

St. Joseph School Parent & Student Handbook



Revised July, 2009

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH

O Great St. Joseph, whose influence over the hearts of Jesus and Mary is all powerful and who has never been invoked in vain, I ask, with the most firm and lively confidence, the speedy granting of this request:

(For the needs of our parish, school, alumni, family and friends; or for some other special intention.)

Dear St. Joseph, obtain for me the object of my prayer if it be for the glory of God and my own salvation; but if it is not, then obtain for me the grace lovingly to resign myself to the will of my heavenly Father, who in the afflictions He permits, as well as in the temporal favors He grants me, has in view only my happiness here and my eternal salvation. Amen!

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I. Introduction and Mission

Welcome to St. Joseph School! When visitors come to St. Joseph Catholic School, they first see the diversity. After they stay a little while, they see a **cohesive spiritual community**. We have an amazing blend of families—ethnically and socio-economically. But it’s the deep unity with one another that sets this school apart.

This handbook is intended to inform you regarding the many aspects of your child’s education. Educational success is best achieved through a **collaboration of school and home**. Together, the St. Joseph School’s staff and parents can create an educational environment that will benefit all students.

We ask parents to please take the time to go through this handbook with their children and inform them of the **guidelines and expectations** that will be in place at school. Familiarity with this framework for our school community can help set a positive tone from the beginning of the year.

The information provided in this handbook is designed to serve as a guide to procedures, policies, and programs at St. Joseph School, and is not intended to be all-inclusive. If you have a question about any section of the handbook, or if you wish to obtain further information, please call the school for an appointment to discuss the matter in detail. Adherence to school rules and regulations is part of the **parent-student-school covenant**. The Principal reserves the right to amend the handbook when it is deemed necessary and appropriate.

After reviewing this handbook, please sign the final page—along with your child(ren)—and **return it to the office by August 31st**. Many thanks, and God bless you!

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. Joseph School—“*A school with a soul, in the heart of Joliet*”—is to provide our students the opportunity for a quality Catholic education, **including concrete experiences of following Jesus**, through a curriculum which addresses all aspects of the child’s growth and development.

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

St. Joseph School is a culturally diverse, Catholic Christian educational community, an active part of St. Joseph Parish and the Diocese of Joliet.

St. Joseph School provides its students with a **Christ-centered environment** in which they can grow through authentic educational experiences and opportunities for Christian service. In the pursuit of academic excellence, each child's unique talents and abilities are recognized and cultivated by developing life-long skills necessary for future success. Our students are encouraged to become active and responsible members of St. Joseph Parish, the community, and the world.

With the involvement of parents, who are the primary educators of their children, we strive to create a community wherein diversity and knowledge, enlivened by faith, are shared in a family atmosphere among students, teachers, parents, and parishioners. This enables our students to grow **spiritually, academically, socially, and physically**.

GOALS

- To give students opportunities to develop moral and spiritual values, ethical standards of conduct, and integrity.
- To help each student develop the power to think constructively, to reason independently, to exercise creativity, and to engage in self-evaluation.
- To help students acquire a sense of responsibility for school, home, church, and community.
- To provide experiences and skills necessary to live in a technological world.

We strongly believe that consistent cooperation among parents, teachers, and students is needed to reach these goals. The foundation of all our teaching is based on the lived-practice of our Catholic Faith. As parents and teachers **we are called to be models for our children**. Christian courtesy is emphasized at St. Joseph School.

II. ACADEMIC INFORMATION

CURRICULUM

The Diocesan curriculum guidelines—consistent with guidelines of the State of Illinois—are followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas. In addition, St. Joseph School offers students the opportunity to reach their full potential spiritually and morally through **daily Religious education**: Catholic doctrine and tradition, study of the Scriptures, preparation for reception of the Sacraments, and education in issues of social justice form the core of our faith formation program; we also promote personal, communal and liturgical prayer, as well as Christian service, to help students follow Jesus in their daily lives.

FIELD TRIPS

During the year, classes take field trips within and outside the city as an extension of the classroom activities. All trips are pre-approved by the Principal and are intended to complement the curriculum. Transportation may be on foot, by car, or by licensed carrier in the case of buses or trains.

Student permission slips, signed by the parent or guardian are required. *Telephone permission is not allowed.* Parent chaperones will be invited to accompany field trips as needed. Per diocesan policy, all chaperones must have completed the Protecting God's Children workshop.

HOMEWORK

St. Joseph School is committed to the concept that homework supplements and reinforces what has been taught in the classroom. Some students may need extra practice in skills taught; for other students, homework is a means of enriching school activities started in class. Students who have fallen behind because of an extended absence may need homework to catch up with the class.

Parents can assist by providing a quiet place for study, showing an interest, and encouraging students **to assume responsibility for their work**. Completed homework assignments, returned in a timely fashion, are factored into the report card grade.

HONOR ROLL

The Honor Roll recognizes those students in Fifth through Eighth Grades who excel academically. The criteria are as follows:

A Honors: All As and only one B; no checks for behavior in areas #1-5 on the Report Card.

B Honors: All As and only one C, or all As and Bs; no checks for behavior in areas #1-5 on the Report Card.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

St. Joseph School strives to establish an atmosphere in each classroom that promotes academic integrity. Students should recognize that this is **essential to the learning process**. Any act of academic dishonesty by students not only degrades their character and reputation, but also hinders the learning process and prevents students from receiving the maximum benefit from the academic program.

Academic dishonesty is defined as an *intentional* attempt by a student to obtain credit for work which is not one's own. No list of actions can be all-inclusive, but the following are examples of the type of actions that would violate this policy:

1. Submitting another student's work—in whole or in part, verbal or written—as one's own work.
2. Copying from another student's test, or using any materials, notes, "cheat sheets," etc. which are not expressly permitted by the teacher during a test period.
3. Plagiarizing (presenting as one's own material that has been copied from a published source, without properly acknowledging its origin), *including copying materials from the internet without proper citation*.
4. Permitting another student to copy, or writing another student's homework, project, report, paper, or test.

Consequences:

Cheating of any type will not be tolerated. The first time a student is caught cheating, the teacher will have a conference with the student and contact the parents; the student will also face a failing grade on the assignment and/or detention, as the teacher deems appropriate. Students who are caught cheating a second time will be sent to the Principal for further consequences, which may include detention, suspension or expulsion.

Students should realize that, in addition to the aforementioned immediate consequences, a violation of the academic integrity policy can have a significant impact on future awards for which they might otherwise have been eligible. Extra-curricular participation may also be affected.

III. ADMISSIONS

REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTERING AND TRANSFERRING

Illinois State Law and the Diocese of Joliet Policy require that all children entering Pre-K or Kindergarten, as well as all children entering Sixth Grade, have a completed health record on file at school *including physical examination, dental examination, and all required immunizations*. Children will not be allowed to attend classes until they have met these requirements.

Children entering school for the first time must also present a birth certificate and Social Security number. Children entering First Grade must be six years of age (five years of age for Kindergarten) on or before September 1st of that year.

Transferring students may be admitted following receipt of attendance, health, and academic records from the previous school. Until such records have been received and analyzed, the child's admission status is understood to be probationary. Students transferring from another Catholic School must be in financial and behavioral good standing at the previous school before being admitted to St. Joseph School.

No student will be denied admission to St. Joseph School on the basis of race, religion, national, or ethnic origin. Catholic Schools—established and maintained by the personal sacrifices of the local parish community, which continues to provide a substantial subsidy toward the school tuition—may justly give preference in admission to children of families that support St. Joseph Parish.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition payments are due in ten installments. The first payment is due by the first day of school. Successive payments—#2 through #10—are due at mid-month, September through May. All fees are included in the tuition, except for fees for special events such as First Eucharist, Confirmation, Graduation, etc. The due-dates for these special fees are determined by the teacher; fees are due *prior to the activity*.

When tuition payments are delinquent, progress reports, report cards, records, and diplomas may be withheld. Eighth Grade students will not receive diplomas or have official records transferred to a high school until all financial obligations are met (a copy of the health record will be forwarded). *Outstanding balances owed to the Before & After School Program will be added to the final tuition statement.*

The following steps will be taken to address delinquent tuition:

30 Days: Past due notice sent

60 Days: Meeting with the Principal to set up a payment plan

90 Days: Formal letter of warning

After 90 Days: Meeting with Pastor and Principal

Families facing particular financial hardships are encouraged to speak directly with the Principal or Pastor in order to work out a payment plan.

FUNDRAISING REQUIREMENT

Each family is required to sell **\$400** in fundraising throughout the school year; this brings in \$200 profit for the school. Families who do not sell the required amount of fundraising will be billed for the balance of the expected amount of profit on their final tuition statement of the school year.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND PHONE

Parents must notify the school of any changes of address, employment, home phone, or emergency information. This information is necessary for the health and safety of your child, particularly in case of an emergency. Unlisted numbers are kept confidential.

STUDENT RECORDS

St. Joseph School maintains an accurate record of student academic progress, attendance, health information, and behavior. Records of attendance and academic progress are kept permanently. When a child transfers or graduates, parents are required to sign a transfer of records form; records are then sent to the receiving school. *No official student records will be forward to another school until a family's financial commitments are fulfilled.* The final tuition payment should be made prior to the student's last day of attendance.

In the case of divorced or separated parents, information regarding student records will be available to both parents unless a court order to the contrary is on file. All financial obligations remain the responsibility of the parents.

TUITION REFUND POLICY

If, a family relocates or withdraws a child during the school term, a pro-rated tuition will be honored.

IV. SCHOOL INFORMATION

ABSENCE & TARDY POLICY

If a child is absent, a parent phone call is required. (Please leave a message if it is before or after school hours.) State of Illinois law mandates compulsory attendance of all children from ages 7-16, and State law defines truancy as *18 unexcused absences*. Unexcused absences may lead to court action and/or dismissal from the school.

All teachers are required to keep accurate and daily records of attendance, which must be kept permanently on file, and to notify the Principal of excessive absences. Letters regarding unexcused absences will be sent to families following the sixth (6) and twelfth (12) days absent.

Punctuality is essential for helping students make a successful transition from home to school. Thus, tardiness will also be recorded, and *excessive tardiness will be reported to the Principal*. Students who arrive after 8:15 AM are considered tardy. If opening prayer has finished and teachers have led their children into the classrooms, tardy students should sign in at the office. Consequences for excessive tardiness may include: students making up the prayer and announcement time, a letter to the parents and/or conference with the parents. Ten days tardy will result in a loss of perfect attendance award for students who might otherwise be eligible.

Finally, students are not allowed to leave the school before regular dismissal time except in case of illness or at the written request of a parent.

ARRIVAL-ENTRANCE-EXIT

Students should be dropped off **between 8:00-8:15 AM** and line up quietly **at the Clay Street door**. (In inclement weather, the children will be brought inside Ferdinand Hall.) *Children should not enter or exit from the street-side of the car* for safety reasons. Once children arrive, they may not leave the grounds without permission of the Principal or the teacher on duty.

Children who arrive on the school premises before 8:00 AM must report to the Before School Program. There are no adults outside before 8:00 AM, and the school does not assume any supervisory responsibility.

At 3:00 PM, all students will **exit from the Scott Street door** and will be escorted to the playground across the street for dismissal. *Parents must park in the gravel lot, and should not use the alley, Scott Street or Clay Street to pick-up students.* For safety reasons, parents of Pre-K—1st Graders should meet their children on the playground and escort them to the car; parents of 2nd—8th Graders may give their children permission to walk themselves to the vehicle unaccompanied, if the parent deems them capable.

ARTICLES PROHIBITED

Certain articles are prohibited from for safety reasons or due to their potential to disrupt instruction. These items include, but are not limited to: **electronic devices of any kind**, pocket knives, league baseballs, sports trading cards, squirt guns.

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

As an additional service to our families, St. Joseph School offers child-care from 7:00-8:00 AM and 3:00-5:30 PM. Students are able to attend this program on an as-needed basis, and families are billed only for the time used. Information on the structure of the program—as well as its expectations and billing rates—is available in the main office.

LUNCH TIME

St. Joseph School participates in the State of Illinois Free and Reduced Hot Lunch Program. Lunches are provided through a contract with the Joliet Public Schools District 86. **All families are asked to complete the hot lunch program application form**—whether or not they qualify for Free or Reduced lunch—because this documentation is used for a variety of State and Diocesan grant applications. *Children who are eligible for a Free or Reduced lunch are required to have an approved form on file.* Children who do not qualify for Free or Reduced lunch may purchase a hot lunch or bring a sack lunch.

Milk is part of the hot lunch program and may be purchased by those with a sack lunch. Students should treat the lunchroom supervisors and playground monitors with respect at all times.

MONEY

When sending money to school, parents should place it in an envelope with the *student's name, the teacher's name, amount enclosed, and purpose.*

NOTICES AND BULLETINS

Notices, bulletins, and parent reminders are sent home in the weekly **family folder**, generally on the last attendance day of the week. However, sometimes special events or reminders are necessary. Teachers and the school office rely on students to deliver these messages, so please check each day for notes from school. Information will also be sent via email, so we ask parents to **send email addresses to stjoseph50@hotmail.com**.

PICTURES

School photos of all students are taken in the fall. Students may purchase these pictures on a pre-pay basis only. Pictures of every student are taken for school records whether families purchase the pictures or not.

From time to time photos are taken of our students other than the school pictures. These photos may be sent to the newspaper, used in the yearbook or school web page, etc. *If you do not want your child's photo used, please inform the school in writing at the beginning of each new school year;* such requests will be kept on file in the office.

REPORTS AND CONFERENCES

Report cards are issued four times a year. The report card is one way that teachers can formally update parents on the progress of their child. Formal Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled at the end of the first and second grading periods. Additional conferences can be scheduled at any time at either the teacher's or parent's request. Periodic communication with your child's teacher or teachers is always beneficial.

Interim reports will be sent home approximately midway into each grading period for those children who are experiencing academic difficulties in order to alert parents to areas of concern.

SACRAMENTS AND RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

As followers of Jesus in communion with the universal Church, the St. Joseph School community participates in the following activities and sacraments:

- Prayers each morning, before and after lunch, and before going home.
- The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance/First Confession) is received by the Second Grade students in February or March, as well as during Advent and Lent for Third through Eighth Graders.
- The Sacrament of Holy Eucharist (First Communion) is received by Second Grade students in May, along with the Religious Education students and older students who have not yet received Holy Eucharist.
- Weekly Eucharistic Liturgy is attended by all students. Classes take turns serving as lectors, petitioners, and servers. Reverence during all liturgical celebrations is expected.
- Confirmation is made by Seventh and Eighth Grade students every other year. The time and date is announced in the school calendar.
- Third through Eighth Graders may participate in the Mass as altar servers. Punctuality and reverence is expected.

Students participate in services for Holy Days, Advent and Lenten devotions, Marian devotions and May Crowning, and other school and parish events. Students who would like to receive Sacraments that they might have missed should contact their teacher or Principal for information.

SCHOOL CLOSING DUE TO WEATHER

When weather conditions are of such a severe nature that school must be closed, local radio stations will carry the announcements to inform all families. *PLEASE LISTEN TO WJOL 1340 AM*, and **please do not call** the school office. Email notices will also be sent.

SCHOOL VISITATION

Parents are always welcome to visit St. Joseph School. Visitation of a classroom should be arranged ahead of time with the classroom teacher. *State law requires that all visitors to report to the school office and register with the secretary*, who will then notify the teacher accordingly.

Since learning time is a high priority, interruptions of instruction are not permitted. Student visitors are not permitted during regular school hours unless accompanied by a parent or guardian; recent graduates who wish to visit their former teachers should wait until after school dismissal.

SERVICE HOURS

St. Joseph School relies on the generosity of its school parents and family members to share their **time, talent and treasure**. Each school family is invited to complete 20 hours of service for the school or church each year; in return, the school offers a credit of \$20.00 for each hour worked—up to \$400.00 in total. Service hours for the current school year begin with the Parish Fair in June and end mid-May of the spring semester. For the complete service hour policy, please contact the school office.

ST. JOSEPH AWARD

The St. Joseph Award is presented to the student in each grade who most exemplifies the spirit of the school patron, St. Joseph. The recipient is recognized for being hard-working, respectful, kind, polite, courteous, helpful, and well-behaved throughout the school year.

TELEPHONE & CELL PHONES

Students need a pass signed by their teacher in order to use the office telephone. *Students are not allowed to use cell phones at any point during*

the school day. If it is necessary for students to have them for after school use, **cellular phones should be turned off** during the school day and left in the student's backpack. If a student is found using a cell phone during the school day or if the phone is not turned off and disrupts the class, it will be confiscated and held by the Principal for a suitable number of days. The use of camera/video capabilities on cell phones is strictly prohibited during school hours.

V. STUDENT INFORMATION

CLASSROOM RULES AND PROCEDURES

Each teacher at St. Joseph School is responsible for establishing classroom rules which are necessary to ensure a proper educational climate. These "rules" are shared with students continuously during the year, and are shared with parents at Open House in the fall and at conferences as needed.

Any parent who has a question regarding classroom rules and procedures should contact the individual teacher. Such rules and procedures may include, but not be limited to: being prepared for class, responding appropriately, staying seated during lessons, being on time for class, proper uniform attire, acting respectfully, etc. Teachers may establish procedural steps leading up to suspension for repeated infractions.

DRESS CODE

St. Joseph School maintains that a student's neatness in clothing and appearance is **a sign of personal dignity and self-respect**. A sense of personal worth and dignity should motivate students to look their best at all times. In addition, the school uniform is a symbol of our school community and helps provide an atmosphere that focuses on learning, as well as an environment that promotes unity.

The following applies to all students:

1. Students are to wear the uniform at all times during the school day. Parents will receive written notification in advance of special Spirit Days (see below).
2. Shirts and blouses must be tucked in at all times.

3. Hair should be neat and clean. Extreme hairstyles are unacceptable. This would include, but not be limited to: shaving, carving, highlighting, streaking, or tails. Hair must be all one natural color. No fad haircuts. Boys must have traditional haircuts, short enough in length so that it does not touch the collar of the shirt. All male students must be clean shaven at all times, no facial hair is allowed.
4. Jewelry is not a part of the school uniform. Students may wear one small necklace and/or bracelet, preferably of religious nature, including a cloth or rope scapular. Girls may wear one pair of small post earrings in the earlobe (no hoops or dangling earrings). A simple watch or ring may be worn. Earrings for boys are expressly forbidden at school. No ear piercing for boys will be allowed; no tattoos will be allowed.
5. Make-up, colored lip gloss, and finger nail polish may not be worn to school. While the use of a fragrance is discouraged, upper grade students may apply a small amount at home. No fragrance, hairspray, make-up, or nail polish is allowed in school.
6. If loops are present with pants or shorts, a belt must be worn.
7. On Mondays and Fridays, as well as additional days when students attend Mass, all students are expected to be in uniform. Girls are to wear their skirt or jumper. No Spirit Day passes or P.E. clothes are allowed on these days.
8. On approved out of uniform days, students are expected to dress appropriately and modestly. They may never wear tank tops, bare midriff tops, spaghetti straps, short shorts or skirts, visible undergarments, spandex, "low rider" jeans, or jeans with holes. No clothing will be allowed with inappropriate sayings, pictures, or advertisements, and no accessory or manner of dress should draw undue attention and/or disrupt the educational process.

Boys Required Uniform

- Slacks- Navy blue dress pants; no cargo pants, baggy pants, or jeans.
- Shirt- Light blue knit shirt with collar; long or short sleeve.
- Socks- Navy, black, or white socks.
- Shoes- For safety reasons, shoes must be soft soled, non-skid dress-shoes that fit with the uniform. No boots, gum, athletic, sport, or hiking shoes are allowed; all shoes must have a closed heel and toe.

Girls Required Uniform

- Jumpers—Kindergarten through Fourth Grades—The approved plaid jumper from the Dennis Uniform Company. (Pre-K may wear a solid blue skirt with a white shirt as an alternative to the plaid jumper.)
- Skirt and Vest—Fifth through Eighth Grades—The approved plaid skirt and vest from the Dennis Uniform Company. The skirt cannot be worn rolled up at the waistband, and must be of modest length. No pants may be worn under the skirt in school. Upper grade girls do not need to wear their vest when wearing the school sweatshirts or a pullover sweater. However, if the sweatshirt/sweater is removed, the vest must be worn.
- Slacks—Navy blue dress slacks may be worn during the cold months from Nov. 1 through March 31. Fifth through Eighth Grades must wear their vests with the slacks; no cargo pants are allowed.
- Blouse—White blouse with a collar. Short or long sleeve is permitted. Fifth through Eighth Grades also have the option of a white polo with buttons and a collar.
- Socks—Must be solid in color and should be either navy blue, red, or white, or footed tights.
- Shoes—For safety reasons, shoes must be soft soled, non-skid dress shoes that coordinate with the uniform, with heels no higher than 1 inch. No boots, gum, athletic, sport, or hiking shoes are allowed; all shoes must have a closed heel and toe.

Optional:

- Sweater—Solid navy blue or red sweater or sweater vest.
- Sweatshirt—Only navy blue St. Joseph School sweatshirts may be worn.
- Shorts—Navy blue walking shorts may only be worn in August, September, May, and June. No cargo shorts are allowed.

Gym Uniform

In order to avoid logistical problems related to students changing in and out of gym uniforms, the St. Joseph School gym uniform serves as the official “school uniform” on days when the students have P.E.

- Shirt/Sweatshirt—Approved St. Joseph School gym shirt from Kristich Sports; the approved St. Joseph School gym sweatshirt may be worn over the shirt in cooler weather.

- **Pants/Shorts**—Approved St. Joseph School gym pants from Kristich Sports. Solid royal blue or navy blue sweatpants are also acceptable. No nylon or striped pants, no “wind” or “tear-away” pants, and no brand names and logos will be allowed.
- **Athletic Shoes**—May be worn only on days when the students are in gym uniforms (or on Spirit Days).

Spirit Day Dress Code

In order to help promote school spirit, St. Joseph School encourages periodic Spirit Day dress opportunities. Students may earn Spirit Day passes when their parents attend PTO meetings, or passes may be granted for special occasions by the school. **Students are allowed to wear any shirt, sweatshirt or jersey that promotes St. Joseph School** (including gym shirts, but excluding homemade shirts), along with any appropriate casual shorts or pants and athletic or casual shoes. No “short shorts,” open-toed or open-back shoes are allowed on Spirit Days.

Consequences

Students not appropriately dressed in uniform may be asked to call home for the appropriate uniform. Repeated violations of the dress code may result in writing assignments or detentions. The Principal has the final authority to determine if any part of a student’s uniform, shoes, hair, etc. are appropriate for school. If you have any questions on the school uniform, please call the school office (815) 722-1005.

CONDUCT IN GENERAL

All students should abide by the general school rules as described in this handbook. Students are expected to show respect toward all adults and other students while in the school or at school activities.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Discipline and respect for authority are based on **Christian respect** for oneself and for other people. Because of the many people involved in our school, rules are necessary so that the school can operate in an orderly and effective manner.

Each student is expected to obey in a respectful manner all members of the school staff. Students are to show respect for lunchroom supervisors,

custodians, teachers and teacher-aides, visitors, parents and other children as well. Failing to do so will be considered a serious breach of conduct and will result in disciplinary action.

Our goal is to provide an atmosphere in which discipline problems are few and in which school behavior is positive, with students abiding by school and classroom rules. Responsibility for discipline and school behavior is shared among students, staff, administration, and parents.

In accordance with St. Joseph School's belief in each student's right to a safe and orderly educational environment, disciplinary efforts of all teachers and supervisors shall be directed toward helping students develop responsible attitudes and behavior. Disciplinary methods may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Student conferences (discussion and counseling)
2. Writing assignments (e.g., notes of apology signed by students and witnessed by parents)
3. Parent conferences
4. Denial of Privileges
5. Removal from the Classroom
6. Detention
7. Ineligibility from extra-curricular activities
8. Suspension
9. Expulsion

Students shall be given the opportunity to defend or explain their behavior to the teacher or Principal before receiving disciplinary action.

TEMPORARY REMOVAL OF STUDENTS FROM CLASSROOMS

When a student's behavior is unacceptable and disciplinary measures are necessary, the teacher shall discuss the matter with the student and make an effort to ensure that the student understands the nature of the problem. A student whose behavior is so disruptive as to interfere with the order of the classroom, the conduct of lessons, or the rights of other students in the learning process shall be subject to removal from the learning environment. When a student is removed from the classroom, he or she will be sent to the Principal's office to discuss the situation and to consider the corrective steps

that need to be taken, which may include a written apology to the teacher, a phone call home, a loss of privileges, detention, or suspension.

STUDENT SUSPENSION

Gross disobedience or misconduct by students is grounds for suspension for a period of up to ten (10) days. The following procedures will be followed in accordance with the State School Code and the policies established by the Diocese of Joliet and St. Joseph School:

1. The Principal will inform the student of the suspension, giving reasons and letting the student present his or her side of the matter.
2. Parents will be notified and are given the reasons for the suspension. Parents may request a conference with the Principal to review the matter.
3. Upon consideration of the facts at such conference, the Principal shall take whatever action deemed appropriate in the matter.
4. Students who receive Special Education service will not be suspended for behavior related to their disability unless such behavior is dangerous to the student or others, or is destructive to property.

Reasons for suspension may include but are not limited to:

1. Disobedience to the staff or administrators.
2. Possession or use of drugs, look-alike drugs, alcohol or weapons.
3. Injury or threats to a staff member or another student.
4. Destruction or defacement of school or other's property.
5. Use of profanity.
6. Gang activities.
7. Any other behavior that seriously disrupts the educational climate.

EXPULSION

Extreme misconduct and repeated instances of misconduct and disobedience by students may be grounds for expulsion from school. The following procedures will be followed:

1. Parents will be notified in writing of the reasons for the expulsion and the time and place of the expulsion hearing.

2. Information will be shared with the St. Joseph School Board regarding any instances of expulsion.
3. The Superintendent and assistant Superintendent of the Joliet Diocese will be notified regarding any expulsion.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment is not permitted, per Diocesan Policy #5320. The full policy is available for review by making an appointment with the Principal. Corporal punishment includes slapping, paddling, or requiring students to maintain a physically painful position for a prolonged period of time, and the intentional infliction of bodily harm.

A teacher may use reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for the other students or school personnel, for the purpose of self-defense, or defense of school property. A student may be removed from the classroom for disruptive behavior.

ALCOHOL, ILLEGAL DRUGS, OR LOOK-ALIKE DRUGS

The possession, use or distribution of any alcohol, illegal drug or look-alike drug is prohibited on school grounds, in school buildings, at school-sponsored activities or on buses or vans transporting students. Students violating this policy will be subject to suspension or expulsion. Police will be notified when appropriate and the student may be required to obtain help from a medical or drug intervention agency before being readmitted to school after such suspension or expulsion.

BULLYING AND CYBER-BULLYING

St. Joseph School attempts to provide a safe environment for all members of our community. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (whether seriously or in jest, in person or online) face possible detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. Engagement in online “**social networking sites**” such as MySpace, Facebook, Friendster, etc. may result in disciplinary actions if the student’s blog contains defamatory comments regarding the school or parish, the faculty, or other students.

GANGS/GANG ACTIVITIES

Participation in gang-related activities is prohibited. A gang shall be defined as “any group of two or more individuals engaged in anti-social behavior.” Specific gang activities include recruiting and displaying gang insignia. Other gang behavior may include: fights, intimidation, gang identifiers (jewelry, clothing, tattoos, etc.), threats, disrespect, possession of a weapon or potentially dangerous object, vandalism, extortion, etc., or other activities which the administration feels would adversely affect the safety and well-being of students and staff or would otherwise be detrimental to the education process. *Students violating this policy are subject to suspension or expulsion.* Legal authorities will be notified when appropriate.

VANDALISM

Any student guilty of vandalism—whether it be to St. Joseph School property, the property of any student or person attending St. Joseph School, or the property of any location which the student visits while representing St. Joseph School—shall be subject to suspension and required to pay for any damages. The police will be notified when appropriate.

POSSESSION OF WEAPONS

Possession of weapons, a potentially dangerous object, firearms, or explosives is prohibited on school grounds, in school buildings, or on school buses/vans at all times. Students violating this policy shall be subject to suspension or expulsion. Police will be notified.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

When there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student may be violating either the law or a school rule, school personnel, upon notification to the Principal or Principal’s designee, or in the presence of the Principal, may search the student or the student’s personal belongings (purse, wallet, book bag, desk, lunch box, etc.).

If the search produces evidence of a serious nature such as weapons, drugs, stolen property, etc., such evidence may be seized by school authorities and disciplinary action will be taken. Parents will be notified as soon as possible. When appropriate, such evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities for proper action.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES

If law enforcement authorities find it necessary to question students during the school day, the school Principal or Principal's designee will be present. An effort will be made to contact the parents of the student to notify them of the situation.

VI. HEALTH AND SAFETY

ACCIDENTS AND ILLNESS

Parents are required to complete an emergency form as part of their child's registration. The school will make every effort to inform the parents of any accident or illness occurring at school that may need care or observation at home. Every accident in the school building, on school grounds, or at any school sponsored event must be reported immediately to the person in charge of the activity and/or the school office.

Students who become ill at school will be sent home only after a parent/guardian or someone at the number on the emergency form is contacted. In case of a *serious accident or illness*, which requires immediate medical attention, the following steps will be taken:

1. 911 will be called in matters that are deemed life threatening;
2. Parents will be called- parents make decision regarding disposition;
3. An ambulance will be called if a parent or emergency number on registration cannot be contacted.

This action on the part of St. Joseph School personnel does not obligate the person or school to assume any financial obligation for the transportation or treatment of the child.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The laws of the State of Illinois make it clear that all school must report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. The Diocese of Joliet requires all faculty, staff, and volunteers to attend the VIRTUS training program, "Protecting God's Children." Whenever there is a case of suspected child abuse or neglect, it is the responsibility of each teacher and/or other school personnel to report such to the proper authorities. *Failure to do so could result in loss of teaching position.*

CRISIS PLAN

St. Joseph School has implemented a “Crisis Plan” in the event that the school building would need to be evacuated. In case of such an emergency, the students will be moved to one of the following secure locations:

- 1) St. Joseph Church
- 2) City of Joliet’s Motor Maintenance Building
(next to the rectory on Chicago Street)
- 3) The Will County Building (on Chicago Street)

Once it is safe enough to release the students, parents and family members should find their child’s teacher and sign out the student before returning home.

DISASTER DRILLS

During the course of the year, disaster drills are conducted for fire and tornado safety, as well as lockdown procedures. Information is posted in each classroom and students are instructed as to the procedures.

HEALTH EXAMINATIONS AND IMMUNIZATIONS

All Kindergarten and Sixth Graders, as well as all children who are new to St. Joseph School (Pre-K and transfer students), are required to have updated **physical, dental and vision forms** on file with the school two weeks prior to the first day of school. Failure to comply will exclude the student from school. Physical examination forms are distributed to the Fifth Grade students before the end of the school year so physicals can be completed during summer vacation.

The Illinois Department of Public Health requires proof of two measles vaccinations for entrance to all grades. Immunization is necessary if a physician has not documented the measles disease with dates. The vaccination is usually given in combination with vaccines against mumps and rubella as MMR. *A series of three Hepatitis B shots is also mandatory for Pre-K and Sixth Grade students.* These shots should be acquired as soon as possible due to the waiting period between shots.

In addition, all junior high students who plan to participate in athletics must have **an annual sports physical** before they will be allowed to participate in the extracurricular activity.

MEDICATION

A school form must be completed and signed by a parent and a doctor before medication can be taken at school. The form is available in the school office. If you are going to the doctor and there is a possibility that medicine will be prescribed for use at school, please stop at the school first for the form in order to save a return trip to the doctor. Without the form, parents must come to school to administer medication.

All medicines, properly labeled by a pharmacy, must be left in the office. Medicines are defined as over-the-counter and registered prescription drugs; this includes aspirins, decongestants, etc.

Parents should notify the teacher about any medication that could affect the student's academic performance.

SAFETY

TO AND FROM SCHOOL—Parents are encouraged to review common safety rules for their children. Children should use the sidewalk whenever possible, cross at corners only, obey the safety patrol, and go straight to their destination without stopping to play. Parents are responsible for the safety of their children after school as they walk to their vehicles in the gravel parking lot.

PLAYGROUND—Children may not cross the street to chase a ball of other object without permission of the adult supervisor. Playground equipment is there for the enjoyment of all students, but must be properly utilized. Caution should be exercised when using balls, bats, ropes, and other playground equipment. In general, all students must be in a supervised area at all times. Students are not permitted to do anything that might be harmful to themselves, to others, or to school property.

When the weather permits (wind chill of 15 degrees or above), **ALL** children are expected to go outdoors during lunch recess. *If a child is too ill to go outside, a note from a parent is required each day.*

VII. Addenda

ORGANIZATIONS

1) ATHLETICS

In addition to regularly scheduled gym classes, students are offered the opportunity to participate in competitive sports such as flag football, basketball, volleyball, and cheerleading. *Academic eligibility requirements*

must be met in order for students to participate, and parent approval is required. Per diocesan policy, a sports physical must be on file with the office before the student can participate.

2) CHOIR-INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

JCA Grade School Band contracts with St. Joseph School to provide instrumental music instruction. Parents who choose to avail themselves of this opportunity make financial arrangements directly with the instructor.

St. Joseph School has a school choir composed of students in Third through Eighth Grades. The choir performs at selected church activities such as Christmas programs, Grandparent's Day, First Communion, Confirmation, Graduation, and PTO functions.

3) PTO

St. Joseph School is blessed to have an active Parent-Teacher Organization, which functions to provide a source of revenue to our school. It is through PTO fundraising that students enjoy a variety of events during the year, such as educational plays, guest speakers and field trips.

Parent support and participation at the regularly scheduled monthly meeting is highly encouraged. In order to help maintain reasonable tuition rates, the PTO raises over \$30,000 each year, which goes directly toward meeting the school's annual budget.

SCHOOL PLEDGE

*As a student of St. Joseph School,
I pledge to behave in a Christian manner at all times,
to respect myself and others, as well as school property.
I pledge to be honest, loyal, and trustworthy,
to obey and respect all authorities,
and to follow all of the guidelines of the St. Joseph Handbook.*

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL LOYALTY SONG

(To the tune of: “Hey Look Me Over”)

*Hey look us over, we're from SJS
They call us the Nailers, just because we're best
We're rough and we're ready
Our colors blue and gold
And when we meet the enemy
They know we're big and bold*

*So be loyal to St. Joe's, always be true
Win for alma mater that's the thing to do
We're the school with class
You can't surpass
We never lose our cool
We're the Nailers, St. Joe's School*

*2-3-4- N-A-I-L-E-R-S
Nailers, Nailers, Are The Best*

RIGHT TO AMEND

St. Joseph School reserves the right to amend this handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the Friday Folder.

Parent and Student Signature Page

I have read and discussed the handbook with my child(ren). We will follow and abide by the procedures, policies, and guidelines in this book.

Student(s) Name(s)

Parent Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date