

About St. Joseph School

Mission Statement

Under the guidance of St. Joseph, Patron Saint of the Universal Church, Saint Joseph School endeavors to achieve academic excellence in a faith-filled and safe environment. The school staff and parents collaborate to develop students' spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical well-being in a traditional Catholic setting.

Vision Statement

Jesus Christ is and always will be the foundation of our Catholic school. Our vision for the future is to have a strong enrollment of engaged students who experience the Gospel with joy and reverence and develop their moral compasses in accordance with Christ's teachings. Furthermore, we will continue to provide a high-quality academic curriculum that inculcates knowledge and fosters logical thinking. Finally, we will sustain a supportive learning community through continued collaboration with parents.

Statement on Prayer

Prayer is an important part of our school day. Each day the students and teachers begin with the opening exercises of the Morning Offering and pray various prayers throughout the school day. Every morning, all students and staff pray the Morning Offering and the Angel of God prayer, and salute the cross and the flag.

Statement on Catholic Identity

While most of the religion curriculum at St. Joseph School is generic to all Christian denominations, doctrines and practices that are specific to the Roman Catholic Church are the core of our Religion curriculum. Although non-Catholic students are not expected to adhere to Catholic practices, they are expected to regard our practices and beliefs with respect and to participate in religion classes and discussions as well as all religious activities conducted in the school.

Statement on Non-Discrimination

St. Joseph School admits students of any race, creed, color, and national and 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, creed, color,

national and ethnic origin, sex, administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, athletic, and other school-sponsored programs.

Philosophy

Saint Joseph School takes as its primary reason for existence the command of Jesus “Go teach all nations, teach them to observe what I have commanded you” (Mt 28:19-20).

We provide a sound academic curriculum that incorporates Gospel values. The atmosphere at Saint Joseph School is structured, purposeful, and conducive to learning self-discipline. The school fosters social and emotional development according to the teachings of Christ.

St. Joseph School offers a sound religious program based on Gospel values and the Magisterium of the Church, which is incorporated into all aspects of the school; provides opportunities to live the Catholic faith through witness and service to others; provides a challenging academic program in accordance with Diocesan and state requirements; and fosters the spiritual, academic, social, and emotional growth of the students.

History

The pastor of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Church in Baltic, CT, Rev. J.C. Van Laar, saw the need to establish a school for the children of this town. He requested the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of Mercy in Tilburg, Holland, to staff this school. The sisters arrived on October 7, 1874, and officially opened St. Joseph School on October 15, 1874, with four hundred students, using the old public-school building. Classes were moved to the Academy of the Holy Family in 1919, and on August 27, 1950, the present building was blessed. In 1970, the sisters staffing the school became a new congregation, the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church.

In 1984, a new addition with three classrooms was dedicated. In the years that followed, new programs were added to the curriculum and the Extended Day Program was also added to accommodate working parents. In 1992, the pre-kindergarten program was initiated. Since then, several extracurricular programs were added as delineated in this handbook. Technology advances were also made with a computer lab as well as computers in every classroom and several LCD projectors. Students also have access to iPads, chromebooks, and smartboards. In addition Spanish is offered to students in grades one to eight. St. Joseph School continues to offer quality Catholic education to its students, maintaining traditional Catholic values while at the same time embracing the opportunities and challenges of the future.

Accreditation

St. Joseph School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and thereby approved by the State of Connecticut. The last accreditation was in March 2021.

Faculty and Staff

Reverend Joseph Tito	Pastor
Dr. Gail Kingston	Principal
Sister M. Loreto, SCMC	Assistant Principal, Science 5-8, Religion 8
Mrs. Alison Goldstein	Pre K
Mrs. Julia Scarsciotti	Kindergarten
Mrs. Kim Cofone	Grades 1 & 2
Mrs. Carol Harkness	Asst. Grades 1 & 2
Mrs. Tammy Lamb	Grades 3 & 4
Sister M. Michele, SCMC	History 5-8, Religion 7
Mrs. Sarah Lussier	Math 5-8, Religion 6
Miss Elisha Gray	Grade 5, Religion 5, Middle School Language Arts
Mrs. Kaitlin Cassidy	Art
Sister Mary Patrick, SCMC	Music
Ms. Tana Brewer	Physical Education
Mrs. Debbie Lau	Secretary, Child Advocate
Sister M. Agnes, SCMC	Building Substitute
Miss Katelyn Goldstein	Librarian
Mrs. Sandy Mann	School Nurse
Mr. Jarrod Begin	Custodian
Mr. Thomas O'Callaghan	Facilities Manager

Advisory Board Membership

Rev. Joseph Tito, Pastor	Mrs. Deborah Baker
Dr. Gail Kingston, Principal	Mr. Paul Gagnon
Mr. Edgar Daigneault	Mrs. Laura Leschinsky
Mrs. Nancy Holte	Mr. Robert Turner Sr.
Mr. Ethan Tanksley	

Safety Team Membership

Dr. Gail Kingston, Principal	Mrs. Sandy Mann
Mr. Ethan Tanksley	Mr. Thomas O'Callaghan

Admissions Policies

Ensuring Appropriate Placement

All students are to meet with the principal and are highly encouraged to “shadow” for a day. An interview with the student is part of the admission process. This interview will not include the student’s parent or guardian.

In addition, all students shall be screened/tested to determine the level of readiness and/or academic achievement to ensure appropriate grade placement:

- Students entering pre-kindergarten must be three (PK3) or four (PK4) by December 31, and must meet with the prekindergarten teacher. They must be successfully potty-trained. The school reserves the right to determine whether a child meets this criterion.
- Students entering kindergarten must be five by December 31. They must take the Brigance screening test.
- Students entering the **first grade must take the SESAT II**
- Students entering grades two through eight must take grade level tests.

No child will be accepted at St. Joseph School if in the judgment of the administration of the school it is felt that this school cannot meet the educational-developmental needs of the child.

All new students will be given a trial period of not less than one semester in which to provide for himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period there are any problems, a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at St. Joseph School. The recommendation and decision of the school is final. St. Joseph School is limited in its human capital resources and will make *reasonable* accommodations for learning differences when possible.

St. Joseph School cannot accommodate students who have extraordinary learning differences. If after admission, the educational and/or behavioral needs of a student exceed what would be considered *reasonable*, the student may need to be separated from St. Joseph School. This decision will be made for the student’s educational and/or behavioral needs to be fully met in another educational setting. If the decision to separate the student from St. Joseph School is made by the school, the student’s tuition due would be prorated.

Non-Catholic students whose parents accept the philosophy of St. Joseph School will be accepted on a space available basis. Non-Catholic students are expected to attend all religious observances and be respectful of Catholic teaching, rituals, and tradition.

No student will be admitted to St. Joseph School during the final 50 days of the academic year.

Consideration for admission to Grade 8 will be done on a student-by-student basis.

Transgender Students

Parents whose transgender students present for admission or continuing enrollment in St. Joseph School will be requested to:

1. Present documentation that their child has been diagnosed with gender dysphoria
2. Attend a conference with the pastor, principal, and diagnosing physician.
3. Understand that the student will be held to the same expectations for conduct, in and out of the classroom, as outlined in the St. Joseph School Parent/student Handbook.
4. Support the school in requiring the student to use the individual restroom located in the nurse's office.

Required Documentation

The school must receive the following documentation before a child may begin to attend: 1) registration form, 2) transcript from previous school, 3) copy of birth certificate, 4) copy of social security card, 5) immunization record, 6) baptismal certificate if Catholic, and 7) certificates of First Reconciliation and Communion if Catholic and above second grade.

Priority of Admissions

If all eligible applicants cannot be admitted due to space constraints, new students are accepted in this order of priority: children of parishioners of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish, children from families already enrolled in the school, children from families newly moved into a parish, Catholic children from non-parish families, and non-Catholic children.

Re-Entry into Saint Joseph School

Students who have left Saint Joseph School and wish to return must first meet with the principal, and if requesting re-entry into the middle school, with the middle school team. Records from the previous school must be sent to St. Joseph School to be reviewed by the principal and middle school team. If the student is accepted, then the student is placed on a contract for the year. Violation of the contract will result in dismissal.

Family Involvement

Parent Role in Education & Obligations

To ensure success for each student, parents need to

- provide adequate time, space and materials for students to do homework;
- monitor homework;
- review and sign papers as requested by the teacher;
- insist that their children assume responsibility for their own work;
- see that their children arrive at school on time; and
- support and adhere to all policies of St. Joseph School.

It is the responsibility of every parent to uphold the values and high standards of St. Joseph School. Each parent should support the policies and work as part of a team to impart to “our” children that responsibility will take us beyond the academic world. A parent has the responsibility to be a good example in Christian behavior and to communicate a positive attitude about school, the staff, and learning to their children. Parental involvement with the school, working with teachers, and reading to children are the kinds of things that positively influence student learning. We welcome all parents to the partnership of educating their children. **Continued negativity and non-compliance with school policies on the part of the parents or the student(s) will result in the student(s) being asked to leave St. Joseph School. This also applies to anyone who disturbs the peace and harmony of the school in any way.**

Participation in Home-School Association

Every parent should become an active member of the home-school association. As members of the home-school association, parents:

- attend scheduled meetings of the home-school association,
- assist the school in its continuing goal of improving the quality of Catholic education,
- promote a clearer understanding of the mutual, spiritual and educational responsibilities of parents and teachers,
- assist in St. Joseph School finances by raising a portion of the school’s income through fundraisers,
- assist the school in scheduled activities.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

As indicated in the school calendar, one parent-teacher conference period is scheduled during the school year, in November. Conferences are held for all students in November.

Conferences with teachers are strongly recommended at any time if there is a need. Any parent wishing to see a teacher should schedule an appointment with the child's teacher. A teacher may also contact a parent to request a conference. Whenever a problem exists, parents should contact the classroom teacher before contacting the Principal. If a problem remains after the discussion, then contact the Principal.

Volunteers

Parents, grandparents, and other relatives are encouraged to volunteer their time, skills, and talents when and where they are able. Parents are also welcomed to be guest speakers in classrooms where a presentation would be of interest and enrichment to our students. The first and greatest benefits of schools are the giving of time and talents to our fund-raisers. Anyone who volunteers on a regular basis is required to fulfill all required forms from the Office for Safe Environments. All information regarding this may be obtained in the school office.

Visitors

Apart from a formal Open House program, visitors will be allowed to assist classes with projects, etc, only with the expressed consent of the Principal and with prior notification of the teachers involved. Consent should be given only when a visit will serve a valuable purpose and will not unduly disturb the class.

All visitors to the school are expected to report first to the school office. Visitors must sign in, state the purpose of their visit, and wear a visitor's badge. No one entering the school is to go directly to any classroom. Neither teachers nor classes should be interrupted during class time. The same procedure is true at dismissal time. Parents should not go directly to a classroom during dismissal time to get homework or to speak with the teachers. Please wait until dismissal time is over. If you have an appointment with a teacher after dismissal, please stop at the office and report your arrival before proceeding to the classroom.

Financial Policies

Tuition Payment Options

All student tuition must be processed through the FACTS program except if the payment is made in full. The tuition payment options are as follows:

1. Payment in full: Make one direct payment to the school no later than August 15, 2025.
2. Two payments: Make the first payment by August 15, 2025 and the second payment by January 17, 2026. The FACTS fee for this is \$10.
3. Payment through in ten equal installments: Payments are due on the 5th or 20th of each month, August through June. The FACTS fee is \$45.

All tuition rates are published on the school website and may also be obtained in the school office. For Catholic parents to obtain a subsidy from their parish, they must be registered in a parish and participate in the weekly envelope system. Each parish pays \$1000 to St. Joseph School (\$750.00 for the student tuition and \$250.00 to the school). This is indicated on the tuition rate page and on the school website.

Tuition Assistance

The school offers some tuition assistance to those in need through the Catholic Foundation Program. Applicants must complete the tuition assistance form through FACTS online program, and submit a 1040 form for the most recent two-year period. Parents will be given sufficient notice for the deadline for this grant, which is due by March 1, 2026. Parents who qualify may also apply to the Connecticut Center for Educational Excellence tuition assistance program.

Non-Tuition Fees

The registration and re-registration fee is \$100 per family (nonrefundable), the book fee is \$100 per student in grades kindergarten through eight, and the technology fee is \$50 per student.

Fees cover, but not limited to registration materials, rental of hard-cover textbooks, consumable workbooks, e-books, classroom supplies, assignment books, art materials, technology fees, physical education requirement (playground balls, jump ropes, etc, for use by classrooms during recess times), audio-visual licenses, and science lab fees for consumable materials. These fees DO NOT COVER FIELD TRIPS, BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL CARE, ATHLETIC PROGRAMS or other after school activities.

Refund Policy

The registration fee is not refundable. The book fee is refundable until the child receives the books. Tuition is prorated after October and until April 30. No refunds are given after April 30.

Fundraising

Since tuition does not cover the entire cost of educating our students, all parents are expected to assist the school in fundraising events. The events may include Annual Rummage Sale, bingo, and other fundraisers throughout the year. Although some proceeds may be ear-marked for a particular cause, a good part of fundraising proceeds goes to the operating account.

The eighth-grade class is responsible for fundraising to cover the costs of their class trip, class night, and graduation.

Miscellaneous Money

Any money sent to the school for milk, hot lunch, snacks, books, etc. must be in an envelope with the student's name, grade, and purpose of the money clearly indicated.

Withdrawal Policy

Families must notify the school in writing if a student is withdrawing from the school. Registered students who withdraw before the first full day of school are responsible for $\frac{1}{3}$ of the full tuition amount. Registered students who withdraw between the first day of school and December 15th are responsible for $\frac{1}{2}$ of the full tuition amount. Registered students who withdraw after December 15th are responsible for the full tuition amount. The school will not forward records for students who withdraw with an outstanding balance until payment is received.

State or City Ordered School Closures

If school is closed due to weather or a public health concern, parents/guardians will still be responsible for payment of tuition. The education of each student will continue with virtual/remote/e-learning. Teachers will continue to plan standards-based lessons and evaluate student work. Report cards will be distributed at the end of each grading period. If a parent/guardian cannot make the regular tuition payment, the principal should be notified as soon as possible to create a payment plan.

Academics

Curriculum

St. Joseph School's curriculum follows the standards approved by the Archdiocese of Hartford, which is available in the office. Classroom teachers teach religion, language arts, reading/literature, mathematics, science, and social studies (and handwriting for kindergarten through grade four). Special teachers teach art, music, computers, physical education, and Latin.

Homework

All students in kindergarten through grade eight are expected to complete homework assignments to reinforce concepts taught in the classroom. Parents can help by providing a quiet place for their children to do their homework and by checking their assignments. Homework may include reading assignments, written work, studying for a test or quiz, and some form of research. Any concerns regarding homework are to be directed to the classroom teachers. The chart below gives a general time frame for daily homework. This is an average; some students will take more time and some will take less, and students will have more homework some days than others.

Kindergarten	15 minutes
Grade 1	15 minutes
Grade 2	20 minutes
Grade 3	30 minutes
Grade 4	40 minutes
Grade 5	50 minutes
Grade 6	60 minutes (combined)
Grade 7	90 minutes (combined)
Grade 8	90 minutes (combined)

Retakes

Students who receive a grade below 70 on quizzes, tests, and projects have the opportunity to improve the grade, but it must be done within a week. The retake grade will be averaged in with the original grade. However, this should not be a common practice as students should be prepared for the initial test.

After-School Help

All teachers are ready to aid their students with schoolwork and are available to give extra help. For middle school, this primarily takes place in the form of the Homework Club, which is held every Wednesday afternoon from 3:00 to 4:00.

Ordinarily, it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with his/her teachers for this instruction; however, a teacher may arrange for a student to stay after school if he/she believes it is in the child's best interest. Parents must give written permission for a child to be in school during after-school hours.

Curriculum Assistance

Organizationally challenged students may benefit from Curriculum Assistance. Students recommended for such organization intervention will meet with a designated staff member at 3:00 p.m. each day for a period of 2 to 3 minutes. It is anticipated that students will exit Curriculum Assistance after six weeks of extra assistance. Students who need this program beyond the anticipated six weeks may be encouraged to seek other out of school organizational programs.

Final Exams

Students in grades 5 through 8 may take a cumulative test, at the discretion of the teacher.

Grading Code

St. Joseph School follows the Diocesan grading code which is as follows:

Grades 3-8

A+	97-100	C+	77-79
A	93-96	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	65-66
B-	80-82	F	0-64

Grades PK-2

E	Exceeding standards
P	Approaching standards
M	Meeting standards
I	Needs improvement
N	Not assessed at this time

Report Cards & Progress Reports

Written reports shall be issued to parents three times a year, at the end of each term. The report shall include information on the student's academic achievement, attitude, behavior, and attendance. Failure must not come as a surprise to parents, who have a right to notification and warning so they can take the necessary steps to ensure better schoolwork on the part of their child.

To keep parents updated on their children's progress, progress reports are issued during the interim of each marking period. These are sent home for all students in the middle of the first term. Parents receive progress reports in the middle of the second and third terms only if students are experiencing academic difficulty. Throughout the academic year, if a student's progress is judged to be deficient, the parents will be notified. Deficiency reports will be sent home as needed.

The report schedule for the current school year is as follows:

Term	Progress Report	Report Card
1	October 8	November 18
2	January 21	March 24
3	April 22	June 9

Honor Roll

The Honor Roll is published at the end of each trimester. **For the final term, honor roll status is determined by the final average in each major subject.** Each honor roll student receives a certificate, and the honor roll is submitted to Our Town.

To make **Principal's Honors**, a student must receive an A in each of the major subjects, and receive no more than one C, and nothing below a C, in the special subjects.

To make **High Honors**, a student may receive a B in one major subject, but must receive an A in each of the other major subjects. He/she must receive no more than one C, and nothing below a C, in the special subjects.

To make **Honors**, a student must receive at least a B in each of the other major subjects. He/she must receive no more than one C, and nothing below a C, in the special subjects.

Major subjects are religion, language arts, reading/literature, math, science, and social studies. Special subjects are Spanish, spelling (for middle school), physical education, art, music, and computers.

Promotion & Graduation Requirements

All students are required to pass all major subjects for the year. Any student who fails a major subject for the year will be required to make it up through an approved tutoring program or summer school program. No student will graduate from St. Joseph School unless he or she has passed all major subjects. The Principal reserves the right to make decisions regarding the academic status of students.

Retention Policy

Parents of students with any serious academic difficulty will be notified by the end of the second trimester. Some factors that might make it necessary for a child to repeat a grade are:

- failure to achieve at grade level;
- failure to complete all tests and major assignments;
- frequent absenteeism or tardiness; and
- lack of social, emotional, or physical development which inhibits performance.

Academic Probation

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic probation. Academic probation is for students who can learn, but who choose not to learn. Students on academic probation will be placed on a two week improvement plan. At the end of the two week period, the student's academic progress will be assessed. Students whose average is an F will not be allowed to participate in any sport of academic competition until the grade has improved to a passing grade of D (70% or higher). Academic probation may be extended for an additional two weeks. At the end of the academic probation period, a student who has made no effort toward improvement may be involuntarily separated from the school. No tuition will be refunded if a student is involuntarily separated, and the parents will be responsible for the remainder of the tuition based on the Financial Obligations policy.

Standardized Testing

St. Joseph School administers standardized tests to its students in accordance with Diocesan School Policy. Test results assist teachers in identifying a student's strengths and weaknesses. They also afford the administration and the staff the opportunity to evaluate the curriculum and address any concerns.

Grades	Test	Time Frame
PK	Brigance	May
K	NWEA	Winter, Spring
1-8	NWEA	Fall, Winter, Spring

Student Conduct

General Student Conduct

It is in keeping with the philosophy of St. Joseph School to encourage and to assist students in achieving age-appropriate self-discipline. A healthy self-discipline will help the individual student grow and will create a safe and productive environment for all concerned. In the event that students exhibit behavior contrary to our philosophy and interfere with the growth of other students, measures will be taken to reverse this behavior, keeping in mind the good of the individual student and the class and the school as a whole.

Therefore, St. Joseph School students are expected to

- speak politely to every person they with whom they come in contact;
- respect themselves and others by keeping hands to themselves;
- be prepared for class at all times, including by studying for tests and quizzes and handing in homework and class assignments on time;
- perform their duties with the highest degree of effort;
- have a serious attitude in the classroom;
- respect the belongings of others and never use them without permission;
- have respect for school property and materials;
- be as quiet as possible in the corridors and stairwells;
- never run inside (other than during gym class);
- refrain from gum-chewing on school property and on the bus; and
- conduct themselves in an orderly fashion.

Off-Campus Conduct

Any conduct, in or out of school, that reflects negatively upon the reputation of the school may be subject to disciplinary action. The school reserves the right to discipline a student for actions committed off-campus, especially if they are intended to have an effect on a student or they adversely affect the safety and well-being of a student while in school.

Care of School Property

Students are responsible for the proper care of school property. This includes the school grounds, school buildings, equipment and any school materials. Students will be expected to make restitution for damage to school property, including the loss and defacement of textbooks, iPads, chromebooks, and/or library books. Students are also expected to show respect for the belongings of other students.

Students in grades K-8 are assigned desks, and all students in grades 4-8 are given lockers. These are the property of the school and must be maintained in a clean and orderly fashion. If the occasion warrants, the administration reserves the right to search this school property.

Technology and the Internet

St. Joseph School has internet access to be used for educational purposes. Proper blocks via a firewall are in place. Students are responsible for accessing only appropriate websites and reporting any accidental “hits” of inappropriate sites. The school has a program to monitor the students on their chromebooks/iPads. Forbidden behavior regarding technology and internet use consists of the following:

- sending, displaying, or downloading offensive messages or pictures;
- using obscene language;
- cyberbullying, including retaliation, harassing, insulting, or threatening others;
- damaging of computer systems or computer networks;
- violating copyright laws;
- submitting documents from the internet as a student’s personal work;
- using another person’s login information;
- trespassing in someone else’s folder, work, or files;
- intentionally wasting limited resources;
- using the network for commercial purposes;
- revealing personal information, one’s own or another’s; and
- any other infraction as determined by the principal.

Students who do not comply with the above usage rules will forfeit their usage privileges. All students and parents are to sign and return the Diocesan “Acceptable Use Policy” at the beginning of the year.

Intellectual Integrity

Technological advances have made plagiarism easier and more tempting than ever. St. Joseph School is committed to fostering its students' honesty and integrity, both through a strict anti-plagiarism policy and through promoting the good work habits that prevent students from feeling the need to plagiarize.

St. Joseph School will not tolerate any form of cheating or plagiarism. Taking materials from any source and presenting it as one's own is plagiarism. It is morally wrong and unacceptable. If a teacher determines that a student has plagiarized, the parent will be notified. The Principal will determine the consequences of the act of plagiarism after consultation with the teacher. **Ordinarily, a detention is given to the student and the student receives a 0 for the assignment.**

Cheating

Cheating of any type will not be tolerated. **Cheating also includes the unauthorized submission of AI Generated assignments or exams.** Students who choose to cheat face a failing grade, detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. A student athlete or student involved in extra-curricular activities who is involved in cheating will also be unable to participate in sports/extra curricular competition.

School Bus Rules

Students riding the school bus must abide by the following rules:

- Follow the directions of the bus driver or other adults in authority.
- Remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- Respect others.
- Use appropriate language.
- Do not play on the bus; do not run and play at the bus stop.
- Eating, drinking and gum-chewing are not permitted on the bus.
- Keep any balls brought to school for recess in a bag while the student is in transit.
- Observe state and federal motor vehicle laws (Sec. 14-175).

Students in violation of the above rules will be reported in writing to the principal and parent. Reports from the Sprague School Office concerning misconduct on the bus will result in a detention that will ordinarily be served on the following day. Three written reports from the Sprague School office will result in a suspension from the use of the bus for a period. The first period of suspension will result in a three-day loss of bus privileges; the second period will result in a five-day loss of bus privileges; the third period will result in a seven-day loss of bus privileges and will necessitate a conference with the parents or guardians of the student involved.

Questions regarding a bus problem should be directed to the bus company.

Cafeteria Rules

To create an atmosphere that is healthy and conducive to pleasant dining, the students need to attend to the cafeteria rules:

- There are to be subdued tones of conversation at all times.
- It is understood that no food is to be thrown, and no running or shouting is to take place, during the cafeteria period.
- Students are expected to remain seated during the ordinary lunch period and not walk around the cafeteria.
- Spills are the responsibility of the students and they are expected to clean any untidiness around their area after each meal. It is also important to throw all waste in the garbage and stack trays neatly.
- Food waste should be kept to a minimum.
- The hot lunch program will resume on Tuesday, September 3, 2024.

Playground Rules

The purpose of recess is to give the students an opportunity for exercise and relaxation between classes. The following directives are given to students who engage in indoor or outdoor recess:

- Students are always expected to respect the teachers on recess duty.
- Students are to be in the play area where the persons on duty are always able to see them.
- Students are encouraged to include everyone in their games and play as much as possible.
- Students may not engage in excessive rough play or any behavior that would endanger the safety of others.

There is to be no physical contact; hands off!

Electronic Devices and Toys

Electronic devices such as Game Boys, cell phones, iPods, iPhones, iPads (except those issued by the school), MP3 players, laser beams, **SMART WATCHES**, etc. are not allowed in St. Joseph School and will be confiscated and submitted to the office. The first offense will result in a detention, and the parent will have to meet the principal. The second offense will result in the electronic device left in the principal's office for the remainder of the year. No toys are allowed in St. Joseph School at any time except for "Show and Tell" in preschool, or in morning and after care.

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

Discipline

Detention

Detention will be assigned for the following offenses:

- disruptive classroom behavior;
- disrespect toward any staff member;
- fighting on school grounds;
- rough games that risk injury to students and/or clothes;
- report of misconduct on the bus,
- three unexcused tardy slips within a trimester;
- three uniform violations within a trimester; and
- multiple missing assignments; and
- any offense which the Principal considers deserving of detention.

No student is exempt from detention. While detention is mostly reserved for the middle school students, it may also apply to students in the lower grades.

Students are given a slip explaining the reason for the detention. It is to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the teacher the following day. If the slip is not returned, another detention may be given.

Detentions are ordinarily one hour long and, for middle schoolers, served on Wednesdays. It is the responsibility of the parents to provide transportation.

Grave Matters

In all matters, particularly those involving suspension and expulsion, the Christian well-being of the individual is to be taken into consideration.

If a student is accused of a crime or a serious misdemeanor, even outside of school time and jurisdiction, the administration of St. Joseph School reserves the right to suspend that student from St. Joseph School if it has reason to believe that the learning environment will be jeopardized or negatively impacted by the student's presence. Teachers will provide schoolwork to be done at home during the time of the suspension. St. Joseph School is not obliged to provide extra help during this time of suspension. After civil authorities resolve the incident, the future status of the student in the school community will be determined by the administration of the school. This may include expulsion.

Sexting

Students involved in possession or transmission of inappropriate photos on their cell phones or other electronic devices face suspension and/or expulsion. In accordance with the law, the Resident Trooper will be notified.

Smoking and Vaping

Smoking and vaping of any type is not allowed on campus. This includes the use of e-cigarettes. Cigars, cigarettes, pipes, tobacco of any type, marijuana, e-cigarettes, or vapors are not permitted on campus. E-cigarettes are forbidden on school property. The battery of an e-cigarette has been known to explode and/or catch on fire.

Suspension

Suspension may be imposed for the following offenses:

- earning multiple detentions,
- repeated disobedience or failure to observe school policies,
- repeated disrespect towards any school personnel or fellow student, and
- Continued plagiarism
- any offense which the Principal considers deserving of suspension.

Suspension means that a student is excluded from classes and all school activities for a given amount of time. All suspensions will be out-of-school suspensions unless otherwise determined by the Principal. During this time, all assignments are to be completed at home under the supervision of parents, and submitted upon return to school. A suspension letter will be sent to the parent and will remain in the student's file.

Expulsion

Expulsion may be imposed for the following offenses:

- destructive behavior toward another student or school property;
- harassment or bullying of another student or students in any form, including cyberbullying;
- any form of threatening a teacher or another student;
- use of dangerous substances (e.g. drugs, alcohol, tobacco) or other materials (e.g. fireworks, matches, knives, and guns) on school grounds or at a school function of any kind; and
- any offense which the Principal considers deserving of suspension or expulsion.

The proximity of graduation will not exempt a student from punishment.

Expulsion means that a student will be permanently withdrawn from the school and is thereafter not expected to be found in the school, on the premises, or at any school-sponsored function. Expulsion is invoked rarely and only as a last resort. This is determined by the Principal, after consultation with the superintendent and the pastor, and may be appealed to the Diocesan Board of Education. Prior to the expulsion, the student and his/her parents or guardian will be granted a hearing by the Principal. If expulsion is determined, the Principal shall notify the parents or guardian of the reasons in writing and shall file a copy of this notice in the Diocesan School Office. The reason for expulsion shall be added to the permanent record card of the student.

Emotional Support Animals

No emotional support animals will be permitted in school unless a student's IEP specifically states the need for such an extraordinary accommodation.

Communication

General Communications

Parents will receive a weekly letter from the Principal electronically. All flyers and other general communications to the parents will also be sent electronically. In addition, teachers may also send home a weekly memo or letter.

Important information is also available on our website, www.stjosephschoolbaltic.com. This includes all necessary forms, upcoming events, the school calendar, monthly hot-lunch menu, and the *Parent-Student Handbook*.

Urgent Communications

The EDUCONNECT system will inform all parents of school delays, early dismissals, and closings, and weather-related issues, as well as important reminders and emergency information.

Contacting the School

The school telephone number is (860) 822-6141.

Contact with Students

Classrooms are not to be disturbed during class time or dismissal time. Telephone calls to the school to leave messages for the students should be rare. Children are not allowed to receive phone calls during school time unless it is an emergency, and then only on the office phone. Students will not be permitted to call home for forgotten items. If forgotten items are found at home and brought into school, they are to be left in the office. **Students may not have cell phones in school.**

Keeping Contact Information Current

Please notify the office if your home number, the number you listed on the emergency form, or your address changes. It is very important that the school has on file the current phone numbers and addresses of all students.

Dress Code

School Uniform

The wearing of a school uniform is specifically designed to encourage and promote Christian values and shall not reflect current fads and trends. **The uniform should always be neat and clean and the correct size for the child.**

Uniforms may be purchased from www.DonnellysClothing.com (school code = JOSEPBALCT).

Girls' Uniform

The girls' basic uniform consists of

- uniform maroon plaid jumper (K-4) or skirt (5-8);
- long or short sleeve maroon polo;
- maroon or white blouse, long- or short-sleeved, with a Peter Pan collar (optional for the 2025-2026 school year only);
- uniform maroon or plaid tie (optional for the 2025-2026 school year only);
- uniform tights or knee socks, either maroon or white; and
- a maroon cardigan or vest (optional).

During the winter months (November 4 to March 28), girls may substitute the uniform gray pants for the jumper or skirt. From the beginning of the school year until October 7 and from April 22 until the end of the year, they may substitute a maroon or plaid skirt for the jumper or skirt, and a polo shirt for the blouse. **The skirt length for the jumper, skirt, and skirt is to the knee.**

Boys' Uniform

The boys' basic uniform consists of

- gray twill dress slacks;
- Long or short sleeve maroon polo;
- a maroon or white button-up shirt, long- or short-sleeved (optional for the 2025-2026 school year only);
- a maroon cloth tie (optional for the 2025-2026 school year only);
- a black or brown belt;
- dark socks; and
- a maroon cardigan, V-neck sweater, or vest (optional).

From the beginning of the school year until October 7 and from April 22 until the end of the year, boys may substitute gray walking shorts for the slacks and a polo shirt for the button up, and wear white socks rather than dark ones.

Shoes

All students are to wear a good sturdy low-heeled (under one inch) tie or buckle shoe, either black or brown. **Dressy** all-black athletic shoes are allowable, and all shoes should be safe to wear on the playground. **Rubber soles are recommended for safety, but sneakers worn in PE are not permitted other than on gym day.** Shoelaces should match the color of the shoe.

No school shoes may have high tops, cleats, platforms, or wedges. Sandals, clogs, and flip-flops may not be worn. Snow boots are not to be worn in the classroom.

Hair

Boys' hair may not be below the collar and must be kept neat. "Boy buns" are not permitted.

Girls' hair must be pulled back and out of the eyes. Hair ribbons should be small, unobtrusive, and of one of the colors in the uniform. Headbands may be worn, but must also match the school uniform in color. Any hairstyle which is contrary to good hygiene, is a distraction, or disruptive to the purpose of the school will not be permitted.

Tails, stripes, and decoratively shaved head styles are not permitted. Hair may not be artificially colored or bleached, and extensions may not be worn. The principal has the final say in this matter.

Accessories & Miscellaneous

Students may wear a watch, **NOT A SMART WATCH**, a necklace consisting of one small medal and a chain, one bracelet on each arm, and one ring on each hand. Girls with pierced ears may wear one stud in each ear; boys may not wear earrings of any sort. No other body piercing is allowed.

Students may not wear nail polish, fake nails, nail tips, makeup (including lip gloss), hair gel or mousse, hairspray, perfume, or aftershave lotion.

Gym Uniform

On gym days, students are to wear the gym uniform rather than the regular one. It consists of

- navy-blue shorts or sweatpants;
- a solid navy-blue tee shirt;
- socks,
- sneakers; and
- a navy-blue sweatshirt (optional).

Students may wear Amber, Jeanie, or “Spirit Wear” tee shirts and sweatshirts on these days. They may also wear ankle socks, although these are not to be worn with the regular school uniform.

Students may not substitute leggings for the sweatpants or shorts, and they may not roll up their sweatpants.

Dress-Down Days

There are occasional “dress-down” days on which students do not have to be in uniform. Students may wear casual clothing such as jeans and tee shirts on such days; however, all clothing must be neat, school-appropriate, and safe.

Pants should not be ripped or frayed. Skirts and shorts should be no shorter than three inches above the knee. Tops must be long enough to tuck into the pants or skirt (no visible midriffs), have sleeves, and be free of offensive words or graphics. **No low-cut or tight-fitting clothing may be worn, including leggings unless the top comes to the knee.** For safety reasons, students may not wear flip-flops or sandals. The principal will make the decision whether students may wear shorts on a particular dress-down day. “Goth”-style clothing or anything reflective of the occult may not be worn on any occasion.

The school reserves the right to make the final decision whether a child’s casual wear is appropriate for the school setting.

Dress-Up

For concert wear, boys wear dress pants, a dress shirt, a tie, and dress or school shoes. Girls wear a modest dress or skirt and blouse, socks/stockings, and dress shoes. The dress/skirt must come to the knee. The same code is also for the Father-Daughter dance and for Graduation.

Policy Enforcement

Failure to adhere to any part of the uniform policy may result in a disciplinary action. Three uniform violations will result in one detention.

Attendance

Arrival

The school day officially starts at 8:30 a.m. A parent or designated adult should accompany each student to the school doors. All students are to cross at the crosswalk and wait for direction from the crossing guard. Students in grades three to eight enter the lower level of the school through the gym doors, and students in grades Pre-K to two enter through the exterior classroom doors, between 8:15 and 8:30 a.m. The gym doors are closed at 8:30 a.m. when morning activities begin. Students arriving later than that must be signed in at the main office.

Dismissal

The school day officially ends at 2:45 p.m. Children in grades kindergarten through four are dismissed from the outer classroom doors. No student will be released to any person who is not listed on the Enrollment Form completed at the beginning of the year by the parents or legal guardians. (Changes to this form may be made during the year, but only in writing, never over the phone.)

If a student's ordinary mode of transportation is changed, parents are expected to send a note to the homeroom teacher who will, in turn, inform the office. If the mode of transportation change needs to be made via phone, please call as early as possible in the day, no later than 2:00 p.m. Calling in to change the mode of transportation should be a rare occurrence.

The regular pickup period ends at 3:00 p.m., at which point the gym doors are closed and children who have not yet been picked up report to aftercare in the gym. Children in this program will be picked up either in the gym or, weather permitting, on the playground.

Scheduled Early Dismissal

Scheduled early dismissal time for all students on specified days is 12:30 p.m., with the pickup period ending at 12:45 p.m. This occurs every first Friday of the month and other times stated in the 2025-2026 school calendar.

Unscheduled Closures

St. Joseph School follows the Sprague Public School System in school closures for inclement weather or similar situations. Cancellations, delays, and early closings will be announced through the EDUCONNECT program and the school website.

There are 900 hours of school for our students and 4 days of professional development for the staff..

Absences

If a child must be out on a given day, parents are asked to **call the office** at (860) 822-6141 before 9:00 a.m. that morning and give the reason for the absence.

If the school doesn't receive a call, it will contact the parent(s) at home or at the place of employment.

If parents cannot be reached when their child is absent, they are to send a written note when the child returns to school after being absent for more than one day, giving the dates of the absence and confirming the reason.

A written statement giving reasons for the absence or tardiness **must** be brought to the student's teacher upon the student's return. **These notes/letters will be retained in the office for one year.** Please avoid writing the absence note on a napkin or a receipt. Should absence for any reason other than illness seem imperative, parents are requested to consult with the Principal and present a written reason for the absence.

Students may not attend **after-school or evening activities** if they were absent from school on the day of the activity.

Assignments will be available at the school office or sent through Google Classroom. A note may be sent with a sibling so that he or she may get the assignments from the teacher. These assignments may be picked up at the end of the school day.

When a student has been absent, it is his or her responsibility to make arrangements with the teacher to catch up on the missed lessons, to submit the make-up work that was done at home to the respective teacher(s), and to take any missed quizzes and tests. A student is usually given one day per each absent day to make up work and take tests and quizzes, although this may be adjusted at the discretion of the teacher.

Excessive Absences

Regular attendance at school is essential for satisfactory performance. Therefore, no student may accumulate more than twenty unexcused absences for the entire school year. Students absent for more than twenty days will be seriously considered for retention, and may have to attend summer school to make up for lost time and skills.

After ten absences, a letter will be sent home notifying the parents of the child's accumulated absences. The same will occur after fifteen absences.

Exceptions to the twenty-absences policy may be made in cases of extreme medical conditions at the discretion of the principal and in consultation with the Diocesan School Superintendent. **Parents must be aware that excessive unexcused absences are unacceptable and may lead to a report to the Department of Childrens Services.**

Appointments and Vacations

All **appointments** should be made outside of school time. **We realize that this is not always feasible, so if a child must have a medical or dental appointment during the school day, a note from the doctor’s office must be submitted upon return to school.**

Family **vacations** should coincide with scheduled vacations on the school calendar. We strongly urge parents to cooperate in this policy. We cannot educate children who are not in school. In the rare event that time must be taken during the school day, a note of explanation must be sent to the principal.

Students are responsible for any work missed. They may receive assignments in advance, and are to confer with their teacher(s) upon their return to school for any other makeup work. Parents are to remember, however, that class presentations and discussions can never be made up, and that some students have difficulty catching up. No special help will be given to students who have taken a vacation outside of the approved vacations listed in the school calendar.

Tardiness

Teachers take attendance at 8:30 a.m. Students not in homeroom by 8:30 are considered tardy. Students arriving to school after this point must report to the office, accompanied by a parent or guardian, to sign in. They will be issued a late slip before reporting to class.

Reasons for excused “tardies” include the following: doctor or dentist appointment, poor road conditions, and family emergency.

If a student has three unexcused “tardies”, he or she will serve a detention. Frequent or habitual tardiness is disruptive and detrimental to the learning process.

Early Pickup

A written request from parents or guardians is required for a child to leave school before the time of dismissal. The request must clearly state the reason for early dismissal. Students will be released only to parents or to someone authorized by them.

The parent or a designated representative must come to the office for the child and sign out. Outside of regular daily dismissal, no child may leave the school without following this procedure.

When a child becomes sick at school, the school will first contact a parent or guardian. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, the school will get in touch with the emergency contact on the Emergency Release Form. (Each child must have an Emergency Release Form in the office.) The same sign-out process then applies as in planned early pickups: A parent or designated representative must come to the office for the child. Children will not be dismissed from a classroom or sent home alone.

Health

Student Illness and Public Health

NB: Children who are sick should not be sent to school. They must be fever-free for twenty-four hours before returning to school.

Following an absence of five consecutive days for reason of illness, a doctor's certificate allowing the child to return to school is required. Saturday and Sunday are included in the five days if the child has been absent Friday and then the following Monday.

Required Physical Exams and Immunizations

Physical exams are required before entry into pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and seventh grade. They must include

- hematocrit or hemoglobin tests;
- weight, height, and blood pressure measurements;
- updating of immunizations;
- vision, hearing, postural and dental screening;
- health history, as doctor feels appropriate; and
- tuberculosis screening.

Students must be up-to-date on their immunizations. Immunization requirements for each grade level can be found on the [website](#) of the Connecticut State Department of Public Health.

Sports Requirements

All students who wish to participate in a sport Cross Country, Basketball, etc., must have a physical examination before the first practice of the sport. In addition, parents must also attend a mandated Diocesan workshop, *Play Like a Champion*. This is a one-time requirement.

In-School Health Screenings

Each year the following screenings are carried out:

- vision screening (K-8),
- hearing screening (K-8), and
- postural screening (5-8).

Injuries

If a student's activities are limited due to an injury or a health problem, a written note from a doctor is required. Students will not be excused from physical education classes without a note.

Administration of Medications

Section 10-212a of the Connecticut State Statutes requires written authorization, signed by the physician and the parent or guardian, before any medication can be dispensed in school. Authorization forms are available in the school nurse's office, and in most doctors' offices. Continued usage of medication in school must be renewed at the beginning of each school year.

All medications must be in the original containers and brought to school by a parent or authorized adult. Medicines should never be sent in with a child. Nasal sprays and the like must not be brought to school unless ordered by a physician. In cases of medicine being taken for a single occasion or for a brief period, a parent may come to the school office and administer the medication to the student. If a student is to self-carry (as in the use of inhalers), the student must have a physician's authorization and parent's signature indicating permission to do so.

It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to pick up all students' medications at the close of the school year.

Food Allergy Policy

St. Joseph School recognizes that life threatening food allergies are an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all pupils with food allergies. In order to minimize the incidence of life threatening allergic reactions. St. Joseph School will maintain a system-wide procedure for addressing life threatening allergic reactions and maintain an Emergency Action Plan for any student(s) whose parent/guardian and physicians have informed the school in writing that the student(s) has a potentially life threatening allergy. No peanut products will be served in the cafeteria. St. Joseph is a nut-free school.

Ambulance

If a student suffers a medical emergency precipitating the need for a 911 call to be made, the parent/guardian will be responsible for any/all expenses involved. The parent/guardian will also be called immediately so that proper directives can be given by the parent/guardian to the emergency personnel.

Safety

Emergency Procedures

Fire drills, lock-down drills, and evacuation drills are conducted on a regular basis to ensure the safety of all students in emergency situations.

St. Joseph School has established emergency procedures that are published in the school *Emergency Manual*. These manuals are in all the offices and classrooms.

Bullying

Bullying is prohibited at St. Joseph School. Behaviors characterized as bullying will not be tolerated during the school day or during any school-sponsored activities, on or off school grounds. Bullying and intimidation are actions which are contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Bullying is defined as any overt action by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate the other student that is repeated against the same student over time. Bullying includes physical intimidation or assault, extortion, oral, written or electronic threats, teasing, “putdowns”, name-calling, threatening looks, gestures or actions, cruel rumors, false accusations, and social isolation.

Any behavior deemed by the school administration to be bullying shall result in disciplinary actions, which may include detention, suspension, or expulsion from the school, depending on the nature of the incident. Any student who retaliates against another student for reporting bullying may be subject to disciplinary actions which may include detention, suspension, or expulsion from the school. Needless to say, no parent may bully any staff member at any point.

Harassment

In keeping with Christian values and recognizing the value of each person, we at St. Joseph School insist on respect for each person. Harassment is a form of bullying and will not be tolerated, whether it be verbal, physical, or sexual. Threats against individuals or the general safety of all will be dealt with very seriously. The consequences of these behaviors will be determined by the seriousness of the violation and will result in an in-school suspension or expulsion. The dignity and safety of each individual person will be safeguarded by the administration, teachers, and staff.

Accident Insurance

St. Joseph School is enrolled in an accident insurance policy with Philadelphia Insurance Agency. Each student is covered for any school-related accident. The coverage extends door-to-door, from the time the student leaves for school in the morning until he/she returns home in the afternoon. It also involves any school-sponsored extracurricular activities 12 months a year. This policy will cover expenses (i.e. deductibles, etc.) over the child's existing insurance.

If an accident occurs, contact the school office for an accident report form. For more information about this insurance, contact Ms. Katie Kruszewski at Philadelphia Insurance at (860) 430-3338.

Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse

In keeping with Section 17-38 of the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut, any school principal, teacher, psychologist, nurse, guidance counselor, social worker, coach, extended day staff person, or parish priest shall report, or cause a report to be made, to the local DCF office concerning any case of suspected child abuse. All staff members of St. Joseph School are mandated reporters and abide by this law.

Safe Environments Policies

Safe Environments refers to environments that are created and maintained to provide students, staff, and volunteers with the safest possible place to study and work.

St. Joseph School is in complete compliance with all the requirements with the Office for Safe Environments with regard to the Pastoral Code of Conduct. All staff members are required to go through a comprehensive screening process, which includes a background check and successful participation in the Armatus online training. Information pamphlets for children and parents are available outside the school office. This information is issued to the students, staff, and parents at the beginning of each school year.

Food Service

Milk

St. Joseph School participates in the federal milk program, which provides white milk and chocolate milk at \$.30 per half pint. Please order milk for each month in advance, and pay by check payable to St. Joseph School.

Hot Lunch

The hot lunch program through the Academy of the Holy Family will start on Tuesday, September 2, 2025. **The price for each lunch is \$5.00.** It will not be available when there is a specific function at the Academy of the Holy Family. Families will be notified ahead of time. A monthly schedule of all hot lunches will be sent home and will also appear on the school website. Make checks payable to the Academy of the Holy Family.

Extracurricular Activities

General Information

Participation in extracurricular activities is highly encouraged. However, it must be remembered that this is a privilege, not a right. At all times, the students must remember that they represent the school and are expected to have a positive attitude and be cooperative with the moderators of these groups. If a student will be absent from an after-school club or activity, please send in a note to the office.

Field Trips

Each class makes at least one trip of an educational nature each year. Field trips are a privilege. Parent permission for such trips is necessary, and forms are sent home for parent's consent and signature. If the signed permission slip is not returned to the school, the student may not participate in the trip. No permission will be accepted via the telephone.

Depending on the cost, parents may be asked to help cover the cost of the arrangements before a child may participate in a field trip. However, most field trip expenses are covered using the Home-School Association revenue. Efforts are made to keep the cost to a minimum.

The teacher is the supervisor of the trips and is responsible for all the decisions made. While parents may serve as chaperones, the number may be limited to the space available. All field trips use bus transportation unless the principal deems otherwise.

Uniforms are to be worn on class trips unless the Principal approves other appropriate dress.

According to Diocesan policy, no overnight field trips are permitted.

A teacher may make a request for a child to miss a field trip if he/she has not been completing schoolwork or has been continually misbehaving. If a student would miss a field trip due to these circumstances, no refunds for the trip will be given.

Clubs

Drama Club: Students in grades 3-8 are eligible to participate in Drama Club, which meets once a week to prepare for a spring production.

School Choir: Students in grades 2-8 are eligible to participate in school choir. These students are required to sing at school Masses, Catholic Schools Sunday Mass in January, First Holy Communion Mass, and Mothers' Day. Rehearsals are held every Monday at noon, and if there is no school on Monday, then on Tuesday at noon.

Cross Country Team: This team is open to students in grades 3-8 and meets every Wednesday during the fall season. The cross-country team participates in meets. It is the parents' responsibility to provide transportation to the team's meets.

Basketball: While St. Joseph School does not have its own basketball team, students may join Sacred Heart School team in Taftville. Information is given about this in the fall.

Concerts/Art Shows

Each year, St. Joseph School presents a Christmas Concert/Art Show and a Spring Concert/Art Show. All students are to participate in these concerts/art shows as they are a major part of the music/art grade. Since this is a formal occasion, all students are to follow the "Dress Up Code." All boys wear a dress shirt, dress pants, tie, socks, and dress shoes. All girls are to wear a modest dress or skirt and blouse, socks or stockings (for lower grade students), and stockings for students in grades five through eight. No student may wear flip flops, boots, or athletic shoes of any kind. **The dress or skirt must come to the knee.**

Miscellaneous

Extended Day Program

Before-school care is available from 7:30 a.m. to 8:15 a.m. and takes place in the art room. No student may be dropped off at school before 7:30 a.m. and left unsupervised. Furthermore, no student may simply be dropped off at the school early; the parent must enroll the child in the Before Care Program. Contracts for this program are available in the school office and may also be found on our website. In the event there is a late opening due to inclement weather, Before Care will be available no earlier than one hour before school begins, e.g., for a two-hour delay, extended day care program begins at 9:30 a.m.

After-school care is available from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the gym. It is also available on half days from 12:45 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Parents will be notified of any early dismissal through the EDUCONNECT program. **Should there be an early closing due to inclement weather including excessive heat, there will be NO EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM.** If a child is to be picked up from the Extended Day Care after school by someone other than a parent, this must be stated in writing. There will be an additional charge of \$7.00 for any child(ren) being picked up after 5:00 p.m., and the child(ren) will be brought to the Holy Family Motherhouse to be picked up there.

The cost of Extended Day Care is a flat fee of \$5.00 in the morning, and a rate of \$10.00 per hour in the afternoon.

The aftercare program will not be available at dismissal time on the last day before Thanksgiving Break (November 25), the last day before Christmas Break (December 19), and the last day of school.

School Bus Policies

Students shall board or leave the school bus at his/her designated stop unless a written request has been made by the parent to do otherwise. This request must be approved by the school principal and given to the bus driver.

All passengers are under the general supervision of the public-school Superintendent of Schools and the direct supervision of the driver while on the school bus.

All students should be at the bus stop at least five minutes prior to the bus's expected arrival (weather permitting). The bus driver will not wait for students at the pick-up point beyond the expected departure time.

Library Policies

All students in preschool through fourth grade have access to the library on a weekly basis or at any time the classroom teachers choose to use the library for their students. All students are expected to observe quiet in the library and to be cooperative with the school librarian.

Students in preschool to fourth grade may check out one book each week.

While there is no specific library period for students in grades five to eight, these students may also check out books. Library privileges will be suspended for overdue books, and a fee of \$.10 per day will be charged on all overdue books. There is a replacement fee charged for a lost book.

Student Records

Education records will be kept for each student and will reflect the physical, emotional, social, and academic aspects of a student's development in the education process.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, the federal law known as the "Buckley Amendment", grants the parent the right to inspect their child's school records, and to request correction of any information in the records that is inaccurate, misleading, or a violation of the child's right to privacy or other rights. The law also guarantees the confidentiality of school records. St. Joseph School also abides by the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the student. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order that is up to date.

When a student withdraws, a copy of the entire permanent record and all documents in the student's academic record are sent to the student's new school as soon as the parents submit a record release form and all financial obligations are met. When a student graduates, a copy of the entire permanent record card along with the 7th and 8th grade report cards and standardized test scores are sent to the student's choice of high school as soon as the parents submit a record release form. **However, only the original permanent record card and the last report card remain in the school file.**

Parking

Families should park in the parking lot across the street from the church. Parking near the main (upstairs) entrance of the building is not ordinarily allowed and must be specifically

cleared by the Principal. Such special permission may be granted to those needing a handicapped parking space and also for loading or unloading supplies, or for bringing students to school who are late or picking up students who must leave early. No one may park in Father Tito's driveway.

Concerns Regarding School Personnel

Concerns involving individual school staff members should be discussed directly with the staff member concerned. If this does not bring about a satisfactory resolution, the matter should then be referred to the school principal for study and possible resolutions. If this does not settle the matter, it should then be brought to the pastor for consideration. At the discretion of the principal, serious matters will be brought to the attention of the Diocesan Superintendent.

Books and Materials

School books which are the property of the school must be properly covered. Any books belonging to the school that are lost or damaged must be replaced. Parents will be billed for any damaged textbooks or materials, including iPads and chromebooks belonging to the school.

Students are to have a schoolbag or backpack in which to carry their books and papers. No backpacks containing wheels are to be used. Chromebooks are to be kept in the accompanying case supplied by the school.

General supplies, i.e., paper, pencils, glue, crayons, must be provided by the parent or guardian. No white-out is to be used by students.

Lost Items

St. Joseph School is not responsible for lost articles. Each child's name should be put on the inside of his or her school bag, lunch box, sweaters and jackets, uniforms, pants, shirts, etc. Please check our school's Lost & Found in the gym when your child is missing any of these items.

Birthdays

Birthdays are recognized as special days for the children. Students may come to school dressed out of uniform on their birthday or half birthday (if their birthday falls during the summer months). Parents are invited to send in cookies, cupcakes, or popsicles for the classmates of the child. Since some students have allergies, it is important to provide

gluten-free and nut-free treats or the appropriate accommodation for these students. If your child wishes to also provide a treat for the teachers, please prepare a separate plate for the teachers' room rather than having the child walk to each classroom distributing treats. This will lessen the disruptions to the educational process.

Invitations to parties outside of school (e.g. birthday parties) may be given out to the children at school only if they are given to every child in the class. Sensitivity to the feelings of others requires that everyone in the class receives invitations or no one in the class receives invitations.

Dress Down Guidelines

Students may wear: jeans, tennis shoes, short socks, shorts no shorter than three inches above the knee, skirts no shorter than three inches above the knee, shorts no shorter than three inches above the knee, sweatshirts, jogging suits, jewelry, dresses and/or slacks.

Students may **NOT** wear: flip flop sandals, open back shoes, tank tops, t-shirts with inappropriate writing, tennis shoes that convert to roller skates, bikini shorts, pajama pants or any flannel pants, yoga pants, leggings worn as pants (leggings must be worn with a dress or skirt), make up, low cut blouses/tops, clothing that is extremely tight and/or hats.

Good Rule: if you think you shouldn't wear it, you shouldn't..

ALL UNIFORM REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES ARE SUBJECT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL.

Blogs

Engagement in online blogs such as, but not limited to Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, etc., may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student or parent's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students, other parents, or the parish.

No parent should open a Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, etc., account under the name of the school or a particular grade or school organization. The only official social media accounts are the ones created and monitored by the St. Joseph School IT specialist. The classroom teacher and the principal will be included in the "friend" list of each such group. A parent who chooses to create such an account may subject his/her child(ren) to separation from the school.

Facebook, Instagram, Snap Chat, Twitter (X), TikTok and other Social Media Postings of Student Photographs

St. Joseph School works to protect the confidentiality rights of all students. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1973 (FERPA) and the Child Protection Act of 2012 (CPA) were designed to protect personally identifiable information of minors. St. Joseph School adheres to these laws in its attempt to protect the privacy rights of all students. As a result, the parents of students enrolled at St. Joseph School are forbidden from posting photographs taken at school sponsored events that include the images of students other than their own on their personal Facebook, Instagram, Snap chat, Twitter (X), Tiktok or any social media page. Such postings are a violation of the St. Joseph School's adherence to FERPA and the Child Protection Act. The students of parents who post such photos may be separated from St. Joseph School.

Conclusion

We thank you, parents and students, for taking time to read the *2025-2026 St. Joseph School Parent/Student Handbook*. If you wish to have a printed copy of this handbook, please contact the office. It will be your guide for as long as you are part of the St. Joseph School Family. We ask that both parents and students sign the enclosed sheet indicating your acceptance of and cooperation with the rules and regulations stated in the St. Joseph School Handbook. We thank you for your cooperation and support in helping us provide a strong spiritual and academic foundation for your child. This form will be kept on file.

The Administration has the right to revise this handbook at any time. Parents will be informed in writing of any new policies.