used by the school; or,
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device.

Bullying is also prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related. Similarly, the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school to commit an act or acts of bullying is also prohibited.

### **Reporting**

Any Staff or volunteer who has witnessed or become aware of any instance of bullying or retaliation must report that act to the Principal or another school official designated by the Principal. In the selection of this person, care should be taken that both a male and female school official are designated to receive reports of bullying.

Any student or parent/guardian of a student are strongly encouraged to report all acts of bullying. Reports can be made to the student’s teacher, who must then report it to the Principal or Assistant Principal, or directly to the Principal or Assistant Principal.

Reports may be made confidentially and anonymously when requested. The anonymous nature of the report may make it difficult to investigate or corroborate the alleged bullying. No disciplinary action may be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

False accusations of bullying are absolutely prohibited and may result in discipline in accordance

with the school's discipline policy.

Anyone with general questions or concerns about bullying or the school's policy should address those questions or concerns to the Principal.

### **Retaliation**

Retaliation against a Target, witness of bullying, a person who makes a good faith reporting of bullying, or who provides information during an investigation of bullying, is prohibited.

### **Response and Investigation**

The school takes seriously all reports of bullying.

Upon receipt of a report of bullying, the Principal or his or her designee will conduct an investigation. When possible, the investigation will begin within three school days of the report of bullying.

The School reserves the sole discretion to determine the scope and adequacy of the investigation.

Anyone with questions about the investigation should direct those questions to the Principal.

### **Violations**

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to discipline in accordance with the School's disciplinary policy.

The School retains the sole discretion to determine whether Bullying has occurred and what the response should be.

Depending on the circumstances, the School's response could include:

- taking appropriate disciplinary and remedial action;
- notifying the parents or guardians of the Aggressor of the determination;
- notifying the parents or guardians of the Target, the Aggressor, and any other affected persons about community resources.

### **Training**

Training on this Policy shall be provided for Staff at least once every three years and, at the discretion of the Principal, for volunteers who have significant contact with students.

### **Publication and Notice**

The Principal or his or her designee shall provide written or electronic notice of this Policy to the Staff.

Written or electronic notice of the Plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms and in languages which are most prevalent among the students, parents or guardians.

### **Consequence Expectation**

If it is determined that harassment/intimidation/bullying has occurred, one or more of the following consequences may result:

- Administrative conference with student (with or without parent)
- Assignment designed to increase awareness and sensitivity to the issue
- Detention (before school, recess, after school)

- Referral to an outside agency for evaluation
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Referral to law enforcement for possible criminal action

This Policy shall be conspicuously posted in the administrative offices of the school.

### ***Birthdays***

Students often enjoy bringing a “treat” to school on their birthday. In keeping with our wellness policy, bringing something to share, e.g., a nonfood treat such as a book, an art project, a colorful pencil/pen etc. is the preferred treat. If food is the treat, for public health reasons, it is required that the food is to be store bought. In addition, check with the individual classroom teacher as to any specific allergies present in your child’s classroom before sending a food treat.

You may distribute invitations at school **only** when every member of the class is invited to an event. Otherwise, you may not distribute invitations in school, but should mail them.

***Busing*** - see *Transportation*

### ***Child Safety Policies***

St. Joseph School maintains a learning and working environment that is free from child abuse. This policy applies to all students, faculty, staff, administrators, members of the School Advisory Council, parents, vendors, volunteers, coaches, guests, and others who act on the school’s behalf. It applies whenever and wherever a school program takes place. Anyone who violates this policy is subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include separation from the school program.

Child abuse consists of acts and threatened acts that are physical, sexual, or verbal in nature. Physical child abuse means physical injury inflicted or threatened by a person responsible for a child’s care in a school program. Sexual child abuse means intentional physical contact or threatened contact with a student that is sexual in nature. It also includes comments and actions that the student perceives as having a sexual meaning or purpose. Verbal or written child abuse means a mental injury to a child’s psychological capacity or emotional stability as seen by, observable, or substantial impairment of the child. This includes inappropriate email, text messages, or internet messages.

### ***Mandated Reporter Law***

If a teacher or any other professional in the building has reason to believe that a student may have been the victim of abuse or neglect, he or she is legally required to make a direct and immediate confidential report to local police or welfare authorities. Anyone making such a report is advised to inform the Principal immediately.

See also *Protection of Children & Reporting Abuse; School Security/Safety Procedures; and Archdiocesan Harassment Policy*

### ***Communications***

#### ***Weekly Communications***

Each week, a school newsletter is available on the school website and via email along with

any other information requiring your attention. If you miss the email, the newsletter can be found on our website under the “Current Families” tab (labeled “Saints News”). This is an excellent way to be informed of the many activities and programs at St. Joseph School and in the community.

### **TADS “Educate” Portal**

Each family and each student will receive a password to access student and classroom news found on the “Educate” Family Portal.

### **Health Office**

At times additional information may be needed by the health office to best meet the needs of your child. Please fill out paperwork and promptly return any additional forms you receive from the health office regarding your child.

### **Teacher Contact During the School Day**

St. Joseph School faculty is always interested in communicating with parents/guardians to better meet the needs of our students. If there is concern with your child’s progress, please contact your child’s teacher at school. Consult your child’s teacher for preferences regarding email or voicemail. Both are checked regularly, and teachers respond in a timely manner. Normally, this will include a call or email within 24 hours to acknowledge your inquiry. Follow up may take additional time, in order to allow for proper investigation and better response to your concern.

St. Joseph School does not interrupt class time during the school day for parent/guardian contact.

### **Complaints**

Persons with concerns about a teacher should first attempt to address the concern with the teacher. Only after such attempts have failed, should administration be contacted. See also: *Grievance Policy*

### **Conferences**

Scheduled school-wide parent-teacher conferences are held periodically throughout the year. Elementary level conferences are scheduled by family, while middle school conferences are held on a drop-in basis. Parents are strongly encouraged to make every effort to use this opportunity to discuss each child’s progress.

To schedule a conference with a teacher at other times, please contact the classroom teacher directly. Determination of further conference needs (principal, pastor, etc.) will be made only after that initial meeting. St. Joseph School asks parents as a matter of courtesy and effective conflict resolution to bring concerns and questions directly to the party who can resolve them. The school strongly discourages drop-in or hallway conferences as they constrain teachers’ ability to give you their full attention. At no time are parents to proceed to classrooms without first checking in with the school office.

### **Confidentiality**

Teachers will keep confidential information entrusted to them so long as no one’s life, health or safety is at stake. Parents will be notified of teacher concerns regarding their child.

## **Counseling**

St. Joseph School offers counseling services through Phoenix School Counseling. They may include individual counseling and psychological evaluations. Parents may contact the school office for more information or to request counseling support for their children.

## **School Closing Policy**

Several factors impact school closings including but not limited to:

Snow events

Road conditions

Temperatures

Wind chill factors

In general, St. Joseph will follow Waconia Public School closing announcements, in large part due to transportation. In some cases, St. Joseph will make decisions based on the factors above that might still make it feasible for us to hold school. Namely, parent drive opportunities allow us to have school when public busing is unsafe due to cold bus stops and long cold bus rides.

The conditions used as guidelines for cold weather closures are sustained temperatures below (–25) degrees and/or wind-chill factors near (-40).

School administration communicates with pastor and local district and transportation officials as to what the conditions are when making weather related school closings.

## **PUBLICATION OF IMAGES & FAMILY DIRECTORY**

Images taken of students and family members taken in the public arena such as sporting events, masses, fine arts public performances, etc. may be released on public media and may identify the students by names or grades.

In addition, because of classroom or activity participation throughout the school year, pictures and videos of students may be used for displays, photo albums, community newspaper articles, school newsletters and calendars, advertising, websites, news broadcasts, yearbook, Facebook, and other social media etc.

Student first names may accompany the information and may be posted with pictures or in news articles. But, St. Joseph School will usually post without names.

***Parents who do not want child or family photos used in school publications must contact the Director of Communications in writing by the first day of school. The denial will be in effect for one school year.***

St. Joseph School may disclose appropriately designated “directory information” about a student/family without the written consent of the student’s parent or guardian, unless they have advised St. Joseph School to the contrary, in writing, during registration for the current school year.

Directory information may include the following:

- Name
- Address
- Grade Level
- Telephone (main home number, not a student's cell number)
- Photographs
- Honors and awards received

Publications utilizing such information may include but not be limited to the following:

- Parent/student directory
- Athletic programs
- Graduation or special event programs
- Insights
- Website (in adherence to child protection laws)

## ***Dress Code***

### **Our philosophy**

Our Catholic School uniform symbolizes respect for authority and order, as well as the idea of basic equality in the eyes of God. It is the intention of this policy to ensure that uniform expectations reflect both pride in oneself and in St. Joseph School. All students in grades K-8 are required to wear uniforms during the school day. We rely on student, parents and staff to assure that everyone is dressed appropriately.

St. Joseph School takes pride in its tradition of excellence. This tradition should be evident to those who come in contact with representatives of our school. The best representatives of any school are its students; therefore, certain basic uniform regulations exist for dress and grooming. These regulations are in the interest of creating a safe environment, conducive to learning and to demonstrating pride and membership in St. Joseph School. We expect the attire of our students to enhance their self-image, rather than make statements. In sum, we have established our uniform policy in the interests of meeting students' needs for safety, belonging, identity and dignity.

The uniform and dress code policy informs everyone of clothing styles and color that are approved for wear at St. Joseph School. On selected out of uniform days, students are to wear clothing that is modest in appearance, appropriate to a Christian environment, and reflects the activities of the school day.

St. Joseph School adheres to a dress code established for students in Grades K-8. The following dress code advises parents and students of clothing style and color that is approved for wear at St. Joseph Catholic School. On selected out of uniform days, students are to wear clothing that is modest in appearance, appropriate to a Christian environment, and reflects the activities of the school day. On out of uniform days, jeans must be in good condition--no holes. If pants are worn loose, then they may not be baggy to the point of showing underwear and the crotch must be several inches above the knees. Shirts or hats may not have any inappropriate writing or pictures on them. Girls' clothing should not be form fitting and midriff skin is not to show. Shirts should have sleeves. No chains should hang outside of clothing pockets. Clothing must be in good taste. St. Joseph

School students will wear uniforms on field trip days unless directed otherwise by classroom teachers or the office.

When an article of clothing is in question, it may require a judgment call on the part of the teacher and/or administrator. Students not meeting the measure of appropriate dress will be asked to phone their parent(s) for appropriate clothing, wear a school uniform or shorts/pants provided by the school and/or receive a Behavior Plan.

If the purchase of any of these brands presents a severe financial hardship or fitting issue, please contact the school office for approval of alternates.

Sweatshirts are available by special order in our summer mailing and once during the school year.

The uniform exchange closet is located in the health office and is available during school hours.

## **PreK-8 Uniform Policy**

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**Uniforms can be purchased** through Donald's Uniforms ([www.donaldsuniform.com](http://www.donaldsuniform.com)),

**\*Optional Uniform Insignia Pullovers:** Black (Gr. 5-8) or Red (Gr. PreK-4) ¼ zip are available for purchase from Donald's Uniforms ([www.donaldsuniform.com](http://www.donaldsuniform.com)). Store locations are in Eden Prairie and St Paul.

[Find the full uniform policy here](#)

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### ***General Uniform Appearance PreK - Grade 8***

- All uniforms should be neat, clean, and in good repair.
- All uniform clothing should be appropriately sized.
- Shirts must be tucked in at all times. (Gr. 3+)
- Pants and shorts are to be worn at the waist, above the hips.
- Socks must be worn at all times.
- Shorts may be worn during September, October, April, May, and June.
- Refrain from wearing shorts on Mass days.
- Capri pants and skirts are not part of the uniform.
- Skorts, jumpers, and shorts should be no more than 3 inches above the knee.
- A plain white t-shirt or cami may be worn under uniform shirts with the following limitations: no lace or embellishments may be worn; no t-shirt or cami may be visible below the sleeves or the hem of the polo shirt.
- Any neat, clean-soled shoes are acceptable. No high heels, boots, sandals, blinking, or wheeled shoes.
- Hair should be clean and well groomed; no extensions or unnatural hair dyes.
- No scarves, face/body paint or glitter, body piercing other than ears.



- Make-up & jewelry should be age and school appropriate and should not create a distraction.
- Jackets should be kept in lockers.

### ***Non-Uniform Attire PreK-Grade 8***

- On non-uniform days, clothing should reflect Christian values with respect to graphics, lettering, and physical fit. Students dressed inappropriately, as determined by school personnel, will be required to change into suitable attire.
- Students should not wear ripped or torn clothing or clothing with inappropriate language.
- A shirt must be worn over all tank tops.
- On Spirit Wear Days uniform pants, skorts, or shorts (in season) must be worn.

### ***Preschool Uniform Policy***

#### **Shirts:**

ANY Sleeved Red or White shirt (Polo, T-Shirt, etc.) . No graphics. Small Logos (Niki, Adidas, etc.) are ok.

Any St. Joseph Spirit Wear shirt

Optional: Uniform Insignia Pullover (Purchase from Premier Custom Apparel)

#### **Bottoms:**

Any black bottom Examples: Leggings, Active Wear, Skirts (at the knee) Jeggings, Sweatpants, uniform twill pant skirts, etc.

During the winter months, leggings or long socks are required underneath the skort/jumper.

Black shorts/capri's may only be worn during the summer months (April – October).

#### **Jumpers (optional):**

Black Uniform Jumpers can be purchased through any uniform supplier

Uniform jumpers are optional

During the winter months, leggings or long socks are required underneath the jumper.

A red or white polo should be worn underneath the jumper

Jumpers should be no shorter than 3 inches from the knee

On Spirit Wear/Non-Uniform days any black pant, skorts, or shorts (in season) must be worn.

### ***Girls Kindergarten - Grade 4 Uniforms***

[See full uniform policy here](#)



**Boys Kindergarten - Grade 4 Uniforms**

[See full uniform policy here](#)



**Girls: Grades 5 - 8 Uniform** [See full uniform policy here](#)



**Boys: Grades 5 - 8 Uniform** [See full uniform policy here](#)



### ***Electronic Device Policy (Cell Phones):***

Electronic Devices, Cell Phones, and Accessories – Electronic devices (cell phones, earbuds, air pods, and headphones, smartwatches, and other devices that can create a distraction for the student or teachers) are not to be seen or used during school hours.

**Consequences:** When a staff member sees a non-school issued device, the device will be confiscated. Electronic devices that are confiscated will be turned in to the office. Students will be assessed a \$10 fine and will turn in their phone to the school office for the next two school days. If the fine is not paid, the electronic device continues to be turned in each day until the fine is paid. **Note: All fines collected will be used to support the food shelf**

### ***Emergency Preparedness Plan***

St. Joseph's Emergency Preparedness Plan provides direction to staff so they have a step-by-step process to help students safely through any crisis. The plan fits into the day-to-day operations and management of the school following the framework of the National Incident Management Systems (NIMS). Our crisis plans are available in each classroom and in the office and is updated yearly.

### ***Faith Formation***

The formal study of the Catholic religion, along with other curriculum that reflects Catholic identity, values, and tradition, is an integral part of our total education. It is St. Joseph School's policy that all students, including non-Catholics, attend faith formation classes and liturgies.

Students at St. Joseph School take turns preparing the liturgy for the weekly school Mass. Days and times are listed in our family newsletters. Parents and guardians are invited and encouraged to attend all school Mass whenever their schedules permit. On Holy Days of Obligation and special celebrations, the students attend Mass on the Holy Day in lieu of the regularly scheduled day. St. Joseph School families are ambassadors of the Catholic faith, as such, attendance at Sunday Mass is essential to forming full understandings of the Catholic faith.

### ***Sacramental Preparation and Participation***

St. Joseph School welcomes children of all religious backgrounds and supports the

parents as the primary Faith Formation educators in their child's life. As a Catholic school, our identity, practice, and study reflect and support doctrine of the Catholic Church. This doctrine respects yet differentiates between the sacramental beliefs of Catholic and non-Catholic churches. Participants in the sacramental life of the Catholic Church must be Catholic. Those students whose families are not members of the Catholic Church do not need to attend evening meetings affiliated with Sacramental preparation in second grade.

### ***Field Trips***

Field trips are viewed by the school as a method to enrich students' education. Unless otherwise directed, students wear the school uniform on field trips. A parent permission form must be completed for each student. Any student who does not have the specific signed permission form will not be allowed to go on the trip. Parents have the option of their child not participating in field trips. These situations will be assessed on an individual basis.

Teachers and/or the principal reserve the right to deny attendance at a field trip to any student for behavioral or academic reasons. Disciplinary action will be taken for a student's failure to show the appropriate respect, attention and behavior expected on St. Joseph School field trips.

Cell phones are not allowed on field trips unless otherwise directed by the teacher and/or administration.

Field trip chaperones must complete the Volunteer Background Check packet, attend VIRTUS training and be approved prior to chaperoning. The school office has background check packets available upon request.

**Health note:** Understand that our school nurse does not accompany classes on field trips. If the need arises, your child may not be treated by a licensed medical professional. If your child takes prescription medication during the school day, that medication will be sent with the teacher on field trips. This includes inhalers, epi-pens, seizure and diabetic medications. Compliance with the medication policy on field trips is necessary for the welfare and safety of all students.

**Parking note:** please do not leave your car in the upper parking lot during a field trip. Students use it for PE class and recess.

### ***Fifth/Sixth Grade Trip***

St. Joseph fifth/sixth grade attends a Minnesota Environmental Camp every other year. During their overnight stay, the students participate in hands-on environmental learning that will demonstrate the importance of natural resources and conservation, as well as instilling an appreciation for the earth.

It is expected that all students attending the Environmental Camp be able to follow classroom rules and expectations. Students who cannot abide by the rules and regulations in the classroom will not be afforded the opportunity to attend this experience. The safety

of your child and others is our utmost concern. This trip is a privilege. Those who receive more than 5 CBE Violations will be at risk for not attending.

Students must also be in good academic standing by the Monday before leaving for their trip. Students must have a C- or better and have no missing assignments in all classes. Students with special needs will be given consideration in the implementation of this policy.

### ***Eighth Grade Trip***

An extended year-end academic class trip is a tradition for St. Joseph eighth graders. The trip is a product of enhanced C-STEM curriculum and student research – St. Joseph promotes live event learning as an approach to a powerful cross-curricular learning experience. The eighth-grade class trip supports real and lasting learning that is meaningful, relevant, and memorable.”

Guidelines:

- The primary purpose of the trip is educational.
- Trip duration will be limited to 4 days.
- Ground travel only will be used.
- School commitment is that the trip will be continued.
- Each year it is our goal that all eighth graders experience an extended year-end academic based class trip. It is not possible without parent support.

All fundraisers for this event must be approved by the principal or parish administrator.

It is expected that students attending the Eighth Grade Dakota Trek be able to follow classroom rules and expectations. Students who cannot abide by the rules and regulations in the classroom will not be afforded the opportunity to attend the trip. The safety of your child and others is our utmost concern. This trip is a privileged experience. Those who receive more than 5 CBE Violations will be at risk for not attending.

Students must also be in good academic standing before leaving for their trip. Students must have of GPA of C- or better and have no missing assignments in all classes. Students with special needs will be given consideration in the implementation of this policy.

### ***Fundraising / “Fair Share”***

Because tuition covers only part of the full cost to educate each child, St. Joseph School sponsors a variety of fundraisers each year. In addition, some fundraisers are in-whole or in-part dedicated to stewardship.

Each family is expected to contribute a set amount each year through fundraising. This is called “Fair Share.” Examples of fundraisers may include the Rake-a-thon for Nonpublic Education and St. Joseph Value Book.

## ***Grading and Homework***

### **Grade 3-8 Grading Scale**

A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D	60-69%
F	<60%

### **Grades K-2 Grading Scale**

The goal of the Kindergarten through Grade 2 progress report is to communicate student achievement to parents/guardians.

The following evaluation scale is used in academic areas:

E	Excellent progress
S	Satisfactory progress
N	Needs improvement
W	Working to develop concept/skill
Blank	Skill not yet evaluated

The following evaluation scale is used for **Christian Behavior Expectations**, including behavior and work habits (grades K-5).

4	Consistently
3	Most of the time
2	Some of the time
1	Needs improvement

### ***Homework***

Parental support is essential for an effective homework program. Time should be set aside at home for assigned school work or outside reading. The amount of time will vary by individual student need. Homework assignments have as their purpose, not only the educational development of the child, but also to develop a sense of industry and responsibility. The following are recommended amounts of time for daily homework:

Grades K-2:	20-30 minutes
Grades 3-4:	30-45 minutes
Grades 5-6:	45-60 minutes
Grades 7-8:	60-90 minutes

Please inform teachers if your child is struggling to complete homework within these time



allotments.

### ***Grievance Policy***

If a grievance between parent/guardian or a student and a teacher or school administrator should arise the following grievance procedure shall apply:

1. The parent/guardian or student (grievant) will meet with the teacher (respondent) to discuss the resolution of the grievance.
2. If the grievance is not resolved, the grievant will meet with the school administrator (if the grievance involves a teacher) or with a person designated by the pastor or parish administrator (if the grievance involves the school administrator).
3. If the grievance is still not resolved, a Grievance Committee will hear the grievance.
4. The Grievance Committee will be made up of three persons: one designated by the pastor, one designated by the respondent, and one designated by the grievant. This committee will meet to receive evidence. It shall have the discretion to determine whether such evidence shall be written, oral, or both.
5. At the conclusion of the meeting, and upon due consideration, the committee will make its recommendation to the pastor. The committee will not have the power to alter or amend school policies.
6. The pastor or his designate will decide on the grievance.
7. The grievance procedure should be complete within thirty days.
8. If the grievance determination is not resolved to the satisfaction of either party, a referral to the Archdiocesan Due Process may be made. Nothing contained herein shall obligate either party to consent to conciliation or arbitration under the Archdiocesan Due Process procedures.

### ***Guiding Principles for St. Joseph Catholic Community & School Concerning Human Sexuality & Sexual Identity***

(Adopted from the MN Catholic Conference)

#### **Purpose**

St. Joseph Catholic Community and School is committed to providing a safe environment that allow all learners to flourish academically, physically, and spiritually. We are obliged to provide an education and resources consistent with Catholic teaching. The starting point for Catholic education is a deeply held understanding that affirms the God-given irrevocable dignity of every human person.

Catholic teaching permeates and shapes the ethos of Catholic communities and schools. The following Guiding Principles shall inform the creation of policies, handbooks, statements, employee agreements, and training for employees.

- God created each person body and soul “in His own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them” (Gen. 1:27). The dignity of each person and the source of his or her most important identity is found in this creation in the image and likeness of God (CCC §364).
- God uses the body to reveal to each person his or her sexual identity as male or female. A person’s embrace of his or her God-given sexual identity is an essential

part of living a fulfilled relationship with God, with oneself, and with each other (Laudato Si §155).

- The harmonious integration of a person's sexual identity with his or her sex is an expression of the inner unity and reality of the human person made body and soul in the image and likeness of God (CCC §364-65).
- The physical, moral, and spiritual differences between men and women are equal and complementary. The flourishing of family life and society depends in part on how this complementarity and equality are lived out (CCC §2333-34).
- All students and families deserve interactions with Catholic school communities that are marked by respect, charity, and the truth about human dignity and God's love (Deus Caritas Est §20).

### **Application of Guiding Principles**

St. Joseph Catholic Community and School will relate to each student in a way that is respectful of and consistent with each student's **God-given sexual identity** and **biological sex**. To this end, below are some examples of how these Guiding Principles apply at St. Joseph Catholic Community and School.

1. All school policies, procedures, resources, employee training, and assistance given to families will be consistent with the Church's teaching on the dignity of the human person, including human sexuality. Reflective of a commitment to a culture of transparency and understanding, these policies will be made available in relevant handbooks, agreements, and statements.
2. The student's name and pronoun usage will correspond to his or her biological sex.
3. Student access to facilities and overnight accommodations will align with his or her biological sex.
4. Eligibility for single-sex curricular and extracurricular activities will be based on the child's biological sex.
5. Expressions of a student's sexual identity are prohibited when they contradict or cause disruption or confusion about the Church's teaching on human sexuality.
6. Students who attend and employees who work at a Catholic school can expect that the school acknowledges that God has created each person as a unity of body and soul, as male or female, and that God-designated sexual expression and behavior must be exclusively oriented to love and life in marriage between one man and one woman.
7. Schools will communicate with parents or guardians about their child's behavior at school and inform them of any concerns relating to the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual health, safety, or welfare of their child, except when advised otherwise by law enforcement or a social service agency.

Definitions 1. Biological sex refers to a person's biology as male or female based upon physical characteristics present at birth. 2. God-given sexual identity refers to a person's identity as male or female that is congruent with one's biological sex at birth.

## ***Harassment Policy***

### **Archdiocesan Harassment Policy**

Each local school and/or catechetical program shall maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment.



This policy applies to all students, faculty, staff, administrators, and members of the Board of Directors, parents, vendors, volunteers, coaches, guests, and others who act on our behalf. It applies whenever and wherever a school and/or catechetical program take place. Anyone who violates this policy is subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include separation from the school and/or catechetical program.

### **Definition**

**Harassment** is unwelcome verbal or physical conduct which has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or learning environment. The basis for harassment may be any protected class, including age, creed, color, disability, national origin, race, and marital status, status with regard to public assistance, religion, gender, and sexual orientation.

One particular category of harassment, sexual harassment, consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature which substantially interferes with an individual's employment or education, or creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive working or learning environment. It also includes situations where submission to such behavior affects decisions about the individual's employment or education. Sexual harassment may be directed to members of the same or opposite sex.

**Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:** teasing or joking of a sexual nature, sexual name calling, making references to past or present sexual activity, spreading sexual rumors, or making derogatory or dehumanizing remarks; subtle pressure for sexual activity; intentional brushing against a person's body; display of offensive pictures, posters, or other graphics; leering, inappropriate patting or pinching, and other forms of unwelcome touching; otherwise creating a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment.

### **Procedure**

Any member of the school and/or catechetical program community who experiences or witnesses sexual or protected class harassment is encouraged to deal with the situation immediately by politely but firmly advising those involved that the behavior is inappropriate and should stop. However, if the individual does not wish to deal with the problem directly or if a request to stop is not respected, he or she should report the incident to an appropriate official (principal/director of catechesis, or, in the case of a complaint against the principal or the director, to the Pastor).

The pastor or his designee will assume responsibility for investigation of all complaints, whether formal or informal, verbal or written, of sexual or protected class harassment. Based on the investigation, appropriate action, including but not limited to counseling, disciplinary warnings, or other disciplinary actions, will be taken. An investigative report documenting interviews, conclusions and recommendations will be completed.

The complainant, the alleged harasser and their parents (if either is a minor) will be advised of the outcome of the investigation, preferably in writing. In cases involving minors, a report to the Child Protection Agency (see below for county numbers) or to the police will be filed if required by state law.

The alleged harasser will be warned, preferably in writing, that retaliation or intimidation

directed towards anyone who makes a complaint or assists in the investigatory process will not be tolerated. The complainant should be invited to report recurrences or retaliation, and the situation monitored as the principal or director deems appropriate.

### **Reporting Abuse**

If you as a parent or parishioner have **firsthand knowledge** of any child abuse or are made aware of any child abuse caused by a volunteer, teacher, or staff member of St. Joseph Church or School in Waconia, **immediately report this behavior or abuse.**

- Police at 952-361-1231 or 911
- Carver County Sheriff (non-emergency) 952-361-1231
- Pastor at 952-442-2384 x 133
- Principal at 952-442-3716
- Faith Formation Director, 952-442-2384 x 137 or 136
- Carver County Social Services, 952-361-1600
- Hennepin County Social Services, 612-348-4500

### **If clergy is involved:**

- Vicar General or Chancellor of the Arch. of St. Paul & Minneapolis, 651-291-4400

### **Health Services**

St. Joseph School in conjunction with ISD 110 (Waconia) employs a part-time health associate. The hours that the nurse is available vary throughout the week. When she is not in the building your child will be tended by school staff. In the event of an emergency, St. Joseph School cannot guarantee that a trained medical professional will be in the building.

Emergency contact information is required for each student. Parents will complete the *Health Census* form annually. This form is used as the primary source of information to ensure the health and safety of each student. Any physical restrictions, health issues, medications or possible concerns should be explained on this important form.

### **St. Joseph School's Health Office policies relating to ill students being sent home or staying home:**

1. Stomach Flu: Any presence of vomiting and/or diarrhea. Students should be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school.
2. Fever: Any fever over 100.4 orally. Child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school and free of fever reducing medication.
3. Pink Eye: Students must have the proper dosage of eye drops for 24 hours before returning to school.
4. Strep Throat: Students must be on antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
5. Lice. Child will be excluded for 24 hours after treatment and until no nits or lice are seen.
6. Communicable Diseases: For the health and safety of all students and staff of St. Joseph School, parents are asked to notify the school office of any communicable disease.

An "Am I Well Enough to go to School?" brochure is available in the health office.

### **Medication Administration:**

St. Joseph School follows ISD 110 (Waconia) Health Services Medication Policy. Prescription and non-prescription (over the counter) medication will be administered under the following circumstances:

1. Medication is accompanied by a completed, signed authorization form from the student's parent or guardian. The school health associate will send the authorization form to your child's physician for his/her signature.
2. The school may rely on a note written by a parent or guardian or an oral request for up to two (2) days until written authorization is received.
3. Prescription medications should be brought to school only in a container labeled by the pharmacy. If you ask, the pharmacy will provide medication for home and school in two bottles with proper labels to avoid the need to transport medication daily with a student.
4. Non-prescription medication must be brought in the original container.
5. All medications must be provided by parents/guardians.
6. A written medication policy is available in the health office.
- 7.

### **Severe Allergy Policy**

St. Joseph School cannot guarantee that a medically trained person will be on the premises at all times. In the case of the student with severe allergic reactions (e.g., bee stings, nut or food allergies), the parent is responsible for supplying the school health office with the necessary medication for their child. In order for school personnel to be able to administer this type of medication, there must be a signed authorization as well as written directive from both the child's attending physician and parents. Two such medications are the Epi Pen and Twinject.

For the health and safety of all students, please reference the "Birthdays" section of this handbook.

### **Peanut and Tree Nut Aware Classrooms**

We have several students in the school that have Peanut and/or Tree Nut Allergies. We will be implementing a Peanut Aware Policy in classrooms that have a Peanut Aware sign posted.

All families need to adhere to a peanut/tree nut aware policy (***especially if your student is in a Peanut Aware Classroom***), to keep our environments and students safe. We do have a Peanut free lunch table for students that need to stay clear from peanut/tree nut food. As always our kitchen is peanut/tree nut free. Students who bring a Peanut/tree nut foods for lunch, need to stay clear of the Peanut Free lunch table.

**Toddler & Preschool classrooms** are always a Peanut/Tree Nut Safe environment. No Peanuts are allowed.

### **Health Screening**

Vision and hearing screening is conducted for children in the fall of each school year. Weight and height measurements are also done in select grades. Screenings can also be done by special request or referral from teachers or parents at any time. When suspected

problems are detected, a referral for a medical evaluation is made. If a resource or financial assistance is needed for the referral, contact the District Health Coordinator at 952-442-0674.

*See also: Absence; Field Trips; Immunizations; School Security/Safety Procedures*

## ***Immunizations***

St. Joseph School follows the regulations contained in the Minnesota School Immunization Law, Minnesota Statutes 1991, Section 123.70. Minnesota law says “**No Shots, No School.**” Immunization records will be checked annually and reported as dictated by state health regulations. Any student with incomplete immunizations records as of the first day of school each year will not be allowed to attend St. Joseph School until proof of received immunizations has been made.

### **Minnesota Immunization Information Connection**

The MN Immunization Information Connection (MIIC) is confidential, computerized network of shared immunization records. It provides clinics, schools and parents with complete, accurate and up-to-date immunization records.

The only people who can see your child’s immunization record are those that either give the immunizations or are required by law to record immunizations for enrollment – doctors, local health departments, schools and day cares. This information is protected by the MN Immunization Data Sharing Law, S144.3351. You can choose to be a part of MIIC by completing and signing a form with your child’s name, date of birth and mother’s maiden name (to ensure correct identifications). You can choose not to be a part of MIIC registry by not completing or returning the form.

## ***Lockers and Desks***

Every student is assigned a locker for storage of books and personal belongings. All lock combinations are provided to the homeroom teacher. The Minnesota law governing school lockers includes the following points:

- School lockers are the property of the school.
- At no time does the school relinquish its exclusive control of lockers that are provided for the students’ convenience.
- School authorities or law enforcement personnel may inspect the interior of lockers at any time, for any reason, without notice, student consent or a search warrant.
- Lockers may not be decorated inside or out except with magnets.
- Classroom desks are included under the above regulations.

## ***Lunch Program***

**St. Joseph School lunches are provided by St. Joseph School** to provide our students with fresh, healthy food for their school lunch. We offer an Meal Program in which all students will be offered a complete daily hot lunch meal at a no cost to the family. These lunches include milk. Second entree are available for the purchase of \$2.00. Your child may qualify for free or reduced-price meals. To apply for free or reduced-price meals, complete an Application for Educational Benefits following the instructions, available in the school office. A new application must be submitted each year. Your application also helps

our school qualify for additional education funds and discounts. Return your completed Application for Educational Benefits directly to St. Joseph School.

Students in grades K-4 have a mid-morning snack (brought from home) with the option to purchase milk.

Low balance emails will be sent to families when their family lunch account falls below \$10.00. Students who are not served hot lunch due to a negative lunch balance will be offered a grape jelly sandwich as a courtesy.

We will continue to accept payments to your family's lunch account via cash/check at the school office.

**Note:** When families qualify for free and reduced lunch they also help the school. Applicant information is confidential. If you think you might qualify, please apply for FREE & REDUCED LUNCH, as the amount of aid that we receive as a school for Title I, Technology Grants, and Federal nonpublic aid is based on the number of families receiving free and reduced lunches. Should your financial status change during the year, you can apply at that time.

### ***Media Use Policy***

Media such as videos, DVD's, speakers, field trips, newspapers, magazines, computer technology, and television programming enhance the learning experience. Media may be used for both curriculum enhancement and positive reinforcement for appropriate Christian behavior. All use of media will be timely and under the direction of the professional teacher.

Videos may be viewed under the following rating guidelines:

Grades K-8	G rating
Grades K-3	PG rating with written parental approval only
Grades 4-8	PG-13 rating with written parental approval and curriculum application has been communicated to both the parents and principal prior to viewing

All movies beyond a G rating are viewed by a teacher prior to use in the classroom.

### ***Student Electronics/Cell Phone Policy***

#### **NEW policy for 2022-2023: Electronic Devices (Cell Phone) Policy**

NEW Policy: **Electronic Devices, Cell Phones, and Accessories** – Electronic devices (cell phones, earbuds, air pods, and headphones, smartwatches, and other devices that can create a distraction for the student or teachers) are not to be seen or used during school hours.

#### **Consequences:**

When a staff member sees a non-school issued device, the device will be confiscated. Electronic devices that are confiscated will be turned in to the office. Students will be assessed a \$10 fine and will turn in their phone to the school office for the next two school

days. If the fine is not paid, the electronic device continues to be turned in each day until the fine is paid.

**Note: All fines collected will be used to support the food shelf.**

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#### Rationale/Research:

Cell Phones are a major distraction in school, disrupting instruction, learning, and student relationships. There is a growing body of research that indicates the increasing use of smartphones and social media is having a negative impact on children and adolescents. This creates a need for parents and schools to develop rules and policies to help children/students deal with the high and increasing level of technology immersion that is common for most of them. St. Joseph Catholic STEM School believes that a change in policy is needed to benefit both students and the school environment.

The following articles provide information about the impact smartphones and social media/internet can and are having on society – particularly adolescents.

#### [Ledger of Harms](#)

This list of factoids, sorted into categories, attempts to document some of the invisible costs of the race for engagement and growth currently underway by technology platforms. Of special interest is the section titled “The Next Generations,” which lists information specifically related to children, including teens. The Ledger of Harms is one resource on the website of the Center for Humane Technology.

#### [Are Smartphones and Social Media Hurting our Kids?](#)

This article on the Institute for Family Studies website was written by Charles Fain Lehman and originally published by the Washington Free Beacon. It presents evidence on both sides of the discussion about the link between the rise in suicide and depression among teens and the rise in smart phone use and decrease in teen socialization. One of Lehman’s concluding statements is that “a lack of scientific consensus does not mean that no action is merited.” That we do not understand the effect of smartphones on developing brains might recommend more caution—where 95 percent of teens having a smartphone suggests a lack of appropriate restraint.

#### [Smartphones, social media use and youth mental health](#)

This article from the Canadian Medical Association Journal reviews research into smartphones, social media use and youth mental health. These key points from the authors are a good summary of the article’s content:

- *Evidence from a variety of cross-sectional, longitudinal and empirical studies implicate smartphone and social media use in the increase in mental distress, self-injurious behavior and suicidality among youth; there is a dose–response relationship, and the effects appear to be greatest among girls.*
- *Social media can affect adolescents’ self-view and interpersonal relationships through social comparison and negative interactions, including cyberbullying; moreover, social media content often involves normalization and even promotion of self-harm and suicidality among youth.*
- *High proportions of youth engage in heavy smartphone use and media multitasking, with resultant chronic sleep deprivation, and negative effects on cognitive control, academic performance and socioemotional functioning.*
- *Clinicians can work collaboratively with youth and their families, using open, nonjudgmental and developmentally appropriate approaches to reduce potential*

*harms from social media and smartphone use, including education and practical problem-solving.*

- *There is a need for public awareness campaigns and social policy initiatives that promote nurturing home and school environments that foster resilience as youth navigate the challenges of adolescence in today's world.*

### Teens and Dangerous Levels of Cell Phone Use

This article by psychologist Michael Ungar is a few years old; however, smartphone usage has only increased since it was written, so we believe his points are still relevant. Among other things, he suggests creating cell-free zones in schools. He also references what Iceland has done in regard to delinquency, drugs and alcohol abuse and suggests that part of the solution to the problem of children's smartphone addiction is "to offer them equally stimulating and socially engaging opportunities to do things that produce the same brain rewards as eight hours staring at a small blue screen." In his studies of resilience over the years, Ungar says "I've been reminded by children over and over again that they actually appreciate structure and reasonable consequences. They like routines and expectations that they can meet. They want genuine attachments and large networks of social relations." He concludes by offering four strategies for parents:

1. Model appropriate cell phone use.
2. Limit access.
3. Set routines and structure.
4. Offer substitutes.

### **Office Hours**

The St. Joseph School office is open 7:30 am – 3:00 pm Monday through Friday during the school year. The school office is closed during school breaks.

### **Parent Cooperation as a Condition of Enrollment**

This handbook is part of the contract that exists between the school and its parents and guardians. The agreement page found at the end of this book is the documentation of that contract. You share with us the responsibility for your children's understanding of our school mission, as well as the rules and regulations that flow from that mission. Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

See also *Recommended Transfer*

### **Drop off Procedures**

The Second Street Entrance (south side) is used as the primary entrance for parents to enter the school. Students who are driven to school should be dropped off at this entrance. Drivers should not leave their car during pickup and drop off hours (7:30 - 8:00 and 2:30-3:00). The Parking Lot entrance is the school bus loading/unloading area. For the safety of all our students, no drivers should park in the parking lot between 7:30-3:00. You may park on Pine Street or Second Street at other times of the day.

In order to assure our children's safety, all drivers and pedestrians are expected to comply with the following procedures. Inform everyone who drives your children of these procedures. Traffic safety rules are for the benefit of the children, not the convenience of the drivers. Our goals are that (1) students are always supervised; (2) Cross the streets only at the corners; (3) Follow directions of school crossing guards. Drivers must pull into a parking place before letting children into or out of the car. Avoid blocking traffic or causing traffic to back up behind you. Do not stop or line up in an intersection. Pedestrians must use sidewalks or other marked paths.

### **Morning Drop-off**

1. *Saints, Inc.* extended care opens at 7:00 a.m. for early arrivals.
2. General supervision begins at 7:45 a.m. Students arriving before this should report to *Saints, Inc.*, or the teacher who has previously agreed to receive them early.
3. Drivers either (a) stop in drop off area, where students leave the vehicle and go directly to the sidewalk to enter the building; or (b) park their vehicle (not in drop-off lane) and walk their students into the school building. When entering/exiting the building, please check in with the door supervisor.
4. Use Second Street (south side of building) for drop-off. The parking lot is for bus unloading Between 7:30-8:00.

### **Afternoon Pickup K-8: Second Street entrance**

1. School provides supervision until 3:00 p.m., after which K-6 students go to *Saints, Inc.* for care. Families are billed accordingly.
2. Drivers either (a) stop in the pickup area, where students enter vehicles from the sidewalk side only; or (b) park their vehicle (not in pickup lane), walk into the Commons area, pick up their children, and walk them to their vehicle.

### **Morning and Afternoon Bus Riders**

Bus drop off and pick-up will be in the parking lot.

### **Visitors to the office may park opposite the school on Second Street.**

Parents and guardians: Make sure that you notify the school office before 2:00 pm when there are changes regarding your child's normal routine. The office will contact the classroom teacher directly. Email messages or voicemails left on teacher machines may not be received until after the school day has ended.

### ***Pet Policy/Rules and Regulations***

St Joseph School provides for the safety of children by restricting animals in its building. Fish and other small domestic animals are permitted in classrooms provided they are secured within a container. No wild animals are allowed in classrooms.

Children with allergies or those with immune deficiencies may be especially susceptible to diseases transmitted by animals or allergic reactions; therefore, special precautions may be needed to minimize risks. Consultation with the school nurse and the child's parents about precautionary measures is strongly advised.



## **Other Guidelines**

- Any animal allowed on school grounds must be clean and healthy. Any education with animals should emphasize proper hygiene and handwashing recommendations.
- No animal should be allowed in food preparation areas at any time.
- Animal cages or tanks should be cleaned thoroughly on a regular basis. Students should not be allowed to handle or clean up any form of animal waste (feces, urine, blood, etc) and waste should be disposed of in a plastic bag or container with a lid. Anyone who cleans a cage or tank should wash his/her hands immediately after completing the task.

## **Exception**

Guide, hearing and other service dogs or law enforcement dogs may be allowed in school.

The complete Pet Policy can be requested from the School Office.

## ***Physical Education***

Students are required to wear appropriate clothing for physical education classes. Gym shoes are required for all students. These cannot be the same as those shoes worn outside. A note from a parent or guardian must be presented if a student cannot participate for one or two days. A physician's excuse is necessary if a student is excused for a longer period of time.

## ***Protection of Children***

**Background Checks:** All paid employees of St. Joseph Church and School in Waconia are required to have background checks and VIRTUS training for terms of employment. **In addition, all volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults are required to undergo background checks and VIRTUS training. This is mandated by the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.**

## **Mandatory Criminal Background Check Policy**

All employees as well as all school volunteers who have regular or unsupervised contact with minors are subject to criminal background checks. A school may decide not to conduct criminal background checks on school volunteers who do not have regular or unsupervised contact with minors, as well as vendors or independent contractors.

The following positions are subject to a mandatory background check:

Teachers, Substitute Teachers, Specialist Teachers, Tutors in this building, Athletic Coaches, Extracurricular Advisors, Teacher Aides, Food Service Personnel, Janitorial Service Personnel, Support Staff, and Administrative Staff.

See also *Volunteer Screening*; *Sexual Harassment Policy*

## ***Recommended Transfer***

Students clearly unable to profit from the school by reason of ability, serious emotional instability, repeated uncooperative or destructive behavior; or the repeated uncooperative or destructive attitude of parent/legal guardian will be asked to transfer when:

1. The school has explored means to meet the needs of the child;
2. There has been sufficient discussion with the parent/legal guardian concerning the child's condition or the parent/legal guardian's attitude;
3. The transfer may take place at the end of a grading period.
4. The final decision is made by the principal in consultation with teachers, parents, and the pastor.

## ***Report Cards***

Students will receive formal evaluations of their progress three times a year. In addition, parents receive notification of their child's progress on their Educate Portal. Report cards will be completed at the end of each trimester (end of November, early March, end of school year) and will be posted to the Educate Portal. Printed report cards will be sent home only at the end of the year. Parents are urged to remain in close contact with their child's teacher or teachers throughout the course of the school year. St. Joseph School asks that parents understand the demands on the teachers' time and call for an appointment if you wish to confer with a teacher about your child's academic progress.

Any requests for grade changes must be made in writing to the teacher within one week of the receipt of the grade. Contesting a grade does not ensure that it will be changed. With the June report card comes the final decision about placement of the student for the following year. The following are possibilities:

1. Pass/Promotion
2. Pass with reservation
3. Placed in Grade \_\_\_\_\_ at parent request (Parents are required to sign a statement that they realize the placement is against the professional advice of the staff.)
4. Placed in Grade \_\_\_\_\_ with reservations (reservations to be stated)
5. Recommended for retention
6. Pass on condition (conditions will be stated)

Assessment and evaluation of students are not limited to report cards. Student portfolios, student/teacher conferences and other assessment and evaluation methods may be used. Progress reports for students with grades less than 70% will be seen by the principal and a principal/student conference will be held. If the student does not demonstrate improvement, parents will be contacted. *See also Academic Probation.*

## ***Retention***

Research indicates that the benefits of retaining a student in a particular grade diminish with age. For a few students, however, it may be beneficial on developmental or academic grounds. The guiding question is always, "How can we best meet this student's needs?"

General timing and process: (1) Areas of concern should be brought to the attention of the parent/legal guardian at the earliest indication, and the principal is so informed. (2) By mid-school year (January), the parent/legal guardian is informed that retention is a possibility. (3) Regular communication with the parent/legal guardian takes place throughout the process. These communications are documented in writing and kept in a separate file.

They may include reports of all efforts to remediate. (4) The final teacher recommendation is shared in writing with the parent/legal guardian no later than six (6) weeks prior to the close of school. (SB 8/11/04)

### ***Saints, Inc. After School Care***

The purpose of St. Joseph's after school program, *Saints, Inc.*, is to provide a safe, nurturing, and enriching atmosphere for your child(ren). It is available to St. Joseph Catholic School and Parish students, kindergarten through grade six. The program is also available on many non-school days, with previous sign-up.

*Saints, Inc.* programming includes academic, social and physical activities; individual and quiet times for personal choice activities; lunch and snack; and full or half-day summer programming.

Families may register for regular care at favorable rates or use "drop-in" care on an occasional basis. The program is located in the St. Joseph Education Center. For more information, call the program coordinator at 952-442-4500.

[\\*Please see separate Saints, Inc. Handbook for more information.](#)

### ***Scholarship Opportunities***

St. Joseph Parish and School have a strong commitment to providing quality education. At the same time, we realize that all may not be able to meet the full amount of tuition asked. It is important that each child have the opportunity to be educated in a Christian, caring environment.

St. Joseph School has scholarship sources available for use by our families; we encourage their use as we believe tuition should not be the deciding factor in your child's ability to attend St. Joseph School. In order to allocate the aid in a fair and objective manner we have enlisted the services of Tuition Aid Data Services. Properly completed scholarship forms must be submitted directly to TADS no later than the deadline. Financial assistance forms are available online at [www.tuitionaid.com](http://www.tuitionaid.com). While the usual application period is in the spring, do not hesitate to inquire in the Business Office if your family's circumstances change during the school year.

#### ***St. Gianna Molla Scholarship***

Through the generous donation of a benefactor, we have started a scholarship for families with four or more children. This scholarship is offered for the fourth child who will have 100% of their tuition paid. The donor wants to make this a long-term commitment. We have named this scholarship the St. Gianna Molla Scholarship.\*

\*St. Gianna Molla is the patron saint of mothers, physicians, and unborn children. She died on Easter Sunday, 1962 after giving birth to her fourth child, choosing her child's life over her own.

## ***School Board***

The St. Joseph School Board exists to offer leadership and service in all matters pertaining to St. Joseph School. Its purpose is to minister, to be an advisor to the principal and pastor, and to develop and support an educational faith community for students, staff, and families.

Parents are welcome and encouraged to participate in school board committees: Enrollment, Finance, Development, Facilities, Technology and Activities.

## ***School Schedules***

### **Grades K-3**

Monday-Friday 7:55 (attendance)  
8:00 am (class begins) - 2:35 pm

### **Grades 4-8**

Monday-Friday 7:55 (attendance)  
8:00 am (class begins) - 2:50 pm

### **Please note:**

1. St. Joseph School students residing within the boundaries of Independent School District 110 (Waconia) may be provided transportation through the public school bus company (Koch). Students must follow all rules and policies of the public school bus system.
2. The school supplies each family with a school calendar for the school year listing early release days, breaks, etc.
3. St. Joseph School does not assume responsibility for a student's care before 7:45 a.m. or after dismissal unless they are registered in Saints, Inc., the extended care program. Please arrange for your child's arrival and departure accordingly. Should a problem arise that necessitates a child remaining at school later than usual, call the school office and the child will be sent to *Saints, Inc.*
4. Parents must communicate in writing to the school office any change in the end of day routine for your child. If there is no written communication, St. Joseph School will send your child on his/her normal end of day routine.
5. Parent cooperation on all matters of supervision is essential for the safety of the children.

## ***School Safety Procedures***

## **Security**

Visitors may use the Second Street doors off of the south side of the school. The parking lot, Elm Street and Pine Street doors (north, west and east entrances) are locked during school hours and are not to be used for entrances. The Parking Lot door will be open for student access to and from buses.

All visitors are expected to sign in and out at the school office.

St. Joseph School conducts regular fire, tornado, and lockdown drills.

There is an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) in the commons area for use in the event of an emergency, as well as on the west end of the gymnasium. Some school personnel are trained in its use. After school hours, St. Joseph School cannot guarantee that a trained staff member will be available to use the AED, should the need arise.

*See also Child Safety Policies*

## **Special Services**

Special education services are offered to eligible students through Independent School District 110, the district that serves the Waconia area. The following conditions entitle students to participate:

1. Having a learning disability
2. Having a special behavioral problem that affects their education progress
3. Emotionally challenged
4. Speech disorder or impediment

ISD 110 (Waconia) is responsible for providing special education services. Parents are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the classroom teacher and the principal. St. Joseph's staff assists in referring students for assessment to public school personnel. After the assessment, a "child-study team meeting" is held to discuss the results of the assessment. ISD 110 will determine if the child should receive special education services. Special services may be provided at no cost to your child. Parents must consent to the evaluation, initial placement, and changes to placement. Notice of denial of services must include description of action, basis for refusal, data relied on, and other options considered. Opportunity for a hearing will be provided by ISD 110.

Other services available to St. Joseph's students, furnished by ISD 110 or through state and federal funding, include:

1. Vision and hearing screening
2. Speech therapy programs
3. Transportation service within the district
4. Health services
5. Counseling services

## **Standardized Testing**

The main purposes of standardized testing is to measure student growth and success and to improve instruction and curriculum. The NWEA-MAP assessment is used to survey learning in Math, Reading, Language and Science in grades 3-8 and Math and Reading in grades K-2 at St. Joseph School. Test data provides student comparisons with a national norm group.

The school may have students in grades 7-8 participate in the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) for Math in the spring. These tests assess the student's proficiency levels in relation to grade level standards.

### ***Student Records***

Student data files are available to authorized personnel only: parents, teachers, administration and related school services. No duplication or removal of any part of the student data file is permitted without parental permission. This policy will be consistent with the Data Privacy Act, Minnesota Statute 15.16. When a student transfers to a new school, the new school officially requests records from St. Joseph School, which sends the records directly to the new school.

### ***Transportation***

Bus transportation is provided to those children residing within district boundaries by Independent School District 110. St. Joseph's students are expected to adhere to the Transportation Policy of ISD 110. Students and parents should remember that riding the bus is a privilege and students have an obligation to obey the rules.

In the interest of keeping your child safe on the bus, call Koch Bus Company at 952-442-3370 if the bus driver cannot or does not address a bus safety problem in a timely fashion. You may also call St. Joseph School Principal for further help addressing issues.

### ***Technology Policy***

For information about our technology and iPad policy, please view the document titled "2022-2023 Technology Acceptable Use Contract" on the school website at <https://school.stjosephwaconia.org/handbooks-forms/>.

### ***Tuition Policy***

*(Board reviewed and updated yearly.)*

Rates are usually adjusted in the Winter and go into effect for the following school year. Tuition does not cover the full cost of educating each child. Parish contributions and fundraising subsidize the cost of education.

### **Payment Plans**

Signed tuition contracts agreeing to one of the payment plan options must be on file for your family the first year you enroll your student and will stay in place until graduation unless otherwise communicated to the office. Payment plan options are as follows:  
TADS – 50% of total tuition is due by June 15 and the second half due by August 31.  
TADS – 10 monthly payments – June through March  
TADS – 12 monthly payments – June through May

### **Tuition Refund**

All tuition must be paid through each trimester registered, regardless of whether the child withdraws from the school during the trimester.

Withdrawal after August 1 – families are responsible for 1/3 of tuition.

Withdrawal after start of second trimester – families are responsible for 2/3 of tuition.

Withdrawal after the start of third trimester – families are responsible for full tuition.

In the event of unforeseen circumstances, the Administration reserves the right to grant exceptions to this policy.

For current tuition information, call the school office at 952-442-4500. Rates are usually adjusted in the spring and go into effect for the following school year. Tuition does not cover the full cost of education.

## ***Volunteer Screening***

All volunteers who interact with children, before the course of their volunteer activity, must sign a volunteer code of conduct agreement, complete a background check, attend VIRTUS training. Background checks are made through the McDowell Agency, which has conducted employee background checks for the Archdiocese for many years. Your information is held in strict confidence in every step of the process.

The background checks can take up to ten working days, so make sure you've completed yours before volunteering for school activities involving children.

VIRTUS Training information is available here: <https://stjosephwaconia.org/programs/safe-environment-training-virtus/>

## **Background**

The Dallas Charter of the American bishops calls us to renewed and strengthened procedures to assure our children's safety. Accordingly, the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis instructed all parishes and schools to institute improved screening procedures for all volunteers in regular contact with children or vulnerable adults, effective July 1, 2004. In addition, VIRTUS training is required. Available training sessions can be found on the website at [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org).

*See also: Protection of Children*

## ***Wellness***

The purpose of this plan is to assure a school environment that promotes and ensures student health and well-being by supporting health related learning, healthy eating, and physical activity. The school recognizes that nutrition and physical education are important components of a student's education. The link between learning and nutrition is well documented. Healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their academic potential, physical and mental growth, and wellbeing. St. Joseph School wants to help students establish and maintain lifelong, healthy eating patterns and physical activity.

- All students will have an opportunity to be physically active.
- Outside recess will be provided daily to grades K-8 weather permitting.
- Nutritious foods will be provided for lunch and at the school store.

- The school will provide a clean environment and adequate time in which to eat.
- Nutrition and health will be taught in all grades.
- Teachers will provide classroom opportunities to enhance healthy habits.

### ***Anticipated Absence Form – St. Joseph Catholic STEM School***

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_



Date of Anticipated Absence \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

Consistent attendance at school is important for a child's academic success. When a child misses school, they miss instruction of new concepts, assessment of knowledge learned as well as day-to-day practice of skills and concept instruction. However, we do understand that life may often provide opportunities for families during the school year that may possibly interrupt their attendance. Parents may request work for a child before the absence. Students are expected to complete the work during the absence and be prepared to make up any missed assessment or additional assignments immediately upon return. Upon request, teachers will provide anticipated missed work for the child when possible prior to the absence. This collaboration between parents and school will assist the child in returning to the classroom on track with the rest of the class and not behind in their preparation for new and continued instruction of concepts.

As parent/parents, we agree to support SJS and our child by diligently working to keep their studies on track during our absence.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

As teacher and administration, we will support the child by providing any pre-planned lessons, homework and activities prior to the anticipated absence and be prepared to share additional missed work upon the child's return.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Assignments will be given dates included for all work is due when the child sure to review these dates to assignment deadlines and that need to be made up upon return.



prior to the absence and due assignments. All pre-assigned returns to school. Please be assist your child in meeting all schedule any quizzes or tests

### **Acknowledgment and Agreement of St. Joseph Family Handbook Policies**

Please read and discuss the St. Joseph Catholic School Family Handbook with your child(ren). The handbook can be found at <https://school.stjosephwaconia.org/family-handbook>. Please check all statements and sign below.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have received and read the St. Joseph Catholic School Family Handbook and we agree to

be governed by the policies contained herein.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand the expectations of St. Joe's School Computers and Mobile Devices Acceptable Use Contract and my family agrees to behave according to the standards of the technology policies.

\_\_\_\_\_ I acknowledge that we are responsible for all information communicated through weekly e-newsletters and/or emails.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian first and last name PRINTED*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

*If you do not wish for your child to be featured in print marketing or social media during the 2023-2024 school year, please contact Katie Moore, Director of Communications, at [kmoore@stjosephwaconia.org](mailto:kmoore@stjosephwaconia.org) with a written request by September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.*



## **School Computers and Mobile Devices Acceptable Use Contract**

Full Technology Acceptable Use Contract can be found at  
<https://school.stjosephwaconia.org/handbooks-forms/>

## **School Computers and Mobile Devices Acceptable Use Contract**

Reviewed and Updated June 2023 50

## USE POLICY FOR DEVICE COMPUTERS & MOBILE DEVICES CONTRACT

Student Name: (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School Year: 2023-24

### **E. Student Acknowledgement**

I have read the policy on the use of Computers & Mobile Devices. I understand the expectations above and agree to behave according to the standards of this policy.

I understand that ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL supports the privacy of electronic communications, but I also understand that it cannot guarantee the privacy of electronic mail or files the student (my child/dependent) may keep on the school's Computers & Mobile Devices.

**IMPORTANT: School provided Accidental Damages Insurance on all Devices is available. See section C in the Use Policy.**

Finally, I agree to return the device and charging utility that was issued and checked out in its original working condition or pay for the cost of repair or replacement when the loss or damage resulting from the student's (my child/dependent) carelessness or negligence.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Activities Handbook

## **Activities Committee**

Board Members:

Mike Sieve

Trent Klein

Adam Garvey  
Brian Moyer  
Lynn Specken  
Kristen Iverson  
Nick Johnson  
Ben Ische  
Activities Director: Shawn Sutherland

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITIES PROGRAM**

### **Mission Statement**

St Joseph Catholic School provides an Activities program where all students have the opportunity to learn, play and have fun while promoting positive self-esteem, teamwork, sportsmanship and Christian behavior.

### **Nondiscriminatory Policy**

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

The activities program has the following major objectives:

- To provide opportunities for competition
- To be inclusive of all students no matter the skill level
- To teach students that participation is a privilege with inherent responsibilities
- To provide activities that promote school unity by learning loyalty, teamwork, self-discipline, maximum effort and mutual respect for one another.
- To help students maintain and keep healthy habits
- To have fun

Emphasis is placed on sportsmanship and attitude of the student rather than the number of games won or lost. In order to maintain the integrity and high standards of our activities programs, all parents, students, coaches, and fans are expected to follow a set of expectations and guidelines. Please read these. By signing the Family Handbook of the School, you acknowledge that you and your child/ren understand this section and will conduct yourselves accordingly. This agreement is in effect for 1 year from the date of your signature.

### ***PARTICIPATION PHILOSOPHY***

Responsibility for the success of the activities program rests with our parents, coaches and volunteers. Adults must remember that the program exists for the growth of young people and must model Christian values and virtues.

### ***STUDENT ELIGIBILITY***

All students in grades K-8 are eligible to participate provided they are enrolled in St Joseph School or are a home-schooled student enrolled in St Joseph's Parish. Each student must maintain a satisfactory academic standing. (Please refer to the Appendix for the complete definition.)

## **ACTIVITIES OFFERED**

Our teams compete in supervised structured games and tournaments with area teams and with School District # 110 Community Education

### **Girls Activities**

#### **Fall**

Volleyball (Grades 4-8)  
Robotics (Grades 3-8)  
Math League (Grades 5-8)  
Soccer  
Running Club/CC

#### **Winter**

Basketball (Grade 4-8)

#### **Spring**

Soccer (Grade K-6)  
Softball

### **Boys Activities**

#### **Fall**

\*Volleyball (grades 4-8) – may start in fall of 2024  
Robotics (Grade 3-8)  
Math League (Grades 5-8)  
Soccer

#### **Winter**

Basketball (Grade 4-8)

#### **Spring**

Soccer (Grade K-6)  
Baseball  
Running Club CC

## ***LEVEL OF INSTRUCTION***

K – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teams are developmental and will focus on teaching basic skills, the rules of the game and having fun. Students are given equitable playing time as described below. Scrimmages, games and up to two tournaments per year will be scheduled as possible.

5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Instruction continues with increased emphasis on the rules, team play and sportsmanship. Students are given equitable playing time as described below. Scrimmages, games and up to three tournaments per year will be

scheduled as possible.

7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade These teams continue instruction in all skill phases with stressing the role of competition and team strategy. Students are given equitable playing time as described below. Scrimmages, games and up to four tournaments per year will be scheduled as possible.

Please note that it is not possible to guarantee practice or game times. Time conflicts should be sorted out as quickly as possible. If a conflict becomes unworkable and the student must withdraw participation, a full refund will be given before the first game is played.

### ***EQUITABLE PLAYING TIME***

The following applies to all grades and all sports:

Regular Season Games: Eligible students will play in every game. At the head coach's discretion, playing time may vary during specific regular season contests. However, by the end of the season, overall playing time received in the regular season games should be fairly equal for all players.

Tournament Games: All students will play in every game but playing time will not be required to be equal.

Please note that playing time may be influenced by a student's participation in practice (though perfect attendance is not required), their attitude, and their current academic or behavior standing in school.

All participants are expected to be at all practices. If a student cannot practice for some reason, this should be communicated to the coach.

#### **\*Assisting an Additional Team**

In addition to playing on his or her regular team, a student may be asked to "play up" to assist an older team that needs additional players to field a team. The decision as to who is asked to play up is determined by the coach of the older team and will be dependent on skill level, team need, and competition level. The coach should be familiar with the skill levels of all the younger players before making a decision. The coach will also consult the athletic director and coach of the younger team before making a decision.

The

When playing up, the SJS playing time policy does not apply and there is no guarantee of any playing time. The coach asking the younger player to assist the older team should communicate with the player's parents about the extent to which the player is likely to play if they accept the invitation. Playing time is determined by the coach. Younger players are offered this opportunity on an "as needed" basis.

St. Joseph Catholic School prefers to field teams consisting of children who attend our school. In the event that a team cannot be formed because of a lack of players, the school will consider combining grades or pulling up students from younger grades to fill roster

spots. If these options have been exhausted and the shortage of players remains, the team may consider adding students who are members of St. Joseph Catholic Church but not enrolled in St. Joe's School. This needs to be approved by the Athletic Director (AD) and the School Principal on a year-by-year basis. The AD will work with the coach on arranging the invitation and participation of the student(s).

## **PROCEDURES FOR PARTICIPATION**

- The Athletic Director announces upcoming athletic activity through the school newsletter.  
Activities and Athletics Registration forms and payment is available online on the school website under Student Life > Activities and Athletics.
- Athletic/Activity Scholarships are available based on need. Inquire with Parish Administrator and Principal.
- There will be a \$ 10.00 late fee for registrations received past the deadline.
- Families will be required to read the *Athletic Handbook*, acknowledge their receipt and understanding, and sign the Athletic Contract.
- By signing the registration form, parents agree to uphold the guidelines listed in this *Handbook* and also agree to volunteer for the needs of these activities.

Parents are required to participate in a pre-season meeting with the volunteer coach and Athletic Director. The meeting will cover the rules and expectations for students, parents and spectators, practice/game schedules, volunteer schedules and questions and answers.

Please note that the Athletic Program cannot be run without your participation. Parents are expected to donate their time for various jobs such as ticket taking, concessions, operating the scoring table, security and set up/clean up. Your help is sincerely appreciated!

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

Participation in St Joseph Athletics is a privilege that requires everyone involved to conduct themselves in a positive, appropriate and Christian manner. Student athlete behavior that reflects negatively on the school, parish or community will not be tolerated and may result in their suspension from the team.

Unsportsmanlike behavior resulting in expulsion from a game or a Technical Foul may result in removal from the activity and further review by the Principal and Athletic Director. Additional disciplinary action may be possible.

Parents, volunteers and spectators are also expected to set a good example for our students. People who violate this policy are subject to removal from the activity at the sole discretion of the Principal and the Athletic Director.

## **Student Participants, Coach, and Parent/Fan Expectations & Guidelines**

**Student Participants will:**

- Represent themselves and St Joseph's School with honor, proper conduct and good sportsmanship
- Not berate the officials or trash talk to their opponent.
- Not use profanity.
- Demand a sports environment that is free from illegal drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and will always refrain from their use.
- Be responsible members of the classroom and school community.
- Respectful of peers, coaches and officials on their team.
- Be respectful of opposing players, coaches, fans and officials.
- Abide by all rules of St Joseph School and the leagues/tournaments we compete in.

**Coaches Will:**

- Represent themselves and St Joseph's School with honor, proper conduct and good sportsmanship.
- Respect the interpretation of the officials.
- Not use profanity.
- Set a good example for student athletes and the school community.
- Assist each student athlete to reach their full potential.
- Do their best to help each student athlete understand their role with the team.
- Attempt to help the student athlete achieve the best experience possible.
- Demand a sports environment that is free from illegal drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all sporting events.

**Parents/Fans Will:**

- Represent themselves and St Joseph's School with honor, proper conduct and good sportsmanship.
- Be supportive of their student athletes and the team in general.
- Respect the judgment and strategy of the coaches.
- Respect the interpretation of the officials.
- Not use profanity.
- Demand a sports environment that is free from illegal drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all sporting events.
- Place the emotional and physical well-being of the athletes ahead of my personal desire to win.
- Remember that the game is for the kids – not the adults.
- Do my best to make sure that youth sports are a FUN and POSITIVE experience.
- Communicate my concerns through the proper channels in dignified manner. (See Conflict Grievance Procedure)

***SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY***

All students must be in school by Noon to participate in that evening's activity. This rule applies to practices, scrimmages, games, tournaments, and all other activities. Students who participate in a school sponsored event such as a field trip, retreat or testing will not be considered absent. Extenuating circumstances such as a family emergency or funeral will need a note from the student's parent to allow their student's participation for that day.



## ***EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS***

Each student athlete is responsible for the school equipment and uniform issued to them and will be accountable for its replacement cost at the discretion of the Athletic Director.

## ***INSURANCE***

St Joseph School does not provide insurance or assume liability for injury received in the normal course of activity.

## ***USE OF FACILITIES***

It is expected that participant families leave our facility in a clean condition. Parents, coaches and members of the team are responsible for the set-up/clean up of the area. Clean-up will involve sweeping of the bleachers, the gym floor, the changing rooms and all common areas. Trash is to be collected and disposed.

## ***CONFLICT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE***

Athletics/Activities can sometimes result in conflicts. Following is the procedure for addressing these appropriately.

Most disputes are better resolved with an appropriate cooling off period. Consequently, no dispute between a parent, coach, student athlete or official will be addressed during or immediately following a game.

The steps to resolve the dispute or grievance must be followed in this specific sequence:

1. The student athlete requests a meeting with their coach. This meeting is strictly between the student and their coach.
2. If the conflict is not resolved, the student athlete and parents should request a conference with the coach.
3. If still not resolved, the student athlete, parent and coach should meet with the Athletic Director.
4. Finally, if there is no resolution – all parties meet with the Principal.

## ***STANDARDS FOR VOLUNTEER COACHES***

1. All adult coaches (head and assistants) must complete VIRTUS training and will be subject to mandatory background checks.
2. Coaches will display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
3. Coaches are expected to follow established rules of the individual contest and league at all times.
4. Coaches are expected to place their players' emotional and physical well-being as a priority. Offensive words or actions directed at their own teams, parents, officials, spectators or officials will not be tolerated.

5. A coach who is expelled from a contest by an official will automatically be suspended for one additional game. The Athletic Director and Principal will further review the matter for possible additional penalties.
6. Coaches will strive to promote sportsmanship and improvement with their teams at all times.
7. Coaches will annually complete “Heads Up” Concussion training and submit certificate to the Athletic Director. <http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/coach.html>

### **Important – Please Read Carefully**

I have read and understand the St. Joseph Catholic School Athletic Expectations and Guidelines. I understand that ANY violation of the Expectations and Guidelines may result in disciplinary action being taken against me which could include immediate removal from the team or event and/or being required to meet with the St. Joe’s Athletic Board, and/or the Principal of the school.

*If you do not wish for your child to be featured in print marketing or social media during the 2023-2024 school year, please contact Katie Moore, Director of Communications, at [kmoore@stjosephwaconia.org](mailto:kmoore@stjosephwaconia.org) with a written request by September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.*

# **Volunteer Handbook**

## **VOLUNTEERS AS AMBASSADOR**

As a volunteer, you will represent St. Joseph’s Catholic School not just “on the job,” but out in our community as well. Help spread the good word about the great things that our school is doing. Answer questions when you can, or urge people to call the school office for more information. Above all, please don’t speak unfavorably about the school. If you have issues or concerns about the school, please contact a staff member.

## **VOLUNTEER CHARACTERISTICS**

- Respects confidentiality rights of students and staff
- Patient when working with students
- Prompt, dependable and regular in attendance
- Friendly to teacher, staff and children
- Aware of, exhibits, and reinforces Christian Behavior Expectations
- Positive attitude in action and words in School, Parish and Community

## **CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

Volunteers are asked to be responsible for their actions and model Christian Behavior Expectations to our students. For complete details of these behaviors see the Family

Handbook.

- Be Prompt and Prepared
- Respect Authority
- Respect Rights of Others
- Respect Property
- Display a Concern for Learning
- Display Appropriate Social Skills
- Display Positive and Productive Character

## ***VOLUNTEER BACKGROUND CHECK***

To maintain a safe environment for our students, all volunteers who work directly with children must complete the Essential 3 for Safe Environments. This includes VIRTUS training, signing the Code of Conduct and a volunteer background check, as required by the Archdiocese. Training is available online at:

<https://stjosephwaconia.org/programs/safe-environment-training-virtus/>

## ***VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES***

- **Be flexible** and ready for change. Often we have events and schedule changes come up suddenly and do not have a chance to communicate with everyone. We will attempt to let you know in advance, but **we appreciate your understanding** when this is not possible.

### **Volunteers for Classrooms**

- Follow all main volunteer expectations, especially those of **confidentiality**.
- Parent volunteers should do **limited correcting** of student work, however, if you are doing such a task, please remember to keep all information confidential and understand that students within one grade level may be at a variety of different stages of development.
- If you are **working directly with students**, either one-on-one or in small groups, please see the Volunteering for Tutoring/Working with Students section of this manual.
- Please realize that regular classroom work will be continuing while you are present and you may need to wait to speak to the teacher.
- Please make the teacher aware of any **discipline questions** you may have, but do not discipline students yourself. We have many students with a variety of needs who may be on special plans of which you are unaware.
- Look for ways that you can help and share your ideas with the teacher/staff person but be sure to check first before doing anything. Teachers/staff may have a particular reason for why something is as it is. For example, you might think nothing of cleaning up something but a teacher may have been “saving” the work for a particular student to complete. When in doubt, please ask.

## Volunteers for Field Trips

- Please watch for opportunities in the school and classroom newsletters as well as completing the parent volunteer interests google form on back to school night.
- If you are going to lead a small group without a teacher present at the field trip itself, you must have **completed a legal background check form**. Anyone who will be responsible for students without a teacher/staff person present must complete this information.
- Please do not give students food on field trips unless you have the teacher's permission as some students have **allergies** of which you may not be aware.
- If you are leading a group without a teacher present, you will need to be responsible for some areas of **discipline**. Make sure you have reviewed the Resource Book section on discipline. Please be as positive with students as possible, stay calm, write down any pertinent details, and report the information as soon as possible to the teacher who will follow up with any discipline consequences as needed.

## Volunteers for Playground/Lunchroom

### **PLAYGROUND**

- Playground volunteers are coordinated by Office Staff.
- If you cannot be there on your scheduled day, please call the office as early as possible as we need to arrange for a teacher to take your place instead.
- Playground volunteers should follow all **playground expectations**, including staying on the playground or black top itself, staying away from parked cars, no rough-housing, cross the street within the gates, etc.
- Please **report any injuries or discipline problems** to the teacher/staff member in charge immediately.
- If you ever find yourself outside with students without a teacher/staff person present, please send a student to the office immediately and someone will be sent outside to assist.

### **LUNCHROOM**

- Lunch room volunteers are coordinated by Office Staff.
- If you cannot be there on your scheduled day, please call as early as possible as we need to arrange for someone to cover your position.
- Expectations for the lunchroom may be different from K-2 to 3-4 and 5-8 so please be sure to check with the supervisor about what is allowed.
- Please report any **injuries or discipline** problems to the lunchroom supervisor/teacher or staff person immediately.
- Please note that the Food Service Staff are not expected to handle discipline problems, or other issues as they need to give their time and attention to preparing the food and serving it, cleaning up, etc.

## Volunteers for Projects

- Watch the School and Classroom Newsletters for these opportunities. Volunteers are often needed for office projects, clean-up projects, Home and School Association events, etc. These are great opportunities for those who cannot volunteer on a regular basis.
- Please follow all directions from the person in charge of the project and contact the office or the person in charge with questions.
- **If you are in charge of any volunteer projects**, please provide the school office all information regarding the project as soon as possible so that they can accurately answer calls regarding the project.

### **Volunteers for Special Events**

- When volunteering for special events such as The Gala, Golf Tournament, Rake-a-thon, Music programs, etc., please be sure to check with the person in charge for what the expectations are for volunteers.
- Please follow all other general volunteer expectations that apply to the event.
- Please do not take a student anywhere during a special event (e.g. to the bathroom, etc.) without first checking with the teacher or staff person in charge. They need to know where each of the students are for whom they are responsible.

### **Volunteers for Tutoring/Working with Students**

- Volunteers working with individual students or small groups should **stay within sight of the teacher/staff person** at all times. This means working somewhere in the classroom, or in the hallway outside the classroom.
- Volunteers should rarely be working with students without a teacher/staff person present. In such cases, **the volunteer must have completed VIRTUS training and its Essential 3 components.**
- Volunteers who work directly with students are the most likely to know personal developmental things about students. As with all volunteers, **confidentiality must be maintained.** If you have a concern, please speak only to the teacher (or in rare cases, the administration) and not to anyone else for advice.

### **VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Complete VIRTUS training online including the Essential 3: signing the code of conduct, completing a background check and watching the VIRTUS video.
- For the safety of our students, always report to the school office and sign in and out.
- Obtain and wear an identification badge.
- Work under the direction of the school staff or the volunteer coordinator(s).
- Communicate with staff or volunteer coordinator(s) to assure clear expectations and task assignments.
- Be responsible for your actions and model Christian Behavior Expectations to our students.
- In an emergency, please remain calm and follow staff directions. If the building must be evacuated, Fire Exits and Tornado Safety Locations are posted in all rooms. Please stay with the group you are with unless given other directions.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

As a volunteer, you may become aware of confidential information about St. Joseph students, including grades, behavior, and disciplinary actions. It is critical that you keep that information confidential and do not discuss it with anyone else, inside and outside of the school (including your own family). Students trust you to maintain their rights and privacy.

## **IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO FULFILL YOUR COMMITMENT**

Be aware of the contact person and the procedure to be followed for your volunteer commitment. Please call the appropriate contact person as soon as you know you are unable to fulfill your commitment.

## **[Archdiocese Code of Conduct Policy Link](#)**

All volunteers must read and abide by the Archdiocese of St. Paul & Minneapolis' Code of Conduct for Adult Volunteers who interact with Minors and Vulnerable Adults. Including, but not limited to appearance, alcohol and tobacco use and appropriate boundaries.

## ***Volunteer Handbook Acknowledgement***

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS FORM TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE PRIOR TO YOUR FIRST VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY. Thank You!

I understand that as a volunteer working directly with children I am subject to a thorough background check, including criminal history.

My signature confirms that I have read this Volunteer Handbook and that as a volunteer working with children I agree to follow these guidelines. I understand that any action inconsistent with these guidelines will result in my removal as a volunteer.

Volunteer's Printed Name (please print all names of volunteers from your household)

Volunteer's Signature

Date