



STUDENT - PARENT HANDBOOK

2024-2025

**32946 Electric Boulevard
Avon Lake, Ohio 44012
440-933-6233
www.stjosephavonlake.org**

MISSION STATEMENT

Saint Joseph Parish School forms and empowers compassionate young people to become missionary disciples who are the hands, heart, and voice of Christ.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- We believe our ministry is to assist parents, the first and most important teachers, in the education and formation of their children as disciples of Christ, according to the teachings and philosophy of the Roman Catholic Church.
- We believe education at Saint Joseph Parish School encompasses the spiritual, academic, emotional, physical, moral and social growth of each student.
- We believe, as the hands of Christ, that we must be committed to serving others with compassion in the parish, school, and community.
- We believe, as the voice of Christ, that we must be committed to spreading the Gospel message with love to all.
- We believe, as the heart of Christ, that we must be committed to worshipping Him with open hearts and teaching others to love and serve Him, as it is revealed through the Scriptures.
- We believe our instruction of the curriculum must incorporate innovative, meaningful teaching techniques in order to meet the needs of the college and career bound as well as the individual learning differences of our students.
- We believe that continuous improvement must be a constant endeavor to encompass the growing and changing needs of our Catholic faith community.

PHILOSOPHY

We, the Saint Joseph Community, believe Catholic education is centered in the family. The process of education, which includes parents, teachers, and students, as well as the wider faith community, is founded on a shared commitment to the spiritual, academic, and social growth of the child. It is our belief that the child, supported by the loving witness of our Catholic faith community, will develop a life-long active response to God's love. Believing in the unique blessedness of each child, we are committed to creating an environment that empowers students to develop their full potential.

Accreditation and Continuous Improvement

St. Joseph Parish School is a Catholic school in the Diocese of Cleveland and is fully accredited by the Ohio Department of Education, through the Ohio Catholic Accrediting Association (OCSAA).

Our current Continuous Improvement Plan cycle, flowing from our Mission, from our Belief Statements, and driven by data, is guided by two main goals, one for Catholic Identity, and one for Academic Performance.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Father Ronald Wearsch, Pastor
Mrs. Maureen Goodwin, Principal
Mr. John Nunney, Dean of Students

SCHOOL PERSONNEL

The faculty of Saint Joseph Parish School are fully accredited, professional teachers. All the teachers hold current licensure in the State of Ohio and are qualified to teach in the subject areas to which they are assigned. Faculty members in grades PreK-3 are hired primarily as self-contained classroom teachers. Teachers in grades 4-8 work in their areas of expertise and certification.

Substitute Teachers

When a teacher is out of school because of illness, professional meetings, or personal business, a qualified, licensed substitute teacher will be hired to take that teacher's place. Occasionally, it may be necessary for the principal to hire a long-term substitute. Whenever possible, a substitute who is familiar to the students will be engaged. The substitute will work closely with the classroom teacher and the principal to ensure a smooth and consistent transition. Substitute teachers are to be accorded the same respect as regular classroom teachers. Any student failing to give a substitute teacher proper respect may be sent to the principal for disciplinary action. Substitute teachers have permission to follow every part of the Saint Joseph School discipline policy.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary responsibility for the education of the children belongs to parents. The greatest single factor in building a child's intellectual, cultural, moral and spiritual attitude is the example parents provide in the home.

Parents are responsible for:

- Supporting school policy and the authority of the administration and teachers.
- Modeling and supporting their children's practice of the family's faith and traditions.
- Confirming that their children complete all assignments.
- Insisting that their children obey the regulations and principles of good behavior.
- Following the policies and procedures stated in the handbook.
- Paying all fees on time.
- Reimbursing any property destroyed or damaged (accidentally or intentionally).

PARENT GROUPS:

- **Volunteer Program** – Volunteers may be used as classroom assistants to the teachers and students. Volunteers may be utilized to assist the faculty/staff and children with activities. Volunteers may be required to be fingerprinted and successfully complete the corresponding background investigation. In addition, volunteers must receive and review a copy of the Diocese of Cleveland "Policy for the Safety of Children in Matters of Sexual Abuse" and complete the Virtus Training.
- **Parent Teacher Organization** – The Parent Teacher Organization's purpose is to work with the school administration to promote and support fellowship and sociability among parents and students, to provide fundraising for the benefit of the school, and to welcome new students and parents. The PTO achieves this purpose through many worthwhile events and activities. Meeting dates and times are published, on Gradelink, in the monthly calendar.
- **CYO** – The parish sponsored Catholic Youth Organization is open to all the children of Saint Joseph Parish and School. CYO welcomes and relies on the assistance of parents. Meeting dates and times are published in the Sunday bulletin and via the parish website. All CYO coaches must be fingerprinted and successfully complete the corresponding background investigation. In addition, CYO coaches must receive and review a copy of the Diocese

of Cleveland "Policy for the Safety of Children in Matters of Sexual Abuse," complete Virtus Training, and the Diocese mandated Coaches Development Program.

ADMISSIONS

- Saint Joseph Parish School has a non-discrimination policy with regards to enrollment. Saint Joseph Parish School admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarships and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.
- Children are eligible for admission to Saint Joseph Parish School according to the following guidelines:
 - Siblings of children presently enrolled in Saint Joseph Parish School
 - Children of parishioners of Saint Joseph Parish who are not presently enrolled in the school
 - Non-Parishioners and non-Catholics (Children of families of other parishes and/or other faiths who desire a Catholic education)
- Students must meet age requirements. Families are asked to complete a Registration and Release of Records form. Payment of the registration, capital improvement and technology fee is due at the time of registration for new families.
- Transfers and withdrawals are handled on an individual basis.

Homeroom Placement Requests

Saint Joseph Parish School invests a large amount of time and energy in creating balanced class lists for each school year based on a multitude of educational factors. To best meet the needs of all students in the school, Saint Joseph Parish School does not accept classroom requests. However, we greatly value the partnership between home and school. Should there be any information important for staff to consider when making class lists, this information is to be sent in writing to the school leadership by April 1 to be considered for the upcoming school year. Class lists are published online the second week in August.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

School Hours

- The school day begins with the start of classes at 7:40 AM and concludes at 2:15 PM. Students may enter the building at 7:20 AM and report to the cafeteria. All students must be in their classroom by 7:40 AM to avoid being marked tardy.
- The school office hours are 7:15 AM until 2:45 PM when phone calls will be answered. Please leave a message before 7:15 AM or after 2:45 PM.
- Phone messages for teachers will be accepted from 7:15 AM to 2:45 PM. Teachers will return phone calls and emails within 24 hours. The school office telephone number is (440) 933-6233.

Visitors – Only authorized visitors are permitted on the school premises. All visitors must report to the school office before proceeding to any classroom area.

Attendance – Regular attendance is a serious parental obligation. Irregular attendance, and chronic absence, may cause the student to miss important lessons and may result in poor grades and lack of enthusiasm for school. Saint Joseph Parish School hours are 7:40 AM to 2:15 PM. In accordance with Ohio Revised Code 3313.205, the following procedure for attendance must be upheld. The parent and/or legal guardian must notify the school by 8:00 AM if the child is absent, (not in school by 7:40 AM,) with the reason for the absence. If a call is not received, the school will try to contact you. If the parent/guardian and school do not have telephone contact the day the student is absent, the student will receive an unexcused absence and the student will not receive credit for make-up work. A note delivered the following day will not be accepted. Truancy is a serious matter that may involve local authorities. A student is considered truant until contact has been made with the parent/guardian.

Reporting an Absence When a student will not attend school, a parent or guardian should phone the school office by 8:00 AM on the day of the absence to report the nature of the illness. If the child is absent only 1 or 2 days, he/she is responsible for getting make-up work upon returning to school. To request missing work when a student is absent for a period of more than two days, a parent may call the school by 11:00 AM to plan for picking up the schoolwork in the office by 2:45 PM or having it sent home with a sibling. Details regarding the arrangements for make-up work are at the discretion of the teacher. Students are responsible for making up all work missed because of absence.

Forms of Absences

- Personal illness
- Illness in the immediate family
- Death of an immediate family member
- Medical appointment with a doctor's written excuse
- Court appointments
- School approved field trips or co-curricular activities
- Extenuating circumstances warranting consideration by the school administrator

Students absent from the school day are not permitted to participate in extracurricular activities for that day.

- After 10 days a warning letter will be sent home documenting absent days.
- After 15 days a phone call with administration will take place.
- After 20 days unless documented by a medical professional could be grounds for non-re-enrollment.
- After 20 days of unexcused absences EdChoice funding may be revoked.

Tardiness Since tardiness interferes with the child's progress in school and disrupts the classroom teaching, parents are requested to see that their children cultivate the habit of punctuality. Students are considered tardy after the bell at 7:45 AM. Any student arriving after 7:45 AM must report directly to the school office with a parent or adult to sign-in.

- Any student arriving at school *after 7:40 AM but before 9:45 AM* is considered tardy.
- Students who *arrive at school but go home before 9:45 AM* will be considered absent one (1) whole day.
- Students who *attend school but go home after 9:45 AM* will be considered absent ½ day.
- Any student *absent from school for more than two (2) hours* due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered absent ½ day.

Appointments Medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school time if possible. A written note must be presented to the office by 8:00 AM if the student is to be released for an appointment during the school day. Students must be picked up in the office by the person specified in the note.

Change of Transportation and/or Early Dismissal All requests for an early dismissal and/or change in regularly scheduled transportation home from school should be submitted to the office in writing by 8:00 AM, or by phone by 11:00 AM. Phone calls regarding a last-minute change in transportation will be accepted by phone up to 1:00 PM.

Family Vacations

Family vacations should coincide with school vacation dates. In situations where absence cannot be avoided, the principal, teachers, and school office should receive written notification well in advance. Teachers may choose to give the student work to take along or have the work available when the student returns, depending on the grade level of the child and the type of work missed. Students are responsible, under the supervision of their parents, for the mastery and completion of work missed during an absence. Parents need to understand that many activities (videos, computer website presentations, experiments, discussions, etc.) missed during a lengthy absence cannot be replicated. Teachers will assign a reasonable length of time in which assignments are to be completed. Work that is not made up will be marked as incomplete and graded accordingly. Parents need to understand it may not be possible to make up standardized tests missed because of family vacations.

FAMILY/CUSTODIAL SITUATIONS

Saint Joseph Parish School is finding an increasing number of families experiencing transitions in parental custodial relationships. In addition, laws governing divorce settlements and custody have been recently changed. For this reason, we find it necessary to clarify and re-state the usual procedures followed by the administration and faculty in dealing with parents in such situations.

In two-parent families it is assumed that both parents are living at the same address unless we have been notified otherwise. Saint Joseph Parish School personnel will, therefore, send home notices, communications, etc. with the child. It is assumed that both parents are communicating regarding the child and that all information is shared by and between the parents. This information includes but is not limited to conference appointments, report cards, progress reports, discussions with school personnel, and tuition statements.

In families experiencing separation of parents, or pending divorce, the above information will be sent home with the child of the parent currently having care of the child. It is assumed that this information is shared *by* the parents and *between* the parents. *Since this situation frequently impacts a child's achievement and interactions at school, parents are asked to inform both the principal and teacher of this fact so that appropriate support can be given to the child.* Saint Joseph Parish School personnel cannot proceed on hearsay, rumors, or demands of a parent, but only with the appropriate documentation detailed below.

In cases of an actual divorce decree involving clear *custody by one parent*, the principal is to be informed by the custodial parent of this fact. *A copy of the first page of the decree bearing the case number, the pages referring to custody and the relationship with the school, and the final page bearing the judge's signature are to be submitted to the principal.* Unless the decree indicates otherwise, school communications will be sent home to the *custodial parent*. Custodial parents should understand, however, that unless the divorce decree specifically limits the non-custodial parent's right to access to records, the non-custodial parent has a right to the same access as the custodial parent. We will, unless instructed by a Court Order, release such records upon request to the non-custodial parent. "Records" includes official transcripts, report cards, health records, referrals for special services, and communications regarding major disciplinary actions. It does not include daily class work and papers, or routine communications sent through the children to the home of residence. In these cases, the custodial parent is asked to cooperate with the school and share this information directly with the non-custodial parent.

Further, unless restricted by Court Order, any non-custodial parent has the right to attend any school activity of their child that includes sports activities and class programs. Parents should keep each other informed as to these activities.

In cases of 'joint custody' (shared parenting agreements) entitling both parents access to school personnel and activities, it is assumed that one copy of communications and information will be sent home with the child and that this will be shared *by* and *between* the parents. If there is a shared living arrangement the school should be notified of who is responsible for the child at all times and if there is to be a change the school should be notified immediately.

Regarding parent conferences in all custody situations: The procedure is that *one* conference appointment be scheduled 'jointly' if both parents wish to be present. It is assumed that parents can set aside differences and to come together on behalf of their child for this time. A joint conference further ensures that both parents are given the same information at the same time, thereby avoiding misunderstandings or misinterpretations.

Visitation should generally begin at the home of one of the parents and not at school. It is hoped that visitation arrangements would reflect the sensitivity of both parents to the consistency and routines that foster security in a child and allow for school responsibilities and homework to be completed during the school week.

If there are questions concerning this re-statement of procedures or circumstances that you feel necessitate other arrangements, please contact the principal personally.

SAFETY, SECURITY AND TRANSPORTATION

All doors of the school building are locked to outside access during the school day to ensure the safety of all within the building. A doorbell is located outside the school's main office front doors. Closed circuit camera allows the secretary in the office to identify individuals at the door and speak with them prior to entrance into the office lobby. The main school door from the lobby is locked and can be unlocked, via a button in the school office, to allow visitors/employees into the main building. All visitors, including parents, must first report to the school office and sign in with their reason for visiting the school. Visitors must also sign out of the office when they leave the school. No person may go directly to the classroom or cafeteria during school hours. Forgotten lunches, books, etc., are to be brought to the school office.

Safety Drills

To provide for a safe exit from the buildings or shelter in place, regular fire, tornado, and additional safety drills are held throughout the school year. In accordance with the Ohio Code, drills are practiced and a record of dates and times for such drills are kept on file. All students are expected to follow directions in an orderly manner. Parents will be notified by email before a shelter in place drill is carried out.

Emergency/Crisis Management Plan

In the event of a crisis or emergency at Saint Joseph Parish School, the appropriate emergency response procedures are activated. Saint Joseph School maintains and frequently reviews its Emergency Response Plan. The safety of students is our first priority in any and all crisis situations. In the event of an evacuation from the buildings and grounds of Saint Joseph School, students and staff will move to an alternative site to be communicated via Gradelink. Parents and/or guardians will be asked to follow specific pick-up procedures set in place to ensure student safety. In addition to an alternative pick-up site, an information center may be established to communicate with parents and guardians of the Saint Joseph School students and staff via Gradelink. In the event of a weather or safety emergency, Saint Joseph School may adjust dismissal procedures. This may include changes such as indoor pick-up, delayed dismissal time, early release, etc. Information from the Emergency Information Forms regarding an early dismissal will be used if parents or guardians cannot be reached by telephone.

Emergency Closing Procedure If the AVON LAKE PUBLIC SCHOOLS are closed due to inclement weather, Saint Joseph Parish School will also close. If there is an emergency affecting Saint Joseph School while school is not in session, parents will be advised through the local media. If there is an emergency while school is in session, every effort will be made to contact parents using each family's emergency number.

Health and Accident Procedures

Saint Joseph Parish School Clinic is staffed by a part-time, registered nurse, who administer first aid in cases of injury or illness. The school furnishes an emergency authorization form, which directs the school's course of action in each individual case. It is essential that the parent notify the school of changes of phone number, address, or employment throughout the school year, so this data is always current.

Health and immunization reports are due on or before opening day of school for all new students. During the school year, vision and hearing screenings are given to all students in grades 1, 3 and 5. Students in grade 7 are screened for vision and students in grades 6-8 are seen by the nurse for a postural screening. Any test may be given upon parent or teacher request (see also Speech/Language/Hearing Services).

Contagious Diseases: Parents are asked to contact the school when their child has been diagnosed as having a contagious condition. This includes strep throat and head lice. If a child has had a 24-hour throat culture one day, he/she should be kept home the following day until the results of the culture are known. Notice of the contagious disease is sent home to parents of students in the homeroom.

When a child becomes ill, he/she is to remain at home until well. **Children must be fever free for twenty-four hours without medication before returning to school.** A fever is 100 degrees or higher. **If a child is placed on an antibiotic, he/she may not return to school for at least twenty-four hours.**

In conjunction with the Diocese of Cleveland and the Avon Lake City Schools, Saint Joseph Parish School has in place a plan in the event of a pandemic emergency. This plan is on file in the school office.

Dismissals Due to Illness: When a child becomes ill or injured during the school day and needs to go home, the child is sent by the teacher to the office to wait until a parent or other responsible party can be reached. Students cannot dismiss themselves by calling home, and an ill child may not go home alone.

Medications: School personnel can administer medications only when a specific procedure is followed. *Medication will only be administered to those students who have a completed form on file in the school office.* Forms are posted on Gradelink. *Medication must be brought to and from the school by an adult in its originally labeled and sealed container from the pharmacy.*

- No matter what the age or grade of the student, the following laws apply to all students using an inhaler or Epi-Pen.
- Whether a student self-medicates, or school personnel administer the medication, a form completed by a physician and parent must be on file in the school office.
- Regarding self-medication, a second inhaler and/or Epi-pen must be also available in the school office.
- Administration of these medications is to take place in the school office, if possible, and dates and times of administration will be recorded.

AIDS Policy

- Children with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) enrolled or seeking enrollment in Grades K through 12 shall be permitted to attend school or parish religious education programs in regular classroom settings provided:
- The health of the child, as documented by his/her physician, allows participation in regular academic school activities.
- The child behaves acceptably; in a manner that would not cause spread of the disease or in any way put others at risk.
- The child does not have open sores, skin eruptions, or any other condition which prevents his/her control of bodily secretions.
- There are periodic evaluations of the child's physical condition with written certification from his/her physician allowing continuing participation in regular academic school activities.
- In Diocesan High Schools, the Principal and Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Schools will consult with the appropriate people and make a recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools, who will make a decision on each case.
- In Parish Elementary Schools and Parish Schools of Religion, the Pastor and Principal will confer with the appropriate persons and consult with the Regional Superintendent before the Pastor makes the final decision on each case in the parish school. Parents and guardians have the obligation to report to the school administration when any child has been diagnosed as having AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC (AIDS Related Complex), or other illness caused by HIV (Human Immune Deficiency Virus that causes AIDS, also known as HLTVIII or LAV).
- To protect confidentiality, when a child with AIDS is admitted to school, personnel who are made aware of the child's condition should be the minimum necessary to assure proper care of the child.
- Based on the condition of the child and the expected type of interaction with others, the principal, after consultation with the proper authorities, may limit the child's participation in school activities.
- A student with AIDS who is excluded from school or a Parish School or Religious Program shall be provided with an alternative means of catechetical instruction.

Chemical Use/Abuse

- Parents will be notified immediately if a student is found to have or be under the influence of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs, or to have drug paraphernalia in his/her possession on school property, on the bus, or during off-campus activities sponsored by the school. A mandatory conference with both parents will be arranged before the student returns to school.
- Intervention by trained professionals may be required as a condition for the student to remain at Saint Joseph School. Lack of cooperation by either the student or parents in this matter will result in the student's suspension or expulsion. If a student gives evidence of signs of chemical dependency, parents will be contacted by the principal, and teachers and an appropriate course of action will be decided upon. Parents who are aware of these or similar problems with a student are to inform the school so that together we can assist the student in overcoming this dependency.

School Grounds

- Pupils may not leave the school premises for any reason from the time they arrive in the morning until they walk home or ride home on the bus in the evening. The school will not accept the responsibility for a child who disobeys this regulation. Violations of this rule are considered a very serious matter.
- Children are to remain in the areas designated for their use by the faculty and staff. Students are prohibited from entering all other areas.
- All adults or playground monitors are to be treated with respect.
- Throwing of snowballs or other dangerous objects in the schoolyard, the bus line, or on the way to or from school will not be tolerated.
- Rough playing or fighting in the schoolyard is never permitted.
- Children walking to school must cross the street only in the designated cross walk under the supervision of the adult crossing guard. They may never cross the street at recess time or go into the street to retrieve a classroom ball.
- No food should be eaten in the schoolyard during recess. Gum chewing is not permitted on school premises.

Busing

- A safe and efficient school bus program calls for teamwork by pupils, parents, bus drivers, teachers and principal. To provide both efficient and safe transportation the following rules and regulations will be followed:
- Bus Safety Rules
- To help maintain morning schedules all pupils must be ready and waiting when the bus arrives.
- Riders must always stay off the road while waiting for the bus. Riders must conduct themselves in a safe manner while waiting.
- Riders must wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to enter.
- Crowding and pushing is dangerous and must be avoided when getting on or off the bus.
- Loud talking and laughing, or unnecessary confusion can divert the driver's attention and may result in a serious accident. Riders must talk quietly when riding the bus.
- Bus riders must never tamper with the bus or its equipment.
- Any damage done by pupils riding the bus, such as cut cushions, a broken window etc., will have to be paid for by the pupils and their parents.
- Throwing anything in the bus or out of an open window is prohibited.
- Riders must always keep arms inside the bus.
- Bus riders are not to communicate verbally or by use of hand gestures to any motorist or pedestrian.
- Books, packages, coats, feet, and other objects must be kept out of the aisles.
- Eating is not permitted on the bus at any time.

The bus driver is responsible for the discipline of the children on the school bus. In the event of misbehavior, the driver will notify the principal in writing of the violation of the safety rules.

Disciplinary actions for violations of bus safety rules are as follows:

- First violation: The child receives a warning and parents are notified.
- Second violation: The child is suspended from the bus for 2 days.
- Third violation: The child is suspended from bus transportation for a week.
- Any subsequent violation: merits loss of bus transportation privilege for the remainder of the semester or year.
- In all areas of bus transportation, the decision of the Transportation Office in collaboration with representatives from the Avon Lake City Schools is final.
- Students are not permitted to ride any bus other than the one to which they are assigned unless it is a family emergency, and they have a bus pass issued to them by the school office. To obtain a bus pass due to a family emergency, a student must present to the school office a note from his/her parent stating the new destination. When the new destination is another student's home, this student must also present a note from his/her parent verifying the change in transportation.

Bicycles

- Pupils may ride bicycles when the weather permits, if they have a signed Bike Rider Policy form on file in the school office. Bicycles are to be walked, not ridden, through the schoolyard. The school is not responsible for damage done to bicycles parked in the yard. Riding double is forbidden. Riders are reminded to cross the streets at the proper places and to abide by the traffic rules.

Parent Drivers

- Parents picking up their children from school are asked to enter from Lake Road only. As you enter, please park in an open spot on the far east side of the property.
- Once buses have exited the parking lot, cars will be directed to pull forward to the Parish Center where students will then access cars. All car riders will be dismissed only to those cars that are in line.
- Students will not be permitted to exit other doors or to walk across the parking lot. Students will access cars by faculty and staff from behind the marked coned-off area.

MISCELLANEOUS

Birthday Celebrations

Students may dress down on the day of their birthday. If a birthday is in the summer or over a weekend/holiday, the student may choose an alternative school day to celebrate. Please have your student notify their homeroom teacher, in advance, of what day they will be celebrating their birthday, if it is different from the actual day.

Invitations for celebrations outside of school can be distributed only if every child in the class is included, or all boys/all girls. Birthday parties do not begin on school property.

General Dress Code Information

The current Dress Code is located on Gradelink under the 2024-2025 Registration Information.

In addition:

In alignment with our school's commitment to fostering a respectful and conducive learning environment, students are not permitted to draw on their skin or the skin of others during school hours or at school-related events. This policy is intended to promote cleanliness, personal hygiene, and respect for one's body as a reflection of self-respect and dignity.

Lunch Program

- Students will enjoy a forty-minute lunch period each day. The lunch period will include a recess period, restroom break, and lunch. Students may bring a lunch from home or may purchase a hot lunch.
- Our lunch staff prepares and serves entrees and desserts daily. Parents are encouraged to supplement these hot lunches with fruits and vegetables brought from home.
- If a student does not have a lunch, an entrée and dessert will be provided. Parents will be notified for reimbursement.
- Hot lunch will begin September 9, 2024. Lunch forms and information on costs and payment will be sent home in August.
- **Please note that no refunds or credits will be given to students who miss their ordered entrée and/or desserts due to illness or vacation.**

Milk

- Milk may be ordered for the year or semester.
- Parents desiring milk reimbursement when their child/children are ill are requested to contact the school office in writing on the last day of each quarter. Reimbursement for these families will be distributed with the students' report cards each quarter.
- If you order for first semester only, you will receive a reminder to re-order prior to the start of second semester.

Outdoor Recess: Students are permitted outdoor recess when weather conditions are favorable. Conditions including temperature and wind chill above freezing, and wet and icy pavement, are taken into consideration. In encouraging outdoor recess, parents are respectfully requested to send children to school appropriately dressed for the weather.

School Supplies

Supplies may be purchased at local stores or from School Toolbox. Students are asked to buy all the items on the list for their grade and have all school supplies with them on the first day of classes.

RELIGION FORMATION

Religion classes are taught on Monday through Thursday for at least thirty minutes in grades one through four. Grades five through eight receive the equivalent amount of instruction in religion per week. On Friday of each week, students attend Mass at 8:00 AM as well as on Holy Days and special occasions. The classes involved plan liturgies, and the children take an active part in the liturgy. Parents are invited and encouraged to celebrate these liturgies with us.

The moral and religious formation/education of a student has its roots in the home. The purpose of the Catholic school is to build on Christian home life by giving formal religious instruction. At Saint Joseph Parish School, the purpose is not only to teach Catholic doctrine, but also to help our students learn to live it. To accomplish this, the students have classroom instructions given by certified catechists, preparation for the Liturgy, and active participation in the celebrations. In addition, all students are encouraged to live out what they have learned and celebrated by undertaking voluntary service projects and by attending religious services with their parents on weekends.

Religious Instruction for Non-Catholic Students

Saint Joseph is a Catholic school whose primary mission is providing instruction in the faith. As such, all students enrolled will participate in religious instruction. Non-Catholics will attend religion classes with other students and will be expected to do assignments in those classes. Non-Catholic students will participate in the religious instruction and sacrament-related preparation activities at their grade level.

Reconciliation Services

Parents are encouraged to take their children with them to participate in the Communal Penance Services offered by the parish on a seasonal basis or to private confessions. Catholic students will have the opportunity to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. Please check the parish Sunday bulletin for times.

Worship

All students attend weekly Mass on Fridays at 8:00am. There may be occasions when this changes, such as when a Holy Day or other special occasion falls during the week. Parents and grandparents are invited to attend.

Servers

The honor of participating in the Ministry of Altar Server is the choice of the individual student and his/her parents. While this is a parish sponsored activity, not a school sponsored activity, students trained as servers may miss class time to serve funeral Masses. Instructions are generally given to fifth grade students who wish to participate. This is a true stewardship opportunity for the parents as well as the children since the commitment on the part of the student to become an Altar Server also requires support, encouragement and commitment from the parents who must see that the server meets his/her obligation. The server schedule for each week will be given to students by the Parish Office.

Religion Curriculum Textbook Series

Loyola Press Finding God K,1,3, 6-8
Loyola Press Christ Our Life, 2
Loyola Press Grow with God K-8
Theology of the Body

CURRICULUM

Instructional Program Like all public and all non-public schools, Saint Joseph School is required to meet the educational standards of the State of Ohio. Faculty members are licensed by the State of Ohio and are under contract to the parish.

The school follows the Graded Course of Studies, which has been prescribed by the Catholic Board of Education of the Diocese of Cleveland and is approved by the State of Ohio. This course of study includes the following subjects:

- Religion, including sacramental studies
- Language arts, including reading, writing, spelling, oral and written English, and literature
- Social studies including geography, Ohio history, United States history, and government
- Mathematics including algebra
- Natural science, physical science, earth science
- Technology
- Health and physical education
- Art and music

Homework may be given daily. The assignment will be a continuation of class work to supplement learning, to review independently what was taught in class, and to provide an opportunity to use research skills. Teachers in grades kindergarten to fourth will determine their own policies on late and missing homework.

Time allotments for homework depend on the type of assignment and on the age and grade level of the student. If a student is experiencing some difficulty in homework, parents are encouraged to contact the teacher through Gradelink or email.

Assessing Student Achievement

- Teachers monitor student achievement based on objectives stated in the Graded Course of Study and incorporated into the teacher's plan for daily instruction. Promotion and retention of students follow diocesan guidelines. Procedures for evaluating student achievement include the following: teacher's observation of student responses, directed activities, quizzes, tests, participation in discussions, experiments, projects, oral and written reports, assignments, and written class work as well as other appropriate means to measure achievement in the subject on a given grade level. At appropriate grade levels, teachers will update grades weekly on Gradelink.
- As the first educators of their children, parents are encouraged to monitor the educational progress of their children. Assignments, projects, tests, and homework are posted on Gradelink, Google Classroom and/or in the students' planners. Parents are expected to review homework, graded papers and projects.

Grading System:

Report cards are issued four times a year and are distributed following the end of the quarter. Report Card envelopes are to be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to school.

Students in grades K-3 will be assessed using Standards Based Grading. The following marking code is used at Saint Joseph Parish School for grades 4 through 8:

A = Superior (100-93%) Consistently does superior work in accomplishing goals, objectives and requirements; thoroughness in daily work and related assignments; demonstrates ability to work independently and cooperatively; exemplary assessment scores.

B = Above Average (92-85%) Usually does above average work in accomplishing goals, objectives, and requirements; good knowledge and use of skills in subject matter; thoroughness in daily work and related assignments; demonstrates ability to work independently and cooperatively; above average assessment scores.

C = Average (84-77%) Usually does average work in accomplishing goals, objectives, and requirements; adequate knowledge and use of skills in subject matter; completes daily work and related assignments; demonstrates ability to work independently and cooperatively; average assessment scores.

D = Below Average (76-70%) Usually does below average work in accomplishing goals, objectives, and requirements; insufficient knowledge and use of skills in subject matter; limited effort in daily work and related assignments; demonstrates limited ability to work independently and cooperatively; low assessment scores.

F = Failing (69-0%) Usually does unsatisfactory work in accomplishing goals, objectives, and requirements; daily and related work below standard; limited ability to work independently and cooperatively; unsatisfactory test grades.

A+	100-98	B+	92-90	C+	84-82	D+	76-75	F	69 - 0
A	97-95	B	89-87	C	81-79	D	74-72		
A-	94-93	B-	86-85	C-	78-77	D-	71-70		

An O, S, or U will be used for conduct and effort. An O, S, or U will be used for Art and Physical Education for students in Grades 5-8.

Academic Honors:

- High Honors: Students must earn all A's
- First Honors: Students must earn a combination of A's and no more than two B's.
- Second Honors: Students must earn a combination of A's and B's and no more than one C.

A "U" (or unsatisfactory) in ANY area, academic or personal development, disqualifies a student from honors regardless of grade average. Academic recognition is intended to be motivational. It is not included in the permanent academic record. Parents are encouraged to recognize their children's best efforts.

Parent-Teacher Conferences There are two scheduled parent-teacher conference days during the school year, which are designed to promote a greater understanding of the needs and growth patterns of the student and strengthen home-school communications. If additional conferences are needed, an appointment may be made with the teacher for a mutually convenient time. Parent-teacher conferences are held in November and as necessary.

Standardized Testing The testing program is designed to provide a systematic means of assessing student mastery of basic skills and evaluating the academic programs of the school. Students in grades K-8 are given the Measurement of Academic Progress, (MAP) three times during the school year to measure mastery of skills in reading, language arts, mathematics, and science (grades 5 and 8), as well as the student's ability to apply these skills to the solution of new problems.

Promotion and Retention Promotion is based on the satisfactory completion of the respective grade level work. Retention is considered in individual cases after thorough discussion by the teacher, principal, and parents. Parents will be notified in due time if a student is being considered for retention. Retention may be considered for the following reasons:

- Failure in three or more major subjects, i.e., Reading, Math, and English. (Failure in an individual subject is defined as receiving a grade of F for more than two quarters).
- Failure to master fundamental skills of reading in the first grade.

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Auxiliary Services: The services of a school psychologist, a speech and language therapist, Intervention Specialist, a reading tutor, a nurse, and an auxiliary services clerk are available through Auxiliary Services Funding.

All children new to Saint Joseph Parish School (Grades K - 8) are screened for language/speech concerns. Children referred by the professional staff, parents, or physicians are given a threshold hearing test. For students identified with speech, language, or hearing concerns, the therapist plans an individualized follow-up program and maintains on-going parent and teacher contact.

2024-2025 Support Staff and Roles

Academic Tutor Grades K-3

Laura Hood/Anne Benik

Role: In coordination with the teacher, provide small group instruction for those students who have been identified as needing additional support. Administer academic reading assessments: DIBELS and MAZE.

Intervention Specialist

Hannah Bushong

Monday-Friday

Role: Constructs Service Plans for students that have been identified and diagnosed, through academic and cognitive assessments, with a specific learning disability. Responsible for carrying out instructional plans as written.

School Psychologist

Dan Trigiani

Tuesdays

Role: Creates Accommodation Plans (504) for those students who have been identified as needing intervention due to a medical or academic diagnosis-but do not qualify for a Service Plan (IEP). Provide direct support and interventions to students, consult with teachers, and families, to improve support strategies, work with school administrators to improve school-wide practices and policies, and collaborate with community providers to coordinate needed service.

Speech -Language Therapist

Molly Walsh

Thursday and Friday

Role: Provide speech and language services as written in Service Plans. Provide intervention for those students who have been identified as needing extra support in the area of speech and language.

All children new to Saint Joseph Parish School (Grades K - 8) are screened for language/speech concerns. Children referred by the professional staff, parents, or physicians are given a threshold hearing test. For students identified with speech, language, or hearing concerns, the therapist plans an individualized follow-up program and maintains on-going parent and teacher contact.

Teacher's Aides K-2

Role: In coordination with the teacher, provide small group instruction for those students who have been identified as needing additional support.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The clergy, administration, faculty and staff of St. Joseph School are committed to providing a Christ-filled learning community promoting faith, acceptance, service and peace. A high standard of conduct, based on and modeling Christian gospel values, is expected of students at St. Joseph School. Our goal is to impart a sense of wholeness to each student for life. In partnership with parents/guardians it is our deepest desire that the students know they belong to a community bonded by Christian love and respect. Standards of discipline are an essential part of the St. Joseph School environment, allowing each student to act within an established order, and ensuring a climate conducive to learning. Students are expected to abide strictly by these standards of conduct in school and while participating in school-related activities. Parents/guardians are expected to join in ensuring their children's compliance with these standards, and to support any disciplinary decisions made by the school administration.

As a responsible member of this community, I will:

- Respect myself and the rights and safety of others.
- Respect both school and private property.
- Respect the learning environment by following classroom and school rules.
- Respect and adhere to St. Joseph Code of Conduct.

Moral and Character Development

Following rules and practicing social skills are important in the very same way as developing academic and physical skills. Integral to Catholic education are the skills of taking ownership; building trust, respect and confidence; showing consideration for others; learning to share and accepting responsibility for the choices that are made.

1. Discipline is as fundamental in Catholic education as it is in Christian life. Good discipline originates in the home because parents are the first teachers of the child. It is a parent's obligation to teach by example to develop in the child good habits of behavior as well as proper attitudes toward school.
2. School discipline is an outgrowth of good home training; therefore, cooperation between home and school is essential. It is the school's obligation to expand, encourage and develop those habits and attitudes.
3. Individual students must contribute to the good of the group, take ownership for their actions and learn to accept consequences.
4. Discipline is based on mutual respect for each person as a human being with needs and feelings, while knowing everyone has the ability to act in a responsible manner.
5. Students have feelings, needs and rights. In addition, students need to know that teachers also have feelings, needs and rights.
6. There will be an atmosphere within each classroom and throughout the school that is conducive to learning and where healthy self-concepts can develop. A whole class should not be disrupted by the inappropriate behavior of one or several students.
7. Recognizing that there are distinct differences in acceptable conduct in the hallways, rest rooms, gym, lunchroom, playground, and assemblies, when classes are in session, students are expected to be quiet when moving within the building out of respect to others who are at work.
8. Students are also to be respectful upon entering and exiting the building.
9. The church is always to be entered reverently in silence and respectfully bowing/genuflecting to the tabernacle.

The students are supported and encouraged to develop a mature Christian character by all faculty and staff members by:

- attention and interest in each student.
- discussion with the student about their growth in character, appropriate behavior and self-discipline.
- notification of parents when there is a concern about character development, self-control or cooperation with school rules.
- parent conferences, both as regularly scheduled, or as requested by either the teacher or parents,
- behavior and/or learning contracts.
- conferences with student, parents, and other school support personnel.
- conferences with the principal.

K-3 Discipline Policy

All primary discipline will be handled in the classroom by the homeroom teacher. School administration will intervene when necessary.

4-8 Discipline Policy

Behavior infractions include but are not limited to:

- Failure to observe school rules
- Destructive to school property
- Hurtful/harmful behavior
- Contact with another student
- Inappropriate language
- Disrespectful behavior to any member of the Saint Joseph School Community
- Excessive talking
- Noise in the hallway/classroom
- Violation of cell phone policy
- Any other behavior that does not model what is expected from a Saint Joseph Student
- Inappropriate use of technology
- **Personal Displays of Affection**

Being overly affectionate in school creates an environment that is not conducive to concentration and learning, therefore students should refrain from inappropriate, intimate behaviors on campus or at school related events and activities. Students are expected to show good taste and always conduct themselves respectfully

Detentions

Causes for a detention include but are not limited to:

- Accumulation of three conduct infractions
- Failure to cease disruptive behavior after receiving a conduct infraction.
- Foul language
- Verbal or Physical Assault
- Disrespectful behavior to any member for the Saint Joseph Community
- Lying, Cheating, Stealing, Gambling, and other deceitful behavior
- Unauthorized nonattendance of class
- Any other behavior that does not model what is expected from a St. Joseph Student

Detention notices will be sent home with the students. Notices are to be signed by a parent and returned to school the following school day. Students not returning the notice with the parent signature on time will contact their parents by phone. Detentions will be served on Tuesdays from 2:15-3:00 PM in the school office.

Once a student receives a third detention, a student-parent conference will be scheduled the with administration, at which time a consequence will be determined that may include but not limited to a behavioral plan, suspension or expulsion.

Additional Disciplinary Measures

The following disciplinary measures are used (depending on the offense or frequency of the offense) and will be determined by the principal:

BEHAVIORAL CONTRACT: This document is completed by the administration and signed by student, parent/guardian, principal, and teachers. Failure to comply with this document will result in further action, which is at the discretion of the administration.

SUSPENSION: After parents/guardians are notified of an offense, students may be suspended from school by the principal. If a student receives three detentions during a school year, he/she will be suspended. Regular suspension excludes the child from school. The student, not the teacher, is responsible for work missed. This work, done in an acceptable manner, is required to re-enter the classroom. In-school suspensions may be given whereby the student works in the school, but is excluded from classes.

When a student serves an in-house suspension:

1. Tests, homework and assignments completed during the in-house detention are accepted for grades.
2. Some in-house assignments will be impossible to make up (i.e. group activity or group work or projects).

EXPULSION: In cases of extreme offense, or lack of parental support, students may be removed from school. The principal makes this decision after conferring with the pastor and the teacher(s).

DAMAGES: If a student is at fault and responsible for property damage, or loss to any extent (school or personal), the student is required to pay for or replace it. Further action may be taken at the discretion of the administration.

OTHER OPTIONS: In some instances, (such as in the case of bullying or extensive meanness) in addition to the disciplinary measures above, students are referred to assisting agencies for additional help or counseling. Any drug related problem requires a professional assessment. Students who pose a serious threat to self or others or who make threats to a student or parent will be removed from the classroom and school premises immediately. He/she will require a professional assessment before returning to school.

Care of Books and Property

- Since books are expensive both to purchase and for the school to maintain from year to year, parents are urged to help their children be responsible for books used. Books are to be kept covered and clearly identified.
- Children are financially responsible for the loss or damage of textbooks and other materials provided for their use during the school year. Students are responsible for any damage to property belonging to the parish, school, or to other students. Saint Joseph Parish School does not assume responsibility for toys, any electronic devices, and/or similar items brought to school by a student.

Anti-Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying

Saint Joseph Parish School teaches belief in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person. We believe that all students, school employees and volunteers have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. All members of the school community, in turn, have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance. The principal will provide staff development training in bullying prevention and cultivate acceptance and understanding in all students and staff to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment.

“Harassment, intimidation, or bullying,” in accordance with House Bill 276, means any intentional written, verbal, graphic or physical acts including electronically transmitted acts i.e., Internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand-held device, either overt or covert, by a student or group of students toward other students/school personnel with the intent to harass, intimidate, bully, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate.

Saint Joseph Parish School will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student, school employee, or volunteer. A student, school employee or volunteer shall not intimidate, harass or bully another student, school employee or volunteer through words or actions whether in the classroom, on school property, to and from school or at school-sponsored events, or from any computer or any other electronic device, not on school property. If any harassment, bullying or intimidation occurs, complaint and investigative procedures will be followed. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

Harassment – Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to, verbal or written taunting; bullying; other offensive, intimidating, hostile or offensive conduct; jokes, stories, pictures, cartoons, drawings or objects which are offensive, tend to alarm, annoy, abuse or demean an individual or group.

Sexual Harassment – For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment includes the following specific instances: verbal sexual abuse; disseminating obscene or sexually explicit material, whether in the form of music, written lyrics, pornographic pictures or other literature, or having such material in one's possession in the school, on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities; obscene or sexually explicit graffiti anywhere in the school or on the school/parish grounds, continuing and unwanted written or oral communication directed to another of a sexual nature; spreading sexual rumors/innuendoes; obscene T-shirts, hats, or buttons; touching oneself sexually in front of others; obscene and/or sexually explicit gestures; and any other inappropriate behavior of a sexually explicit or obscene nature that demeans or offends the recipient. The above list is not meant to be all-inclusive but is intended to provide guidance as to what may constitute sexual harassment.

Isolated or trivial incidents are not sufficient to constitute harassment and will be handled according to the student behavior code. Allegations of sexual harassment (as defined above) are to be reported to the teacher and the principal. Parents of both the offender and the victim will be informed of the allegations. The matter is to be kept confidential by all parties involved, and every effort will be made to protect the alleged victim from retaliation. The parents of both the offender and the victim are obligated to cooperate in remedying the situation. If the allegations are substantiated, disciplinary actions will be taken. These will depend on the nature, frequency and severity of the action, the ages of the offender and victim, the history of similar actions by this individual, and the circumstances in which the harassment occurred. Possible disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to, any or all the following:

- verbal warning/reprimand and apology to the victim.
- a parent/student/principal conference.
- written warning/reprimand & parent notification.
- entered in the student's file.
- detention or removal from selected school activities and/or extracurricular activities.
- behavior/probation contracts, possibly requiring professional intervention,
- suspension; and/or
- expulsion.

Sexual Violence – Sexual violence is handled separately because of its potentially criminal nature. If an incident of sexual violence occurs, the principal, pastor, or other school authority is required under state law to report the incident (O.R.C. 2151.421). The Department of Human Services and the police will be contacted immediately if there is any "reason to believe" (O.R.C. 2151.421) that sexual abuse or violence has occurred involving a child less than eighteen years of age. The parish attorney will be contacted immediately in these situations.

Generally sexual harassment should be construed as sexual violence when the recipient: is physically touched without his/her consent in a sexual manner; is expressly threatened or perceives a threat of physical harm for purposes of the offender's sexual gratification; or is the victim of sex offenses under Ohio law, including Gross Sexual Imposition (O.R.C. 2907.05), Sexual Battery (O.R.C. 2907.03), Rape (O.R.C. 2907.02), Importuning (O.R.C. 2907.07), Voyeurism (O.R.C. 2907.08), Public Indecency (O.R.C. 2907.09), or Felonious Sexual Penetration (O.R.C. 2907.12) as examples. In each one of the above examples, the Department of Human Services and the police will be contacted immediately.

Gangs

Youth gangs and gangs related activities are PROHIBITED.

- A gang is defined as any non-school sponsored group, usually secret and/or exclusive in membership, whose purpose or practices include unlawful or anti-social behavior or any action that threatens the welfare of others.
- Gang activity includes: recruitment; initiation; a manner of grooming, hair style and/or wearing of clothing; jewelry; head coverings, or accessories which by virtue of color, arrangement, trademark or other attribute denotes membership in a gang; displaying gang markings or slogans on school or personal property or clothing; having gang tattoos; possessing literature that indicates gang membership; fighting, assault, hazing; extortion; establishing turf; use of hand signals, gang vocabulary and nicknames; possession of beepers or cellular phones; possession of weapons or explosive materials; possession of alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia; attendance at functions sponsored by a gang or known gang members; exhibiting behavior fitting police profiles of gang-related drug dealing; being arrested or stopped by police with a known gang member; selling or distributing drugs for a known gang member; helping a known gang member commit a crime; or any other action directly resulting from membership or interest in a gang.

Consequences If a student is suspected or identified as being a member of a gang, shows interest in joining a gang, initiates or participates in any gang related activity, or has been approached for recruitment, any or all of the following steps may be taken:

- Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately, and appropriate intervention will be initiated.
- A behavior contract will be prepared stating the conditions for the student remaining in the school.
- Students may be referred to counseling (personal and/or family).

- Students may be referred to the Department of Human Services or other welfare or childcare agencies of the respective county.
- Students may be referred to outside agencies or programs for treatment when use of drugs and/or alcohol is involved.
- Students may be referred to the Task Force on Violent Crime.
- Police, Juvenile Court and other appropriate authorities will be notified of violence and/or illegal activities.
- Students may be suspended and/or expelled as already outlined in the school discipline policies.
- Parents/students will be held liable and financially responsible for all forms of vandalism.

Jurisdiction Realizing that gang activity is a community concern; communication will be maintained with the police department and public-school officials on all matters related to gang activity within this community. Involvement and jurisdiction of school authorities in gang related incidents occurring outside the school or off school/parish property will be determined in cooperation with diocesan legal authorities and the police and will take into consideration the nature of the incident, the safety of the student, the effect of the incident on other students, and the good order and functioning of the school.

Related Policies In order to prevent the onset of gang related activity, the following related policies will be strictly enforced:

- Dress code and uniform policy as defined in the student-Parent Handbook.
- Discipline policies and consequences as defined in the Student-Parent Handbook.
- The right of school authorities to search lockers, student desks and upon request, personal property, if suspicion of gang involvement exists.
- Policies and procedures relative to scheduling, supervision, and attendance at school/parish sponsored events held during the school day, in the evening, or on weekends, whether held on parish property or at other public facilities.
- Policies and procedures established relative to participation in and attendance at school/parish sponsored athletic functions whether held on parish property or at other public facilities.
- Insistence on parent cooperation in not permitting children to host/attend unsupervised parties or activities.

Weapons

- In furtherance of the overall philosophy, goals, and objectives of the Catholic educational experience, Saint Joseph Parish School expressly prohibits the use, possession, sale, display or discharge of any weapons or explosive devices in the school, on school grounds, or at school-sponsored activities. This policy shall apply to all students, participants in parish programs, teachers, administrators, and other personnel in the school or parish.
- This policy includes, but is not limited to, any firearm, knife, deadly weapon, or explosive or incendiary device. As defined by (ORC 2923.11 A), “deadly weapon means any instrument, device or thing capable of inflicting death, and designed or specially adapted for use as a weapon, or possessed, carried, or used as a weapon”. By definition, (ORC 2923.11 B) states that “firearm means any deadly weapon capable of expelling or propelling one or more projectiles by the action of an explosive or combustible propellant. Firearm includes an unloaded firearm and any firearm that is inoperable but that can readily be rendered operable”.
- Violations of this policy may warrant notification of the police, immediate suspension, and possible expulsion. If possession of a weapon is suspected, the principal or other administrator will immediately contact the police department and the parish attorney before confronting the individual. If it is determined that this policy has been violated, the parents of the offender shall be immediately contacted and must cooperate with the disciplinary process.
- Disciplinary action may include immediate in or out of school suspension, pending investigation and resolution. If the student's infraction does not warrant immediate dismissal, then the parents may be required to sign a probation contract that includes all conditions of the student's retention at the school. Possible terms of this probation agreement may include professional counseling, participation in a community program addressing youth violence, suspension from extracurricular activities, and any other conditions deemed appropriate by the administration of the school or parish program after consultation with the parish attorney.

Student Threats Policy

Since the mental health professionals are continually addressing the area of risk assessment for violent or potentially violent behavior, these guidelines will be reviewed periodically or as needed:

1. All student threats to inflict any harm to self or others must be taken seriously immediately.
2. Whoever hears the threat should report it immediately to the principal.
3. If the threat is towards another student or faculty member, police should be notified immediately.
4. Student is to be kept in the principal's office under supervision until the police arrive.
5. The parent/guardian of the student who has made the threat shall be notified immediately.
6. Any adult or the parent/guardian of any students who have been verbally mentioned as potential victims or listed in writing as potential victims shall be notified immediately.
7. The student should be suspended and not be considered for readmission to school until a comprehensive mental health evaluation/risk assessment has been conducted by a Psychiatrist/Psychologist (Ph.D.). If a Psychiatrist performs the primary evaluation, he/she shall determine the necessity to utilize a Psychologist (Ph.D.) for psychological consultation and/or testing. If a Psychologist (Ph.D.) performs the primary evaluation, he/she shall determine the need for psychiatric consultation. The evaluation shall comply with the provisions of the Ohio Revised Code 2305.51. (Refer to Release Form - copy available in school office.)

The mental health care professional (Psychiatrist and/or Ph.D. Psychologist) shall provide a follow-up assessment of the student to the principal if the student is readmitted to school. The mental health care professional shall provide the principal with a copy of the follow-up assessment and/or evaluation and shall inform the principal if therapy, counseling and/or treatment will be needed and/or provided.

8. Counseling should be made available to children who are victims of the threatening behavior or who observed the threatening behavior if it is determined that such counseling is needed, and parental permission is granted.
9. Documentation from the mental health care professionals concerning any student is to be placed in a separate, confidential file and should not be a part of the student's academic/disciplinary file with access only by the principal and/or pastor. This documentation may be kept for a period of one year beyond the time when the child leaves the school because of expulsion, withdrawal by parent/guardian, graduation or non-readmission before being destroyed.

In all cases involving suspension or expulsion, the decisions of the principal and pastor are final.

Confidentiality

Sometimes the school's response to an incident is dictated by the Diocesan office. Sometimes the Diocesan lawyer gives counsel to assist us in determining consequences of acting. Sometimes our actions are entirely at our own discretion. Always, we seek a solution that will keep our students safe and will also help those who caused the problem to learn to make better choices. While the "rumor mill" may inform you of an incident, it will seldom inform you correctly of the specifics of the incident, the consequences applied, or actions taken to deal with the problem. In fact, the rumor mill may mistakenly report that "nothing was done about it." These reports usually surface for one or more of these four reasons: (1) The school often cannot publicly announce what consequences were applied or what action was taken because of confidentiality issues. (2) The consequences applied did not include a specific "punishment" which the other students or the parents were expecting. (3) Investigation proved the allegation to be false, and the person who originally spread the rumor about the incident does not go back to clear up the misinformation. (4) No overt action could legally be taken. Please rest assured that if misbehavior did occur, and action can be taken, it will be taken. Just understand that the action taken may not always be visible to you and your child, but it will be, to the best of our ability.

Acceptable Use Policy

- Saint Joseph Parish School makes a variety of communications and information technologies available to students through computer/network/Internet access. These technologies, when properly used, promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. Illegal, unethical or inappropriate use of these technologies can have dramatic consequences, harming the school, its students and its employees. The Acceptable Use Policy is intended to minimize the likelihood of such harm by educating Saint Joseph Parish School students and setting standards which will serve to protect the school. We firmly believe that digital resources, information and interaction available on the computer, network or Internet far outweigh any disadvantages.
- All users are expected to use the technology available at Saint Joseph Parish School in a manner that is consistent with the teachings and mission of the Catholic Church and the school's academic programs. Technology includes but is not limited to: cellular telephones; CD/MP3/DVD players' personal data devices; computers, hardware and peripherals; software including operating system and application software; Internet; digitized information including stored text, data, email, digital images, video and audio files; internally or externally accessed databases, applications, or tools (Internet- or school-server based); school provided Internet access; and new technologies as they become available.
- Users are expected to be appropriately responsible for and use technology to which they have access. Actions considered inappropriate are prohibited and will result in revocation of the student's access to the computer/network/Internet.

Inappropriate Use: Inappropriate use includes but is not limited to those uses that are specifically named as violations in this document; that violate the rules of network etiquette; or that hamper the integrity or security of this computer/network/Internet system or any components that are connected to it.

Transmission of any material in violation of any federal or state law is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to: cyber bullying; threatening, pornographic, harassing, defamatory or obscene material; or other inappropriate use of technology such as e-mail, social networking, web pages, and the use of hardware and/or software which disrupts or interfered with the safety and welfare of the school community (even if such uses take place after school hours or off school property).

Students must:

Respect and protect the privacy of others.

- Use only assigned accounts.
- Decline to view, use, or copy passwords, data, or networks to which they are not authorized.
- Avoid distribution of private information about others or themselves.

Respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources.

- Observe all network security practices as posted.
- Report security risks or violations to a school administrator, teacher or network administrator.
- Refrain from destroying or damaging data, networks, or other resources that do not belong to them without clear permission of the owner.
- Conserve, protect, and share these resources with other students and Internet users.
- Abstain from overriding the Internet content filtering system.

Respect and protect the intellectual property of others.

- Refrain from copyright infringement (no making illegal copies of music, games, or movies).
- Avoid plagiarism.

Respect and practice the principles of parish and school community.

- Communicate only in ways that are kind and respectful.
- Report threatening or discomfoting materials to a school administrator, teacher or network administrator.
- Refuse to access, transmit, copy, or create material that violates the school's code of conduct (such as messages that are pornographic, threatening, rude, discriminatory, or meant to harass).
- Avoid accessing, transmitting, copying, or creating material that is illegal (such as obscenity, stolen materials, or illegal copies of copyrighted works).
- Abstain from using the resources to further other acts that are criminal or violate the school's code of conduct.

- Avoid sending spam, chain letters, or other mass unsolicited mailings.
- Refrain from buying, selling, advertising, or otherwise conducting business, unless approved as a school project.
- Avoid posting or disseminating any harassing, demeaning, threatening or immoral comment or visual injurious to the reputation of the school, the parish, the Church or an individual, whether the action occurs on school property or off grounds.

Consequences for Violation: Violations of these rules may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of a student's privileges to use the school's information technology resources. Users have the responsibility to use technology resources in an appropriate manner. Items will be confiscated and returned at the end of the school day. Consequences of misuse or abuse of these resources will be disciplined depending on the severity of the situation. The decision of the administration in all disciplinary action is final.

Handheld/Worn Technology Devices: All handheld technology devices (including but not limited to cell phones, smart watches, iPods, iPads, and handheld games) other than calculators and reading devices are not permissible for use on school property or on the bus. The school administration recognizes that some families feel the need to equip their students with a cell phone. We acknowledge that for safety reasons parents want to be able to contact their student before school, after dismissal and at any other times outside the school day.

- The student is required to have the cell phone turned off and stored in their book bag during the school day, which includes dismissal.
- If a cell phone is found out of the book bag or heard during the school day it will be collected by the teacher until the end of the day and the student will be issued a blue slip for the first violation and a detention for any others.
- If a student repeatedly violates the cell phone policy further action will be taken by administration.
- Please do not call your child during the school day.

Internet access for academic use is available with staff supervision. Phone access is available in the school office if needed. Saint Joseph Parish School cannot be responsible for the safety of these costly devices. *Should a student use a device outside of the described, it will be confiscated, and a parent will need to retrieve it after school between 2:15 and 2:45 PM.*

Supervision and Monitoring: School and network administrators and their authorized employees periodically monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that uses are secure and in conformity with this policy. Students have no expectation of privacy with respect to the use of technology resources. Administrators reserve the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on the school's information networks to further the health, safety, discipline, or security of any student or other person, or to protect property. The school administration has the right of access to any electronic devices brought onto school property. They may also use this information in disciplinary actions and will furnish evidence of crime to law enforcement should one be committed.

Agreement Form: To ensure the proper use of technology resources, it is necessary that each user and parent/guardian annually sign the *Student Acceptable Use Policy - User Agreement Form*. The signed form must be on file at Saint Joseph Parish School before Internet and other technology access is permitted. Signing the form indicates that the user will abide by the rules governing Internet and other technology access as stated in this policy.

The school reserves the right to issue additional or more detailed rules for the use of technology resources, and violations of such rules may be a cause for imposition of any of the penalties delineated above. The school reserves the right to seek financial restitution for any damage caused by a student.

Please Note: It is impossible to include everything in a handbook, just as it is impossible to foresee everything that will occur during a school day or school year. Situations often arise in which the principal or teachers, for the well-being of the students, need to make decisions not covered in the Student-Parent Handbook.

If disputes arise, which cannot be resolved by ordinary discussion between parents, the Pastor, the school administration or other school officials, an attempt at confidential mediation, with a qualified mediator, to resolve the dispute will be the first course of action. Litigation will serve as a last decision-making resort. Damages in any legal action brought will be limited to the reimbursement of tuition and fees.

For more information or clarification regarding the policies and procedures contained in this handbook, please feel free to contact the school office at (440) 933-6233.

Amendment to Saint Joseph Parish School Handbook Policies

Saint Joseph Parish School and/or principal retain the right to amend this Handbook for just cause with or without notice. The school will attempt to keep parents promptly informed of all changes made to this Handbook. However, some changes may have to be made immediately due to unforeseen circumstances.

Handbook updated on 9-2-24

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