



St. Joseph Catholic School
Student and Parent Handbook
2024-2025

St. Joseph Catholic School
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www.sjsfalcons.org

Academic Excellence Surrounded by Faith

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK Revised Date: July 3, 2024

“What greater work is there than training the mind and forming the habits of the young?”

St. John Chrysostom

Dear Parents,

Welcome to St. Joseph Catholic School! As parents are called to be the primary teachers of their children, we are committed to partnering with you in fulfilling this responsibility by forming and educating your child in the Catholic tradition. We accept the call to serve our families with great care. It is our duty to provide the pathways of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, while forming them in the values of the Catholic faith.

The Parent/Student Handbook reflects the policies of St. Joseph Catholic School for the 2024-2025 school year. Please read this document carefully in its entirety, and sign the attached agreement, which is a requirement. The agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of St. Joseph Catholic School for the 2024-2025 school year.

The faculty and staff of St. Joseph Catholic School look forward to working with you to promote academic excellence and spiritual development in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church. In prayer, let us ask that God would guide us along His path, which leads to the understanding of all truth. It's a great time to be a Falcon!

In Christ,

Clayton Cobb

Principal

St. Joseph Catholic School

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School's Right to Amend

While a concentrated effort has been made to address all issues related to the school environment, the possibility exists that some regulations and policies have been omitted. St. Joseph Catholic School, a ministry of St. Joseph Parish, follows and practices the tenets of the Roman Catholic Church. The school reserves the right to amend and enforce any policy to reflect such teachings and beliefs. Additionally, in the absence of a policy in this handbook, the principal (*in accordance with Diocesan policy*) reserves the right to determine policy should the need arise, particularly when repeated attempts to correct student behavior require additional disciplinary action not outlined in the handbook.

St. Joseph Catholic School

History

St. Joseph Parish was established February 26, 1949. Father Joseph B. Gremillion, the first pastor of the parish, offered the first Mass March 13, 1949, at the Broadmoor Theater. Mass continued to be conducted at this site for the next thirteen months. At this time, there were 235 families in the parish.

The groundbreaking for the first building of St. Joseph Parish was held July 13, 1949, on the site of Patton and Anniston Streets. The official was Most Reverend Charles P. Greco, Bishop of Alexandria. The formal dedication and blessing of the new combination church and social hall building of St. Joseph Parish took place Sunday, April 16, 1950, at 11:00 A.M., with Bishop Greco officiating.

The first school building was completed, and the school opened in September of 1951. In attendance were 102 pupils and four teachers, comprising kindergarten and three grades. Today, there are over 320 students enrolled in K3 - Eighth grade. The physical plant of St. Joseph Parish now has over 12 permanent structures.

Catholic education is a priority as one of the missions of St. Joseph Catholic Church. The school is encouraged and supported by the parish community. Today, St. Joseph is still a growing and dynamic parish under the pastoral leadership of Father Jerry Daigle.

Mission Statement

It is the mission of St. Joseph Catholic School to provide an authentically Catholic education directed towards academic excellence and the formation of each child in the virtues of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Philosophy

In accordance with the mission of the Catholic Diocese of Shreveport and of St. Joseph Parish, our school is a vibrant Christian community where students are encouraged and supported to reach their full potential spiritually, intellectually, aesthetically, emotionally, socially and physically.

St. Joseph Catholic School recognizes that parents are the primary educators of their children, and we view the school as an extension of the family. It is the school's responsibility to help

educate the child in a Christian environment. We recognize that each child has individual gifts and needs. Through a carefully planned curriculum and qualified staff, we help to develop these gifts and meet the needs of every child.

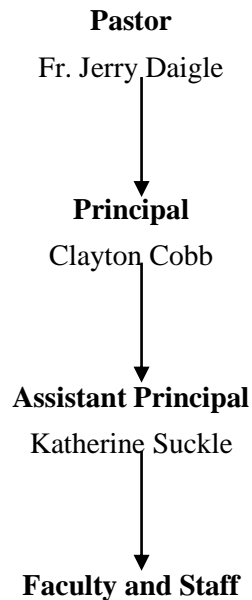
As a Catholic school, faithful to the tenets of the Roman Catholic Church, we support the teachings of the Roman Catholic Bishops of the United States in their pastoral letter, "To Teach as Jesus Did." That is, education of the young is fundamentally the responsibility of the home. Thus, it is the function of the school to complement, to reinforce, and to extend the Christian development begun within the home:

Through communication between home and school regarding the progress of students and the expectations of parents and school.

1. Through staff awareness of the obligation to remain abreast of current trends in education.
2. Through challenges, which encourage students to continue their development beyond the boundaries of home and school.
3. By providing an atmosphere in which faith is fostered through liturgies, religion classes, and visible signs of faith such as the crucifix and other religious symbols.
4. By cultivating through word and example a respect for the person, rights, and properties of others and a respect for the religious beliefs of others.
5. By encouraging everyone to greater love by cultivating a greater acceptance of one another; by community solidarity; and by lasting friendships.
6. By meeting our individual responsibilities with maturity that elicits trust.
7. By offering as wide a variety of choices as reasonably possible.
8. By individual and group guidance in relating consequences to choices.
9. By making available to the student a range of academic and extracurricular choices, so as to allow every student an opportunity for growth.

The first responsibility of St. Joseph Catholic School is to be an expression of a Christian community in which we strive to love one another with love, which Jesus said would be the sign of His followers. Therefore, each member of the St. Joseph family is an example of a Christian center of learning. We accept as a basic reality that in a Christian center of learning, rights bring responsibilities. As responsibility develops, it calls for choices, which should encourage good and reflective decision-making. Respect for and trust in one another is the basis from which an active sense of responsibility grows. Because students have varying needs and learning abilities, we endeavor to offer a variety of experiences both inside and outside the classroom in order to help them realize their potential.

Administrative Structure



Admissions Policy

Non-discriminatory Policy

St. Joseph Catholic School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, and national or ethnic origin, or disability in violation of state law and federal law or regulation in the administration of its education policies or program. The information provided in an application will not be used for any discriminatory purpose.

Entrance Requirements

The parents or guardians of every prospective new student must submit a completed application, complete an admissions screening, and submit a complete set of previous school records upon registering. Administration reserves the right to review screenings and records to determine grade placement.

Three-year old (Pre-K3) students **must be 3 and potty trained by September 30** of the year they enter.

Four-year old (Pre-K4) students **must be 4 by September 30** of the year they enter.

Five-year old kindergarten students **must be 5 by September 30** of the year they enter.

St. Joseph Catholic School reserves the right to deny admission to students who have been dismissed or expelled from a previous school.

St. Joseph Catholic School will not admit a student for the eighth grade after the beginning of the school year.

By signing the K-Village form, parents are communicating that their child is school-ready because he or she is potty-trained. Your child must be toilet trained (no diapers or pull-ups) upon entry into our program. This is absolutely essential. Students that have more than 3 accidents in one week will be asked to take a time out to work on potty-training, and your spot will be held. If a student returns and continues to have accidents the administration has the right to dismiss your child from the pre-kindergarten program.

Registration

Registration opens during Catholic Schools Week at the end of January. At the time of registration, all new students seeking admission to St. Joseph Catholic School are evaluated on the basis of current standardized test scores and report cards. All new students are placed on a nine-week probationary period. This is done for the benefit of both the student and the school.

St. Joseph Catholic School accepts students of varying levels of ability; however, the school reserves the right to refuse acceptance when the prospective student has a learning challenge that the school is not properly equipped to handle. The school reserves the right to refuse acceptance to a student who has proven himself/herself to be a serious and persistent behavior problem. Students who are expelled from any other school may not enroll at St. Joseph Catholic School.

If a student's complete school records are not available upon registration, then the student will be placed on a probationary status until records are received.

The following data is necessary before registration is complete:

***Verification of active parish affiliation/stewardship**

***Immunization Records**

***Birth Certificate (original)**

***Social Security Card**

***Baptismal Certificate (Catholic applicants only)**

***Report Cards**

***Standardized Test Results**

***Record of IEP/Accommodations Plan (if applicable)**

All new students will be given a trial period of not less than one semester in which to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period there are any problems, a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at St. Joseph Catholic School. The recommendation and decision of the school is final.

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

Priorities for Admission

As openings become available, the following priorities will be used to accept students to St. Joseph Catholic School:

1. School families (families with children presently enrolled)
2. Members of St. Joseph Catholic Church Parish
3. Members of other Catholic parishes
4. Non-Catholic students

Withdrawals

Families must notify the school in writing if a student is withdrawn from the school. Registered students who withdraw before the first full day of school forfeit their registration, technology (see "Fees for all Students"), and PTO fees. Registered students who withdraw after the first day of school through December 15th are responsible for each quarter of the tuition payment the student was enrolled for the first semester. **Registered students who withdraw after December**

20th are responsible for the full tuition amount. The school will not forward records for students until all accounts have been settled.

Dismissals

St. Joseph Catholic School is limited in its human capital resources and will make reasonable accommodations for learning exceptionalities when possible. St. Joseph Catholic School cannot accommodate students who have extraordinary learning differences. If after admission, the educational and/or behavioral needs of a student exceed what would be considered reasonable, the student may need to be separated from St. Joseph Catholic School. This decision will be made in order for the student's educational and/or behavioral needs to be fully met in another educational setting. If the decision to separate the student from St. Joseph Catholic School is made by the school, the student's tuition due would be prorated.

Parent Cooperation Statement

An integral part of the educational philosophy of St. Joseph Catholic School is the conviction that the school assists the parents/guardians in carrying out their primary responsibility of providing for the religious and secular education of their children. Therefore, it is the right and duty of parents/guardians to serve as the primary role models in the development of your child's life: physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. As partners in the educational process at SJS, we ask parents:

- To set rules, times, and limits so that your child:
 - Gets to bed early on school nights;
 - Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day;
 - Is dressed according to the school dress code;
 - Completes assignments on time.
- To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences;
- To meet all financial obligations to the school;
- To inform the school of any situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health;
- To complete and return to school any requested information promptly;
- To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education;
- To support the religious and educational goals of the school;
- To attend Mass and teach the Catholic faith by word and example;
- To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school;
- To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems;
- To not post negative comments about students, teachers, or the administration on social media or school communication apps.

An ongoing positive working relationship between the parents/guardians and the school is critical to the success of the school and the students. Your choice of St. Joseph Catholic School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life. Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the Church community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Having chosen to enter into a partnership with us at SJS, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. **If there is an incident at school, you as parents must**

investigate the complete story as your first step, understanding that the school can only discuss your child with you. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships. Talking negatively about a child’s teacher at home will only create an attitude of distrust toward the teacher, the school, and the parent.

While SJS encourages the constructive exchange of ideas, feedback, and suggestions intended to foster the continued growth and improvement of the school, SJS is ultimately responsible for the orderly administration and operation of the school, including the policies and procedures implemented to achieve the school’s goals. **Thus, St. Joseph Catholic School reserves the right to terminate the enrollment of any student(s) if it is determined by the school’s administration that** (1) a positive working relationship between the school and the parents/guardians no longer exists and/or is irreparably damaged, or (2) that the parents/guardians have failed to provide the support and assistance necessary for the religious and secular education to which each child is entitled. Furthermore, failure on the part of any student and/or parent/guardian to abide by the rules, regulations, and policies as outlined in the school handbook may result in termination of the student’s enrollment from the school.

Financial Information

Tuition and Fees

\$8,953 (Non-Catholic)

\$7,787 (Catholic)

Multi-child discount (this is subtracted from the total tuition per family):

	Non-St. Joseph Parishioner	Catholic Non-St. Joseph Parishioner	St. Joseph Parishioner
2 children	\$1200	\$1250	\$1300
3 children	\$1800	\$1850	\$1900
4 children	\$2200	\$2250	\$2300

- 10% discount provided for Active Duty Service Men/Women

Fees:

Registration Fees: \$300 for the first child. \$150 for 2 or more children. The fee will increase on 3/1/2025 to \$350 for the first child. After 1/1/2, the registration fee is waived for the 2024-2025 school year

- **Supply Fee:** \$125 – this fee covers all school supplies
- **PTO Fee:** \$25 – membership fee
- **Homeroom Fee:** \$25 – for homeroom parties and activities
- **Technology Fee:** \$185

- **Security Fee:** \$150 per family- covers security needs for the school year

Fees cover registration materials, rental of hard-cover textbooks, consumable workbooks, classroom supplies, assignment books, art materials, physical education equipment (playground balls, jump ropes, etc. for use by classrooms during recess times), audio-visual licenses, Science lab fees for consumable materials; **DOES NOT COVER FIELD TRIPS, BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL CARE, ATHLETIC PROGRAMS (basketball, cheer, volleyball, etc.) or other after school activities.**

Payment Options

You may pay your tuition to FACTS by:

- Paying in full to FACTS by August 1.
- Paying in semiannual installments to FACTS, due August and January.
- Monthly installments to FACTS, due the 10th or 20th of the month from August 2024 to May 2025. Payments may be automatically deducted from your bank account.

Tuition Policy

Families will not have access to grades or be issued a report card if tuition payments are more than thirty (30) calendar days delinquent. Final report cards will not be issued if tuition, cafeteria fees, book fees, technology fees, athletic fees, library fees, or after-school fees are not paid in full. For 8th grade students, all accounts must be paid and current, prior to their last day of school (**May 17**), in order for the student to participate in end of year activities, or commencement. **When tuition is sixty (60) days past due, the school will no longer allow the student to attend classes unless the past due tuition and any accumulated late fees are paid in full. A return fee of \$25.00 will be assessed to your account for any returned tuition payment. Please address all tuition questions to the school office.**

FACTS Tuition Management

Our school has an agreement with FACTS Tuition Management Services to handle tuition collection. You will receive notification via email from FACTS to set up your account. All tuition payments should be made promptly to FACTS. All tuition is paid electronically for the 2024-25 school year.

Financial Aid Policy

Tuition assistance is available through the Diocese and the Church and a few State of Louisiana educational grant services such as ARETE and ACE. Information about tuition assistance is available in the school and church offices. The majority of applications are due in March of every school year; some grant services have alternate deadlines. Applications can be completed through FACTS and Tuition Assistance Forms found in the registration packet.

Office Procedures

Office hours

The school office hours are from **7:30 AM to 3:30 PM (12:30 PM on half-days)** during the school year. Summer office hours are 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Mondays-Thursdays, with the office closed on Fridays. The school office is closed the last week of June and the first two weeks of July.

School hours:

- The school doors open for students at 7:20 AM.
- The school day is 7:45 AM-3:05 PM for Grades K3- 8th.

Students not in their homeroom at 7:45 AM are considered tardy. From 7:45-8:00 AM, students are to go directly to their classroom.

ALL students arriving after 8:00 AM MUST be signed in to school by parents.

At St. Joseph Catholic School, we work in partnership with parents to enable each child to develop as an independent learner. Parents should allow their child(ren) to enter the school building on their own each morning. Various classes invite parent involvement or visitation on particular occasions.

Change of Address/Phone

It is vital that the school be able to reach you in the event of an emergency. Please notify the school office immediately in writing of any change of address, custody, home telephone number, cell phone number, work phone number, email address, and/or phone numbers of emergency contacts so that FACTS may be updated.

Visitors

St. Joseph Catholic School asks that families limit school visits to when they are absolutely necessary. School visitors (volunteers, parents, etc.) must check in at the main office. For safety and security reasons, each person is required to sign in at the office when he/she enters the building for any reason. All visitors and/or volunteers are required to wear a designated badge that may be picked up in the office. Visitors are not allowed past the lobby without a badge and access to the campus will only be given with permission from the administration- even to walk one's child to the classroom. Visitors and/or volunteers are to sign out at the time of departure. Visitors may be asked to show identification in the form of a driver's license or other government issued identification.

Parents who volunteer in the school **are not permitted** to drop in on a classroom to see their child during the day. This is an interruption to the teacher and to the educational process.

Delivering Items to Students

Any items to be dropped off to students must be brought to the front office, and the items will be delivered to the student by a member of the faculty or staff.

Media Policy

St. Joseph Catholic School reserves the right to create still and moving images of all students through the use of photography, videography, etc. These images will be used in various school publications, school and Church websites, newspapers, magazines and other publications, as well as television. These images will be used to share news about the school and to promote the school and the accomplishments of its students.

If you do not wish to have your child appear in these venues, please ensure that the media release on your application via FACTS has been filled out. Please inform your children as well that they are not to be photographed so that they can inform teachers, administrators, and parents who may be documenting an event, activity, or competition.

Conferences and Messages

A. Teacher Conferences- are scheduled when deemed necessary by the school administration and faculty members. Throughout the school year, SJS faculty will gladly meet with families

regarding the needs of a student. In order to assure that there is adequate time to meet, an appointment must be made. Appointments are made through the school office by email or by phone. The best way to schedule an appointment with a teacher is by email. Appointments will only be scheduled before school, after school, or during the teacher's planning period. Teachers will not be disturbed from his or her primary duties once the school day begins. Conferences are not to occur at carpools.

B. Messages-Telephone messages to students during school hours are not permitted. ONLY messages deemed of vital importance by the administration will be relayed to students during school hours. If through urgent necessity, a parent comes personally to school to deliver a message or to bring something to a student, the parent must come to the school office. Under NO circumstances is the parent to go directly to the student's classroom. Students are permitted to use the telephone in the office only in the cases of emergency and then only with permission of the school administration.

Changes in Transportation

Please make sure your child knows the arrangements for afternoon transportation prior to coming to school, should it need to differ on a particular day/s from his/her usual method of transportation. If there is to be a change in the usual transportation arrangements for your child, the teacher MUST be informed IN WRITING if the change is known ahead of time. Notice of sudden changes in transportation MUST be telephoned to the office by THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN by 2:00 PM. We ask for your cooperation in this matter for your child's safety and protection.

Conflict Resolution

Complaints of students and parents should always go through proper channels. Discussing a problem with others, who are not involved or do not have the ability to achieve resolution, does not help to eliminate the problem. On the contrary, it may only create more discontent and animosity between the parties actually involved. Any issues concerning school matters can and should be solved by communicating with one another in a Christian manner. Communication between parents and teachers are integral for the success of the student. The direct approach is often best.

The following steps are required for addressing student and parent concerns in order to achieve a resolution that is just and fair in regards to all parties:

1. Begin with communicating concerns with the appropriate faculty member regarding your child. This faculty member is most familiar with the concern and will be able to initially address the matter best. In order to bring the matter to the attention of the administration, this critical step must occur first.
2. If communication by phone or email does not prove effective, please schedule a conference with the teacher and an administrator.
3. If satisfactory adjustments or explanations are not made, please schedule a conference with the principal.
4. If satisfactory adjustments or explanations are not made, please schedule a conference with the pastor.

Final decisions may not be reached in the presence of the grieved party but only after a closed session to discuss the matter privately. Normally accepted standards of due process will be followed in the exercise of these procedures.

Fundraising Policy

All requests for school fundraisers including auxiliary organizations that have been approved to solicit the families of St. Joseph Catholic School, must be submitted in writing to the Principal. Requests must be received at least one month before the event date (or beginning date) of the fundraiser. Items which are not part of an approved fundraiser may not be sold on campus.

Any funds raised for a group within St. Joseph Catholic School will belong to the school in the event that school is closed for an extended period of time due to natural disasters, pandemic, etc.

The St. Joseph Catholic School Annual Fund Drive is a fundraising campaign to cover operating costs and to enhance educational programs that are not covered by tuition fees. All Annual Fund Drive donations are tax deductible.

Contributions to the Annual Fund insure continued growth and financial strength for our school and parish. St. Joseph Catholic School welcomes any gifts of securities or life insurance, as well as consideration in estate planning.

Many companies have a Matching Gift program for schools. Your gift to St. Joseph Catholic School may be matched by your company and, in some cases, the value of the gift may double or triple. Please contact your employer's human resources department for more information.

Communication

Communication with Parents

In order to ensure that all communication from school reaches home in a timely manner, St. Joseph Catholic School uses a **Wednesday folder system**. Official folders containing all correspondence are sent home on Wednesday and should be returned the following school day. Your child is responsible for returning an empty folder to their homeroom on Thursday each week. There is a \$2.00 replacement charge for folders that are lost. Information is not sent home if the Wednesday folder has not been returned. Official school-wide emergency communications are sent using the FACTS voice, text, and/or email messages, and **Bloomz**; therefore, it is imperative that contact numbers are up to date.

Confidentiality

St. Joseph Catholic School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) in regard to privacy of student records and the rights of non-custodial parents. St. Joseph Catholic School protects the confidentiality rights of all students. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1973 (FERPA) and the Child Protection Act of 2012 (CPA) were designed to protect personally identifiable information of minors. St. Joseph Catholic School adheres to these laws in its attempt to protect the privacy rights of all students. As a result, the parents of students enrolled at St. Joseph Catholic School are forbidden from posting photographs taken at school sponsored events that include the images of students other than their own on their personal social media page(s). Such postings are a violation of the St. Joseph Catholic School's adherence to FERPA and the Child Protection Act. The students of parents who post such photos may be separated from St. Joseph Catholic School. Additionally, when discussing disciplinary action with parents, only the names of their children will be discussed.

Custody Concerns

It is the responsibility of the parents/ guardians to share any official custodial information and documentation decided through the courts. Official custodial agreements will be kept in a confidential file in the office of the principal. **In the absence of any court document, the school will view each parent as having full legal custody of his/her child.** In the absence of a court order to the contrary, non-custodial parents have the right to receive records about their child's academic progress or lack thereof. The school reserves the right to charge a shipping and

processing fee for extra records sent to more than one home address.

Be advised that if a teacher is subpoenaed to testify in a child custody case, the parent will be responsible for paying the cost of a substitute teacher and any other costs associated with the testimony (mileage, parking, food, etc.). It is a great benefit to the child to have both parents involved in his/her education.

FACTS Family Portal

FACTS Family Portal is a computer-based management program which allows you to view your child's grades, homework assignments, school calendar of events, and other school information. You will be given the specific information needed to access this site at Back to School Night and Parent Tech Night. Teachers post their weekly calendar by Monday afternoon, including homework and test dates, and grades are updated weekly. FACTS is our major means of communication with parents, so it is very important to visit it frequently to stay informed. A FACTS Parent App is available for smartphones and tablets. Access to FACTS may be suspended by the front office for any parent whose tuition and/or fees (lunch, library, extended day, etc.) are overdue.

SJS Social Media

St. Joseph Catholic School utilizes social media as a manner of informing the community of happenings at our school (Facebook® and Instagram®). We wish to promote a very positive image of the school. Content posted on the internet in relation to the school, faculty, other students, or the parish in a derogatory manner is not permitted and may result in disciplinary action.

No parent, student, or teacher is to open a social media account under the name of the school, faculty or staff member, or a particular grade or organization. The only official pages are the ones created and monitored by St. Joseph Catholic School. Individuals who choose to create such an account may subject themselves to separation from the school. During the school day, students are not permitted to utilize social media. Any such practice will result in disciplinary action.

SJS Website

The St. Joseph Catholic School website, www.sjsfalcons.org, is designed to provide school information to parents, as well as the general public.

Falcon News

Each Monday, SJS parents receive a weekly newsletter from the principal via email and text, which features a calendar for the week and upcoming events and activities, as well as other pertinent information. Important announcements are communicated here each week. Please read the newsletter carefully.

Email

Email is also a very effective means of communication if questions or comments need to be addressed with teachers, administrators, or other staff members. Email for faculty and staff is the first initial and last name of the person @sjsfalcons.org.

Curriculum

Spiritual Information

The initial goal of any Catholic institution is to permit the members of the community to experience Christ while on the path to heaven. It is the intent of St. Joseph Catholic School to foster within each student the importance of an authentic relationship with the Holy Trinity- God

the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Our faith curriculum strives to form each child in the virtues of Jesus Christ and form them in preparation for an encounter with him in the Sacraments. Through formation in the Catholic faith, our students, therefore, are prepared to minister to others in their school, home, the Church, and community.

- Our enrichment classes and special liturgies will enhance liturgical experiences.
- Students are actively involved in weekly Eucharistic liturgies.
- Family and friends are welcome to attend weekly mass and other special events.
- **ALL STUDENTS (K3-8th grade) ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND MASS**, which is considered a religion class for grades K3-8th, and students are to wear the appropriate uniform for the day. (K3 students start to attend school Mass later in the school year).
- All middle school students become responsive to the needs of others by participating in community service projects;
 - 8th grade students have **20 hours** of required service hours to complete for graduation
 - 7th grade students have **15 hours** of required service hours
 - 6th grade students have **10 hours** of required service hours
- Service hours will be a major grade (equal to a project grade) in Religion.

The sacramental life of the children of the Catholic tradition is an important component of the religion program at St. Joseph Catholic School. Students in **Grade 2** will prepare for Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. Students in **Grades 7 and 8** will prepare for In accordance with the diocesan guidelines, candidates for First Communion will receive the sacrament of Reconciliation prior to First Communion. Parents are required to be active partners in the preparation of their children for these sacraments. The sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist are only conferred to students baptized in the Roman Catholic tradition.

Academics

The curriculum followed by St. Joseph Catholic School is in compliance with the state curriculum regulations for approved schools in Louisiana. The academic needs of each student are not only fulfilled by required courses, but are also supplemented by library resources, computer-assisted instruction, educational field trips, audio-visual materials, and enrichment activities. The religious instruction included in the curriculum helps develop the student's attitudes of faith, love, care and service to others.

Homework

Formal home-study is assigned to help students become self-reliant and self-directed. Assignments are designed to reinforce daily lessons, to supplement and enrich class work, and to prepare for certain lessons through various experiences.

Since each student has different capabilities and interests, it would be difficult to denote the specific amount of time to be spent on an assignment. A good range would be 10-15 minutes for each grade, going up incrementally. For example, students in Grade 1 would have approximately 10-15 minutes of homework; Grade 3 – 30-45 minutes, etc. If a problem arises, the teacher should be contacted. Reading is not included in the homework time, and students should read at least 20 minutes each night.

Homework may be assigned to students **Monday- Thursday**. Homework will not be assigned to

students on Friday evening or during long, seasonal breaks. **However, students may be asked to study over the course of a weekend for an upcoming test or quiz.** No large projects, including research papers, will be due on Monday or the first day of school of the week. However, students enrolled in Algebra may expect weekend homework.

Testing

The purpose of assessment is to gauge student progress and the mastery of basic skills appropriate to the subject. Students will not be permitted to retake a quiz or a test in order to improve their academic standing. Grades are posted weekly on FACTS for 1st - 8th grade. Report cards are sent home every nine weeks for all grades.

Students may be given a maximum of three quizzes or tests per day. **In an effort to alleviate the amount of tests assigned in one day for middle school students, a middle school teacher may utilize Monday for testing days from time to time.** In addition to teacher-made tests given in the classrooms, St. Joseph Catholic School students in grades 3-8 are required to take the TERRA NOVA Next annually. This test is a standardized, norm-referenced test. It is used to compare a student's progress with students across the nation or to detect specific strengths or weaknesses of a child or a program. Louisiana, ACE, and ARETE Scholarship recipients are also required to take the state LEAP assessment.

Field Trips

Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals. Field trips are re-evaluated each year to determine the compatibility of the field trip with curricular goals. A field trip is a privilege and not a right. All grades do not always have the same number of field trips.

Field trips are permissible for all grades when advanced planning, location, and the experience ensures a successful learning opportunity. Individual teachers, in consultation with the Administration, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct.

A written official permission slip, signed by the parent, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip activity. Verbal permission cannot be accepted. **A telephone call will not be accepted in lieu of the proper field trip permission slip.**

Parents may refuse to permit their child from participating in a field trip by stating so on the proper form. **Students who do not attend a field trip are to remain at home and will be marked with an unexcused absence for the day.**

Students who are participating in the field trip must ride in a vehicle for which they are assigned. (Forms to be a driver must be completed and filed in the office. See forms in the Appendix of this handbook).

All monies collected for the field trip may not be refundable. Cell phones are not allowed on field trips. Parents who chaperone a field trip may not bring preschool or school-age siblings on the field trip. All chaperones must be 21 years of age or older, have taken Protecting God's Children, and be current on their Virtus bulletins at least 3 days prior to the Field Trip per policy of the Catholic Diocese of Shreveport. All drivers must avoid making unnecessary stops or detours unless given approval by St. Joseph Catholic School personnel. St. Joseph Catholic School may cancel or postpone planned field trips.

Textbooks

All textbooks are provided by St. Joseph Catholic School or by the State of Louisiana for use by

students. All non-consumable textbooks must be covered with coverings. Students have full responsibility for the care of textbooks issued to them. All textbooks are to be handled with care at all times, so that it is returned at the end of the year in the same condition it was received. It is recommended that students use backpacks to carry books to and from school. Textbooks should be kept free of ink or pencil marks. Answers to problems, quizzes, or tests should NEVER be written in textbooks. If a textbook is lost or damaged, the student or family of the student will be expected to pay for its replacement.

Report Cards/Progress Reports

Report Cards are important tools for communication. Report Cards will be given four (4) times during the academic school year or every nine (9) weeks. First, second, and third quarter report cards are sent home with students. Final report card will be mailed. Progress Reports will be given mid-way between each nine-week grading period.

No student will be given a Report Card (or standardized test results) if tuition, cafeteria, library fines, or After-School Care Program fees are in arrears.

Grading

The purpose of grading is to give some indication of a student's progress. A close working relationship between the school and home is recommended to ensure your child's school success. Parents are encouraged to regularly check student progress (grades) on FACTS. The grading scale is as follows for the core subjects, Religion, and behavior:

A 93-100	For students in Algebra I and Spanish I	A 90-100
B 85-92		B 80-89
C 77-84		C 70-79
D 69-76		D 60-69
F 68 & below		F 59 and below

For Art, Music, P.E., Library, STREAM, and Handwriting, the following will be used:

E 93-100

S 77-92

N 76 & below (Middle School students receive true letter grades for enrichment courses)

Awards

Honor Roll is recognition for students in grades 1-8.

Grades 1-5: To be eligible for "Straight-A" Highest Honors, a student must have all A's on his/her report card in core subjects (Conduct, Reading, ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Religion).

To be eligible for the "A/B" Honor Roll, a student must have all A's and B's on his/her report card in core subjects (Conduct, Reading, ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Religion). If a student has an "N" in an enrichment or non-core class, they will not be eligible for Honor Roll.

Grades 6-8: To be eligible for "Straight-A" Highest Honors, a student must have all A's on his/her report card in core subjects (Literature, Grammar, Math, Science, History, Religion, and Spanish). To be eligible for "A/B" Honor Roll, a student must have all A's and B's on his/her report card in core subjects (Literature, Grammar, Math, Science, History, Religion, and Spanish).

Perfect Attendance is awarded at the end of each nine weeks for students who have not

missed a day of school, have no more than two tardies, as well as not having an early dismissal. Students are also recognized at the end of the year for Perfect Attendance for all four quarters.

Christian Witness Awards will be given to one student per class each month. This is given to the student who is exhibiting the virtue of the month. Students will be recognized monthly at a school Mass.

St. Teresa of Calcutta Award is awarded to one student per class in grades 1-5 at the end of each nine weeks. This award is given to students who, "do small things with great love." Recipients of the Award are recognized at the awards ceremony at the end of each 9 weeks.

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati Award is awarded to **one male and one female** student per grade in grades 6-8 at the end of each nine weeks. Frassati once said, "One act of charity at a time" This award, then, is given to those students who are seen doing acts of charity for others, as well, over a period of time.

Academic Awards Assembly

The administration of St. Joseph Catholic School has established awards to recognize students who display outstanding accomplishments in a variety of areas. The goal is to help students recognize their gifts and to further develop those gifts. The purpose of awards given at the school is to help students realize the personal growth that happens when they accomplish something. The award should not take on more importance than the internal motivation we hope to impart in students as they grow. The Awards Assembly is held at the end of each of nine weeks. Students are recognized by the Principal and faculty.

Participation in Athletics, Cheer Squads, and Academic Clubs

St. Joseph Catholic School encourages the participation of students in extracurricular activities through the school. We believe that it is part of the formation of the whole person. Still, the primary focus of any academic institution is academic success. Students wishing to participate in school athletics, cheer squads, and clubs must maintain a grade point average of 2.5 or higher. Honor Society organizations will have a higher GPA requirement. Students who do not maintain the required GPA for a grading period (**from the beginning of the 9 weeks to progress report or from progress reports to report cards**), will be placed on academic probation and unable to practice or participate in activities. If a student is able to bring his or her grade to the satisfactory level, the student will be permitted to participate once again. If a student fails to meet academic requirements for the consecutive grading periods listed above, the student will be dismissed from the team, squad, or club.

For all athletic teams, a student will be assessed an **annual \$50 athletic fee** if he or she wishes to participate. With approval from the principal, coaches may assess an additional fee to cover the cost of uniforms, participation in special activities,

Promotion/Retention

Advancement to the next grade is based on a student's daily performance, test results, recommendations of teachers, and the student's ability to complete work successfully on a more advanced level. Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of all subject areas and daily attendance requirements.

Pupil Progression Plan

PRE-KINDERGARTEN Promotion to Kindergarten is based upon the following:

- a. Students develop a positive self-image through successful daily experiences.

- b. Students demonstrate responsible behavior by caring for personal belongings, developing friendships, taking turns, and having respect for others.
- c. Students develop mathematics skills by counting, sorting, and classifying groups.
- d. Students develop good listening, speaking and pre-writing skills.
- e. Students develop visual discrimination skills such as identifying letters of the alphabet, numbers 1 to 10, and recognizing their names.
- f. Students develop and display a level of age-appropriate independence in completion of assignments and tasks.

KINDERGARTEN Promotion to 1st grade is based upon the following:

- a. Mastery of at least 70% of the school's Reading curriculum on the End of Year assessment.
- b. Mastery of at least 70% of the school's Math program on End of Year assessment.
- c. A student may be retained only once in Kindergarten.
- d. Maturity is considered if a student has displayed lack of readiness needed in first grade.

GRADES 1-2:

To be eligible for promotion to the next grade, the student must have successfully completed the area of study with the determined passing mark (70-D-). If a student fails **Reading/Language Arts** or two core subjects (R/LA, Math, Religion) subjects, he/she will be retained.

GRADES 3-8:

To be eligible for promotion to the next grade, the student must have successfully completed the area of study with the determined passing mark (70, D-). Major subjects at SJS are as follows: Reading/Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science, and Religion.

If a student fails two major subjects or three overall subjects, he/she will be retained.

For all grades (1-8) "Failing" means that a student is to be retained in his or her present grade. A student fails a subject if he/she has an "F" as a final grade. The decision to voluntarily retain a student (hold back) who has not acquired the necessary fundamental skills will be made in consultation with the administration and parents. No student should be put in the position of undertaking a task for which he/she has not mastered the requisite skills, of becoming unduly frustrated, or of experiencing a feeling of failure, if it can possibly be avoided. The student will be given every consideration, and such facts as general development, and social maturity will be taken into account. A conference with the parents of a child in danger of failing should occur no later than the end of the second nine weeks reporting period. In retaining a student, the teachers and school principal will dialogue with the parents or guardian. The following must be considered:

- a. Is retention in the best academic interest of the student?
- b. Physical/social maturation level of the student
- c. Has the student been retained previously?
- d. Emotional maturity /self-esteem and well-being

SJS does not socially promote students. Pupil progression allows a student to fail once in K-3rd and once in 4th-7th. A student who does not pass 8th grade will not advance to 9th grade and will not be permitted to repeat the 8th grade at St. Joseph. SJS administration reserves the right to retain a student who does not display a satisfactory understanding of course material even after the completion of 30 hours of administration, seeking what is in the best interest of the student. A student who fails more than once within these time frames will not be able to continue their education at St. Joseph Catholic School.

Academic Probation

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation will be placed on an improvement plan for 1/2 a quarter. At the end of the 1/2 quarter, the student's academic progress will be assessed, students may or may not continue on academic probation (case by case review). Students whose average is an F will not be allowed to participate in any sport or academic competition until the grade has improved to a passing grade of D (70% or higher).

Make-up Work/Test Policy

When a student is absent for three or more days, a parent is to call the school office before 9:30 AM to arrange for homework assignments. Homework assignments may be picked up at the school office **between 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM**.

For short absences, students should make arrangements with classmates regarding assignments. Students may, also, receive missed assignments from their teachers when they return to school or through FACTS or Google Classroom.

Students will be allowed **one day for make-up per each day of absence due to illness**. For example, a student who was absent three days due to illness will be given three school days to complete the missed work. The day of return is day zero, and should be when students collect all of their make-up work. Extended absences due to illness or emergencies will be handled on an individual basis. Tests and quizzes are also allowed **one day for make-up per each day of absence due to illness**. If a student is present when a test or quiz is announced, and they are absent the day prior to the test or quiz, they must take that test or quiz on the originally scheduled date. If a student checks in after the assigned test on the given day, the test is to be made up the following school day.

In order to receive full credit, all work should be turned in by the due date. If an assignment is turned in a day after the due date, students will receive half credit. If an assignment is turned in two or more days after the due date, students will receive zero credit. Teachers may mark the assignment as a zero until the assignment is completed and submitted.

Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations. No assignment will be given in advance of the vacation. All make-up work will be given upon the student's return. Any assessment may take place AFTER the first day of the student's return.

Transfer Students

When a student transfers to another school, the parents should notify the school office at least one week in advance. The student must turn in all textbooks, iPads and accessories (Middle School and 5th graders) return all library books, and pay all outstanding fees and fines before transferring to another school. Official records are released from the school office at the request of the school to which the student transfers after a signed release from the parents is secured. Records will not be released until all fees and fines are paid, and all school property is returned.

Placement of transfer students shall be based on careful consideration of the following:

- Records from the previous school
- Testing
- Other data necessary to render a prudent decision regarding the student's placement.

Students who transfer into SJS are subject to all provisions of the Louisiana Compulsory Attendance Law. Also, any child who transfers into SJS is subject to the entrance age requirements. Any student who transfers into SJS may be denied admission into school, if the

principal decides there is convincing evidence that admission of such a student would likely prove detrimental to the orderly academic processes of other students, or if there exists the possibility or threat of friction or disorder among students involved. In addition, if SJS is not able to meet the needs of a student who displays exceptionalities, they may be denied admission to our school for the welfare and best interest of the child.

Policies on Records and Reports

St. Joseph Catholic School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy) regarding access to student records. Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the US Mail. **No records will be given to parents to transport to the new school.**

Students requesting records/transcripts/recommendations must make a five school-day request to the School Office. All forms should be submitted to the St. Joseph Catholic School Office for distribution. Completed forms will be sent via the U.S. Mail. Special handling will require that all postal fees be paid by the parents.

Records are maintained for every student in Grades PK-8. The cumulative folder includes student's records of the following:

- a. Course/subject grades
- b. Scores on local testing programs and other screening instruments
- c. All data or reasons for student placement
- d. Information on remedial or alternative programs
- e. IEP and multidisciplinary evaluations
- f. Necessary letters to and from parents
- g. Attendance
- h. Other relevant data, such as health, etc.

No records will be sent to transferring schools of students whose financial commitment is in arrears.

Student Discipline Policy

Rules of Behavior

St. Joseph Catholic School strives to form the entire person in the Catholic tradition by instructing students to develop a life of virtue as understood in the teachings of the Roman Catholic faith. All students are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school which are designed to foster mature development and personal responsibility.

The purposes of disciplined behavior are:

1. To adopt the virtues which are necessary in order to live a Christian life in love.
2. To provide an avenue for personal development of the entire person.
3. To guarantee the student and fellow students a path to success in the classroom.
4. To display proper self-control and self-respect.
5. To value cooperation with others on the path to success.
6. To see authority figures as individuals who will provide academic guidance and life blessing through obedience.

Disciplined behavior is said to exist when there is evidence of a cooperative spirit. The parents are the first teachers and should develop in the child good, healthy habits of behavior as well as proper attitudes towards school.

To assist the child, the parent should:

1. Recognize that each administrator, teacher, and school employee takes the place of the parent while the child is in school and to teach the child to respect these individuals accordingly.
2. Become familiar with the school rules and guide the child in complying with them.
3. Teach the child respect for law, authority, sacred environments (church), the rights and property of others.
4. Permit open and proper communication for parents, teachers, and students when necessary.
5. Provide a suitable home environment and establish a daily routine resulting in organizational and study skills.
6. Teach the child to value the unique character that God has given to each of us, all created in His image and likeness to know him, love him, and serve him.

Discipline and Behavior Procedures

As a school, we have adopted Education in Virtue as our guiding principles regarding behavior and discipline.

“*The Disciple of Christ, Education in Virtue*”® is a Christian curriculum structured on the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas regarding the virtues and gifts of the Holy Spirit. It aims to provide a consistent structure and systematic instruction for youth to learn about the virtues so that they can form the habits and dispositions necessary to live as disciples of Jesus Christ. This curriculum emphasizes Christian discipleship as indispensable toward human flourishing and the quest for joy. It has been developed in response to the call for a New Evangelization, firmly conveying the reality that happiness is found in a life of holiness.

In the school setting, the call to discipleship is extended not only to the students but also to their parents, the faculty, the staff, and the administration. It is the fruit of a personal encounter with Christ which affects one’s intellectual, spiritual, physical, and social life. ‘The disciple of Christ must not only keep the faith and live on it, but also profess it, confidently bear witness to it, and spread it’ (CCC, 1816).”

It is a fundamental necessity that students, teachers, and parents will act as ladies and gentlemen at all times on and off campus. When there is a need to follow disciplinary procedures, parents can be assured that correction for behavior will be done in a Christ-like and appropriate manner for the common good of the child and the academic community. Correction will be done immediately so as to be most effective.

The decision of the teacher regarding correction is final and will not be appealed, unless the administration has found reason to increase or lessen the disciplinary action. Students should accept consequences with obedience and understanding. Teachers are here to educate, form, and mentor students. Students will have a clear understanding as to what is expected of them and why certain actions are considered virtuous, and they will receive instruction as to how to meet those expectations. When a student fails to do so, he or she will be given an explanation as to how the rule/virtue was broken, how to cultivate the virtue, and what the consequences are for such violations.

It is important for parents to support the teachers in these efforts, as teachers will communicate in a timely manner with parents. SJS faculty and administration will ensure that each student is

treated in a just manner when it comes to disciplinary procedure throughout the school day.

Normal procedure for minor offenses is that the teacher handles the issue until administration needs to intervene. Each classroom teacher has his/her own set of classroom rules relating to our adopted virtues and in line with our handbook that students are obligated to follow. **Grades 1-5 utilize Bloomz® as a behavior tracking tool.** Our goal is to form students to become virtuous saints. Students may be rewarded behavior points for exhibiting virtuous behavior. Students repeatedly exhibiting a negative aspect of a virtue will result in losing behavior points. When students lose behavior points, they may be required to complete a reflection or perform a restorative action that compliments the virtue with which they are struggling. Behavior that is more negative in nature will necessitate immediate corrective action. If behaviors continue, it will warrant the attention of the principal and parents- where a conference may become necessary, followed by corrective action that correlates to the nature and circumstances of the transgression. Middle school will no longer utilize a behavior grade. At this point, they are expected to display a level of virtue as role models to the younger grades. If middle school students do not conduct themselves in a virtuous manner, the above corrective actions will be assigned. For matters of a more grievous nature will be addressed with the disciplinary action mentioned on the pages to come.

Detention

Detention may be issued for a breach of classroom and/or school rules. Any staff member of St. Joseph Catholic School can issue a detention. A detention period will be held on **Tuesday and Thursday after school (3:05 pm – 4:15 pm)**. Students begin to serve detention in third grade. While detention is normally assigned as 1 day, there are cases where the administration may assign multiple days of detention to be served.

Parents are provided with a Detention Form with written notification of the detention. Detention takes precedence over appointments, practices, lessons, tutoring, ball games, etc. **This may prove to be inconvenient but no exceptions will be made.**

- Failure to serve a detention, without proper excuse or communication with the principal, will result in an additional detention.
- The student must report to the library immediately upon dismissal from school. If a student is five minutes late for detention, he/she will serve an additional detention. The student is not allowed to talk, move about the room, create a disturbance, or leave the room without permission.
- Failure to follow detention rules will result in an additional detention.

After receiving **3 detentions**, a conference will be scheduled with the student, the parents, and teacher(s). Upon receipt of **6 detentions**, the student will be assigned a suspension. **MULTIPLE SUSPENSIONS MAY RESULT IN EXPULSION.**

Specific Offenses Which Warrant a Detention

- Willful disobedience
- Disrespect for authority (may result in 2 detentions assigned)
- Using obscene language or gestures- written, spoken, or other methods
- Damaging school property or property of others
- Failure to wear appropriate school uniform (4 violations in a 9 weeks)
- Cheating/Plagiarism – 1st offense

- Cell phone or other electronic device violation
- Forging signature – 1st offense
- Overt hitting of another student- 1st offense (may result in 2 detentions)
- Cutting classes
- Tardy to a teacher's class (3 violations in a 9 weeks)
- Immoral or vicious practices
- Disrupting a class
- Three (3) iPad violations
- **Disruptive or disrespectful behavior at an extracurricular event (game, field trip, or dance; on-campus or off-campus)**
- Any behavior that is deemed inappropriate by administration

Some behavior may be determined more severe than a single detention but not as egregious as a suspension may result in multiple days in detention if determined by the administration.

Suspension

Students who receive an out-of-school suspension will not be allowed on campus during the time of their suspension. Students will receive zero credit for all assignments, including quizzes and tests, while they are serving a suspension.

Major Offenses Which Warrant An Immediate Suspension

- Theft of another person's property
- Fighting
- Receiving the 6th detention from teacher/teachers for any reason/reasons in a year
- Leaving school grounds during school hours without permission
- Displaying blatant obscene behavior
- Cheating on homework or an assignment – **2nd offense**
- Forging a signature – **2nd offense**
- Vandalizing school property
- Intentionally or carelessly causing serious injury to another student
- Blatant disregard for school policies
- Improper use of the computer or Internet
- Plagiarism- **2nd offense**
- Overt and harmful contact (administrative discretion)
- Bullying or Harassment
- Behavior at an extracurricular activity that is more egregious than meriting detention.

Additionally, if a student is suspended from school that day, the student may not participate in extracurricular activities such as pep rallies, dances, ball games, or cheer. When a student is suspended, a conference with the principal will be scheduled.

Students who participate in extracurricular activities at St. Joseph Catholic School are to reflect the virtues taught during the school day and at extracurricular events such as games, matches, or

dances. This includes a proper display of sportsmanship by anyone who represents St. Joseph Catholic School. Failure to do so will result in the administration forbidding a student to participate and/or attendance at an individual event. Frequent violations may result in the dismissal of the student from the team, squad, or club. If a student was suspended from school on the day of an event, he or she will not be permitted to participate or attend the function (game, match, dance). Depending on the severity of the offense or frequency of occurrences, the administration may forbid a student from attending or participating in future events.

Expulsion

Expulsion is an extremely serious matter. Students who pose a threat to themselves or to others may be expelled from St. Joseph Catholic School. Students who have been expelled will not be allowed to return to the campus for any reason without prior permission from the principal.

Students whose parents have violated the Parent Cooperation statement agreement in this handbook may, also, be excluded from St. Joseph Catholic School.

Offenses Which Warrant an Immediate Expulsion

- Substance abuse of any kind
- Bringing or using alcohol at school or any school-sponsored event
- Smoking, including e-cigarettes, on school grounds or school sponsored event
- Bringing tobacco, e-cigarettes, lighters, or matches to school or school-sponsored event
- Being involved in extreme cases of vandalism.
- Bringing any type of weapon (firearms, knives, etc.) to school.
- Repeated offenses resulting in suspension.
- Inappropriate/obscene material on a cell phone or computer

Some behavior may be determined more severe than a one-day suspension but not as egregious as an expulsion may result in multiple days suspended, if determined by the administration.

St. Joseph Catholic School reserves the right to suspend or expel any student whose behavior is deemed detrimental to the Catholic values of the school.

Bullying/Harassment

St. Joseph Catholic School is to provide a safe environment for all individuals. This requires good, positive communication between home and school. When a student or parent becomes aware of such a matter, it is imperative that communication begins with your child's teacher as well as the administration. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (seriously or in jest or online) face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

SJS has the responsibility as a Catholic institution to instill in the mind of each student every child's worth and value as an image of God. Bullying behavior is defined as repeated and persistent verbal, written, physical, or psychological action, implied action or communication intended to cause harm, fear, or distress to another person (or group of persons). Bullying is a means of control and may be carried out directly through physical, verbal, written, or electronic means, or indirectly through social and emotional aggression.

Examples of bullying, as defined above, may include, but are not limited to:

Verbal (overt)	Physical (overt)	Social/Emotional (covert)
Teasing/Taunting	Hitting	Relational Aggression
Insults	Kicking	Manipulating Friendships
Racial Comments	Spitting	Gossip
Sexist Comments	Pushing	Intentional Exclusion
Harassment	Inappropriate Gestures	Intimidation
Threatening/Extortion	Stealing	Written Notes
		Electronic Misuse/Text Messages

Each St. Joseph Catholic School student has a right to his or her own dignity and individuality. Thus, anyone who bullies or demeans another person could be subject to immediate suspension or other appropriate corrective action.

Additionally, if it is believed that a student is the subject of being bullied, it is necessary for the student or the parent of the student to communicate with teachers and/or administration immediately. Choosing to delay communication is a mental health risk for the student and may cause the matter to escalate.

Harassment

SJS will not tolerate harassment in any form. The school administration investigates all complaints of harassment. Thus, anyone who harasses or demeans another person will be subject to appropriate corrective action. Sexual harassment refers to behavior that is not welcome, personally offensive, fails to respect the rights of others, lowers morale, and, therefore, interferes with a student's right to be at school.

Sexual harassment may take different forms and includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal: Sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, threats
- Non-verbal: Sexually suggestive objects or pictures, graphic commentaries, suggestive or insulting sounds, leering, whistling, obscene gestures
- Physical: Unwanted physical contact, including touching, pinching, brushing the body, or pushing
- Technological: (Sexting) The act of sending sexually explicit materials through mobile phones/devices, social media, and/or e-mail.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from St. Joseph Catholic School.

Sportsmanship

St. Joseph Catholic School is a founding member of the Shreveport Private School League. We participate in all athletic activities with a sense of sportsmanship. It is expected that anyone who is present at the events refrain from any vulgar or offensive language and gestures towards the players, coaches, cheer squad members, referees, or other attendees. Those who perform any action deemed as harassment towards another will be asked to leave the event.

If a parent has a concern regarding sportsmanship or fair play, please bring the matter to the attention of the school athletic director. If there is no satisfaction after speaking with the athletic director, please bring the matter to the attention of the principal. It is expected, whether coaching or as an attendee, that St. Joseph faculty and parents set an example for the students.

Administrative Leave of Absence for a Student

Under certain circumstances, the administration of St. Joseph Catholic School may deem necessary that a student be placed on administrative leave for a defined or indefinite period of time. There are several factors that may determine such decisions such as the health of the child or other extenuating circumstances. During such a time, the student will be excused from school and permitted to make up work that is missed. Administration will meet with the parents/guardians of the student and determine the appropriate conditions for the student's return. If the student is placed on administrative leave for disciplinary reasons, the administration may conclude that the student is incapable of returning to school.

Academic Integrity

The students of SJS are expected to uphold high ethical standards in accomplishing their work. Completing one's own work is the expectation. Cheating of any type will not be tolerated. This includes copying answers from verbal, written, printed, or electronic sources, plagiarism, submitting another student's work as their own, **permitting another student to copy his or her work, or providing verbal, written, or electronic communication for a student to cheat.**

With the development of many AI programs such as ChatGPT ® Google Bard ® (as examples), SJS is aware such software may be utilized by students, however, the use of such programs is considered a matter of academic integrity and will not be tolerated as it is not the work of the student.

Students who are caught cheating or plagiarizing in any class will be dealt with in the following manner:

First offense: Any student cheating on a test or assignment will receive a zero "0" and detention

Second offense: "0" for said assignment, suspension, and a conference with the parents

Third offense: "0" for said assignment, conference with parents, and the student will be recommended for dismissal from the school

A student athlete or student involved in extracurricular activities who is involved in cheating will also be unable to participate in sports/extracurricular competitions.

Uniform Dress Policy

St. Joseph Catholic School takes pride in the appearance of its students. Students are required to wear a regulation uniform every day. Following the dress and grooming code is the first sign of readiness to begin each day in an atmosphere of love and cooperation with an emphasis on academics.

To ensure we keep with the uniform regulations, students are only allowed:

- One (1) monogram (initials) on their uniform. Monograms are allowed on girl's collars and boys' sleeves. This monogram must be "navy blue" or "white" stitching and cannot be larger than 2 inches.

- No ruffles on collars, sleeves, or additional material or stitching that changes the shirt from the regulation type shirt described below. This includes no trim in color on a collar or sleeve.
- White polos and white sailor blouses are no longer part of the uniform and may not be worn.

Uniforms are available at:

Shreveport Gymnastic Supply Company
4727 Line Ave.
Shreveport, LA 71106
(318) 869-1206

Used uniforms are available on campus in the uniform closet (near the front entrance doors). The uniforms in the closet are in good condition and available at no cost.

UNIFORM GUIDELINES FOR GRADE LEVELS

Pre K-3, K-4, K-5 Girls:

- Plaid uniform dress, plaid uniform jumper, or skort no shorter than **two inches above the knee cap (Dress and Jumper are preferred for K3 and K4)**
- Solid white blouse with Peter Pan collar (worn with jumper only)
- Solid navy knit or moisture wicking polo shirt with school logo on left (worn with skort only).
- *Shoes are to be Velcro only. Boots, crocs, and sandals are not to be worn.*

Pre K-3, K-4, K-5 Boys:

- Navy elastic-waist classic fit pants and shorts. **No belt**
- Light blue knit or moisture wicking polo shirt with St. Joseph Catholic School logo
- *Shoes are to be Velcro only. Boots, crocs, and sandals are not to be worn.*

Grades 1-5 Girls:

- Plaid uniform jumper or skort (**no skirts**) no shorter than **two inches above the top of the knee cap**
- Solid white blouse with Peter Pan collar (worn with jumper only)
- Solid navy knit or moisture wicking polo shirt with St. Joseph Catholic School logo on left

Grades 1-5 Boys:

- Navy classic fit shorts or pants. Shorts are to be no shorter than **two inches above the top of the knee cap**
- Light blue knit or moisture wicking polo shirt with St. Joseph Catholic School logo on left
- Belt-navy, brown, or black required

Middle School Girls:

- Solid navy knit or moisture wicking polo shirt with St. Joseph Catholic School logo
- Plaid uniform skirt or skort no shorter than **two inches above the top of the knee cap.**

Middle School Boys:

- Light blue knit or moisture wicking polo shirt with St. Joseph Catholic School logo on left

- Navy shorts or pants. Shorts are to be no shorter than **two inches above the top of the knee cap.**
- Belt – Navy, Brown or Black

All Students:

- Shirts must be tucked in except for spirit shirts.
- All girls are expected to wear shorts or bloomers under jumpers and skirts.
- **Shorts, skirts, or skorts are not to be rolled up. Repeated offenses can be considered as willful disobedience.**
- **Socks:** white, black, or navy – must be visible and cannot be the type of socks that are below the top of shoes. Socks are required with all shoes and should touch or come close to the ankle of the student. Socks are not required when wearing tights. **PTO socks may be worn any day by any student- even to Mass.**
- **Shoes:** Rubber sole shoes suitable for school wear. **LIGHT UP SHOES, CROCS, SANDALS, HEELS AND BOOTS OF ANY KIND ARE NOT PERMITTED**
- **Undershirt:** only plain white or navy short or long sleeves will be permitted.
- **Turtle-neck:** solid white or navy (no writing, graphics or logos) worn with jumpers and under oxford and polo shirts (long or short sleeves)
- **Leggings/Tights: (Girls only)** Navy, gray, or white tights or leggings. Must be plain in style and solid in color.

Outerwear approved for inside wear:

- Navy or Green sweatshirt with St. Joseph Catholic School crest
 - Navy fleece or sherpa jacket – SJS crest optional
 - Navy or white cardigan - SJS crest optional
 - Any SJS team sport jacket
 - Any SJS Spirit sweatshirt (ex. Sold by BSN Sideline Store, PTO, or Shreveport Gymnastics)
- **Only Navy/Dark Green/White outerwear is approved for Mass. Hoods are not allowed in church. ****

Any other outerwear must be removed when indoors. The hood of a jacket is not permitted to be worn indoors.

Other Uniform Exceptions:

- Students are allowed to wear SJS team jerseys **with undershirts** on game days. Girls may wear cheer uniforms on game days (except on a Mass day). Fridays will be spirit shirt days unless announced otherwise. Any SJS spirit shirt or SJS team shirt can be worn on this day with uniform bottoms. Cheerleaders may wear their uniforms on spirit days. Undershirts must be worn under basketball jerseys.
- Girls may only wear clear nail polish.
- **No makeup or artificial nails.**
- All students must have hair that is combed, clean, neatly groomed, and above the eyebrows.
- **Boys' hair must be above the collar and above the top of the ear.**
- **Unusual haircuts are not acceptable, and hair must be of natural color for boys and girls. Hair wraps and hair tinsel are not allowed.**

- **Animal ear headbands, hair wraps, and tinsel are NOT allowed.**
- Only jewelry appropriate for school will be allowed. Studs or small closed hoops no larger than a dime are allowed. Boys may not wear earrings and/or metallic accessories. Only small cross necklaces or saint necklaces are allowed. One bracelet per wrist and only one ring may be worn. No other piercings are allowed.
- Students are not allowed to have tattoos, including the washable type.

Free Dress Days:

- No spaghetti strap shirts/dresses or halter tops.
- No tank tops.
- No jean shorts.
- Skirts and shorts should be no shorter than uniform skirts or shorts (2 inches above the knee for girls). They must be visible.
- No inappropriate artwork or writing on clothing (i.e. politics, alcohol, tobacco, sexually suggestive, etc.)
- Leggings must be worn with a tunic, dress, or skirt. Yoga pants and athletic leggings are not allowed.
- All joggers must be loose-fitting.
- Boys may wear shorts or pants that are loose-fitting.

A student who chooses not to follow the uniform dress code will receive a violation notice (uniform violation slip). This notice is to be signed by the parent. **Four violations in a nine-week period will result in a detention.** Students are not to write on, tear, or destroy any part of a St. Joseph Catholic School uniform. **Good Rule: If you do not think you should wear it, do not wear it.** If a student arrives inappropriately dressed, parents will be contacted for appropriate clothing, before they are allowed into class. **ALL UNIFORM REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES ARE SUBJECT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE PRINCIPAL.**

Transportation

Carpool Directions

Carpool – begins at 7:20 A.M. for all grade levels

Morning carpool begins at 7:20 A.M. for all grade levels

Do not drop off students prior to 7:20 A.M. No child is “**old enough**” to be on campus alone without adult supervision. This includes safety patrol students.

First bell for all students will be at 7:40 A.M. and the tardy bell at 7:45 A.M.

Tardies:

- Between 7:45-8:00 A.M. students are considered late but will report directly to the classroom; teachers will indicate tardy during attendance check

- After 8:00 A.M, a parent must sign the student into school at the school office; students will be given a tardy slip to go to the classroom.

Afternoon carpool

- Grades K3-8: 3:05 – 3:30 P.M.
- Students in grades K3-8 not picked up by 3:30 P.M. are taken to After-School Care and a fee will be charged

There are three (3) carpool drop-off/pick-up locations:

- **K3, K4, K5-** on the church side of the main office; students will exit and enter the cars on the sidewalk side
 - Inclement Weather Change – students will be dropped off/picked up under the cover at the Church entrance
- **1st-4th** – at the entrance to Gremillion Hall
 - Inclement Weather Change - students will be dropped off/picked up at the gym
- **5th-8th** – between the gym and Family Life Center

****NOTE**** *Students with siblings in different grade levels (K5-8) are to be dropped off and picked up at the carpool location of the youngest sibling. For example, a family with a student in K5 grade and 5th grade will drop-off and pick-up both students at the Church side carpool.*

I. CARPOOL GUIDELINES

1. **PLEASE do not** turn left into the parking lot from Atlantic Ave. This is a safety issue and is unfair to parents waiting in line to drop off their student(s). This also blocks both lanes of traffic to our neighbors.
2. **PLEASE do not** turn around in any neighbors' driveways. It is not fair to our neighbors.
3. **PLEASE do not** drive down Patton Avenue and turn right into the parking lot. This is a safety issue and is unfair to parents waiting in line to drop off their student(s).
4. **PLEASE follow** the assigned speed limit of 15 mph in the school zone. Remember that school zones are HANDS FREE zones. These safety measures are in place for the good of our students.
5. **If your child has reported to After School Care instead of carpool, please enter the school lot through the carpool line at Atlantic Avenue- NOT ANNISTON.**

II. K-VILLAGE MORNING AND AFTERNOON CARPOOL (dismissal at 3:05 PM):

- Access Patton Avenue from Grover Place and travel East on Patton. Turn “left” into the Church parking lot.
- Faculty members will be on duty to assist your student out of the car in the morning and into the car in the afternoon. Faculty Members can help students into the vehicle but **are not responsible for buckling students into car seats.**
- As you leave the carpool line, turn “right” onto Anniston Avenue to avoid the carline exiting the Gremillion lot.
- **All students should enter and exit the vehicle on the driver’s side.** Students cannot pass through the carpool line.

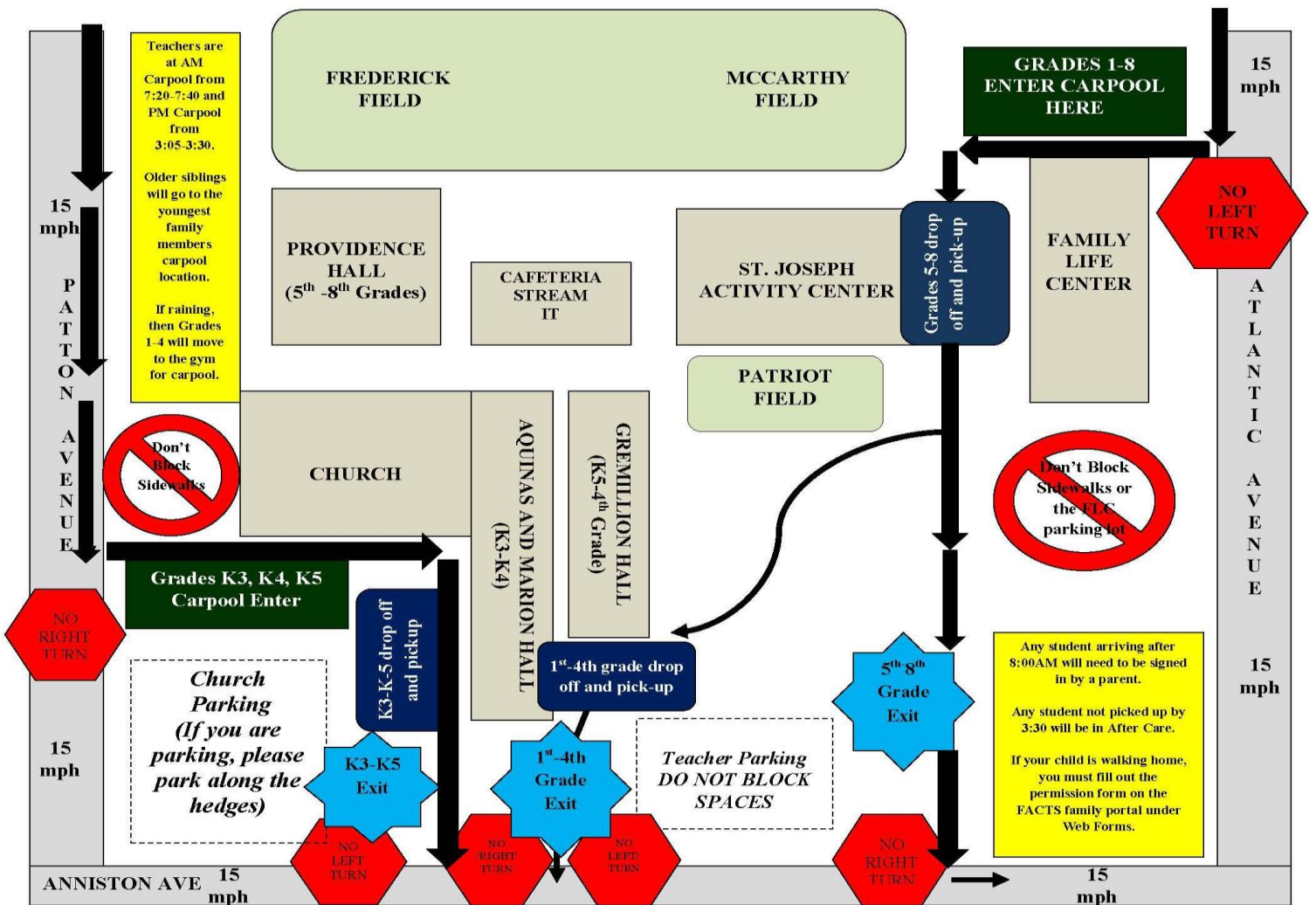
III. GRADES 1-4 AND GRADES 5-8 (dismissal at 3:05PM) MORNING AND AFTERNOON CARPOOL:

- Access Atlantic Avenue from Grover Place and travel East on Atlantic.
- Turn “right” into the Family Life Center parking lot.
- Follow the outside lane of the parking lot to the road that runs between the school gym and the Family Life Center.
- At the following locations, faculty members will be available to greet and supervise your student:
 - **GRADES 1-4** – Drop off and pick up students at the entrance to Gremillion Hall.
 - Faculty members will be on duty to greet and supervise students
 - When leaving the parking lot, please go “straight” across to Fremont to avoid the carline leaving the Church parking lot.
 - **GRADES 5-8** – Drop off and pick up students under covering between the Family Life Center and the gym
 - Faculty members will be on duty to greet and supervise students
 - When leaving the parking lot, please go “straight” to exit, turning left to avoid the carline leaving the Gremillion Hall parking lot.

Students in grades 5th-8th are permitted to walk to and from school. Parents choosing to walk their child to school from the church parking lot must utilize the crosswalk. Parents are permitted to walk their child to the front door of the school.

If you intend for your 5th-8th grade student to walk home from school unaccompanied by an adult you must submit a letter to the school office stating you give your child that permission along with completing the walk home permission form on the FACTS Family Portal. **No students in grades K3– 4 will be allowed to walk home from school unaccompanied.**

These rules exist first and foremost for the safety of your children. Violation of carpool routes and rules endanger SJS students and parents. If everyone follows these procedures, traffic will flow safely and smoothly. Patience will be required, and courtesy will always be expected. We ask for your full cooperation with all of these regulations.



Carpool Map

Attendance

Absences

When a student is absent from school, a parent must call the office by 9:00 AM each day of the absence. If the office does not receive a call, a parent will be contacted. This policy is for the protection of the St. Joseph students and is aligned with the state statutes of the state of Louisiana. **Students with more than 15 days of unexcused absences per year are subject to failure unless it is due to an extended illness. All absences due to vacation are considered unexcused absences.**

A written statement giving reasons for the absence or tardiness must be brought to the student's teacher upon the student's return. These notes/letters will be retained in the office for one year. **If a student is absent due to illness for three consecutive days or more, a note from the child's physician is required.** Should absence for any reason other than illness seem imperative, parents are requested to consult with the Principal and present a written reason for the absence.

Vacations are unexcused absences. Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations. No assignment will be given in anticipation of the vacation. All work will be given after the planned vacation. Each child is responsible for requesting assignments and making up the work within 2 days after returning to school. The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process.

Students needing medical appointments during school hours require a doctor's excuse. Parents are required to sign out their child. If the child returns to school during the same school day, he/she must be signed back into school in the office. Students who are away from school for an appointment or other reason for 3 1/2 hours or more will be counted as absent for 1/2 a day. Three (3) early withdrawals, each of which are less than 3 1/2 hours, are considered a one-half day absence.

Students that do not attend school due to an illness cannot participate in extracurricular activities after school (i.e. team practices, ball games, competitions, cheering at events, dances, tutoring, lessons, etc.).

Tardies

Tardies are a distraction to the learning process and to orderly classroom management. Please make the necessary arrangements to have your child at school on time. Tardiness leads to the same unfortunate consequences of unnecessary absences.

The SJS school day begins each morning at 7:45 A.M. A child is tardy when he arrives after 7:45 A.M. If a child arrives after 8:00 A.M., the parent must accompany the student to the front office and sign him/her in. A student will not be admitted to the classroom without their tardy slip from the school office. **Six cumulative tardies will equal one day unexcused absence, which will be reflected on a student's attendance record. Additionally, parents will be required to have a conference with the principal. As attending school Mass is a requirement, students who check in after Mass will be considered absent for a half-day. If a student is unable to be on time for Mass, parents must either bring the student to Mass or check the student in after 9AM.** If a child has three tardies, parents will be contacted via email. Excessive tardies have a direct impact on a student's academic evaluation and promotion to the next grade level. They are disruptive to the learning environment. Tardies will only be considered excused with a note from a doctor or when the school administration excuses all tardiness because of severe weather or traffic problems.

Tardy Between Classes

Students are given plenty of time between classes to get to where they need to be. **Middle school students who are tardy to a teacher's class 3 times during a 9-week grading period will receive detention for each occurrence.** Students must check with their teacher if they need to use the restroom or get water between classes. It is best to request permission from the teacher whose class they are entering. If a student arrives to class after the required time, the student will be considered tardy. If a student has gained permission from the teacher of the previous class to get water or use the restroom, the teacher from the previous class will make contact with the teacher of the upcoming class.

Checking Out

We strongly urge parents to make appointments for their children after school hours. If a student must be checked out during school hours, the parent should come to the front office and sign their child out. Checking out a child during school hours is excused only when a child is ill or if a doctor's appointment is necessary. A doctor's excuse must be presented upon the child's return to school. All parents must report to the front office to check in or check out their child between school hours. All students must be checked out through the front office. An unexcused check-out prior to lunch will result in an unexcused absence. *****No students will be allowed to checkout after 2:30 P.M.*****

Medical

Health Records

The Louisiana State Department of Health requires that all students have a current record of immunizations on file at the school. Students may not begin school in August if immunization records are not on file or not up-to-date. The only exception to the policy is in the event that a student has an illness that would compromise his/her life by being immunized. Documentation of a compromising condition must be presented prior to the first day of the school year.

The student health records will be reviewed each year to ensure we are complying with regulations of the Louisiana State Department of Health. Each student receives a certificate of immunization for immunizations from the local health unit or your medical provider. All health records should be kept up-to-date. It is the responsibility of the parents to notify the school office of any changes.

Medication Policy

- Proper procedure for each medication will be followed or the medication will not be administered. No exceptions will be made.
- Students are not allowed to have any medication, prescription or nonprescription, in their possession at any time on the school grounds. Only students with completed forms from a licensed physician stating the need to keep medications on their person will be allowed (i.e. inhalers, epi-pens, etc.).
- Teachers and school administrators have the right to take any medication from a student and contact the parent for appropriate action.
- A consent form for medication administration must be completed and signed by the parent and the physician for each medication. We accept the standard form used by Caddo and Bossier Schools.
- The physician's portion of the form must include: the child's name, diagnosis, name of medication, time and frequency to be administered at school, dosage, and length of time to be

administered.

- Prescribed medication must be in an updated container that meets acceptable pharmaceutical standards. The label must include the name of the student to be administered the medication, name of the medication, strength, and amount of time it is to be administered.
- Medication must be brought to school by parent or guardian.
- Verbal phone orders from physicians or parents will not be accepted.
- The child will come to the office at the prescribed time to receive medication.

Illness or Injury

When your child is ill, please call the front office before 9:00 A.M. to inform school officials.

Students exhibiting the following illnesses must be symptom free 24 hours without the assistance of medication given to reduce symptoms:

- **Fever over 100 degrees**
- **Vomiting caused my illness**
- **Diarrhea**

If a child becomes ill or is injured while at school, the school personnel will notify the designated parent or guardian and give simple first aid only. Therefore, it is most important that the school office knows where to reach a parent or guardian during the school day. A current emergency telephone number (home, work, relative, friend, or neighbor) should be on file in the school office at all times. It is the responsibility of the parent to keep this emergency information current. No student will be released to anyone not appearing on the approved list.

When receiving a call from school to pick up a sick or injured child, it is required that the child be picked up within thirty minutes. If there are extenuating circumstances that will delay the person contacted, please inform school officials.

Parents are asked to inform the school if their child becomes ill with a contagious disease (chicken pox, measles, flu, lice, pink eye, etc.) A student who has an infectious or contagious disease is not permitted to attend classes until the danger of transmitting the infection or disease to other students is over. A signed release from a family doctor is required of any student returning to school after such illness. Should a student be absent over an extended time period for causes of hospitalization, a statement from the physician as to the nature of the illness and recovery information should be presented to the receptionist upon return to school.

Immunizations

All students enrolled in St. Joseph Catholic School must have current immunizations. The only exception to the policy is in the event that a student has an illness that would compromise his/her life by being immunized. Documentation of a compromising condition, such as, but not limited to, leukemia must be presented prior to the first day of the school year.

Asthma/Allergy

The school does all that it can to ensure the school environment is favorable to children with asthma or allergies. As much as possible, the school does not use chemicals in science and art lessons that are potential triggers for children with asthma.

Immediate access to reliever inhalers is vital. Parents are asked to ensure that the school is provided with a medication consent form submitted by a licensed physician. It is recommended that a student carry on their person and have a labeled spare reliever inhaler in the office. All inhalers must be labeled with the child's name.

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

Classroom Teachers must be familiar with the Emergency Action Plan of students in their classes and respond to emergencies as per the emergency protocol documented in the Emergency Action Plan.

In the event of a suspected allergic reaction (where there is no known allergic history), the school's Emergency Response Plan will be activated. The emergency medical services will be called immediately.

- The classrooms have easy communication with the front office and have the ability to call 911.
- Information will be kept about students' food allergies in the classroom and in the substitute emergency folder accessible by teachers, substitutes or other responsible adults.
- All teachers and substitutes will be educated about the risk of food allergies.
- A parent or guardian of a student with food allergies is responsible for providing all food for his/her own child. Snacks will be kept in a separate snack box or chest provided by the parent or guardian.
- Tables will be washed with soap and water following any food-related events held in the classroom.
- Proper hand cleaning techniques will be taught and encouraged before and after the handling/consumption of food.

Special Services

Library

We offer a wide range of learning services and media resources to the children of St. Joseph Catholic School that will assist students in becoming successful readers and effective seekers and users of information. It is used as a support system for the reading aspect of the curriculum, specifically comprehension.

Pre-K through 5th grade classes will visit the library on a scheduled basis throughout the week. Teachers can also schedule extra visits to the library for lessons and research.

During visits, students in grades 1-8 may check out 1-2 books. Books are due back to the library in two weeks. Borrowed books are to be returned on time and in good condition. Students may renew their books. Parents/Students will be notified when books are overdue. If a student has an overdue book, they may not check out any items until the book is returned.

Books damaged or lost must be paid for by the student before any other materials may be checked out. According to policy, report cards will be held until outstanding balances are paid or lost books are returned.

Bean Stack is for students in grades 1-8. Bean Stack is an online, digital reading log that encourages students to read without being tied to quizzes and reading ranges. Bean Stack reading challenges can be taken during library class or on classroom iPads at the teacher's discretion.

Child Nutrition Program

The Diocese of Shreveport participates in the National School Lunch Program. The Child Nutrition Program serves student quality meals in a Christian environment. This is done by ensuring the meals are healthy, correctly prepared, and attractively served in pleasant surroundings. The Diocese of Shreveport Catholic Schools Food Policy is provided in the Appendix of this handbook.

Free and reduced applications will be available to all families. Applications will be available the first day of school. You may ask for an application from the cafeteria manager or school office personnel. All applications are handled confidentially and used only for eligibility determination and verification of the data. Parents may apply for Free and Reduced benefits any time during the 2024-2025 school year. **The cost for lunch is \$3.60.**

Monthly menus are published on the website (www.sjsfalcons.org) and PTO page. Menus are also posted in the lunchroom and classrooms. Menus are subject to change without notice. Parents have the option to send in payments to the school or to create an account through MySchoolBucks, which can be found on the school website.

Director for the Child Nutrition Program is Sr. Ann Middlebrooks, SEC. Her office is located at 3500 Fairfield Avenue (Catholic Center). Her office number is 219-7298. The Cafeteria Manager is Cynthia Jackson. Her office is located in the St. Joseph Catholic School Cafeteria. Her office number is (318) 841-8220.

After-School Care

St. Joseph Catholic School offers an After-School Care Program (ASC) at a cost of \$10.00 a day for 1 child. For 2 or more children, it is \$9.00 a day. A fee of \$1.00 per minute is charged for students remaining in the program after 5:35 P.M. After School Care follows the 2024-2025 Parent-Student School Handbook for all policies.

Parents are to make arrangements for their child(ren) to be picked up at dismissal time (3:05 PM or 5:30 PM for ASC). Students who are not picked up by 5:30 PM will receive:

1. A phone call reminding you to pick up your students on time
2. A registered letter reminding you that failure to pick up your child on time constitutes neglect.
3. Students who remain after 6:30 PM will be sent home via the Shreveport Police Department.
4. Repeated early drop off or failure to pick up your child from After-School Care on time will result in expulsion from the After-School Care Program.

Students not picked up by the end of carpool (approximately 3:30 PM) will be sent immediately to the After-School Care Program.

After-School Tutoring

Tutoring is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the St. Joseph Catholic School library from 3:05 PM - 4:15 PM. Tutoring is provided by Loyola College Prep National Honor Society members. This is a time for students to receive help in areas they may be struggling. This is not homework completion time. Although tutors can help with homework questions, students should have specific work to complete. If tutoring is canceled, a text and email will be sent to parents. Students are required to seek help for their academics during this time. If your child is not actively seeking assistance, he or she may be dismissed by the on-duty teacher to After School Care.

Safety Procedures

Child Abuse Laws

St. Joseph Catholic School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of Louisiana. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services.

Emergency Drills

State Law requires that fire drills be held monthly. During the fire drills, students should follow these regulations:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds
2. Close windows and doors
3. Walk to the assigned place briskly, in single file at all times, and in silence
4. Return to the building when a signal is given.

Tornado drills are held periodically. The procedures are:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds
2. Walk briskly to the assigned place in single file
3. Sit, face wall, and put hands over head
4. Return to the classroom when a signal is given.

Crisis Management

St. Joseph Catholic School has implemented a crisis management plan in case of a lockdown emergency. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedure to follow to keep your children safe. In the event of a crisis involving law enforcement personnel, the school will defer to law enforcement procedures and request that parents do likewise.

Emergency Closings

In certain extreme cases, usually due to inclement weather, it is necessary to close school. The school will only do so after communication between the administration and the Catholic Schools Office. Parents are responsible for discussing with their children proper emergency procedures should school dismiss before the end of the regular time schedule. The school will use its normal dismissal procedure should this occur.

In case of an emergency situation, parents will be notified by text or email with all pertinent information and specific directions for the closure. Public media may also be used in specific situations. Please **DO NOT** call the front office about possible school closure. You will be contacted as soon as a decision has been made.

Campus Safety

St. Joseph Catholic School attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals and has a closed campus to ensure your child's safety. For the 2024-25 school year, SJS will have school resource officers employed throughout the school day. All gates and outside doors are locked after 8:00 AM in the morning. All visitors must check in at the front office before going to any area of the school. In the event that the school suspects danger to a student or the school community, the school reserves the right to call the police. The school reserves the right to search anything brought on school property.

Asbestos Management

St. Joseph Catholic School, along with other schools in the Diocese of Shreveport, will conform to all regulations and legislation regarding asbestos inspection/abatement/removal, as required by

federal and state government agencies. Written documentation is kept at the school office and the Diocesan School Office.

Asbestos containing building materials are located within St. Joseph Catholic School. In their present condition, they present no hazard to school occupants. An Asbestos Management Plan has been developed to prevent the asbestos from becoming a hazard, and you may find this document on file in the school office. The plan is available for inspection upon request and appointment.

Drug-Free Policy

St Joseph Catholic School and the school grounds are a drug-free zone. According to Louisiana State Policy, the use, possession, or sale of alcohol or drugs by students on school premises or at school sponsored functions on school property is prohibited. Students who possess drugs and/or alcohol at school or at any school function face suspension and/or dismissal.

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

St. Joseph Catholic School and the school grounds are a smoke free zone. No smoking is allowed on the school grounds or in any of the school buildings. Smoking or the use of smokeless tobacco by a student is strictly prohibited. Also, use of any tobacco products is prohibited for students at all school-related functions (on or off campus). Possession of any tobacco product, e-cigarettes or vapes are never permitted on campus and are grounds for dismissal.

Technology (Acceptable Use Policy)

iPad Policy

The following procedures have been established to address electronic devices on St. Joseph Catholic School property during school hours of 7:20 AM -3:30 PM and also during the hours of After-School Care (dismissal – 5:30PM).

St. Joseph Catholic School is a 1:1 iPad school in grades 6-8 and classroom sets of iPads are used in other classrooms on campus. The use of an iPad is a privilege. When inappropriate behavior with the iPad is identified, the following discipline guidelines will be followed.

a. Minor Offense – 3 violations result in detention

- i. Leaving an iPad unattended
- ii. Using an “app” when not specifically directed to use
- iii. Using iPad when instructed not to use

b. Major Offense – Loss of iPad for 2 weeks from the time of the incident and issued a detention

- i. Misuse of email, camera (students are not permitted to take pictures of others unless it is relevant to an assignment), or “apps” on iPad
- ii. Using another student’s iPad without permission
- iii. Downloading offensive or inappropriate images or verbiage
- iv. Accessing or attempting to access inappropriate websites
- v. Tampering with the security or other settings on the iPad
- vi. Being in the possession of someone else’s iPad without permission
- vi. Using inappropriate language or having inappropriate images on the iPad

Any misuse of an iPad that is not listed above will be reviewed, and the appropriate discipline will be applied.

Cell Phones and Smart Watches- Powered Down and Put Away

- If a parent believes it is necessary for his/her student to have a cell phone at school, the parent must complete and sign the required form. The signed form will be kept on file at the school office. This will be verification that your child has your permission to have a cell phone on campus and that you are aware of the restrictions and procedures concerning the use of a cell phone at school during school hours.
- If a signed form is received at the school office, the student may possess a cell phone on campus and must adhere to the following restrictions and procedures that apply during school hours of 7:20 AM - 3:30 PM and, also, during the times of carpool (dismissal- 3:30 PM), tutoring (dismissal-4:15PM), After-School Care and (dismissal – 5:30PM). Students are not permitted to use cell phones or smart watches to communicate during sports practices.
 - **The phone must be turned OFF and kept in the student’s locker for middle school and in the student’s backpack for elementary until the end of the school day or the end of ASC. (The phone cannot be on the student’s person, such as on a belt or in a pocket or in a purse or in a backpack/purse that is taken into a restroom or dressing room.) If a phone is found on the person or in the backpack of a middle school student outside of the permitted times, the phone is confiscated, and a detention is issued. If the phone makes any noise (ring, music, vibration) or is taken out for any reason without proper approval, a detention will be issued, and the phone will be confiscated.**

The student’s parent(s) must come to the office to retrieve any confiscated phone.

- Since a student may not receive a phone call on a cell phone during the school day, emergency contact with a student at school can always be made by phoning the school office.
- If a faculty member is suspicious of a student using a cell phone, an appropriate search may be conducted.

Other Mobile and Electronic Devices

- Mobile Electronic devices such as gaming devices, cameras, etc., are not allowed on campus.
- **Smart Watches and other smart devices must be kept in one’s locker during the school day. Smart watches are capable of linking to phones and now can be utilized as independent devices. Students who communicate with others during the school day via a smart watch will receive the same consequences as using a cell phone. St. Joseph reserves the right to conduct appropriate searches if there is suspicion that a student is using a mobile device during the school day.**

Social Media

Engagement in social media such as, but not limited to Facebook®, Twitter®, Instagram®, Snapchat®, TikTok®, YouTube®, BReel®, etc. may result in disciplinary actions (including expulsion) if the content of the student’s or parent’s blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students or the parish. Parents should refrain from creating a class/grade Facebook® page without the written authorization of the principal. Negative or defamatory comments about the school, the faculty, other students, or the parish made on a parent’s Facebook® page may result in the children of the parent being dismissed from the school. In the event that a student is dismissed from the school, there will be no

reimbursement for tuition and/or fees. Students wearing St. Joseph Catholic School uniforms (daily or athletic) performing any inappropriate behaviors will be subject to disciplinary action.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is being cruel to others through electronic means by sending or posting harmful material over the Internet. This can be done through e-mail, instant messaging, chat rooms, or online social media sites. In the state of Louisiana, this is considered criminal behavior. Any form of harassment is in direct violation to the mission of our school. St. Joseph Catholic School will not tolerate harassment in any form. Harassment will be handled as outlined in the school discipline policy. Appropriate conduct is expected in both face-to-face and electronic interactions. Parents or students who feel that they have been the victims of cyberbullying should print a copy of the material and report the incident to school administration. Reports will be fully investigated. Consequences may include, but are not limited to, the loss of computer privileges, detention, suspension, dismissal from school, and/or police involvement.

School Information

Birthday Observances

Students in Grades Pre-K through Grade 8 may have birthday treats brought to school; to be eaten after students are finished with lunch and in the cafeteria. All treats should be pre-packaged with ingredients listed on the package. Items, such as cupcakes and/or cookies, that are individual, are requested. No cakes or candy, and please, no candles.

Invitations for parties (birthday, slumber, etc.) should be sent to the homes of students via the U.S. Mail not via classroom teachers.

Water Bottles

St. Joseph Catholic School has installed water-filling stations through the campus to assist in the prevention of the spread of germs and disease. Parents are to provide a refillable bottle for their child if they wish for them to utilize the filling stations. **Water bottles are only to be utilized with the permission of the teacher. PLASTIC water bottles are preferred. Water bottles are to contain water ONLY. Water bottles must have a closable, leak-proof lid. Cups and tumblers are not allowed.**

Recess

Recesses are provided for students to take a break from learning. Grades K3-5th grade have two recesses a day. Grades 6th-8th have recess immediately following lunch. If the “heat index/real feel” temperature is above 95°, students will have indoor recess.

PLAYGROUND RULES

1. Students do not enter or leave the playground without permission and supervision of school faculty.
2. All students must remain in the designated play areas. Students are not permitted to leave the playground area unless it is deemed necessary by a faculty member.
3. Play-fighting, rough play, kicking, tackling, wrestling, teasing others, etc. are prohibited.
4. Students are not allowed to throw rocks, sticks, pine cones, gumballs, etc.
5. Students should use playground equipment correctly.
6. Students should be courteous and respectful to others at play.
7. At the end of recess, students should bring all play equipment to the storage bin and line up quietly.

Extracurricular Activities

The purpose of the extracurricular program at St. Joseph Catholic School is to encourage our students to develop their talents and to learn how to live and work in cooperation with others. Extracurricular activities not only add to the enjoyment of school life, but also give the student deeper insights and experience in cultural and religious areas. It is a goal of the program to accommodate as many students as possible and, at the same time, provide a manageable, quality program. Due, in part, to the number of students we are attempting to serve, we will have to limit the number of activities in which a student participates. This is for the benefit of all.

Based on the recommendation of the faculty and administration, participation and placement in St. Joseph Catholic School extracurricular activities is determined, in part, by the following selection criteria:

- Academic Performance
- Aptitude/Interest in a particular area
- Behavior
- The number of students interested in participating in a particular extracurricular activity.

Participation in an extracurricular program is a privilege. Therefore, students may be removed from a program due to misbehavior, lack of cooperation, academic failure, and/or excessive absence and tardies to school. We ask that parents cooperate with us in enforcing this policy. This is for the benefit of all concerned.

All clubs, groups and activities will have a faculty representative/sponsor. This representative/sponsor is responsible for the supervision of the students involved and the coordination of their activities as they relate to the school program.

Lockers

Students in grades 6-8 are assigned a locker and issued a school-owned combination lock (\$3) to use to protect their personal items during the day, evening and on the weekends. In order to maintain a quiet atmosphere for class, students are allowed to go to their lockers only at specified times. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers at any time.

The school maintains a universal key and reserves the right to open student lockers at any time without probable or reasonable cause. The locks are the property of St. Joseph Catholic School. Students will be responsible for replacement of any lost lock.

Lost and Found

Any items left in the school building or on the school grounds should be given to the school receptionist to be placed in the Lost and Found basket in the uniform closet. Items placed in the Lost and Found remain there for 10 days. **After 10 days, items are donated to charity.**

Students who lose a library book, textbook or workbook must pay the replacement cost of the book plus shipping in order to receive a new copy. Parents are encouraged to look for their child's item in the Lost and Found.

Parent Teacher Organization – PTO

St. Joseph Catholic School Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) works to support and enhance the educational ministry of the school. Fund-raising, parent education, and building community are goals of this organization. Whether visiting for lunch, helping with fundraisers, attending PTO meetings, or joining the school on field trips, the parent's presence at school is a welcomed part

of life at St. Joseph Catholic School. Your support is very valuable to the school, so please consider where you can realistically assist the school.

- Monthly PTO meetings are held on the third Tuesday day of each month unless a special meeting is needed. The SJS PTO has a Facebook page, SJS PTO SHREVEPORT.
- PTO fundraising events support many projects at SJS including, but are not limited to, Catholic Schools Week, Silent Auction, World's Finest Chocolates, Prayers for staff, National Teacher Appreciation, and many other items.
- PTO Room Moms assist the classrooms with events and parties.
- PTO has several opportunities to earn donations for the school including Box Tops for Education, Amazon Smile, and Kroger Community Rewards.

Parties

All school parties will be arranged by the classroom teacher in collaboration with the Room Mother Coordinators. As a school, we celebrate with 2 parties annually – Christmas and Valentine's. Other holiday celebrations are celebrated within the class with a special treat. Any additional school parties may be held only at the discretion of the principal.

School Property

The parent of a child who carelessly destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property will be obligated to pay the full amount of repairs and labor or replacement. Textbooks rented by the student must have a proper book cover. No writing in rented textbooks is permitted. The student will pay a fine or replacement for damaged or lost texts before any final reports, transcripts, or diplomas are presented.

Search

The school reserves the right to search anything brought on school property. This includes cell phones and other electronic devices.

Title IX

St. Joseph Catholic School adheres to the tenets of Title IX: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Use of School Grounds

Permission shall be obtained from the principal for use of school grounds.

APPENDIX

**ALL FORMS ARE FOUND ON THE FACTS
FAMILY PORTAL AND ARE TO BE
COMPLETED DIGITALLY**

- Cell Phone Use Form – page 43
- Volunteer Driver’s Agreement Form – pages 44 - 45
- Diocese of Shreveport Catholic Schools Food Policy – pages 46- 47

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL CELL PHONE USE FORM SY 2024-2025

Personal cell phones or other electronic communication devices are common with our students and the use of them on the school campus presents potential problems. These devices in school can be a hindrance to the educational process, and with cameras and text messaging can become an issue of privacy and security.

The following procedure has been established to address personal cell phone and other electronic devices on the St. Joseph Catholic School campus during school hours (7:20 a.m. – 3:30 P.M. This means phones are not to be out at carpool since it falls under school hours) and also during the hours of After School Care (dismissal at 5:30 P.M.).

- If you believe it is necessary for your student to have a cell phone at school, you must complete and sign the required form. The signed form will be kept on file at the school office. This will be verification that your child has your permission to have a cell phone on campus and that you are aware of the restrictions and procedures concerning the use of a cell phone at school during school hours.
- If a signed form is received at the school office, the student may possess a cell phone on campus and must adhere to the following restrictions and procedures that apply during school hours of 7:20 AM - 3:30 PM and, also, during the hours of After-School Care (dismissal – 5:30PM). Students are not permitted to use cell phones or smart watches to communicate during sports practices.
 - The phone must be turned OFF and kept in the student’s locker for middle school and in the student’s backpack for elementary until the end of the school day or the end of ASC. (The phone cannot be on the student’s person, such as on a belt or in a pocket or in a purse or in a backpack/purse that is taken into a restroom or dressing room.)
 - If the phone makes any noise (ring, music, vibration) or is taken out for any reason without proper approval, a detention will be issued, and the phone will be confiscated. The student’s parents must come to the office to retrieve any confiscated phone.
- Since a student may not receive a phone call on a cell phone during the school day, emergency contact with a student at school can always be made by phoning the school office.

Other Electronic Devices

- No electronic devices, such as iPods, ITouch, MP3, gaming devices, cameras, beepers, etc. are allowed on campus.
- Smart Watches and other smart devices must be kept in one’s locker during the school day. Smart watches are capable of linking to phones and can also be utilized as independent devices. Students who communicate with others during the school day via a smart watch will receive the same consequences as using a cell phone.

St. Joseph reserves the right to conduct appropriate searches if there is suspicion that a student is using a mobile device during the school day.

Students violating these procedures will be issued a detention.

My student and I have read the St. Joseph Catholic School guidelines for my student to have a personal cell phone or other electronic devices with them during the school day and we will adhere to the guidelines listed above.

Parent Printed Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Student Printed Name: _____

Student Signature Name: _____

Date Signed: _____

VOLUNTEER DRIVER'S AGREEMENT SY 2024-2025

The following transportation agreement is made by and between St. Joseph Catholic School and _____ (Transporter), of _____ (city), Louisiana.

By our signatures it is agreed that:

1. All vehicles used for transportation of individuals shall be designed for enclosed passenger transportation, shall be licensed according to law, and shall display a current state safety inspection sticker.
2. Transporter warrants that he or she has a valid Operator's License; that the driver's license number supplied in this contract is for that license; that he or she has no other vehicle operator's license and had never had such a license canceled by Louisiana or any other state or entity.
3. No more than 15 persons (including the driver) shall be transported in any of these passenger vehicles, but in no case more than the number of seat belts available.
4. No one under the age of 21 shall be permitted to operate the vehicle.
5. The Transporter agrees to abide by the Diocesan Driver and Vehicle Safety Policies and warrants that he or she is carrying at least the minimum vehicle liability insurance required by the state.
6. Upon compliance with the above requirements and in consideration of the fact that the Transporter is volunteering his or her time without remuneration, the Diocese of Shreveport shall provide excess liability insurance coverage while the Transporter is operating vehicles in compliance with the purpose and terms of this Agreement.
7. By signing this Contract, Transporter authorizes the diocese, parish, or school to check with all available state agencies regarding the validity of Transporter's license and Transporter's driving record. Transporter agrees to cooperate with such an investigation and provide any necessary information to enable a license check to be made via a Motor Vehicle Report (MVR).

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed and delivered this Agreement as of the day and year listed on the next page.

VOLUNTEER DRIVER'S AGREEMENT (cont'd, page 2)

SY 2024-2025

Name of Driver _____ Birth Date ___ / ___ /

Address _____

Social Security Number _____ Telephone _____

Driver's License Number _____ Exp. Date _____ State Issued _____

Vehicle Year/Make/Model _____ License Plate _____

Insurance Company's Name _____

Policy Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Liability Limits of Policy _____

In order to provide for the safety of our students or other members of the parish and those we serve, we must ask each volunteer driver to list all accidents or moving violations they have had in the last five years: (please indicate date, type, and city and state.)

Please note: Louisiana state law requires minimum Bodily Injury Liability coverage of \$15,000 per injured person up to a total of \$30,000 per accident, and Property Damage Liability coverage with a minimum limit of \$15,000. This basic coverage is often referred to as 15/30/15 coverage.

All volunteers are required to attend Protecting God's Children training and keep up with the continuing education portion of the program called Virtus, an online education source with monthly bulletins. All volunteers must complete and submit the form for a criminal/sex offender search/background check and Motor Vehicle Report. Please verify that you are current with these requirements:

- I have attended the Protecting God's Children training Yes No
- I have completed the Motor Vehicle Report and background check Yes No
- I am current with my Virtus monthly bulletins Yes No

Certification:

I certify that the information given on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that as a volunteer driver, I must be 21 years of age or older, possess a valid driver's license, have the proper and current license and vehicle registration, and have the required coverage in effect on any vehicle used to transport the children.

Please be aware that as a volunteer driver, your insurance provides the primary coverage in case of an accident.

Thank you for helping us with our transportation needs.

Date _____

Signature of Volunteer Driver _____

Signature of Diocesan Parish School Representative _____

Diocese of Shreveport Catholic Schools Food Policy

To help ensure the health and welfare of each student attending the Diocese of Shreveport Catholic Schools and to provide guidance to school personnel in the areas of nutrition, health, physical activity and food service the Office of Catholic Schools subscribes to the following: The Office of Catholic Schools will ensure that no student in the Diocese of Shreveport Catholic Schools goes hungry while in school.

The Office of Catholic Schools will ensure that an economically sustainable meal program, that provides a healthy nutritious lunch, is available to every student at every school so that students are prepared to learn to their fullest potential.

The Office of Catholic Schools will ensure that the nutritional value of the food served by Diocese of Shreveport Catholic Schools significantly improves upon USDA and State Dietary Guidelines by providing nutritious, fresh, tasty, and when possible locally grown food. The Office of Catholic Schools encourages staff to utilize food from school gardens and local farmers based upon availability and acceptability.

Meals served to students are prepared in Peanut Restricted and Shellfish Restricted kitchens and shall be attractively presented in a pleasant environment with sufficient time for eating. It shall be the responsibility of the entire school staff to foster good manners and respect for fellow students.

Students will have minimal involvement in any sales of candy, sodas, cookies and sweets at any school sponsored event or for any fundraising activity.

Bake Sales and/or Ice Cream Socials may be held with the permission of the school principal, in moderation and with consideration and consistency of the goals of this policy.

Foods offered to students during the school day as a snack, incentive, or reward, whether arranged by parents or staff, shall be consistent with the Healthy Snack List Options provided by Pennington Biomedical Research Center in cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Education.

The Office of Catholic Schools recognizes that class parties are a tradition in Catholic School education. However, parents and staff are encouraged to provide healthy party snack options that are consistent with the goals of the policy. Parties are to be held after the lunch hour.

The Office of Catholic Schools will ensure that teachers, principals, and Nutrition Services employees recognize that the lunch period is an integral part of the educational program of the Diocese of Shreveport Catholic Schools and work to implement the goals of this policy.

Student Rules & Regulations: All students are encouraged to participate in the school's meal programs.

- Students who bring breakfast or lunch must bring food of nutritional values based on the Diocese of Shreveport Healthy School Environment & Wellness Policy guidelines.
- Drinks may include milks, 100% fruit drinks or water. No carbonated beverages (canned sodas) are allowed.

- No Fast Food restaurant meals are allowed in the cafeteria during lunch time.
- All meals from home must be ready to eat. No microwave or warming facilities are allowed in the cafeteria.
- Students must bring their meals when they arrive in the morning. Meals will not be delivered to students by the office staff during the school day.

The Office of Catholic Schools supports all efforts that encourage healthy eating experiences, school gardens, and nutrition education as integral components to the core academic curriculum at all grade levels.