

# St. Joseph Catholic School

Parent and Student Handbook

2025-2026



Learn. Grow. Serve in Christ.

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In addition to the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook, St. Joseph School, its staff, administration, and families are also subject to the policies of the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools Office and Diocesan Catholic School Board. Complete Diocesan Catholic School Board Policies can be found at:

<https://www.dmdiocese.org/resources/schools/diocesan-school-policies-regulations>

The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the school. Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the school administration reserves the right to require a student's withdrawal if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

The provisions contained in this handbook may be changed at any time, with or without notice. This handbook is not an all-inclusive summary of all rules governing student conduct and behavior.

*The policies, regulations, and procedures contained in this handbook are subject to review and revision during the school year with approval from the Bishop, Superintendent, and diocesan legal counsel.*

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## **Covenant of Trust between Parents and St. Joseph School**

“Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it.’ Then he embraced them and blessed them, placing his hands on them.” (Mark 10:14-16).

At baptism, parents accept the responsibility of forming their child in the practice of the faith. “Catholic parents also have the duty and right of choosing those means and institutions through which they can provide more suitably for the Catholic education of their children” (*Canon 793.1*).

Catholic school personnel partner with the family in proclaiming and witnessing as disciples to the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. They assist parents in fulfilling their responsibility as the primary religious educators of their children.

Parents at St. Joseph School are aware of this vocational call from God, and in response, commit themselves by word and example to be the first and best teachers of their children in the faith.

Practically, this means parents will:

- Understand that the authentic teachings of Jesus as taught by the Catholic Church, will be part of their child’s education and formation.
- To the best of their ability, respect the teachings of the Church and help their children respect the Church and its teachings.
- Commit to conversing frequently with their children about God and include prayer in their daily home life.
- Participate in and cooperate with the Catholic school in programs that enable them, respectively, to take an active role in the religious education of their children, including sacramental preparation for Catholic children.
- Support the moral and social teaching of the Catholic Church to ensure consistency between home and school.
- Teach their children by word and example to express compassion and concern for the needs of others.
- Practice stewardship of time, talent, and treasure, and meet their financial responsibilities in support of the school and parish.

St. Joseph School enters a relationship of trust with each school family. The Parent/Student Handbook provides the school’s framework for this trusting relationship by setting out policies and regulations for the orderly, safe, and effective spiritual and academic formation of children.

By completing my/our permissions in JMC, I/we hereby acknowledge that I/we have read this handbook and will abide by these regulations, that I/we have had an opportunity to ask questions about its contents, and that I/we will fulfill my responsibilities as the primary educator of my/our child as outlined in this covenant of trust.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **DIOCESE OF DES MOINES SCHOOL'S VISION**

Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Des Moines, based on the teaching of Jesus Christ and the mission of the Church, are collaborative communities of spiritual formation and academic excellence, where students grow in faith and wisdom and emerge as responsible citizens dedicated to the practice of lifelong discipleship.

### **DIOCESE OF DES MOINES SCHOOL'S MISSION AND BELIEF STATEMENTS**

We develop and inspire learning for life by providing a world-class education within a Catholic environment for our students.

- Catholic schools exist to enable students to learn the traditions and doctrines of the Catholic Church and to carry out the Gospel message of Jesus Christ in their daily lives
- Each student in Catholic schools should experience the value of human dignity and the concepts of peace and justice to enable them to be participants in a global society
- Catholic schools are partners with parents in the education of the children
- Catholic school educators need to apply research-based curricular practices that enhance the learning of all students in the classroom

### **DIOCESE OF DES MOINES ESSENTIAL LEARNINGS**

#### **Essential Academic Learning**

Our students will:

- Access and use information effectively
- Apply technology competently
- Think critically and creatively
- Solve problems independently and cooperatively
- Reason scientifically, mathematically, and historically

#### **Essential Spiritual/Social Learning**

Our students will:

- Accept church, civic, and personal responsibility
- Anticipate and constructively react to change
- Communicate ideas and feelings effectively in various ways
- Demonstrate global awareness, cross-cultural understanding, and social justice principles
- Demonstrate personal wellness practices

### **ST. JOSEPH MISSION STATEMENT**

Together we are St. Joseph: A healthy, growing, and welcoming faith community that brings people to Christ, forming intentional disciples, and sending them out to transform the world. Every member is committed to worship, grow, serve, connect, and give.

### **ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL HISTORY**

St. Joseph Catholic School opened its doors in 1949. The Precious Blood Sisters were our first teachers, ministering 23 years. In 1971, the Sisters of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary began their ministry to students, which continued for the next 18 years. Today, we are extremely proud of our highly dedicated, spiritual, and talented teaching staff.

Building on the foundation of Catholic values established in the home, St. Joseph Catholic School

provides the students the opportunity for further spiritual growth and development of moral character. As a result of this philosophy, a child grows strong in the beliefs of the Catholic faith while achieving academic success.

St. Joseph Catholic School continues to educate students in Preschool through 8th Grade. We are a multicultural school community with our students coming from Des Moines, Bondurant, Altoona, Pleasant Hill, Mitchellville and Ankeny.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Student Responsibilities**

- **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**
  - Respect the authority of teachers and other members of the school staff
- Be respectful of friends and companions
- Be respectful of self by accepting responsibility for own actions
- Approach studies with seriousness of purpose and a realization that learning is work
- Develop good study habits and make a sincere effort to do his or her best in all academics
- Be well prepared for classes each day both mentally and physically
- Develop basic attitude of consideration for others
- Regular attendance and punctuality
- Dress according to uniform code and practice good hygiene
- Act in an appropriate manner as a representative of St. Joseph School during all extra curricular activities
- Honesty is expected from all students of St. Joseph School

### **Teacher Responsibilities**

- Respect each student as a distinct individual
- Prepare material and plan lessons in timely fashion
- Develop strategies for motivating students
- Develop and maintain an interesting and inviting classroom space
- Be available for face or telephone contact with parents
- Inform parents promptly if students are not working up to their ability
- Establish and maintain a comfortable atmosphere conducive to learning
- Develop a plan that may include parental conference or administration intervention for individual students that may be causing any intrusion in the classroom
- Keep room clean and orderly

### **Parent Responsibilities**

- Encourage respectful behavior at home for others and students themselves
- Provide opportunity at home for responsible behavior
- Provide a learning atmosphere at home
- Prepare children mentally and physically for school including nutritious meals, electronics guidance and sensible bedtimes
- Teach thoughtfulness and consideration for the rights of others
- Teach compromising and non violent settling of differences
- Teach time management and good attendance
- Guide child's choice of companions
- Take advantage of communication with teachers
- Support teacher when any kind of discipline is needed
- Make effort to attend school meetings or functions to show priority of education

# ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL ADMISSION

## Admission Policies & Procedures

The St. Joseph Leadership Council endeavors to offer the opportunity for a Catholic education to all who desire it. However, due to space and personnel limitations, and in compliance with the guidelines set by the Diocesan Board of Education, it shall be the policy of the St. Joseph Leadership Council that a priority system be used in acceptance for enrollment in St. Joseph Catholic School. The following groups, listed in priority order, shall be considered for admission:

1. Students who have been enrolled at St. Joseph Catholic School during the previous school year and whose families have fulfilled their tuition and tithing obligations.
2. New students from families with other students already enrolled at St. Joseph Catholic School.
3. New students from families registered at St. Joseph Parish, Ss. John & Paul's Parish, Immaculate Heart, or St. Mary's Parish.
4. New students from newly registered families at either St. Joseph, Ss. John & Paul's, Immaculate Heart, or St. Mary's Parishes with an immediate history of Catholic education.
5. New students who were Religious Education students at either St. Joseph, Ss. John & Paul's, Immaculate Heart or St. Mary's.
6. New students from families registered at Catholic parishes without schools.
7. New students from families registered at Catholic parishes with schools.
8. New students from families who are non-Catholic.

Should a non-Catholic request admission to St. Joseph Catholic School, the following requirements need to be met:

- a. Attendance with their class at Mass (participation is not required nor expected), the daily Religion class and all activities including those of a religious nature.
- b. Tuition rate will be comparable to actual per pupil cost. Tuition determined by the Leadership Council.

### POLICY #505

Children wishing to enroll in kindergarten must be at least five (5) years of age on or before September 15 of the year in which they wish to enroll. A family wishing to enroll their child must present evidence of age in the form of a birth certificate or other comparable evidence before that child may enroll. It will be within the discretion of the administrator to determine what is satisfactory evidence for proof of age. Prior to enrollment, the child must provide the administration with a completed health and immunization certificate. These forms are available in the school office.

### REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Our parish has had for many years a commitment to do all it can to make Catholic education available to all its families who wish it for their children. The continuation of a quality school with a quality education depends on maintaining a quality faculty that is fairly compensated and enthusiastically supported by our parents and our parish. It is the sacrifices of many that make the enterprise of St. Joseph Catholic School possible. Parents sacrifice financially to give their children an extra edge on building religious and faith values. Parishioners who have long since had children in school continue to tithe generously, thus making it possible for the parish to subsidize the per pupil cost by more than one half. St. Joseph Catholic Parish is committed to making it possible for any child of a registered and participating family to attend a Catholic school. A small committee has been set up to meet with any family who needs financial aid. The bottom line in these instances is not money but whether the family is regularly attending the parish for

weekend liturgy and worship and whether they are participating in the parish SACRIFICIAL GIVING PROGRAM at a level they can afford on a regular basis.

In order to be given preference as members of St. Joseph Parish the following criteria need to be met:

1. Currently registered at St. Joseph, Our Lady's Immaculate Heart, St. Mary's or Sts. John and Paul Parish and have completed a Sacrificial Commitment Card.
2. Regularly attending week-end Liturgy at home Parish and participating in parish events.
3. Regularly using envelopes to contribute to the parish through the Sacrificial Giving Program as stated on the Sacrificial Commitment Card. (The amount to be given is to be determined by the parishioner's family in relation to their income.)

Families who currently have students in school but are not meeting their financial obligations to the school, and/or have not been faithful to items two and three above, will not be given priority over new students in the registration process.

#### **ADMISSION - FOUR-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM**

Application for enrollment will be considered according to parent/custodian/guardian compliance with the Leadership Council policy on financial obligations and the following priorities:

A maximum of 20 students who are 4 by September 15 will be considered for enrollment in each session of the Four-Year-Old Program in the following order:

1. Catholic students who have siblings enrolled in St. Joseph School
2. Catholic students who were enrolled the previous year in the St. Joseph Preschool 3-year-old class
3. Non-Catholic students who currently have a sibling(s) enrolled in St. Joseph School
4. New students whose parent/custodian/guardian is registered in any Catholic parish, with enrollment preference based on the following order:
  - a. a. Students of parishioners of St. Joseph;
  - b. b. Students of other Catholic parishes without a Catholic school
  - c. c. Any other Catholic student
5. Any other non-Catholic student

Policy Adopted: September 2000 Policy Reviewed: May 2005  
June 2010 January 2011

#### **SCREENING OF NEW STUDENTS**

A screening process will be used with each new student. The screening process shall include, but not be limited to, parent and student interviews, receipt and review of the student's records and forms from his/her previous school, when applicable, such as testing as required by the administrator. Enrollment may occasionally be granted on a conditional basis. The previous school may be contacted for additional information.

#### **NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Applicants for admission and employment with the diocesan schools are hereby notified that these schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability as defined in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as it applies to the diocesan schools and Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act, in admission or access or treatment or employment in,



its program and activities.

School choice programs, including the Students First Act, aim to empower families to access the school that best meets their child's needs to help them achieve social, emotional, and academic success.

Accredited private schools in Iowa comply with the Civil Rights Act to the extent that the law can be applied to private religious schools. However, under the law, private religious schools are also permitted to operate in accordance with their mission and ask that families enrolled at the school do the same.

Sometimes, a school's mission and philosophy may not align with an individual family's values, interests, goals, and beliefs. In these cases, the school will work in consultation with the family to determine if enrollment is in the child's best interest.

Additionally, accredited private schools are committed to working with all learners to the best of their ability, including children who may require additional support. Many schools work with parents and the local public school district of students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to provide the services identified to meet the academic and behavioral needs of the child. While these schools do not discriminate against children with diverse learning needs, a full range of services may not always be available.

Decisions concerning a child's admission and continued enrollment are based on the child's emotional, academic, and physical abilities and the resources available to the school to meet the child's needs. Enrollment decisions always take the best interests of the child into consideration.

### **Fallback Action**

St. Joseph Catholic School is committed to meeting the academic, spiritual, physical, and behavioral/social-emotional needs of every student. However, if a student's needs exceed available resources, full-time placement in another setting (such as a public school) may be considered to ensure appropriate support.

## **TUITION AND FEES**

All tuition and ancillary fees are managed through Blackbaud Tuition Management. All families are required to register on Blackbaud before their registration is considered complete. More information about Blackbaud and how to create your tuition account is found in school registration materials and on the school website.

Lunch payments should be made through your jmc Family Portal or jmc Family app.

### **Fees for St. Joseph families for the 2025 - 2026 school year are:**

Please note that tuition does not cover the full cost for your child. St. Joseph Parish and the other participating parishes cover approximately 26% of the cost per child.

<b>Students</b>	<b>CTE Rate Per Child</b>	<b>Tuition Total</b>	<b>Parish Investment</b>	<b>Actual Per Pupil Cost</b>
Tuition per student	\$5,892.00	\$5,892.00	\$5,308.00	\$11,200.00

### **Additional Fees - \$200 Technology Fee/Per Child (Grades K-8)**

<b>Out of Parish Tuition/Non-Catholic/Non-Actively Tithing</b>
\$7,876/ per child

<b>HOT LUNCH</b>		
\$3.25/Day	\$1.50/Extra Entree (Grades 5-8)	\$1.00/Extra Milk

<b>BUSING</b>
\$60.00/month per child

<b>3-YEAR-OLD PRESCHOOL &amp; 4-YEAR-OLD PRE-KINDERGARTEN</b>		
3 Year Old, Morning Only	\$400.00/month	
3 Year Old, Optional Afternoon Enrichment	\$500.00/month	
4 Year Old, Morning Only	\$433.34/month (approx.) or UPK Funding	To be eligible for UPK Funding, a child must be 4 years old ON OR BEFORE 9/15/25.
4 Year Old, Optional Afternoon Enrichment	\$450.00/month	NOT UPK Funded

- **Registration Fee of \$100.00 for new families where applicable.**

All bills owed to the school must be paid in full by May 15th. Parents are reminded to take advantage of the tax deduction/credit available on the Iowa State Income Tax.

## **TUITION ASSISTANCE**

Families in need of tuition assistance may apply for diocesan help from the Catholic Tuition Organization or parish help from Guardian Angel. Application forms are available in the school office and on the school website.

The State of Iowa is committed to providing a high quality education for all students by providing funding for qualifying private school students. For more information, please see the following link: <https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/students-first-education-savings-accounts>

## **ORGANIZATION**

### **ADMINISTRATION: School Principal**

St. Joseph School employs a full-time principal. The major responsibilities include faith leader of the school, personnel director, educational leader, management/administration, public relations and planning and development. The principal is employed by the region and has direct accountability to the pastor.

### **FACULTY**

The faculty of St. Joseph School is comprised of fully accredited, professional teachers. All the teachers hold current licensure in the State of Iowa and are qualified to teach in the subject areas they are assigned. Faculty members in grades Pre-K-5 are hired as self-contained or semi-contained classroom teachers. Teachers in grades 6-8 work in their areas of expertise and certification. Additional specialists are employed in the areas of Physical Education, Art, Music, STEM, and Interventions. The faculty is regularly observed and evaluated by the school administration.

## SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

St. Joseph School employs a full-time guidance counselor who is available to all students. Any student may request to see the counselor by asking the teacher to set up a time, or they may write a note and ask the school secretary to put it in the counselor's box. A parent or teacher may also request that the counselor visit with a student.

The guidance counselor will be available and should be consulted when dealing with disruptive students. The guidance counselor, as the child's advocate, can help supply creative ways to deal with students experiencing difficulty in and out of the classroom at school. In addition, the principal will also work with these students, their teachers, and their parents.

## SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

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

Substitute teachers are justified in issuing a detention.

## LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Comprised of school and parish volunteers, the Leadership Council works closely with the Principal and Pastor in the areas of faith, academics, community-building, and fundraising to support the mission of St. Joseph Catholic School.

### Structure

- **Membership:** Comprised of the Pastor, Principal, and volunteers invited to serve by the Pastor.
- **Officers:** Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer — named by the Pastor.
- **Meetings:** Held throughout the year and open to the public.
- **Annual Meeting:** Includes the Regional President and Board of Directors.

Begun in 2023–2024, the Leadership Council combines the work of the Board of Education and Parent Teacher Organization at St. Joseph Catholic School.

## SCHOOL VISITORS POLICY

During the course of any day, there are visitors on our school grounds for a variety of purposes. For the purpose of this policy, the term "school" will encompass the school building, the playground, parking lots, and any other structure or land used by the school during the school day. All visitors to the school during secured hours will have to be buzzed in through the main doors and sign in at the school office.

Safety for our students and staff is our top priority. In order to keep the school environment secure, parents/visitors will not be allowed to join their student during the school day; exceptions will be made during school-wide celebrations in which guests are invited.

Forgotten lunches and other items will be left at the office for students and may not be delivered to classrooms to maintain instructional integrity. St. Joseph offers performance/display opportunities for students. Parents and other family members are often invited and welcome to attend these events.

## **VIRTUS TRAINING AND BACKGROUND CHECK**

The Diocese of Des Moines is committed to the protection of young people from sexual abuse in the church. The four dioceses of Iowa have developed safe environment programs for clergy, parish and school staff and volunteers to help keep children safe from sexual abuse. All individuals who are employed by or volunteer at St. Joseph School are required to complete Virtus Training. In addition to Virtus Training, all individuals are required to complete a background check form.

## **SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS**

School volunteers are defined as people who have regular (i.e. 3 or more hours) contact with students. Volunteers must complete the Virtus training one time and have a background check every seven years.

## **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **RELIGIOUS FORMATION**

The religious formation of children IS the primary reason for the existence of Catholic schools. Thus, St. Joseph's religious education program is of special curricular importance. Scripture, doctrine, prayer, and Liturgy are related to children at their developmental levels, beginning with their own experiences. Prayer is interwoven throughout the student's day. Prayer begins and ends each day, experienced daily in religion class, before lunchtime and other parts of the day.

### **LITURGIES**

All children have the opportunity to celebrate liturgy together at least once a week. Parents, grandparents and friends are invited to attend school liturgies. Mass is scheduled on Wednesday at 8:30 AM. Throughout the year students have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the school day. Special service opportunities, renewal days and seasonal activities are shared throughout the year, as well. Parents and children are expected to participate in Masses each weekend and on Holy Days.

### **SACRAMENTS**

The Church recognizes parents as the primary educators of their children, as they are the first teachers in their children's lives. According to the United States bishops, parents have the "right and duty" to be intimately involved in the sacramental preparation of their children. This obligation springs from the commitment made by the parents at the child's baptism to form them in the Catholic faith.

The parish and school work together with the parents to provide a comprehensive approach to formation for the sacraments. The St. Joseph Director of Faith Formation works to provide the parish element of sacramental preparation. The teachers provide the classroom component of this preparation.

All parents of children to receive First Eucharist, the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confirmation are expected to attend meetings in preparation for these sacramental celebrations. Preparation of young people for the sacraments is a responsibility shared by parents, parish, school, and the candidates themselves. An opportunity for preparation for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist is offered in the second grade year.

## **SERVICE PROJECTS**

Special service opportunities, renewal days and seasonal activities are shared throughout the year.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **CONTACTING TEACHERS & OFFICE**

School Office Hours:

- 7:45 AM-3:45 PM Monday-Friday

Teacher Hours:

- 7:45 AM-3:45 PM Monday-Thursday
- 7:45-3:30 Friday

Parents may contact teachers by phone, either before or after school hours, or parents may contact teachers via email. Teachers are generally not able to pick up phone calls or return emails until after dismissal. For immediate concerns, contact the office. Please consult the Personnel Directory or the St. Joseph Web Page for e-mail addresses or extensions.

St. Joseph Catholic School encourages parents to contact a teacher as needs arise. Parents may request a conference at any time they feel a need to do so. Teachers are available to meet with parents before or after school. Please call to schedule a time that is mutually agreed upon by both parties.

## **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences are scheduled in fall and spring. It is expected that all students and parents attend scheduled conferences. Specific conference times are scheduled for all parents and students in Grades Preschool-8. This is a very valuable time of sharing between parents and teachers about academics, growth in maturity, and the faith development of each child.

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that the schools provide the same common information to Custodial Parents and Non-Custodial Parents upon request that is provided to parents of intact families. Common information shall include, but not be limited to, report cards, notices of school functions and activities, appointments for parent-teacher conferences, notes home, etc. Situations may be dealt with on an individual basis in order to best meet the needs of the student.

Families must share appropriate contact information and any court order or other document that would support a deviation from this policy. For the scheduled parent/teacher conferences in the fall

and spring, only one conference will be scheduled for each student. **Both parents are asked to attend the same conference so that similar questions can be addressed.**

## **DUAL PARENT REPORTING**

In the case of divorced parents, the names and addresses of both parents should be sent to the school office. A certified copy of the Order of Dissolution, as well as any subsequent modification of the Order, should be on file. Unless otherwise decreed in the Order, information commonly made available to parents of any students in attendance (i.e.) notices of school functions, progress reports, and appointments for Parent-Teacher Conferences, etc. will be provided to both parents upon request. Both parents are encouraged to attend the parent-teacher conferences. Divorced parents are asked to furnish St. Joseph Catholic School with a copy of the custody section of the divorce decree. This information will also help the school in determining when, if ever, the child can be released to the non-custodial parent.

## **RELEASE OF STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

Student directory information is designed to be used internally within the school parish. Directory information is defined in the annual notice. It may include the student's name, parents/guardians' names, address, telephone number, date of birth, e-mail address, and grade level. Prior to developing a student directory or to giving general information to the public, parents will be given notice annually along with the Parent/Student Handbook of the intent to develop a directory or to give out general information and have the opportunity to deny the inclusion of their child's information in the directory or in the general information about the students. Leadership Council Policy 506.2E allows you the right to refuse the release of this information. Please refer to the policy below for further information.

## **LEADERSHIP COUNCIL RELEASE OF STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

St. Joseph Catholic School has adopted a policy designed to assure parents and students the full implementation, protection, and enjoyment of their rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. This law required the school district to designate as "directory information" any personally identifiable information taken from a student's educational records prior to making such information available to the public. St. Joseph has designated the following information as directory information: student's name, address, and telephone number; e-mail address; and grade level. Parents have the right to refuse the designation of any or all of the categories of personally identifiable information as directory information with respect to your student provided that you notify the school in writing at the time of registration. If you desire to make such a refusal, please complete the disclosure portion on the registration form.

If you have no objection to the use of student information, you do not need to take any action.

## **TELEPHONE AND MESSAGES**

Please make arrangements for after-school activities with your child before s/he comes to school. Students **will not** be permitted to use the phone during school hours except with teacher permission. Please phone in messages for students **before 1:00 p.m.**

## **ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL WEBSITE**

The St. Joseph Catholic School website is <https://stjosephcatholicdsm.org/> It contains a variety of information, including announcements, updates on school activities, menus, school policies, and staff directory.

## EMERGENCY CONTACT

It is mandatory for every family to have current emergency contact information on file at St. Joseph Catholic School. This file includes the names and contact details of individuals to be notified if parents or legal guardians cannot be reached in a crisis.

Please notify the school office immediately if there are any changes to your family's emergency contact numbers or information. Schools are legally required to maintain up-to-date emergency numbers for all students. Families will be asked to review and update their emergency information annually.

## SCHOOL CLOSING (BAD WEATHER)

In the event of a school closing due to hazardous weather conditions, a message will be texted to the phone number of the primary contacts of the student and sent to the email addresses listed on your registration materials. It is also important that you check any messages from the school before calling the school office. Only after parents are notified via text and email system will the announcement be made on local television stations.

The decision to delay the start of school, cancel school, or dismiss early due to inclement weather or other emergencies will be made by the Administration. This decision will be made by **6:30 AM**.

**Late Starts:** If there is a late start, school will begin two hours later than the usual time, with the first bell ringing at **10:10 AM**. Buses will run as scheduled for a late start. Please note, there will be **NO morning Preschool or UPK** if there is a late start.

In the event of school closings or cancellations, all Before and After School Programs will be **CLOSED**, and all school extracurricular activities will be canceled. Families will be notified of school closings or delays via email and text message.

**Emergencies During the School Day:** In the event of a national emergency or severe inclement weather (such as a tornado) that occurs during the school day, students will remain at school in designated safety areas. Students will be permitted to leave with their parents/guardians upon their arrival at the school.

## ACADEMICS

### Curriculum Overview

#### Religion

Our teachers are committed to providing robust instruction in our Catholic faith, supported by ongoing religious education through the Diocese, our local parish, and collaborations with other Catholic schools in our area. Our Director of Religious Education, along with the parish priest and deacon, actively work with our staff to strengthen the religion program. For the 2022–2023 school year, St. Joseph adopted **Spirit of Truth** as its core religion resource.

The importance of prayer is central to our school day, which begins with prayer and continues at various times. Students actively plan and participate in weekly Mass, as well as Holy Day celebrations. As a school family, we also engage in special prayer services planned by specific grades throughout the school year.

The Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist are prepared for in the second grade. Specific dates for these preparations will be established by the Director of Faith Formation.

### **Reading: Structured Literacy Approach**

St. Joseph Catholic School employs a Structured Literacy approach to reading instruction. This approach is characterized by systematic, explicit instruction that integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing, emphasizing the structure of language across:

- The speech sound system (**phonology**)
- The writing system (**orthography**)
- The structure of sentences (**syntax**)
- The meaningful parts of words (**morphology**)
- The relationships among words (**semantics**)
- The organization of spoken and written discourse

### **Three Teaching Principles Guide Structured Literacy Instruction:**

1. **Systematic and Cumulative Instruction:**
  - **Systematic:** Materials are organized to begin with the easiest and most basic concepts, progressing methodically to more difficult concepts through a logical scope and sequence.
  - **Cumulative:** Each new step of instruction is explicitly based on concepts previously learned, reinforcing foundational knowledge.
2. **Explicit Instruction:**
  - All concepts and rules are intentionally covered with continuous student-teacher interaction. It is not assumed that students will naturally deduce these concepts or learn through implicit exposure.
3. **Diagnostic Instruction:**
  - This involves continuously assessing students' learning strengths and gaps to personalize instruction and measuring progress to adjust teaching to meet individual needs.

*(Source: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt: What is Structured Literacy?)*

### **Mathematics**

For the 2025–2026 school year, St. Joseph adopted **enVision Mathematics** as its new schoolwide math resource. This program provides deep conceptual understanding aided by visual models, personalized learning, and 3-act tasks. Its vertical alignment from Kindergarten through Grade 8 helps the school effectively address mathematical standards.

The enVision program is highly strategy-based, offering students diverse tools to meet their individual learning styles.



## **Social Studies**

Our social studies curriculum, provided by **TCI**, takes an interactive approach by immersing students in the world around them. As students progress each year, they climb a “staircase” of content that gradually grows more challenging, strengthening their understanding of topics, including ideas represented in the Social Studies Common Core.

## **Science**

St. Joseph will begin adopting **OpenSciEd** in middle school (Grades 6-8) in the 2025–2026 school year. OpenSciEd focuses on creating high-quality, open-source science materials. It aims to provide freely accessible, adaptable, and research-backed science curriculum aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The vision is to empower educators with innovative, student-centered resources that foster deep and engaging science learning.

The **Full Option Science System™ (FOSS®)**, developed at the Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California at Berkeley, is used in our elementary grades. The Hall supports public access to scientific ideas and interactive science experiences, along with the design and development of new methods and materials for teaching and learning science.

FOSS® emerged from a philosophy of learning introduced by the late Robert Karplus, physicist and science educator. The core principle of that philosophy is that students should learn science by doing science. When presented in a thoughtful and engaging manner, the study of science becomes an exciting and interesting experience.

## **Human Growth and Development**

Human Growth and Development (as mandated by the State of Iowa) is integrated into the guidance and health curriculum at St. Joseph School. It is presented from a Catholic perspective in the context of total growth. Parent support and involvement is an essential component of this program. Parents are welcome to examine the materials and are counted upon to follow up with information at home. Parents who choose not to have their children participate in Human Growth and Development must send written notification to the school.

## **ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS**

### **Band**

St. Joseph offers a well-rounded band program for students in grades 5-8. All students are tested for the most suitable instrument for their physical make-up. Regular individual lessons are given during the school day. In addition, the students rehearse in either the Advanced Band or the Beginning Band. These rehearsals are held both during and before/after school.

## **STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKS/IOWA CORE**

All diocesan schools are bound by the Standards and Benchmarks set by the diocese for each curriculum area. All Standards and Benchmarks meet the criteria determined by the State of Iowa Department of Education. All diocesan schools are State of Iowa accredited. Standards and Benchmarks are posted on the Diocese of Des Moines website. The standards drive our classroom instruction and reporting system.

The Diocese of Des Moines also implements the Iowa Core. This initiative has been mandated by the State of Iowa to ensure all students are receiving a quality and equitable curriculum across the state.

Diocesan standards, benchmarks and GLE's are available on the website:

<https://www.dmdiocese.org/resources/schools/standards-and-reporting/k-8-standards-and-power-gles>

## **REPORTING STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

### **Body of Evidence**

Teachers determine student progress by gathering a body of evidence from student work such as classroom assignments, assessments, and observations. By using these items teachers can give students and parents a more accurate assessment of the level at which the student is performing. The Diocesan report card reflects a standards-driven education in our diocese. This Progress Report format summarizes your child's educational success in the standards and in character development.

### **Progress Reporting to Parents**

The Official Diocesan Progress Report evaluates students purely on the basis of the individual student's ability, rather than in relationship to the academic ability of other students in the same class or grade level. It is important that parents encourage their children to do their best while accepting children as they are.

All K-5 schools use a standards-based reporting system to reflect the standards-driven education in the Diocese of Des Moines. St. Joseph uses this system in the 6-8 classrooms along with a more traditional letter grade system. The reporting system progress reports (report cards) provide parents with a summary of their child's progress in the educational program as well as their character development. Progress reports are available to K-8 parents on a trimester schedule during the school year.

Progress reporting and student assessment is based on the overall philosophy and mission statement of the Catholic Schools of the Des Moines Diocese. Progress reporting is based on the following beliefs:

1. Progress reporting should promote self-esteem and motivate continued growth toward specific goals for each child.
2. Progress reporting should provide parents and students with accurate information and encourage parental involvement.
3. Progress reporting will recognize that each child has unique needs and abilities and the assessment will reflect effort, as well as actual accomplishments based on consistent norms.
4. Progress reporting and conferences will provide an opportunity for interaction with the best interest of the child in mind.

### **K-8 Standards-Based Progress Report**

St. Joseph School uses a Standards-Based Report Card for students in grades K-8. Progress is reported three times per year, at the end of each trimester. Achievement Levels (4, 3, 2, and 1) will be used as the marks to show student progress assessed during each trimester.

The following is the 4,3,2,1 Achievement Scale for Grades K-8:

- 4 = Meets Grade Level Expectation with Excellence
- 3 = Meets Grade Level Expectation
- 2 = Progressing Towards Grade-Level Expectation
- 1 = Attempts; Not Meeting Grade-Level Expectation

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRESS REPORT**

In addition to the 4,3,2,1 achievement scale, middle school teachers are also responsible for implementing the Diocesan Assessment Principles and Guidelines in determining proficiency levels for students in grades 6th-8th.

#### Grade 6-8 Assessment Principles and Guidelines:

1. Differentiation of instruction is necessary in order for students to grow and progress.
2. Behavior is not considered part of academics and is not part of the proficiency level (4,3,2,1) assessment score is reported in a separate Christian Character progress report
3. Extra credit will not be given; quality differentiation is expected to determine whether a student exceeds grade/course level expectations.
4. Zeroes
5. Will not be given for missing or incomplete work
6. Teachers are to use zeroes only when the actual score reflects a zero score
7. Determining proficiency  
Teachers will triangulate data, considering most recent scores to determine proficiency scores (4,3,2,1)

The grading scale used for letter grades will be as follows:

A+ 97-100%	B+ 87-89%	C+ 77-79%	D+ 68-69%	F 59.99% and below
A 94-96%	B 83-86%	C 73-76%	D 64-67%	
A- 90-93%	B- 80-83%	C- 70-72%	D- 60-63%	

#### 6-8 Midterm Reports

If a middle school student is receiving a "D" or "F" at mid-term, the parents will be informed in writing. It is the role of the student, parent, and teacher to devise a plan, which will create the opportunity to improve the grade by the end of the trimester.

#### HOMEWORK

Homework is an extension of the learning process in the classroom. Homework can enhance the study skills of a student and reinforce concepts learned during the school day. Quality work to the best of each student's ability will be insisted upon. As a general rule, homework assignments will be given to students in all grades on Mondays through Thursdays. Weekend assignments may be given at the discretion of the teacher. Tests and long range assignments are given at the discretion of each individual teacher. Obviously, the amount of homework assignments will differ from the primary grades to the middle school grades.

Evening study times for all St. Joseph students are expected and encouraged. It is up to parents to enforce this. Parents are encouraged to examine the homework of their child(ren) and discuss the areas being taught. This will give the child(ren) greater confidence in what is being taught, will provide home reinforcement for the concept learned and will help enforce the idea that school work has a high priority. Parents are encouraged to provide their child(ren) with a suitable atmosphere, specific time and regular location in which to study.

Television, radio and extended telephone calls are highly discouraged during this study time. Evening study times should be expected and encouraged. The following are appropriate guidelines:

- K-2: 10-20 minutes per night
- 3-5: 30-50 minutes per night

- 6-8: 60-80 minutes per night

Study time may include homework, independent reading or reading with a parent or sibling.

Study time may include: completing assigned work, studying math facts or spelling words, independent reading, oral reading or extra credit projects. At all times, assignments are to be done neatly and completely with the appropriate materials. Students in grades 3 through 8 are required to maintain an Assignment Notebook.

Homework must be meaningful, purposeful, of high quality and aligned to specific benchmarks and course-level expectations. Teachers must give students an opportunity to complete the work. Students who don't use their time well during the day may have more homework than usual because of not using their work time productively. Parents are encouraged to communicate with the teachers through a written note, email, or phone call should they have a question concerning homework.

Parents will be informed at the start of school of the homework policy for each department of St. Joseph School. Long range projects, assignments and tests will be given at the discretion of each individual teacher, but will be communicated as well as coordinated within areas where subjects are departmentalized.

#### 6th-8th Homework Guidelines:

- It is expected that students turn in homework the day it is due.
- A letter grade and percentage will be reflected on the JMC Gradebook.
- Some formative work and all summative work will be recorded on the JMC Gradebook.
- JMC Gradebook will be updated by the teacher at minimum every week.

#### 6th-8th Incomplete/Late Work Policy:

- If a student has incomplete/late work, it will be scored on JMC as an "ID" (insufficient data).

#### 6th-8th Retake Policy:

- Teachers will determine if a retake for a formative or summative assessment is necessary.
- Teachers may assign students to retake formative or summative assessments if they are not reaching proficiency.
- Retakes must be completed within one week of the initial assessment.
- Teachers will report on the most recent scores after the retake.

## STANDARDIZED TESTING

FAST assessments are given to K-8 students three times per year and are used as our universal screener. In addition, Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) is given to students in selected grades 3-8 each year. ISASP standardized test results are best used for and designed for overall educational planning and program evaluation.

Standardized test results may also be components of identification for special needs programming.

## STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Our doors are open to children of all abilities. If a student comes to us with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), we will meet with the family to see if we can meet the needs of your student. The IEP is implemented through a collaborative effort between Des Moines Public Schools and the St. Joseph staff.

St. Joseph School will seek to jointly serve students with special education needs who have been diagnosed as qualifying for special education programs if a cooperative effort which adequately meets the needs of the child can be established with the public school. Where a student is served with Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) will be dependent upon Des Moines school staffing.

While St. Joseph Catholic School does not offer a formal special education program, reasonable accommodations will be made for students with special needs based on the following procedures. St. Joseph School will utilize the school Student Assistance Team and services from Des Moines Public Schools for screening of students as well as evaluation of students when requested by parents or recommended by teachers with parental approval. The educational consultant, school psychologist, school social worker, occupational therapist, physical therapist, and speech and language pathologist may provide services. These services are initiated through the teacher, administration, or school staff.

### **Intervention Support**

The Intervention program offers support to students in kindergarten through grade eight who may have extra needs in academic areas. The program works in conjunction with the general education teachers. The purpose is to help students be successful and feel good about themselves in all school environments.

After communication with the parents, the student and their concerns may be recommended to be brought up at a Student Assistance Team meeting. The SAT is made up of teachers from all grade levels, administration, and the school counselor. Based on the student's individual needs, interventions will be recommended. If needed a student assistance plan will be developed.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL**

### **STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

The 6th, 7th, and 8th grades are important transition years in the academic life of a student. It is during this time that he/she must develop the self-discipline, sense of responsibility and independence in study skills needed to achieve success in high school and beyond. It is important for students to learn that certain actions or omissions have consequences. When a student does not get an assignment finished or fails a test, it is the student's responsibility, along with the teacher's encouragement, to seek the help necessary to resolve the situation. Parents are asked to support the efforts of the middle school staff and are also encouraged to contact the staff directly with their questions or concerns. It is important that our students are guided in the human, intellectual, and spiritual formation of their person.

### **RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROPERTY**

Students will be expected to take good care of property: theirs, others and school. The following is required of every middle schooler:

- Each student will be assigned his/her own locker. Lockers must be kept neat and organized. Only school material will be kept in the locker. Lockers, desks and facilities may be periodically inspected for cleanliness, missing school property and evidence of damage.
- Lost, soiled or damaged books will bring about an assessment of fines. When textbooks are issued to students, each teacher will keep a record of the number and condition of each student's textbooks. All books should be covered for protection.

## ASSIGNMENT COMPLETION

Each student is given a school issued assignment notebook. This will help the student to organize his/her time, make sure assignments are completed on time, and help parents who wish to see what has been assigned.

Students are required to come to class prepared. This includes all books and materials necessary for the day's classes. Assignments are expected to be completed, even when late.

All work turned in should be done neatly, fulfill the teacher's requirements, and be the student's best work. Any work that does not meet these expectations will need to be redone.

All assignments are expected to be completed on time. If there is a good reason for not completing an assignment, it is the student's responsibility to see the teacher **before class to explain the circumstances**. This also applies to assignments not completed because the student did not understand something.

When a student misses class for any reason, it is his/her responsibility to see the teacher as soon as possible to find out about assigned work. If a student is absent for a test, but was present when the test was announced, s/he will be expected to make up the test on the day s/he returns to class, or at the teacher's discretion. This also applies to assignments or projects announced when the student was present, but due on a day when he/she was absent. If this presents a problem, it is the student's responsibility to talk to the teacher. If a student is absent, it will be the parents' responsibility to request and pick up homework at school. Upon request, middle school homework will be available in the office at the end of the school day for pick-up.

## HOMEWORK

### 6th - 8th grade Homework Guidelines:

- It is expected that students turn in homework by 8:00 a.m. on the day it is due.
- If there are extenuating circumstances (i.e. family emergency or internet outage) that prevent an assignment from being submitted on time, teachers must be notified by email, Google Classroom, phone call to the school, or written note by parent by 8:00 a.m. on the day it is due.
- A letter grade and percentage will be reflected on the JMC Gradebook for core subjects only (Language Arts, Math, Religion, Science, Social Studies)
- Some formative work and all summative work will be recorded on the JMC Gradebook
- JMC Gradebook will be updated regularly by the teacher

### 6th - 8th grade Incomplete/Late Work Policy:

- If a student has incomplete/late work, it will be scored on JMC as a zero until completed and turned in.
- Students will be required to complete the assignment for 80% of the grade.
- Students with incomplete/late work and/or teacher referral may be required to attend Study Club to complete missing assignment(s)

## Communication

The teacher will notify the parents of a student who is below standards in academics or has shown inappropriate behavior. This communication has been a positive tool in assisting students to take more responsibility for their work and to see the consequences of poor study and work habits. Parents will be called at other times when necessary and parents are encouraged to call the school as well.

### **Failing Grades**

A failing grade is used only for the student who has the ability to do the required work and receive a passing grade, but does not accomplish this. The teacher will inform the parents, administration, and counselor as soon as it is evident that a student is not meeting class requirements and design an action plan.

If the student does not improve after parental notification, a meeting will be held to gain further insight into the student's problems. A plan of action will be developed and the student's progress will be monitored by the counselor or student support teacher who will meet regularly with the student and will consult with the teacher. Such supervision will be documented. The teacher will continue to inform administration about the student's progress. The teacher will continue to inform the principal about the student's progress. If the progress is still unsatisfactory by midterm of the third trimester, the principal will inform the parents in writing of the likelihood of failure for the year and the need for remediation to take place. Before the teacher gives the F or ID as the culminating grade, the principal will review all documentation and give or decline permission for the F or ID to be given.

### **Make Up Work**

It shall be the responsibility of the student on the day of his/her return to arrange with the teachers for make-up work. All schoolwork missed because of an absence due to illness or family emergency will be made up within the number of school days that are double those of the absence, up to a total of six (6) make-up days unless the teacher and student come to an alternate agreement. Extended valid absence or individual needs will be valid consideration for an extension of time.

### **OTHER EXPECTATIONS**

Students are expected to treat others with respect. Abusive language, put-downs, and harassment of other students will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to maintain proper behavior in class. Serious discipline problems may lead to suspension from athletic participation or other consequences deemed appropriate by the school.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

In order to develop habits of self-discipline and responsibility, students are expected to attend class regularly. While it is possible for an absent student to make up most of the school work missed, it is impossible to completely compensate for absences from the classroom. Students who must be absent but fail to make up work may not understand what the teacher is currently presenting, and may also become discouraged with the double burden of keeping current and making up work missed.

Tardy students not only affect their own studies, but also interfere with the progress of others. Tardiness to class creates an obvious interruption and confusion for all class members. It is unfair that an entire class may be interrupted by students who are unprepared because of irregular attendance and/or tardiness.

Success in school and regular attendance has a strong correlation. Regular attendance and punctuality is expected of ALL students. We believe regular attendance is necessary for the student to receive the maximum benefits from the instructional program and to develop firm habits of punctuality, self-discipline,

and responsibility. Students who arrive after 10:00 AM and leave before 2:00 PM are counted as ½ day absent.

Students are not to leave the school building or playground during the school day without written permission from their parents or guardians. If a student must leave during the school day, the school office must be notified in advance and an adult must come to the school office to sign out their student. Students are required to sign out in the office before they leave and sign in when they return.

If it is necessary for a student to remain after school for academic or disciplinary reasons, he/she will call parents or guardians before classes are dismissed.

Valid reasons for a student's absence from school are as follows:

- Personal illness
- Death or serious illness in the immediate family
- Suspension from school
- Other reasons that can be justified from an educational standpoint may be approved in advance by the Principal
- School sponsored activity off site

It shall be the responsibility of the student to arrange with the teacher for make-up work within a reasonable period of time when s/he is absent from school. All schoolwork missed because of absence will be made up within the number of school days which are double those of the absence, up to a total six (6) make-up days. Extended valid absence will be considered for extension of time.

## **NOTIFYING THE SCHOOL**

### **ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL**

Parents are required to notify the school office by 8:10 AM if a child will be absent or tardy that day.

**Attendance Line: 515-266-3433- Attendance Email: [Schooloffice@stjosephcatholicdsm.org](mailto:Schooloffice@stjosephcatholicdsm.org)**

Please state the student's name, grade, home room teacher, reason for absence, and who will pick up homework (homework cubby is located outside of the school office). If your child has been diagnosed with an illness, please provide this information as well. If the school has not been notified of a child's absence, the office will contact the child's parents. The school will make every attempt to contact parent(s) by 9:00 AM if the child is absent and no phone call or email is received from parent(s).

If a student is home ill for more than 4 consecutive days, the school will require a note from a physician regarding the extended absence for illness. A student who is absent because of illness will be expected to make arrangements with the teacher(s) and come to an agreement as to when make-up assignments will be completed.

## **VACATIONS**

As you examine our school calendar in this handbook, you will note our scheduled vacation days, teacher professional development days and days of early dismissal. Please try to arrange your family activities so that the student will not miss school. Vacations that result in absence from school are not encouraged.

Vacation trips are considered unexcused absences. Families are encouraged to schedule vacations during the time school is NOT in session, rather than taking children out of school. If a student is to be



gone from school for a vacation, the teacher must be informed at least a week ahead of time to arrange schoolwork and tests.

## **HIGH SCHOOL VISITS**

The administration at Dowling Catholic High School no longer sanctions 8th grade student visits. Students who feel it is necessary to visit a school in order to reach an enrollment decision should schedule visits on teacher in-service days.

## **HIGH SCHOOL TOURNAMENTS**

In the event that a local high school would be involved in state level tournaments, students may obtain an excused absence providing the following criteria are met:

- Advance notice is given to teachers and the office no later than 9:00 AM the day prior to the event via electronic response (e-mail) or a hand-written signed note from parent/guardian.
- Schoolwork for the day must be completed and turned in to the teacher prior to departure.

## **EXCESSIVE ABSENTEEISM/TARDINESS**

It is the parents' responsibility for the child to attend school as required by the state of Iowa. Parents will be notified whenever a student is found to be truant from school. The truant student will make up the time absent. Truancy will result in disciplinary action. It is a parent's responsibility to see that the child attends school as required by the Iowa Compulsory Attendance Statute.

ANY ABSENCE EXCUSED OR UNEXCUSED WILL BE RECORDED AS TIME ABSENT FROM SCHOOL.

### **Excessive Absenteeism**

Chapter 299 of the Iowa Code requires that every child between the ages of 5 to 16 shall attend school. School policy states that twenty-one (21) days in one school year (defined as 7 days each trimester) will be considered excessive absenteeism.

## **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

- personal illness, not to exceed three consecutive days without a doctor's note
- death or serious illness in the immediate family
- other verified emergencies
- necessary medical or dental emergencies or appointments
- all other absences must be approved by the administrator

All school work missed because of absence needs to be made up within the number of school days which are double those of the absence, up to a total of six (6) make-up days. Extension of time will be considered for extended valid absence.

## **TARDINESS**

Tardiness to class creates an obvious disruption for all class members, teachers and staff. In order to maintain instructional integrity in the classroom as well as develop habits of self discipline and responsibility, students are expected to arrive **before** 8:10 when announcements begin.

Students not in the classroom by the time announcements are over will be marked tardy. Tardiness shall be considered arriving late to school without a valid reason. Students arriving after 8:10 will need to be driven to the front of the building and enter in the Main School Entrance. Tardy students will be sent to the school office to sign in. Excused tardiness will include medical and/or dental appointments. Over-sleeping will not be considered a valid excuse and the student will be counted tardy.

The following action(s) may be taken when dealing with student tardiness without a written excuse or acceptable reason: warning by teacher, parent contact, detention assigned by teacher or administrator; students who are continually tardy to school will be subject to Administrator action. Excessive tardiness shall be defined as five (5) times tardy in a trimester. Students will not be marked as tardy when late due to weather related reasons, or circumstances beyond their control, such as conditions which may cause a bus to be late.

### **PROCEDURES FOR TARDINESS**

- 5th Unexcused Tardy in a Trimester
  - Email Notification or letter may be sent to parent(s) from school office
- 10th Unexcused Tardy in a Trimester
  - May result in a parent meeting with administration

### **TRUANCY**

Any students absent from school without the knowledge and consent of his/her parents or guardians will be considered truant. If a student leaves the school without permission or cuts class the parents will be contacted and appropriate consequences will be given. Parents will be notified whenever a student is found truant and will only be reinstated in his/her class after a conference with the Principal and parents or guardians.

Adherence to these attendance and tardiness procedures protects the instructional time of all students and avoids unnecessary disruptions that have a negative impact on student achievement. **Students who are continually absent or tardy to school will be subject to further Administrator action.**

### **DISCIPLINE**

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that each school adopts student responsibility and discipline policies.

The policies shall relate to the mission and educational purposes of the school. The policies shall include, but not be limited to the following: attendance; use of tobacco, the use or possession of alcoholic beverages or any controlled substance, vaping or the use of e-cigarettes (see policy 570); harassment of or by students and staff (policy 579); violent, destructive, and seriously disruptive behavior (policy 567); suspension, expulsion and emergency removal; weapons and threats; physical restraint and abuse (policy 564); out-of-school behavior (policy 573); participation in extracurricular activities (policy 658); academic progress; and citizenship.

## PHILOSOPHY

Discipline policies and student responsibilities should be communicated in a reasonable manner. Discipline is defined as the training that develops self-control, character, and orderly conduct, as well as acceptance of or submission to authority and control. The home and school must work in such a way that children learn to help each person to live the Gospel values of our faith.

**“Respect for law and order should be instilled in the minds of children and be expected from the behavior of all youth. The ultimate goal is a responsible person capable of self-control and capable of the initiative to creatively attain the goals for Catholic Education.” (Vatican II Document)**

The students at St. Joseph are entitled to learn and develop in a setting which promotes respect for self, others, and property. The school environment should encourage academic and social maturation and should promote the dignity and worth of each student in preparation for the responsibilities of adulthood. The school fosters the total well-being of each person physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. School administration, staff members, parents, and students are charged with cooperating to develop mature, healthy, and responsible individuals capable of self-control.

The discipline policy at St. Joseph Catholic School is centered around Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS). This school-wide initiative aims to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interactions and self-regulation for every student, from grades K-8. St. Joseph Catholic School PBIS Mission Statement: “Together we are St. Joseph: We believe academic and behavioral success comes from supporting each other and caring for our community. We will foster this environment by modeling faithful, respectful, responsible, and safe actions, words, and thoughts.”

### Definition and Purpose

Integral to Catholic education are the skills of taking ownership, building trust, respect, and confidence, showing consideration for others, and learning to share and accepting responsibility for the choices that are made.

1. Discipline is as fundamental in Catholic education as it is in Christian life. Good discipline originates in the home because parents are the first teachers of the child. It is a parent's obligation to teach by example in order to develop good habits of behavior as well as proper attitudes toward school.
2. School discipline is an outgrowth of good home training; therefore, cooperation between home and school is essential. It is the school's obligation to expand, encourage and develop those habits and attitudes.
3. Individual students must contribute to the good of the group, take ownership for their actions and learn to accept consequences.
4. Discipline is based on mutual respect for each person as a human being with needs and feelings, while knowing each individual has the ability to act in a responsible manner.
5. Students have feelings, needs and rights. In addition, students need to know that teachers also have feelings, needs, and rights.
6. There will be an atmosphere within each classroom and throughout the school that is conducive to learning and where healthy self-concepts can develop. A whole class should not be disrupted by the inappropriate behavior of one or several students.
7. Recognizing that there are distinct differences in acceptable conduct in the hallways, restrooms, gym/lunch room, at assemblies, and on the playground, total regimentation or

absolute quiet is not demanded in these areas. However, anytime classes are in session, students are expected to be quiet when moving within the building out of respect to others who are at work.

8. Students are also to be respectful upon entering and exiting the building.

9. The church is always to be entered reverently in silence and respectfully bowing to the altar upon entering a pew.

## **Areas of Discipline**

The Parish/school premises are important areas of discipline:

- While on parish/school premises
- While on school buses or on chartered buses
- While engaged in related school activities and functions, such as approved field trips, tours, and extracurricular activities such as sports, band and choir
- Conduct of students away from the school grounds is subject to school discipline if it directly affects the welfare of the school

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS**

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a school-wide initiative program with a consistent set of expectations, with positive reinforcement and consequences for all students in grades K-8. The objective for implementing PBIS is to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interactions, active engagement, and self-regulation for every student. This will help develop and implement procedures and routines that support high expectations for student learning.

The school-wide PBIS in Iowa is defined as a philosophy and practice of recognizing the importance of positive relationships among all members of a school community for the purpose of enhancing learning. PBIS emphasizes prevention, active instruction, and research-validated practices for:

- Establishing and teaching clear expectations for all students in all settings
- Establishing and teaching clear expectations for all staff
- Modeling and rewarding these expectations
- Helping schools staff, families, and community members understand and support the diversity of students, including those students with the most intense support needs
- Understanding the physical and social contexts of behavior by using data to guide decisions regarding change

St. Joseph has four behavior expectations: Respectful, Responsible, Safe, and Faithful. Students are taught how to show these behavior expectations in different areas of the school during school-wide boosters. There are two boosters during the school year and teachers/staff provide re-teaching throughout the year. The acknowledgment system rewards students for showing positive behavior.

Even with clear expectations and positive reinforcement, sometimes children will misbehave. To address inappropriate behavior, a response to behavior flow chart has been implemented by all staff. When school expectations are not followed, consequences will be specific to the behavior. Problem behaviors are divided into minor and major referrals. A minor/major description chart is used by staff.

St. Joseph's PBIS program provides tier 1 (universal, school-wide) support, tier 2 (targeted group) support, and tier 3 (individual support). St. Joseph's Tier 2 program is called Check-in/Check-out.

## **BEHAVIOR CONSEQUENCES**

### **BREACH OF DISCIPLINE**

Breach of discipline is defined as any conduct by students that interferes with the maintenance of school decorum. Behavior that conflicts with or disrupts the educational program or is antagonistic to the welfare of other students and school personnel will not be tolerated. Insubordination and other forms of misbehavior are incompatible with good citizenship and the educational mission of the school.

**The pastor and administrator hold final decisions in all discipline matters.**

#### **Examples of Breach of Discipline Include, but are not limited too:**

- Verbal or other types of abuse.
- Threats or intimidation of others, including gang affiliation.
- Open defiance and refusal to conform to school rules and policies.
- Use of profane or obscene language, loud and boisterous conduct.
- Tardiness to class or school.
- Possession or use of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco (including e-cigarettes/vapes) on school premises.
- Refusal to comply with directives from school personnel.
- Disobedience or insubordination.
- Violation of the rules of the school or Leadership Council.
- Physical attacks or threats of physical violence.
- Truancy.
- Misbehavior such as extortion, intimidation, or possession of dangerous objects.
- Any behavior that disparages an individual's race, ethnicity, disability, sex, or religion, treated as severe as physical assault.
- Sexual harassment, including unwelcome advances or inappropriate conduct affecting another's education or work environment.
- Violation of state or federal laws.

Appropriate behaviors are taught to students throughout the school day. When a student exhibits an inappropriate behavior, the St. Joseph School staff follow a series of corrective consequences to help the student learn the appropriate behavior.

The following is a list of possible actions that are authorized to be taken in all cases of breach of school discipline:

- Detention during non-academic time (recess, lunch, before or after school).
- Exclusion from class or activities with the approval of the principal for a short period of time. This may include participation in school-sponsored activities, sport, or other events.

### **Community Service**

Community Service consequences may also be utilized. These consequences may be used for any major violations of student conduct such as fighting, overt or covert bullying, vandalism, habitual violations, etc. Community Service would include, but not be limited to, general cleaning around the school (gym/lunchroom, hallways, classrooms, grounds, etc). This, of course, does not preclude utilizing the remaining options of in-school suspension or expulsion should the situation warrant it, as determined by administration.

## **Suspension**

Suspension is a warning that a student's behavior is not in keeping with the St. Joseph philosophy and that such conduct may lead to a recommendation for expulsion. Suspension may be "in-school" or "out-of-school". The student will be provided with educational material to work on throughout the day. The student will be excluded from all regular classes and contact with other students throughout the day, as well as any school-related activities during that time. The student is responsible for getting homework assignments for the next day.

It should also be noted that each trimester of the school year, all students begin with a "clean slate" when accumulating detentions for missed assignments, inappropriate behavior, etc.

## **GRADUATED OFFENSES AND CONSEQUENCES**

### **Level 1: Minor Infractions**

Examples: Tardiness, minor disruptions, dress code violations, disrespectful behavior.

Examples of Possible Consequences:

Verbal warning.

Written reflection on behavior.

Parent/guardian notification.

### **Level 2: Moderate Infractions**

Examples: Repeated minor infractions, cheating, lying, inappropriate language, defiance.

Examples of Possible Consequences:

Detention (1 hour).

Meeting with school counselor.

Parent/guardian meeting.

Academic Consequence

### **Level 3: Serious Infractions**

Examples: Fighting, bullying, vandalism, harassment, possession of prohibited items.

Investigation Phase:

Initial Reporting: Any serious infraction should be reported immediately to school administration.

Gathering Information: School staff will gather relevant information, including witness statements and any physical evidence.

Interviewing Parties: The involved students and any witnesses will be interviewed to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the incident.

Examples of Possible Consequences:

In-school suspension (1-3 days) may be imposed pending investigation results.

Restitution for damages (if applicable).

Parent/guardian notification and meeting.

Expulsion

### **Level 4: Major Infractions**

Examples: Drugs (inhalant, vaping, smoking, gummies) or alcohol use, theft, severe bullying, threats to harm others.

Investigation Phase:

Immediate Reporting: Any major infraction will be reported to the school administration for investigation.

Information Gathering: Like Level 3, information will be collected from witnesses, video surveillance, and other relevant sources. History of behavioral infractions will be reviewed as well.

Decision Making: After reviewing the findings, school administration will determine appropriate consequences.

Examples of Possible Consequences:

Out-of-school suspension (3-10 days).

Referral to behavioral intervention services.

Parent/guardian notification and meeting.

Expulsion

### **Level 5: Severe Infractions**

Examples: Threats called into the school, weapons possession, physical assault, any action that endangers the safety of others.

Investigation Phase:

Immediate Notification: Any severe infraction will be reported to school administration and law enforcement as necessary.

Comprehensive Investigation: A thorough investigation will be conducted, including collecting statements from parties involved, witnesses, and reviewing any evidence (e.g., surveillance footage).

Interim Measures: Depending on the severity, students may be removed from school during the investigation into safety.

Examples of Possible Consequences:

Expulsion.

Immediate removal from school premises.

Notification of law enforcement.

Parent/guardian notification.

### **DETENTION (GRADES 4-8)**

Detention is a consequence assigned to students who choose to behave inappropriately. The morning a student serves detention, he/she will report to the designated teacher at 7:15 a.m. sharp. For middle school, detention is generally scheduled on Thursday mornings from 7:15-8:00. A student who misses detention will report on the next regularly scheduled detention day. Community service may be added to detention time if a student reports late. Students in 4th and 5th grade, teachers will communicate with parents to set up a detention time.

Community service consequences may also be utilized. These consequences may be used for any major violations of student conduct such as fighting, overt or covert bullying, vandalism, habitual violations, etc. Community service would include but not be limited to general cleaning around the school (gym, hallways, classrooms, grounds, etc.) This, of course, does not preclude utilizing the remaining options of in-school suspension, out of school suspension or expulsion should the situation warrant it as determined by administration.

It should be noted that each trimester of the school year all students begin with a "clean slate" when accumulating detentions for inappropriate behavior.

### **SUSPENSION/ EXPULSION**

Suspension is a warning that a student's behavior is not in keeping with the St. Joseph philosophy and that such conduct may lead to recommendation for expulsion. Suspension may be "in-school" or "out-of-school." The student will be provided with educational material to work on throughout the day. The student will be excluded from all regular classes and contact with other students throughout the day. The student is responsible for getting homework assignments for the next day.

### **PARENT PARTNERSHIPS**

The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the school. Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the school leadership reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a family if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

Normally a child is not to be deprived of a Catholic education or otherwise penalized for actions of parents. However, parents may so significantly reduce the school's ability to effectively serve its students that parents may be requested to remove their student from the school for any of the following reasons:

- A. Refusal to cooperate with school personnel
- B. Refusal to adhere to Diocesan or local policies and regulations
- C. Interference in matters of school administration or discipline
- D. Public rejection of the laws, norms, and teachings of the Catholic Church

### **EXTREME BEHAVIORS**

The following behaviors are detrimental to a productive and safe learning environment (this list is not all inclusive):

- Sexual or other forms of harassment
- Smoking
- Drinking alcohol
- Possession of any illegal substance such as cigarettes, alcohol or drugs
- Possession of knife, gun, matches, etc
- Any violent behavior such as physical attack or intimidation to teacher or student

Offenses may result in suspension or expulsion as the situation dictates. With any case of violent behavior, the authorities may be notified and expulsion may result.

### **RESTRAINT AND PHYSICAL FORCE**

The act of deliberately striking a student is specifically prohibited. However, the use of reasonable force in self-defense or defense of another may be warranted for protection.

Restraint is the act of physically controlling or directing the actions of a student. Teachers and administrators are free to use reasonable and appropriate means of restraint as may be necessary to prevent a student from harming himself/herself or another, or to prevent a breach of discipline to compel compliance with the Discipline Policy. Restraint should not cause serious or permanent harm.

State law forbids school employees from using corporal punishment against any student. Certain actions by school employees are not considered corporal punishment. Additionally, school employees may use "reasonable and necessary force, not designed or intended to cause pain" to do certain things, such as prevent harm to persons or property. State law also places limits on school employees' abilities to



restrain or confine and detain any student. The law limits why, how, where and for how long a school employee may restrain or confine and detain a child. If a child is restrained or confined and detained, the school must maintain documentation and must provide certain types of notice to the child's parent. If you have questions about this state law, please contact your school. The complete text of the law and additional information is available on the Iowa Department of Education's website: [www.iowa.gov/educate](http://www.iowa.gov/educate)

## **ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE**

St. Joseph employees are prohibited from using physical abuse (striking a student, sexual abuse) on students. Students who wish to allege abuse from a St. Joseph employee can report the alleged abuse to any one of the following individuals: Principal, Counselor, or the Pastor.

## **SEARCH**

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that, in the enforcement of policies and regulations designed to protect individuals and to preserve the educational environment, searches of lockers, desks, personal property and effects and the students shall be permitted at the direction of the school administrator or the administrator's designee to the broadest extent allowable by law.

1. **NO CONTRABAND ALLOWED.** In the interest of maintaining the health, safety and good order of the school environment, students shall not have items of contraband in their possession or control on school grounds, on school vehicles, or while attending school activities or events. Items of contraband include controlled substances which have not been validly prescribed, apparatus used for the administration of controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, weapons, explosives, poisons, inhalants, stolen property or other devices or material which are intended to interfere with school order. Certified school employees may without or warrant search a student, a student's belongings, students' lockers, desks, work areas or vehicles under the circumstances outlined below in order to maintain the safety, health, discipline and order of the school environment.
2. **REASONABLE SUSPICION.** Searches of students, their clothing, pocketbooks, briefcases, book bags, duffel bags or other personal containers in the immediate proximity of the student, searches of lockers, desks, other workstations which a student may lock (except for periodic inspections) will be conducted if there is a reasonable suspicion that a criminal offense or a school rule (including the rule prohibiting possession of contraband) has been violated by the student(s) being searched and that the search will produce evidence of such violation.
3. **PERSONAL SEARCH.** Authorized personnel with a witness present may ask a student to empty his/her pockets, handbag, briefcase, book bag, duffel bag, or other personal belongings when there is reasonable suspicion that the student has contraband in his/her possession. If the student fails to comply, an administrative staff member or his/her designee with a witness may search the student or his/her belongings. Except in cases of emergency (e.g., it is believed the student may harm himself/herself or others), other staff members shall not conduct a search. If contraband is found in a personal search, appropriate disciplinary action may be taken.
4. **LOCKERS AND OTHER LOCKED FACILITIES.**
  - a) **PERIODIC INSPECTION.** Lockers, desks and other facilities remain at all times property of the parish/school, even though temporarily assigned to students. Lockers, desks and facilities may be periodically inspected for cleanliness, missing school property and evidence of damage. 24-hour advance notice may be given of the date and time of inspection before periodic inspections are made of lockers or

other facilities which students are permitted to lock. Written notice need not be given; oral notice may be given through normal school channels. If contraband is found in a periodic inspection, the student may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, and items, which may be illegal to possess, may be turned over to law enforcement authorities.

b) Authorized personnel with a witness may request a student to open his/her locker or other assigned facility which may be locked by the student and disclose its contents when there is a reasonable suspicion the student has contraband in the facility. Facilities that are not allowed to be locked by students may be inspected or searched at any time. If the student fails to comply with authorized personnel a witness may search the locker or other facility. If contraband is found the student may be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions, and items that may be illegal to possess may be turned over to law enforcement authorities.

5. SEARCHES BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS. Law enforcement officials will not be allowed to search students, their belongings, desks, lockers or vehicles on school premises unless pursuant to an arrest, a valid warrant or other reason allowed by law.

The law as to private schools and search and seizure is clear. A private school, while respecting a student's and employee's property, may, nonetheless, with or without probable cause, search person, lockers, books, bags, and other possessions since the search is not conducted by "public" authorities as opposed to "private" authorities. That is to say that search and seizure may happen at a private institution without constitutional safeguards. It is the policy of St. Joseph Catholic School to respect people; Constitutional rights and to balance those rights against the responsibility of the school to insure a drug/weapons free environment.

With respect to due process, the due process clause of the State and United State Constitutions do not impact on the private school setting. St. Joseph Catholic School may suspend or terminate a student's attendance with or without due process. As used here due process contemplates a hearing and notice prior to a student being deprived of any significant right. It is the policy of St. Joseph that due process does not limit in any way the ability of St. Joseph Catholic School to suspend or expel any student it deems undesirable. Hearing and notice are gratuitous and are not mandatory under St. Joseph policy.

These policies are intended to acknowledge that the school and parish are ultimately responsible for the environment and atmosphere at the school and are not subject to public authorities.

## **THREATS OF VIOLENCE/ DANGEROUS WEAPONS**

St. Joseph Catholic School will respond to all threats of violence as serious in intent. All threats will be investigated by the program administrator, counselor, and/or designee. The threat will be reported and a meeting will be conducted with the student's parents. St. Joseph Catholic School will take disciplinary action, which may include a recommendation for professional counseling. The incident may be reported to law enforcement officials for further action. Administration, Diocesan Superintendent, and Pastors will also be notified and consulted.

### **PROTOCOL**

These steps will be followed in each case:

1. Teacher, parent or student(s) reports threat to the administration.
2. Administrator or designee interviews student(s).
3. Parents of the student(s) who made the threat will be called. No threat will be taken

- lightly.
4. In the event a student is threatened, and, depending upon the nature and seriousness of the threat, the threatened student's parent(s) will be called.
  5. Student(s), lockers and personal items will be searched at any time without notice.
  6. Upon investigation, if the administration determines that there is reason to believe that the threat of violence is supported by the results of the investigation, the provisions in the school disciplinary policy will be followed regarding suspension and/ or expulsion.
  7. Any valid threat may be reported to the police.
  8. Parent(s) of the student who made the threat will be required to come to school as soon as practical and remove the student from the school grounds. St. Joseph Catholic School will require professional counseling through Employee and Family Resources or a counselor of the family's choosing, approved by the school.
  9. The student will not be allowed back into school until a professional counselor has provided in writing a document stating that the student is not a threat to himself/herself or others. The student may be searched daily as a condition for return to St. Joseph Catholic School.
  10. The school counselor or designee will meet regularly with the student making the threat. Teachers are also asked to be cognizant to curtail any teasing that might come out of this disciplinary action.
  11. Documentation by all involved regarding the situation and post disciplinary activities will be kept on file.

Any student who sells a controlled substance on the parish grounds or at school-related functions will be subject to immediate expulsion. Every consideration will be made in order to avoid expulsion of a student from St. Joseph Catholic School. This may include referring the student and his or her family to a local community resource for counseling.

The principal will notify the Pastor if there is a recommendation for expulsion. Parents and students may request a hearing prior to the final decision. Readmission after expulsion may not take place for one semester and only with the explicit permission of the Administration.

### **Right To Waive**

The administrator reserves the right to waive and/or deviate from any and all disciplinary regulations for just cause at his or her discretion.

## **VERBAL AND/OR PHYSICAL HARASSMENT/BULLYING POLICY**

St. Joseph Catholic School maintains an environment free from verbal and/or physical harassment and/ or abuse. Harassment may take the form of, but is not limited to; jokes, stories, pictures, comments or other actions that are annoying, abusive or otherwise demeaning in nature, providing conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive to create a hostile educational environment.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to the following:

### **1. Physical Harassment**

- Touching
- Pinching
- Tripping
- Brushing the body
- Assault
- Other inappropriate and/ or unwanted physical contact

## 2. Verbal Harassment or Abuse

- Insults
- Humor and jokes about sex or gender-specific traits
- Threats
- Suggestive comments

## 3. Non-verbal Harassment

- Suggestive or insulting sounds
- Shunning
- Obscene gestures
- Other inappropriate and/ or unwanted action

# Daily Processes

## DAILY SCHEDULE

### Office Hours -

7:45 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. Monday - Thursday

7:45 a.m. - 3:30 on Friday

**School Hours** - 8:10 a.m. - 3:20 p.m. (Monday - Friday)

**Supervision:** Adult supervision begins at **8:00 AM**. For safety reasons, students should not be on school grounds before 8:00 AM unless they are participating in a supervised morning school activity. Students may enter the building at 8:00 AM.

**After-School Pickup:** All students must be picked up by **3:30 PM**. Students who are not picked up by this time will be charged a fee on their tuition account.

## DISMISSAL

All students will leave the school building in an orderly manner. No running or pushing is permitted. Dismissal will begin at 3:20. All students are to be off the school grounds within fifteen minutes of dismissal time unless participating in a staff-supervised school activity. If students must wait for a ride longer than fifteen minutes, school officials will be notified **which will result in additional fees**.

**For pick up, the parents/guardians will drive in the line corresponding to their youngest child.** For example, if a parent has a 6th grader and a 2nd grader, the parent will pick up both children in the 2nd grade line. Parents/guardians must refrain from parking along the road or in the parking lot. All cars must enter from E. 34th St. and follow the correct path (**left leads to grades PK-3rd, straight leads to grades 4th-8th**).

No parked or unattended cars in pick up line during drop off/pick up times (8:00 to 8:30 am and 2:45 to 3:45 pm).

- Drivers must stay in cars- teachers will assist students in boarding cars. All students will board from the sidewalk after their last name is called.
- Teachers will be assigned stations to assist with loading/unloading of students and dismissing the car line once students have loaded.
- If a student is not available, a car will proceed to the designated area to wait for the student.

**If a student is needing assistance to be buckled, please pull forward and park in front of the playground to avoid disrupting the flow of traffic**

If a student is being transported home in a different manner than usual, a note must be sent to the office at the beginning of the day.

Students are not to leave the school building or playground during the school day without written permission from their parents or guardians. If a student is to be picked up during the school day, he/she is asked to bring a written note from home. Parents are required to sign out in the office before they leave and sign in when they return.

Students who walk to and from school must practice safe crossing procedures. Students are expected to observe and follow traffic lights to safely cross the busy intersections in the area. Parents are asked to review safe crossing procedures with their children periodically throughout the year.

## **RECESS**

Elementary schools will offer recess for students that are preferably outdoors (criteria should be established for when indoor recess occurs). Recess should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity through the provision of space and equipment.

### **Playground Rules For Students**

The following playground rules are set for the safety and well-being of all St. Joseph School students.

- Once outside, students are to remain outside until the bell rings.
- Only students who have written permission from teacher, doctor or parent will remain inside.
- Students are to report all problems to the playground supervisors.
- No one is to stand at the top of or on the slide.
- Students are to dress appropriately during the winter. Even on very cold winter days, students will be outside. Only students who bring boots and snow pants will be allowed to play in the snow.
- Throwing snow is not permitted.
- Students will enter the building quietly, in a single file or double line.
- Students are expected to be respectful of the school by cleaning their shoes or boots before entering.

### **Cold Weather**

Please have your child dress appropriately during colder weather, such as boots, snow pants, hats, and mittens. Generally, we will use 0 F with the wind-chill factored in as a guideline. During severe weather, recess will be held inside. We will attempt to go outside whenever possible.

During colder months, and especially when snow is present, students are required to come to school prepared for outdoor play. This includes wearing a:

- Coat
- Snow pants
- Boots

- Mittens or gloves
- Hat

Parents/guardians are asked to check for these items daily, as clothing can become misplaced or damp from outdoor activities.

### **Indoor Recess Rules**

During inclement weather there will be indoor recess during the noontime. The students may sit and play games on the classroom floor, at their desks or they may choose to do their work. Students are to stay in their own classroom. Each student is to be gainfully occupied with an activity.

## **Excusing Students From Outside Recess**

If your child needs to stay in from recess more than one (1) school day after an illness, a physician's note is required. Student's that are unable to go out for recess will be supervised in the office. Medical research has shown that daily periods of fresh air and exercise contribute to a healthier child, both physically and mentally.

# **BUS INFORMATION - TRANSPORTATION**

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

St. Joseph operates bus routes to transport students to and from school. Bus service may be available to students of St. Joseph Catholic School. The exact bus routes are subject to yearly change based upon the families who request the service. The cost is \$540 a year per student. If you agree to use the bus at the beginning of the year you are obligated to that payment for the rest of the school year unless you move out of our parish school district. The monthly fee will be \$60.00 per student.

## **BUS GUIDELINES**

1. The bus survey forms will be due the same date as school registration forms.
2. Families, who have ridden the bus the previous school year, have top priority. However, their survey form must be turned in to the office by the due date. After this date registration will be open on a first come, first served basis.
3. Fees need to be paid on time.
4. Every effort will be made to pick up or drop off your child/children as close to your home as possible. The actual route will be at the discretion of the administration committee designing the route.
5. The fee for bus service is the same whether you use the bus both morning and afternoons, or just one way.

## **BUS TRANSPORTATION DISCIPLINE POLICY**

If your child rides the bus the following guidelines and regulations need to be followed. Proper conduct on the bus is required at all times; it is a necessity for the safety of the children. The bus driver is considered to be in complete charge of the bus and the riders. His or her judgment in making decisions concerning the actions of the riders will not be questioned. Any actions by riders that distract from the driver's attention shall be considered an offense and treated accordingly. The bus driver may assign seating for any or all passengers.

It should be remembered that it is not the bus driver or the principal who excludes a student from riding a bus. It is the student who excludes himself/herself with unacceptable behavior, which may endanger him/her as well as others. Riding a school bus is a privilege, not a right.

**For safety reasons, the following rules have been developed:**

- Students must obey the bus driver at all times.
- Noise on the bus is to be kept at a reasonable level. No shouting or other loud noises on the bus or out the windows is allowed.
- Students must remain seated at all times. Aisles are to remain clear of feet and other items.
- The bus must be kept clean at all times.
- Eating and drinking are not allowed on the bus.
- Students waiting to board a bus should stand a safe distance from the curb until the bus comes to a complete stop and the doors are opened. Pushing and shoving while waiting to board the bus is not permitted.
- In case of an emergency, all riders are to remain seated in the bus unless otherwise instructed by the individual in authority.
- If a student disobeys the rules, parents will be contacted.

## **CORRECTIVE DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

**Infractions of the rules will result in one of the following actions:**

1. Phone call to or meeting with the student's parents/guardians.
2. Suspension of transportation privileges for 1 - 30 days.
3. Suspension of transportation privileges for the remainder of the school year.
4. Discipline may carry over to the next school year.

### **More Serious Infractions**

Transportation services may be immediately suspended for the following severe bus conduct infractions for a minimum of five days. Transportation privileges could be suspended for the entire semester or school year, depending on the severity of the incident and the number of previous discipline infractions the student has had. The principal will determine the extent of the corrective action. **These incidents include:**

- Fighting or threatening others on the bus.
- Using profanity or obscene gestures toward the bus driver or others on the bus.
- Throwing or shooting items in the bus or out the windows.
- Igniting fires, smoking, or the use of a controlled substance on the bus.
- Severe safety distractions such as pointing laser lights at the bus driver or others on the bus.
- Putting hands, arms, and other parts of the body outside the windows.
- Any activity on the bus that could severely jeopardize the safety of the students on the bus.
- Vandalism.
- Harassing behavior.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITY AT BUS STOPS

St. Joseph Catholic School offers bussing services for eligible students. Families choosing to utilize this service are expected to follow all bus safety guidelines and responsibilities outlined below:

- **Parent/Guardian Responsibility at Bus Stops:**

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child arrives safely at the designated bus stop on time for morning pick-up. Likewise, parents/guardians must be present at the bus stop in the afternoon to meet their child unless prior arrangements have been made for the student to walk home.

- **Community Pick-Up and Drop-Off Locations:**

Some bus routes use designated community locations (such as parking lots or public spaces) for pick-up and/or drop-off. Families using these locations are responsible for their child from the moment the student steps off the bus in the afternoon. St. Joseph Catholic School and the transportation provider are not responsible for student supervision once the student has exited the bus at these locations.

By using the school bus service, families agree to follow these guidelines to ensure student safety.

## FOOD SERVICE

St. Joseph Catholic School is a Team Nutrition School. We work closely with USDA to continuously improve and promote the health of our school children. As a Team Nutrition School, we serve lunches that are lower in fat and sodium, and include more grains, vegetables and fruits. St. Joseph, in compliance with the Meal Requirements for the National School Lunch Program under Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. A large emphasis will be placed on the inclusion of even more fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as many new recipes including leafy green, and red/orange vegetables and beans, legumes, staples needed for a well balanced diet. **No outside food will be allowed in the lunchroom (McDonalds, Subway, Panera, etc.) for students and/or adults. Candy, gum and cans or bottles of pop are not allowed.** Lunches from home are welcome. Carbonated and caffeinated beverages are not allowed. Please limit non-nutritious items to follow the Wellness Lunch Guidelines.

### PAYMENT FOR LUNCH

Payments for lunch will be paid through the JMC Family Portal or JMC Family App. St. Joseph provides a hot lunch or option of a salad. Lunch is \$3.00/day or \$60/month. Milk is \$1.00 and \$1.50 for Ala Carte. Students are also allowed to bring a cold lunch.

### LUNCH PROGRAM

The St. Joseph lunch program must be in compliance with the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. Five food components must be offered for lunch (protein, vegetable, fruit, bread, and milk). Your child is not required to take all five items offered but a minimum of three different components must be taken. One of the three must be a fruit or vegetable.

Ala Carte is offered to students in grades 4-8. Students are expected to eat most of their lunch before purchasing ala carte items. Some items included are fruit juice, baked chips, granola bars, fresh fruit, yogurt and string cheese. New items are introduced as they become available and will be in compliance with the Healthy Kids Act.



## **VISITORS**

In order to maintain a safe and secure environment for all students and staff, we do not allow visitors during the school day, which includes lunch periods. We appreciate your understanding and support in helping us prioritize student safety.

## **ALLERGIES**

Food Allergies are a big concern. If your child has food allergies that will affect what they can eat or drink for lunch, the State of Iowa requires a form to be filled out by your child's physician stating what your child is allergic to and if this is a Disability or Medical condition (504 form). Please contact the St. Joseph School Kitchen to update files.

The St. Joseph School Cafeteria is "Peanut Conscious," meaning we do not have open peanut butter containers, nor do we use peanut butter in any of our meal components. Students are allowed to bring peanut butter items in their cold lunches. All treats/food for class parties must follow the school's Wellness Policy and Food Allergy Policy of no peanuts or peanut products.

## **LUNCHROOM PROCEDURES**

- Lunch time should be an enjoyable and relaxing time for eating and quiet visiting with classmates.
- Good manners and courtesy will be practiced by all students.
- Students are to use the restroom and wash their hands before entering the lunchroom.
- Each classroom will come to the lunchroom with their teacher and will wait quietly while they are checked in and receive their lunch tray. Please and thank you are expected. Teachers on duty will monitor all students in the lunchroom.
- After receiving their lunch tray and milk, students are to sit at their assigned seat and not be running around.
- Students will not be dismissed until the floor and table they are sitting at is cleaned up.
- If students need help, would like seconds, or if there's a problem at their table, they should raise their hands and a supervising teacher will help them.
- At the designated time, students will be dismissed. All food must be consumed in the lunchroom.
- Students need to be in a single file line to dump their trays and place their tray in the dish window.
- Throwing trays is not allowed and is dangerous to the staff.
- Students who misuse food, silverware (throwing, bending & etc.) or who are disrespectful of the lunchroom and staff will be referred to the principal and/or assistant principal.

## **FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH**

The free & reduced lunch program is a Federal and State funded program. All information on the application is kept confidential. Please consider applying. Every family has difficulty paying for lunches at some point or another. The money is available, so it is worth the time to apply. Please read the instructions and the application carefully. If you do not qualify at this time and your financial status changes any time during the school year, you can reapply. Instructions and applications are also available in other languages if needed. Please contact the food director or the school office for

these items.

St. Joseph Catholic School will continue to make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and in preventing the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

Toward this end, St. Joseph Catholic School will:

- Provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals
- Provide staff development programs that include appropriate certification and/or training programs
- Utilize electronic identification and payment systems;
- Promote the availability of meals to all students.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

Our school is served by a part-time school nurse (RN) who monitors illness, student health records and maintains a health file on each student to meet health records for the State of Iowa. Vision screening is conducted on students in Grades 1, 4 and 7 each year and on students where a concern is identified. Heartland AEA conducts hearing screening on students in grades 1-5 annually. Health Care Plans are required by the State of Iowa for students who have health issues that do or may affect their educational process. The school nurse develops that care plan in coordination with the parents (usually through written interview), the educational staff and physician as necessary. Up-to-date immunization records are required by the State of Iowa. Physical examinations are recommended for students entering or in grades K, 4 and 7. A copy of the examination will be requested for the student's school health file. Athletic physical examinations are required annually for all students participating in school athletics. Parents are asked to complete a health update form on their student annually.

## **ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS**

In case your child is ill or has an accident at school, the parent or guardian will be notified at once. Please have an alternative place for your child to go if you are unable to pick up and take care of your ill child. No child is ever sent home until prior arrangements have been made. If a child becomes ill or is hurt, s/he should report to her/his teacher or some faculty member. Any child with a rash is excluded from school until the rash is diagnosed.

## **HEALTH CARE PLANS**

The Iowa Administrative Code 281--41.23 (281) states the definition of "individual health plan is the confidential, written, preplanned and ongoing special health service in the education program. It includes assessment, planning, implementation, documentation, evaluation and an emergency plan. The plan is updated as needed at least annually.

Licensed health personnel develop this written plan with the education team." The Administrative Code further states prior to the provision of special health services a written individual health plan is on file [IAC 281--41.23 (1)(b)(4)].

## HEARING SCREENING

Heartland AEA 11 will conduct its annual Hearing Conservation Program during this school year. Students in kindergarten, first, second, and fifth grades will receive a hearing screening. In addition, students in grades 6-8 with a history of known hearing problems will be screened.

Students who do not pass this screening may receive an individual hearing test by the audiologist. Parents will be notified about the results of the hearing tests only if their child does not pass the test. This is a screening process only, and does not identify all hearing or ear problems. If your child has had hearing or ear problems recently, feel free to send this information to the school nurse for the audiologist.

If you do not want your child to participate in the screening program and follow-up assessments by the school audiologist, please notify the school. If there are any questions about the hearing testing program, please contact the school nurse.

## DISPENSING OF MEDICATION

It shall be the policy of the St. Joseph that **medication of any kind** shall not be administered to students by school personnel nor shall medications of any kind be brought upon the premises of St. Joseph School, except within the guidelines of the Iowa Department of Education, and with the approval of the Principal. **All prescription medication that must be taken during the school day must be turned in to the office.** The following procedures are enforced to help ensure protection for the student and St. Joseph School:

1. Medications may be administered by the school nurse or other medication administration trained personnel. Record of course completion and updates to be kept in the nurse's office. (Iowa code 281-14.1(3 & 4))
2. No school personnel shall administer to any student nor shall any student possess or consume any prescription or non-prescription medication until a signed School Medication Authorization form is filed with the school office. (Iowa code 281-14.1(5))
3. All prescriptions and over-the-counter medications must be turned in to the office; exception for emergency medications (inhaler, epi pen, glucagon) approved for self administration. (Iowa code 281-14.1(8))
  - a. Prescription medications must be in the original container with date, student's name, name of licensed medical professional, medication, purpose, dosage, and time. (Iowa code 281-14.1(6 & 7))
  - b. Over-the-counter medications must be in the original container and must be labeled with the student's name and have signed parent permission for specific reason, duration of medication or amount of doses. (Iowa code 281-14.1(6 & 7)) The school nurse has the authority to review and question the dosage of over-the-counter medications given to minors to ensure their safety and proper administration. An additional parent request form must be signed for new medication or dosage changes.
  - c. Over-the-counter medications will not be given prior to 11:00 AM without parent notification due to the risk of medication overdose if it was taken at home prior to school.
  - d. Vitamins, supplements and other non-FDA approved over-the-counter medications will not be administered by school personnel. (Iowa Board of Education Medication Administration Manual page 9-10)

4. A student may be considered for co-administration or self-administration of emergency medication with demonstrated competency, written licensed medical professional instructions and written parental consent. (Iowa code 281-14.1(3 & 9) It is recommended, but not required to keep a backup inhaler or Epi pen in the office.
5. Medications for students on field trips during scheduled medication times will be sent in labeled containers(to be packaged by school nurse) along with medication instructions and field trip medication form with a medication administration trained personnel. For all day or overnight field trips, parents/guardians will make arrangements with the school.
6. Parents/guardians may administer medication and/or over-the-counter medication at school to their own child without any authorization form. Nothing in this policy shall prohibit any school employee from providing emergency assistance to students, including administering medication.

At vacation time, end of the year, or end of the dispensing time, any remaining medication will be returned to the parents or destroyed.

ALL MEDICATIONS MUST BE KEPT IN THE NURSE'S OFFICE. NO MEDICATIONS ARE ALLOWED IN BACKPACKS OR SCHOOL LOCKERS.

## **STOCK EPINEPHRINE AUTO INJECTOR AND NARCAN POLICY**

St. Joseph seeks to provide a safe environment for students, staff, and visitors who are at risk of potentially life-threatening incidents including severe allergic reactions, respiratory distress and opioid overdose. Therefore, it is the policy of St. Joseph to annually obtain a prescription for epinephrine auto-injectors, bronchodilator canisters and spacers and opioid antagonist from a licensed healthcare professional, in the name of St. Joseph, for administration by a school nurse or personnel trained and authorized to administer to a student or individual who may be experiencing an anaphylactic reaction, respiratory distress or acute opioid overdose.

Under Iowa law, St. Joseph, its Leadership Council, authorized personnel or school nurse, and the prescriber are not be liable for any injury arising from the provision, administration, failure to administer, or assistance in the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector, bronchodilator canister or spacer, or opioid antagonist provided they acted reasonably and in good faith.

### **1. Procurement And Maintenance Of Supply**

The supply of this medication will be maintained in a secure, dark, temperature-controlled location. St. Joseph will try to maintain a designated person to routinely check stock of medicine and will try to keep the stock current.

St. Joseph will strive to stock the following:

- One adult dose epinephrine auto-injector;
- One adult dose bronchodilator canister or spacer;
- One dose of opioid antagonist.

### **2. Training**

An appropriate person will be trained and may provide or administer any of the medication listed in this policy from a school supply to a student or individual if the authorized personnel or school nurse reasonably and in good faith believes the student or individual is having an anaphylactic reaction, respiratory distress and opioid overdose. Training to obtain a signed certificate to become personnel authorized to administer an epinephrine auto-injector, bronchodilator canisters and spacers and opioid antagonist shall consist of the requirements established by law.

An appropriate authorized person will be required to provide a procedural skills demonstration to the school nurse demonstrating competency in the administration of stock epinephrine auto-injectors, bronchodilator canisters or spacers and opioid antagonists to retain authorization to administer these medications if the following occur:

- Failure to administer an epinephrine auto-injector bronchodilator canister or spacer or opioid antagonist to a student or individual by proper route, failure to administer the correct dosage, or failure to administer an epinephrine auto-injector, bronchodilator canister or spacer and opioid antagonist according to generally accepted standards of practice (“medication error”); or
- Accidental injection of an epinephrine auto-injector into a digit of the authorized personnel administering the medication (“medication incident”).

### **3. Reporting**

St. Joseph will normally contact emergency medical services (911) after a stock epinephrine auto-injector, bronchodilator canister or spacer or opioid antagonist is administered to a student or individual. The appropriate person will remain with the student or individual until emergency medical services arrive. Within 48 hours, St. Joseph will report to the Iowa Department of Education:

- Each medication incident with the administration of stock epinephrine, bronchodilator canister or spacer, or opioid antagonist;
- Each medication error with the administration of stock epinephrine, bronchodilator canister or spacer, or opioid antagonist; or
- The administration of a stock epinephrine auto-injector, bronchodilator canister or spacer, or opioid antagonist.

## **SEVERE FOOD ALLERGIES**

St. Joseph School does have students with severe, life-threatening food allergies. Due to the risk of individual food allergies, the Polk County Health Department has strongly suggested strict guidelines in the way treats, snacks, and holiday parties are handled at school.

## **WHEN SHOULD YOUR CHILD STAY HOME?**

The following are public health recommendations when deciding whether or not to send a child to school that wakes up not feeling well. This is a general guideline for common mild illness.

- **Diarrhea/Vomiting** within the last 24 hours: keep student home.

- **Fever 100 degrees or greater:** keep students home until fever free at least 24 hours.
- **Runny Nose** due to allergies or mild irritation: students may attend school. If due to cold virus with other symptoms such as cough, sore throat, headache, yellow/green drainage from nose; keep student home.
- **Strep Throat** symptoms are sore throat, fever, and aches, sometimes associated with stomach or vomiting. A student must be excluded from school until 24 hours after antibiotic therapy has started.
- **Pinkeye** symptoms are usually red, itchy eyes with yellow drainage. The student must be excluded from school during the acute stage and/or started on an antibiotic by a physician and released to return to school with a physician note.
- **Lice/Scabies** symptoms are usually lice/nits in the scalp hair for lice and microscopic mites under the skin causing an area of irritation and itching for scabies. The student needs to be excluded until after the first treatment with a lice shampoo and treatment prescribed by a physician for scabies.
- **Chicken Pox** symptoms usually are low-grade fever, distinctive red vesicles rash. Students must be excluded from school for a minimum of 5 days after the eruption first appears and/or vesicles are dry or crusted over.
- **Impetigo** symptoms are usually red spots that fill with fluid usually on hands and face especially around the nose and mouth. The student must be excluded from school until they have been started on an antibiotic by physician. Any draining lesions need to be covered when in school.
- **Rash** some rashes are contagious, frequently this is hard to identify. You may be asked to have your student seen by a physician and a release signed to return to school stating the rash is not communicable.

A more detailed and much larger list of communicable diseases, their symptoms, treatments and exclusions from school is published by the Iowa State Department of Public Health and is kept at the school.

Exclusion criteria based on the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services guidelines.

<https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/2819/download?inline=>

## WELLNESS

St. Joseph Catholic School strives to educate the whole person in mind, body and soul. In educating students about the body, they strive to develop a profound reverence for the great gift of life, their own lives and the lives of others, along with readiness to spend themselves in serving all that preserves and enhances life.

St. Joseph Catholic School supports and promotes proper dietary habits contributing to students' health status and academic performance. Foods available on school grounds and at school sponsored activities during the instructional day should meet or exceed St. Joseph Catholic Schools nutrition standards. Foods should be served with consideration toward nutritional integrity, variety, appeal, taste, safety and packaging to ensure high-quality meals.

St. Joseph Catholic School has developed a local wellness committee comprised of representatives of administration, parents, and leaders in food/exercise authority and employees. The local wellness committee has developed a plan to implement and measure the wellness policy and monitor the effectiveness of the policy. The committee will report annually to the St. Joseph Catholic School Leadership Council regarding the effectiveness of this policy.

#### Specific Wellness Goals:

- Nutrition Education and Promotion
- Nutrition Guidelines for all Foods Available on Campus
- Physical Activity
- Implementation and Evaluation
- Mental and Spiritual Wellness

#### NUTRITION EDUCATION AND PROMOTION

St. Joseph Catholic School will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is offered as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program, which is part not only of physical education classes, but also part of classroom instruction in other subject areas
- Includes promotion of enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste-testing, and virtual farm visits
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods and health-enhancing nutrition practices
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and physical activity
- Links with meal programs, other foods and nutrition-related community services

#### NUTRITION GUIDELINES FOR ALL FOODS AVAILABLE ON CAMPUS

##### General Directives

##### Food Safety

All foods made available on campus will follow food safety and security guidelines and comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and guidelines will continue to be implemented to prevent food illness in school. For the safety and security of the food and facility, access to the food service operations should be limited to food service staff and authorized personnel.

##### Sharing of Foods

St. Joseph Catholic School discourages students from sharing their food or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

##### Food Service Department

The St. Joseph Catholic School Food Service Department will

- Engage students in selecting food offered through the meal program in order to identify new, healthful and appealing food choices. Parent feedback is welcome.
- Share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students.

##### Qualification of Food Service Staff

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the meal programs. St Joseph Catholic School will:

- Assignments for managers and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.
- Provide the USDA established-continuing education hours and training for all food service employees.

## School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- Be appealing and attractive to students.
- Be served in clean and pleasant settings.
- Meet nutrition requirements established by local, state and federal law.
- Include a variety of fruits and vegetables and menu choices.

## Meal Times and Scheduling

- Allow adequate time for students to receive and consume meals and provide a pleasant dining environment
- Schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch periods scheduled between 11AM and 1PM
- Not schedule tutoring, club or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities
- Provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans (calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber). Foods must also meet several nutrient requirements:

## Calorie limits:

- ❖ Snack items:  $\leq 200$  calories
- ❖ Entrée items:  $\leq 350$  calories

## Sodium limits:

- ❖ Snack items:  $\leq 200$  mg
- ❖ Entrée items:  $\leq 480$  mg

## Fat limits:

- ❖ Total fat:  $\leq 35\%$  of calories
- ❖ Saturated fat:  $< 10\%$  of calories

Trans fat: zero grams Sugar limit:

- ❖  $\leq 35\%$  of weight from total sugars in foods Beverage and Food

St. Joseph Catholic School will follow The Smart Snacks in School standards published by the USDA, building on the healthy advancements by ensuring that snack foods and beverages sold to the students in addition to those foods provided through the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program are also tasty and nutritious. Any food and beverage sold during the school day must meet the nutrition standards. As defined by the USDA, the school day is anytime before the first bell until 30 minutes after the last bell.

## Beverage Nutrition Standards

All schools may sell:

- ❖ Plain water (with or without carbonation)
- ❖ Low fat milk
- ❖ Unflavored or flavored fat free milk and milk alternatives permitted by NSLP/SBP
- ❖ 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- ❖ 100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation), and no



- added sweeteners.
- Elementary schools may sell up to 8-ounce portions. There is no portion size limit for plain water. Calories per 8 fluid ounces or  $\leq 10$  calories per 20 fluid ounces.

#### Other Requirements

- Fundraisers
  - ❖ The sale of food items that meet nutrition requirements at fundraisers is not limited in any way under the standards by the USDA.
  - ❖ The USDA standards do not apply during non-school hours, on weekends and at off-campus fundraising events. The school day as defined by the USDA is after midnight the day before the first bell until 30 minutes after the last bell.
- Accompaniments
 

Accompaniments such as cream cheese, salad dressing and butter must be included in the nutrient profile as part of the food item sold.

This helps control the amount of calories, fat, sugar and sodium added to foods by accompaniments, which can be significant.

#### Food Nutrition Standards

General Standard for Competitive Food must meet all of the proposed competitive food nutrient standards and

1. Be a grain product that contains 50% or more whole grains by weight or have whole grains as the first ingredient\* or
2. Have as the first ingredient\* one of the non-grain main food groups: fruits, vegetables, dairy, or protein foods (meat, beans, poultry, seafood, eggs, nuts, seeds, etc.) or
3. Be a combination food that contains at least 1/4 cup fruit and/or vegetable or
4. Contain 10% of the Daily Value (DV) of a nutrient of public health concern (i.e., calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber). Effective July 1, 2016, this criterion is obsolete and may not be used to qualify as a competitive food.
5. \*If water is the first ingredient, the second ingredient must be one of items 2, 3 or 4 above

#### Exemptions to the Standard

- Fresh fruits and vegetables with no added ingredients except water are exempt from all nutrient standards.
- Canned and frozen fruits with no added ingredients except water or are packed in 100% juice, extra light syrup, or light syrup are exempt from all nutrient standards.
- Canned vegetables with no added ingredients except water or that contain a small amount of sugar for processing purposes to maintain the quality and structure of the vegetable are exempt from all nutrient standards.

#### NSLP/SBP Entrée Items Sold A la Carte.

Any entrée item offered as part of the lunch program or the breakfast program is exempt from all competitive food standards if it is sold as a competitive food on the day of service or the day after service in the lunch or breakfast program.

- Sugar-free chewing gum is exempt from all competitive food standards
- Grain Items - Acceptable grain items must include 50% or more whole grains by weight, or have whole grains as the first ingredient.
- Total Fats
- Acceptable food items must have  $\leq 35\%$  calories from total fat as served.
- Exemptions to the Standard
- Reduced fat cheese (including part-skim mozzarella) is exempt from the total fat standard.
- Nuts and seeds and nut/seed butters are exempt from the total fat standard.
- Products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats are exempt from the total fat standard.
- Seafood with no added fat is exempt from the total fat standard.
- Combination products are not exempt and must meet all the nutrient standards.
- Saturated Fats - Acceptable food items must have  $< 10\%$  calories from saturated fat as served.
- Reduced fat cheese (including part-skim mozzarella) is exempt from the saturated fat standard.
- Nuts and seeds and nut/seed butters are exempt from the saturated fat standard.
- Products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats are exempt from the saturated fat standard.
- Combination products are not exempt and must meet all the nutrient standards.
- Trans Fats - Zero grams of trans fat as served ( $\leq 0.5$  g per portion).
- Sugar - Acceptable food items must have  $\leq 35\%$  of weight from total sugar as served.
- Dried whole fruits or vegetables, dried whole fruit or vegetable pieces and dehydrated fruits or vegetables with no added nutritive sweeteners are exempt from the sugar standard.
- Dried whole fruits or pieces with nutritive sweeteners that are required for processing and/or palatability purposes (i.e., cranberries, tart cherries or blueberries) are exempt from the sugar standard.
- Products consisting of only exempt dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats are exempt from the sugar standard.
- Sodium
- Snack items and side dishes sold a la carte:  $\leq 230$  mg sodium per item as served.
- Entrée items sold a la carte:  $\leq 480$  mg sodium per item as served, including any added accompaniments.
- Calories
- Snack items and side dishes sold a la carte:  $\leq 200$  calories per item as served, including any added accompaniments.
- Entrée items sold a la carte:  $\leq 350$  calories per item as served including any added accompaniments
- Entrée items served as an NSLP or SBP entrée are exempt on the day of or day after service in the program meal.

#### Accompaniments

Use of accompaniments is limited when competitive food is sold to students in school. The accompaniment must be included in the nutrient profile as part of the food item served and meet all proposed standards.

- Caffeine

- Elementary: Foods and beverages must be caffeine-free with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances.

#### Special Events Snacks

Snacks served during the school day should make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and healthy beverages conforming to this policy. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages and other considerations.

#### Rewards

Schools are encouraged to offer nonfood forms of rewards. If food or beverage rewards are used for academic performance or good behavior, they should conform to this policy. Schools will not withhold beverages or food (including food served through meals) as a punishment.

#### Celebrations

Schools will evaluate their celebration practices that involve beverage and food during the school day.

#### Fundraising

To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, in-school fundraising activities should use foods that meet the above nutrition and portion-size standards for beverages and foods. St. Joseph Catholic School encourages fundraising activities that promote physical activity.

### PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Wellness education is an important and integral part of the education of students at St. Joseph Catholic School.

#### Physical Education

St. Joseph Catholic School will provide wellness education that:

- Includes students with disabilities;
- Engages students in moderate to vigorous activity during a portion of physical education class time;
- Meets regularly for the scheduled period of time it will allow at the elementary school level.

#### Physical Activity Opportunities after School

To provide opportunities for physical activity outside the regular physical education classes, all St. Joseph classes:

- Offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs.
- Offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including students with disabilities and students with special health-care needs.
- Offer information about community agencies such as the Des Moines Parks and Recreation.
- Publicize and promote participation in community events and programs that involve physical activity.

#### Physical Activity and Punishment

Employees will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or routinely withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g. recess, physical education) as punishment. Physical activity may be used as an accommodation for students demonstrating a specific need for activity.

#### Communication with Parents

St. Joseph Catholic School will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. St. Joseph Catholic School will:

- Provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during and after the school day.
- Support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school.
- Distribute information about physical education and activity via a website, newsletter, other take home materials and special events or physical education homework.

#### Staff Wellness

St. Joseph Catholic School values the health and wellbeing of every staff member and encourages activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

#### Monitoring

The Chief Administrator will ensure compliance with established school wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

#### St. Joseph Catholic School:

The principal will ensure compliance with those policies in the school.

Food service staff, at the school level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within food service areas and will report on matters to the Food Service Director, or Principal.

#### St. Joseph Catholic School:

- St. Joseph Catholic School will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes. If St. Joseph Catholic School has not received a SMI review from the state agency within the past five years, St. Joseph Catholic School will request from the state agency that a SMI review be scheduled as soon as possible.

#### Policy Review

The Principal will review the nutrition and physical activity policies and practices and the provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity at the end of the school year. St. Joseph Catholic School will revise the wellness policies as needed and at a minimum of every 5 years, review the school policies.

## DRESS CODE

### Kindergarten – 8th Grade Dress Code

Students are expected to come to school **neatly dressed, clean, and well-groomed**. Students must wear their uniforms each day unless otherwise stated. Parents are responsible for ensuring their children are dressed appropriately each day. The Principal is the final judge on the acceptability of students' appearance.

## Regulation Uniforms

### Girls Only

- Skirts, skorts, pants, or jumpers of solid color **navy blue or khaki tan** (no polo dresses).
- Skirts and jumpers may be no more than **three inches above the knee**; solid shorts must be worn underneath.
- During winter, solid navy leggings or navy/white tights **must be worn** under all skirts and jumpers.
- **Not permitted:** leggings, yoga pants, lycra, tight knit pants, or colored denim.

### Boys Only

- Solid color **navy blue or khaki tan pants**.
- **Not permitted:** colored denim.

### All K–8 Students

- Shirts do **not** need to be tucked in but should be an appropriate length below the belt line.
- Belts are not required, but all pants must be worn **above the hips**.
- **Not permitted:** sashes or scarves as belts.

### Shirts:

- Solid **white, gold, or royal blue polo-type shirts** with a fold-over collar (no chambray, navy, sky blue, or denim).
- Long-sleeved or short-sleeved polos permitted.
- Solid white T-shirts may be worn under polo shirts.

Color reference examples:

Color	Walmart	Target	Lands' End
Gold	French Toast	Gold	Maize
Royal Blue	Royal Blue	True Royal Blue	Cobalt

### Socks:

- Must be worn at all times and **not distracting**.

### Sweaters & Fleeces:

- May be worn year-round.
- Must be solid **white, royal, or navy blue**, with or without the school logo.
- **A uniform polo shirt must be worn underneath**, with the collar visible.
- **Not permitted during class:** coats, jackets, hoodies, or crewneck sweatshirts.
- Spirit wear may be worn **only on Spirit Days**.

### **Shoes:**

- Solid **back, sturdy shoes** or tennis shoes.
- Tennis/gym shoes must be worn on PE days.
- **Not permitted:** Crocs or lookalike Crocs, slides, slippers, or sandals.

### **Shorts:**

- During **August, September, October, April, and May:** “walking” shorts in navy blue or khaki tan may be worn.
- Shorts must be no more than **three inches above the knee**.

### **Hair:**

- Hair must be **well-groomed** at all times.
- Hair must be **above the collar** for boys and clear of the eyes during the school day.
- Girls with long hair must have it styled to avoid distraction.
- When applicable, students must be **clean-shaven**.
- **Not permitted:** extreme hairstyles or unnatural dyed hair colors.
  - Students with inappropriate hair colors will be removed from class, and a plan will be developed before returning.

### **Jewelry, Tattoos, and Makeup:**

- Earrings must be **small and non-distracting**.
- All other jewelry must be **inconspicuous and appropriate** (no nose piercings).
- **Boys may not wear earrings or items in their hair.**
- No visible tattoos or ink, including temporary tattoos.
- Makeup must be **natural in style**.

### **Dress Down Days:**

Mission and Spirit Days are scheduled throughout the year. Please check the **school calendar** for specific dates.

#### **Permitted on Dress Down Days:**

- Solid colored denim jeans or skirts without holes or tears
- Solid colored denim shorts during shorts season or athletic shorts (no shorter than 3 inches above the knee)
- Sweatpants or athletic pants
- T-shirts, turtlenecks, button-down shirts, sweatshirts, or fleece tops (no inappropriate writing or images)

#### **Not permitted:**

- Leggings, yoga pants, ripped pants
- Shorts shorter than 3 inches above the knee
- Miniskirts or cutoffs
- Sleeveless shirts, camisoles, tank tops, Crop tops
- Shirts exposing the midriff
- Shirts advertising alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, rock groups, or containing offensive language or symbols

### **Picture Day:**

- Pictures are scheduled each fall.
- No family is required to purchase photos.
- Students may wear either dress code or “**dress up**” clothing for picture day.

### **Uniform Exceptions & Out-of-Uniform Days:**

- **Eighth Grade:** May wear their class t-shirt on Mondays.
- **Mission Days:** Monthly; students may dress out of uniform with a monetary donation to support mission projects.
- **Spirit Days:** Monthly; for \$1, students may wear St. Joseph or Dowling t-shirts/polos with jeans or sweatpants (no yoga pants).
- Other **special dress days** will be announced by the Principal.

### **Dress Code Modifications:**

The administration reserves the right to modify the dress code with communication to families at any time during the school year.

### **Dress Code Violations:**

- **First Violation:** Student reminder and a note sent home.
- **Second Violation:** Student calls parent and a note is sent home.
- **Third Violation:** Parent called by the Principal; the student is removed from class until corrected.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

### **ACTIVITIES PHILOSOPHY**

The mission of St. Joseph School extra curricular programs is to provide all students an equal opportunity to learn and achieve the fundamental skills and develop the basics of an activity within the context of a quality program. Providing a foundation for future life skills, participants will also learn teamwork and good sportsmanship. Extra curricular activities will strive to give all participants an opportunity to represent their school and community well and extend the mission of the Diocese of Des Moines and St. Joseph School.

Various extracurricular activities are available at St. Joseph Catholic School and Parish. These activities include scouting, sports and music. Many of these activities are possible because of volunteers. The school is always looking for assistance from interested adults. Parents will be provided an Athletic Handbook that outlines in detail the aspects of our athletic programs.

Students are attending school primarily for an education. Extracurricular activities are a privilege. If a student is not working to his/her ability, the parent and activity leader will be notified. Final decisions concerning participation in these activities are up to the Administrator and Pastor.

## BICYCLES/SKATEBOARDS/ROLLERBLADES/MOPEDS/SCOOTERS

Bicycles are brought to school at your own risk. Students are responsible for providing their own locks and locking their bikes. We encourage the use of bicycle helmets. Bicycles must be parked in the designated areas. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen bicycles. Bikes are not to be ridden on the playground, sidewalk surrounding the school, or any time during the school day. They must be walked to and from the area when on parish property. Skateboards, rollerblades, scooters, or mopeds are not allowed on the parish premises at any time.

## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS/INVITATIONS

While birthday balloon bouquets have become very popular, the delivery of such items has proved to be disruptive to the school routine. Therefore, balloon bouquets and other such items are not to be sent. They will not be delivered to your child during the school day. **Birthday treats/items will be limited to no food items only.** If a student brings an unapproved treat to school, the teacher will not serve the treat and will offer another opportunity for the student to bring an approved treat. Students who serve unapproved treats on school grounds will be subject to disciplinary infractions.

**Private party invitations are never to be passed out at school unless all classmates are invited or all of one sex in the class are invited.**

Arrangements for any type of classroom party or other school celebration must be approved by both the Principal and the classroom teacher. Please refer to the school calendar for approved dates and times for parties. Homeroom parents will be responsible for organizing parties and will communicate directly with classroom teachers regarding plans.

### TREAT POLICY EXCEPTIONS

1. Holiday Parties
  - a. Holiday Parties (Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day): Treats from the **acceptable treat lists may be served**. Students may bring Valentine cards with a piece of candy for the Valentine's Day class party only. All classmates must be included when distributing Valentines.
2. Whole Class Reward Pizza Parties
  - a. Pizza, ice cream or popcorn parties will be allowed for whole-class reward parties and must be approved in advance by the Principal. Examples of whole class reward parties include Leadership Council fundraiser reward parties, auction reward parties, any other reward party approved in advance by administration. Pizzas may be ordered from the cafeteria or from pizza franchises (Dominos, Pizza Hut, Papa John's, etc.)
3. End of Year Class Picnics/Parties
  - a. Treats from the acceptable treat lists may be served. Any food not on the acceptable treat list for end of the year class picnics/parties must be approved in advance by the Principal. Acceptable food items for these parties may include: sack lunches (provided by each individual student), pizza, or Subway.

### ACCEPTABLE STORE PURCHASED TREATS

Please purchase the specific brand when applicable, i.e. Kellogg's, Nabisco, Keebler, etc.

- |                                                  |                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| • 100% Fruit Juice (must be in individual boxes) | • Cheezits                             |
| • Animal Crackers                                | • Cheezit Mixture--All Varieties       |
| • Baked Chips, Any Variety                       | • Chex Mix-Chocolate, Caramel          |
| • Bottled Water                                  | • Chex Mix--Traditional (140 Calories) |
| • Crackers, Reduced Fat                          | • Chex Mix--Simply Chex                |



- Dried or canned fruit
- Eddy's Fruit Bar
- Fiber 1 Bars 90 calories—all varieties
- Fiber 1 Bar—Oats & Chocolate only
- Fruit by the Foot
- Gogurt
- Frozen Gogurt
- Kellogg's Single Serving Whole Grain Pop tarts
- Hunts snack pack pudding
- Keebler Elf Grahams
- Mott's 100 % Juice (100 calorie size)
- Nabisco Honey Maid Delight—Chocolate
- Nabisco Honey Maid Delight—Cheesecake
- Pop Chips
- Popcorn—Vic's Half Salt only
- Pretzels
- Pringles Lite—small container
- Quaker 90 calorie granola bar—Honey Nut, Dark Chocolate, Cherry, Chocolate Chunk,
- Cookies & Cream, Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip
- Quaker Chewy Chocolate Granola Bar
- Quaker Rice Snack Chocolate
- Quaker Rice Snack Caramel
- Rice Krispie treats—individually wrapped
- Riptide water
- Smuckers Uncrustable 2.8 ounce size—whole wheat
- String Cheese
- Sweet Freedom Fudge Lite Bars
- Sweet Freedom Round Sandwich \*\*Contains Splenda
- Switch Juice
- Teddy Grahams
- Yogurt

## CELL PHONES/ELECTRONICS

### Personal Communication Devices Policy 584

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that, all Catholic schools will adhere to the policy regarding personal communication devices.

Cell phones, smart watches, and other communication devices may not be used between the start of the school day and the end of the school day. Hours of school day operation are listed in each school's parent/student handbook.

At Dowling Catholic High School, administrators retain the discretion to allow phones at specific times of the day. These times will be listed in the parent/student handbook.

For all diocesan schools, the use of cell phones or any device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in locker rooms or restroom areas. Families and students may use the main office when communicating messages from home or school.

Should a student not comply with the policy and the conditions listed in the parent/student handbook, consequences will be enforced. These consequences shall be listed in the parent/student handbook.

Policy Adopted: July 16, 2025

Cell-phones, smart watches, laser pointers, iPods, (or any mp3 device), electronic games/toys, and other electronic devices are **not to be possessed by students during school hours**.

Cell phones and smart watches will be shut off and **checked in with the main office** at the start of each day, and returned at dismissal. If a student is found in possession of any of these items during school hours, the item will be confiscated and returned directly to the parent/guardian. Multiple infractions are subject to additional disciplinary action.

St. Joseph Catholic School does not recommend bringing these items to school and is not responsible for the safety or upkeep of such items.

If extenuating circumstances exist for a family, a prior exception may be made with the approval of the school principal. The child will be required to leave the device in the school office or middle school classroom during the school day.

## **CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBERS**

Please notify the school office promptly concerning any change of address, phone number, or emergency information. This courtesy will help us to keep our records in order.

## **CHEATING/PLAGIARISM**

St. Joseph expects that students' personal integrity and self-respect will be reflected not only in honest, responsible behavior but also in a willingness to extend support and direction to others whose behavior appears harmful to herself/himself or the community. St. Joseph students are expected to tell the truth. Misrepresentations of facts, significant omissions or falsifications are violations of the Honor Code. A student's name on any work is regarded as assurance that the exercise is the result of the student's own thoughts and study, as stated in his or her own words, and produced without assistance, except as quotation marks, references, and footnotes acknowledge the use of printed sources for help. Students are expected to behave honestly in their learning. Students found to be in violation of cheating or plagiarism will be subject to consequences deemed appropriate by teachers and administration. This may include, but is not limited to the following actions:

- Students will complete the assignment or test again in detention.
- The student will write a letter to parents/guardians.
- The teacher will notify the parents/guardians concerning the offense.

## **CHILD ABUSE**

It is the policy of the Des Moines Diocesan Board of Education, in keeping with the Iowa Code, that all certified employees of schools of the Diocese of Des Moines are mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse and must report suspected abuse to the Department of Human Services. Mandatory reporters are required to file a report when the person "reasonably believes a child has suffered abuse." Within 48 hours of the oral report, a written report must be forwarded to the Department. Each report should contain as much of the following information as can be obtained within the time limit:

1. Name, age, address of the suspected abused child.
2. Name, address of parents, guardian or persons legally responsible for the child's care.
3. Description of injury/ies, including evidence of previous injuries.
4. Name, age, and condition of other children in the home.
5. The child's whereabouts are different from parents, guardians, or persons legally responsible for the child.
6. Any other information considered helpful.
7. Name, address of person(s) making report. The law specifies that a report will be considered valid even if it does not contain all of the above information.

It is not the responsibility of the Diocesan school employee to prove that a child has been abused or neglected, and Diocesan school employees shall not take it upon themselves to investigate the case or contact the family of the child to ask questions or make any kind of judgment. School administrators are to be notified about all reports submitted to the Department of Human Services.

## CHILD ABUSE-ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE BY SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

St. Joseph employees are prohibited from being physically abusive to students (striking a student, sexual abuse). Students, or their parents, who allege abuse from a St. Joseph employee should report the alleged abuse to any of the following individuals: Lynn Ernst, Principal at 266-3433.

## COMMUNICATIONS

- a. The school office is open from 7:45 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. each school day.
- b. Requests for conferences may be made by a parent or guardian through the office or by the office to discuss any concerns about a student's progress or problems. Parents may request a conference at any time.
- c. Teachers and/or administrator are available to meet with parents by appointment. Any parent or guardian may visit the classrooms by making an appointment through the office.
- d. The law holds that parents do not cease to be parents when they no longer have custody of their children. St. Joseph Catholic School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. 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 that court order. If the child is not to be released to the non-custodial parent a copy of the custodial section of the divorce decree must be provided to our school.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

### Crisis Plan

In the event of a crisis at St. Joseph, emergency response procedures which are part of the Crisis Plan are activated. Our school maintains and frequently reviews the Crisis Plan manual. The safety of our students is the most important priority throughout any crisis situation.

### Fire/Tornado/Intruder Drills

Regular fire, tornado, and intruder drills are practiced throughout the school year. Students are expected to follow all directions promptly and in an orderly manner during these drills. Safety is our first priority in any crisis situation.

## FIELD TRIPS

Classroom teachers will notify parents at least one week in advance of any field trips they may be planning with their students. Teachers may schedule field trips provided the following conditions are met:

- Field trips will be of an educational nature and requests for trips must be accompanied by a rationale of the experience the students will gain by such field trips.
- **Signed parental permission slips must be received for all students prior to the trip.**
- Adequate teacher and adult supervision must be provided for all trips.
- Transportation will be by school bus if possible.
- A fee will be requested as compensation for travel and admission costs.

Parents may be asked to help chaperone a field trip. The teacher organizing the event will contact parents if there is a need. Because of the nature of some field trips, additional chaperones cannot be added on the day of the event. Parents are asked to contact the organizing teacher if they would like to chaperone at least one week in advance of the trip.

Due to liability and responsibility, students may not leave from field trips with parents or other non-school personnel unless the parent makes the request by the morning of the field trip.

## **GRIEVANCES**

Responsibilities are stated in the job descriptions of teachers and the School Principal. Should there be a grievance beyond the realm of responsibilities of each party, grievances and requests for any meetings should be placed in written form stating the policy or procedure at issue.

The person/persons who wish to file a grievance should:

1. Request a conference with the teacher (if the issue is with a teacher) or with the staff member involved. The teacher may request to have administration present for the conference. The Principal will generally refer parents to the teacher if this step is not completed.
2. Failing resolution, a meeting with the administrator should be requested.
3. Failing resolution through the administrator, a meeting with the priest/canonical administrator should be requested.
4. Failing resolution through the pastor/canonical administrator, a meeting may be requested with the Superintendent to seek a resolution to the issue.

If the above procedures have not been followed, the school has no responsibility to discuss or meet with the party requesting a hearing.

## **GUM AND CANDY**

Students may not chew gum and/or eat candy on school premises (including the playground, gymnasium, all areas of the church) or on field trips. The exception to this is an approved classroom party. Violations of this policy may result in consequences, including fines and/or behavior infractions.

## **LOST ITEMS**

Lost and found items are located inside the west doors of the school building. Parents/guardians are encouraged to check this location periodically for any missing items. All unclaimed items will be laundered and donated to charity at regular intervals.

## **NICOTINE/TOBACCO FREE CAMPUS**

It shall be the policy of the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that diocesan schools adhere to the state of Iowa Smoke Free Air Act. (ICC 142D)

Smoking or use of smokeless tobacco or non-FDA approved nicotine products, for purposes of this policy, "smoking" includes, but is not limited to, burning or vaporizing tobacco or other products in a cigarette, cigar, pipe, electronic cigarette, or any noncombustible product, which may or may not contain nicotine, that employs a heating element, power source, electronic circuit, chemical, or

mechanical means, regardless of shape or size, that can be used to produce vapor from a solution of substance, is not permitted in or on school buildings, school grounds, school property, school vehicles, or non-school owned property used for extracurricular activities. This includes enclosed places of work and study, all outdoor areas such as parking lots and sports areas/stadiums, and private vehicles on school parking lots.

This policy applies to employees, students & visitors at all times, including school-sponsored and non-school sponsored events.

## **PETS ON CAMPUS**

For the safety and well-being of all students and staff, and to address potential liability concerns (including those with severe allergies), pets are strictly prohibited on school campus during school hours, drop-off, and pick-up times.

Any exceptions for field trips or special events involving animals must receive prior approval from the Principal. This allows necessary arrangements to be made, particularly for students with allergies.

## **SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Each student is responsible for the preservation and cleanliness of the school building and its contents. If through carelessness, a student damages or destroys school property or texts, the student will be expected to pay the expense involved with repair or replacement. This includes but is not limited to, text and library books.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

A permanent record for each student is securely maintained in the school office. In accordance with the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**, parents/guardians have the right to review their child's permanent record upon request. Students who are 18 years of age or older also have the right to access their own records.

To request a review of student records, please contact the Principal. Student records are considered private property and will only be released when lawfully requested.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

Technology is a vital part of the approved curriculum at St. Joseph Catholic School. The use of school owned and maintained computers are a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. Technology use must be consistent with the educational and spiritual objectives of the school system. Appropriate and equitable use of the Internet will allow students and staff access to resources unavailable through traditional means. Students' use must be in support of education, including research and administrative support consistent with school policy.

The use of technology is central to the teaching and learning process. Electronic/digital information research skills are fundamental to the preparation of educated citizens and future employees. Students will use technology to conduct research and obtain information that will assist them as they strive to achieve the standards, benchmarks, and grade level/course level expectations of the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic schools.

The purpose of St. Joseph Catholic School's Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that the Internet usage at school is for constructive educational goals and is consistent with the philosophy of the school. Because the Internet provides access to computer systems located all over the world, families should be aware that some material accessible via the Internet may contain material that is illegal, controversial, inaccurate, or potentially offensive. The St. Joseph Catholic School system cannot control all the content of the information available. However, the school system believes that the benefits to students from access to the Internet in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration exceed the disadvantages. The school system does not condone the use of inappropriate materials and will make precautions to limit access to these materials.

Student Technology Acceptable Use: The following are terms and conditions for using the school system technology:

Access to the Internet is available to teachers and students as a source of information and a vehicle of communication.

- Students will be able to access the Internet through their teachers.
- Making Internet access available to students carries with it the potential that some students might encounter information that may not be appropriate for students. However, on a global network, it is impossible to control all materials. Because information on the internet appears, disappears, and changes, it is not possible to predict or control what students may locate.
- It is a goal to allow teachers and students access to the rich opportunities on the Internet, while we protect the rights of students and parents who choose not to risk exposure to questionable material.
- The smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users who must adhere to strict guidelines which require efficient, ethical and legal utilization of network resources. To reduce unnecessary system traffic, users may use real-time conference features such as talk/chat/ Internet relay chat only as approved by the supervising teacher. Transmission of material, information or software in violation of any board policy or regulation is prohibited.
- System users will perform a virus check on downloaded files to avoid spreading computer viruses. The school makes no guarantees as to the accuracy of information received on the Internet. Permission to use Internet - Annually, parents will grant permission for their student to use the Internet using the prescribed form.

#### **Student Use of Internet**

- Equal Opportunity – The Internet is available to all students within the school through teacher access. The amount of time available for each student may be limited by the number of available terminals and the demands for each terminal.
- On-line Etiquette:  
The use of the network is a privilege and may be taken away for violation of policy or regulations. As a user of the Internet, students may be allowed access to other networks. Each network may have its own set of policies and procedures. It is the user's responsibility to abide by the policies and procedures of these other networks.
- Students should adhere to on-line protocol:
  - Respect all copyright and license agreements
  - Cite all quotes, references and sources.
  - Remain on the system long enough to get needed information, then exit the system.
  - Apply the same privacy, ethical and educational considerations utilized in other forms of communication.
- Student access for electronic mail will be through the supervising teacher. Students should adhere to the following guidelines:
  - Others may be able to read or access the mail so private messages should not be sent.

- Delete unwanted messages immediately.
- Use of objectionable language is prohibited.
- Always sign messages.
- Always acknowledge receipt of a document or file.
- Students will not access their own personal e-mail or other accounts, including social networking sites, without the teacher's permission.
- **Restricted Material –**
  - Students will not intentionally access or download any text file or picture or engage in any conference that includes material which is obscene, libelous, indecent, vulgar, profane or lewd; advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law; constitutes insulting or fighting words, the very expression of which injures or harasses others; or presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or the manner of distribution, it will cause a material and substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities, will cause the commission of unlawful acts or the violation of lawful school regulations.

### **Student Violations – Consequences**

Students who misuse technology or access restricted items on the Internet are subject to disciplinary action according to the school's Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports disciplinary program.

### **Examples of Unacceptable Practices include, but are not limited to:**

- Giving out our passwords, or other individuals' passwords.
- Using someone else's account or user name.
- Harassing someone.
- Any use of sites that specifically involve unacceptable topics.
- Seeking unauthorized access to any resource, including but not limited to social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, etc.
- Trespassing in another's folders, work or files.
- Reproduction or transmission of copyrighted material without explicit permission;
- Downloading, copying, installing, or transmitting commercial software, shareware or freeware without permission from the school's Technology Coordinator.
- Playing games online or downloading games that are not for educational purposes.
- Use a diskette, flash drive or CD from any source other than the school without permission of the teacher.
- Vandalism – Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy equipment and/or data of anyone connected to the Internet or to any computer on the school property. This includes, but is not limited to, uploading, creating, or transmitting computer viruses.
- Cyber bullying

### **Other**

- Notify an adult immediately if, by accident, you encounter materials that violate the rules of acceptable use.
- Do not print anything without permission from a teacher.
- Unauthorized Costs – If a student gains access to any service via the Internet which has a cost involved or if a student incurs other types of costs, the student accessing such a service will be responsible for the cost.

Headphones are to be used for academic purposes only; students may not use headphones to listen to music during class or worktime.

Independent student use of electronic/digital information resources will be permitted unless a written request by parents/guardians of minor students (under age 18) is made denying access. Parents should be encouraged to be aware of the uses of the electronic/digital resources their children are making.

Students will sign an Acceptable Use Guidelines for their technology devices stating they are aware of the rights and responsibilities that come with using the school technology.

## **TRANSFERS**

Parents are asked to inform the school office as soon as possible when transferring a child to another school. All records will be sent directly to the new school on request of that school, but only after the parents have signed a release form for this information to be forwarded. All tuition must be paid before the release of records. Because of waiting lists in some grade levels, early notification of transfers will be greatly appreciated.

## **TOYS FROM HOME**

Toys of any variety from home should remain at home unless specific permission is granted or a request is made by the classroom teacher to bring a particular toy for an educational purpose. Items brought without permission will be confiscated.

## **APPENDIX**

### **HARASSMENT/BULLYING POLICY**

**Information taken from Diocese of Des Moines Catholic School Policies and Regulations  
Policy 579**

St. Joseph School believes that all students should learn in a safe environment where all people are treated with respect and value and are free of bullying and harassment. St. Joseph has programs to prevent and work to eliminate bullying and harassment.

Harassment and bullying is defined as any electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward a student which is based on any actual or perceived trait or characteristic of the student and which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:

- Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property.
- Has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance.
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

"Electronic" shall mean any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optical cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. "Electronic" includes but is not limited to communication via email, social media, cell phones, text messaging, or similar technologies.



The phrase “trait or characteristic” of the student as used in this policy includes, but is not limited to, age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status. The term “gender identity” means the gender related identity of a person, regardless of the person’s assigned sex at birth.

Harassment and bullying may include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors and circumstances:

- Verbal, nonverbal, or physical or written harassment, bullying, hazing, or other victimization that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim;
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one’s grades, achievements, property, etc. that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim;
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim; and/or
- Unreasonable interference with a student’s performance or creation of an intimidating, offensive, or hostile learning environment

This policy shall be in effect while students are on school property, while on school owned or school operated/leased vehicles; while attending or engaged in school sponsored activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school.

Students who believe they or another student or students are the victim of bullying or harassment should immediately report their concerns to the school principal, classroom teacher, or the principal’s designee. The school must promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of bullying and harassment. The principal or the principal’s designee will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging bullying or harassment. If a staff member believes she/he is or has been bullied or harassed by a student, the staff member should contact the principal who must investigate the matter. If the staff member chooses, the matter may be reported to legal authorities.

Retaliation against a person because the person has filed a bullying or harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment investigation or proceeding is prohibited.

An individual who knowingly files a false harassment complaint and a person who gives false statements in an investigation shall be subject to discipline by appropriate measures, as shall a person who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy. A student found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion.

The principal shall ensure that the anti-harassment and anti-bullying policy and procedures are printed in the Handbooks and integrated into the school’s Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP). The principal or the principal’s designee is responsible for collecting data relating to incidents of harassment and bullying.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to impair the school’s ability to educate and administer consistent with the mission of the Catholic Church. Nothing in this policy is intended to condone behavior or lifestyles that are inconsistent with Catholic teachings.

**Complaint Procedure:**

Any individual who believes that the individual or any other school related individual has been harassed, bullied or hazed should notify the principal or the principal's designee. Each school shall have a designated investigator. The alternate investigator is the diocesan superintendent of schools or her/his designee. If the principal or the principal's designee is a witness or the alleged instigator of the bullying, harassment or hazing, the diocesan superintendent of schools or her/his designee must be the investigator. The complainant or the investigator should complete the Diocese of Des Moines

Anti-Bullying Incident Report Form to turn over evidence of the harassment, including, but not limited to, letters, tapes, or pictures. The complainant shall be given a copy of the completed complaint form. The investigator has the authority to initiate an investigation in the absence of a written complaint.

**Investigation Procedure:**

The investigator will reasonably and promptly commence the investigation upon receipt of a complaint. The investigator will interview the complainant and the alleged harasser/hazer. The alleged harasser/hazer may file a written statement in response to the complaint. The investigator may also interview witnesses as deemed appropriate. The investigator should include the totality of circumstances during the investigation. Upon completion of the investigation the investigator will make written findings and conclusions to each allegation and report the findings and conclusions to the principal and pastor/canonical administrator. If the principal or the principal's designee is the alleged instigator the report shall be given to the pastor/canonical administrator and superintendent. Information received during the investigation is kept confidential to the extent possible.

**Resolution of the Complaint:**

If the principal is not the investigator the principal may, if deemed necessary investigate further after the principal receives the investigator's report. In such a case, the principal may make a determination of any appropriate additional steps which could include an interview with the complainant and alleged abuser. Additional steps may include suspension or expulsion. The principal must file a written report closing the case and documenting any disciplinary action taken in response to the complaint. The complainant, the alleged abuser and the investigator must receive notice as to the conclusion of the investigation. Disciplinary action information can only be shared with the alleged abuser and his/her parents. Care must be taken to protect the privacy of all individuals involved. The principal must maintain a log of information necessary to comply with the Iowa Department of Education reporting requirements.

**CYBER BULLYING**

Neither the school's network, the broader Internet or cellular phones (whether accessed on campus or off campus, either during or after school hours) may be used for the purpose of harassment by any student at St. Joseph Catholic School. All forms of harassment through any electronic means, often called "cyber bullying", are unacceptable.

Cyber bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: Harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening or terrorizing another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or Web-site creations or postings (including blogs). Often the author (sender or poster) of the inappropriate material is disguised (logged on) as someone else. Any student, faculty, or staff member who feels that they have been victims of such misuses of technology should not erase the offending material from their computer or cellular phone. They should print a copy of the material immediately and report the incident to the administration. All reports of harassment in cyberspace will be investigated fully. Sanctions may include,

but are not limited to, the loss of computer privileges, detention, Saturday school, community service, suspension, separation or expulsion from school. Use the procedure outlined below for filing a report on cyber bullying.

Harassment is a serious matter. All activities in the investigation will be carried out with discretion and privacy will be maintained to the fullest extent possible. Information related to these complaints will be maintained as confidential, consistent with the diocesan obligations. The following procedures should be followed when filing a report:

1. Verbally communicate to the harasser that you want the behaviors to stop. If this is too difficult for the student to do alone, he/she may seek help from a teacher, counselor or administrator. If the behavior stops at this point no further action is needed.
2. If the behavior is deemed verbal, physical harassment or abuse and the behavior is repeated, the student will report to a higher authority. (i.e. teacher, counselor, administrator) This will be done utilizing the following forms:
  - a) Diocesan Anti-Harassment/ Bullying Complaint Form
  - b) This form is found in the school office and with administration.

Following a valid report, administration may use but is not limited to the following courses of action: meet with parents, assign community service, in-school suspension, out of school suspension. Every consideration will be made in order to avoid expulsion of a student from St. Joseph Catholic School. This may include referring the student and his or her family to a local community resource for counseling. Readmission after expulsion may not take place for one semester and only with the explicit permission of the administrator and pastor.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND/OR ABUSE BY STUDENTS**

### **Information taken from Diocese of Des Moines Catholic School Policies and Regulations Policy 582**

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that all schools maintain an environment free from sexual harassment and/or abuse. The schools must promote a sexual harassment and abuse free environment through information, supervision and investigation of allegations of such behavior.

Sexual harassment and/or abuse shall include but is not limited to, inappropriate, intentional or unwelcome sexual advances, touches, or behaviors, pressure or requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Students who believe they have been sexually harassed and/or abused by students shall report such to the school's Level-One investigator.

Persons who have been sexually harassed and/or abused always have the right to notify the civil authorities.

The Level-One investigator must respond promptly to complaints/allegations of sexual harassment and/or abuse. The processing of a complaint or allegation shall be handled confidentially to the extent possible. Program personnel (employees/volunteers and students) are required to assist in the investigation when requested to provide information and to maintain confidentiality of the reporting and investigating process.

No one shall retaliate against a student or employee/volunteer because they have filed a sexual harassment or abuse complaint or participated in an investigation of such a complaint.

Chapter 102 Level One Investigators are:

St. Joseph School Principal - 515-266-3433

St. Joseph School Counselor 515-266-3433

Upon determination that there is a need for a Level-Two investigation of sexual harassment and/or abuse, the Level-One investigator shall contact the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent will appoint the Level-Two investigator. The Level-Two investigation should ordinarily be completed within a period of three weeks from receipt of the Level-One reports and forms.

If a student believes sexual harassment and abuse has occurred but does not wish, or believe it would be inappropriate, to file a complaint of harassment or abuse with a Level-One investigator, they may inform the Program Administrator about the incident(s) but are not seeking Level-One investigation. In such cases the program administrator should handle the concern as a discipline matter.