

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL

175 North 8th Street, Ponchatoula, LA 70454
Mrs. Danette Ragusa, Principal
Mrs. Shelly Ernst, Assistant Principal

985-386-6421
Rev. Paul A. McDuffie, Pastor

Parent/Student Handbook

2024-2025



Mission Statement

The mission of St. Joseph School is to encourage our students to have a zeal for their Catholic faith through prayer and service and to provide students with the opportunity to develop their God-given talents through academic excellence.

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PLEASE READ THIS HANDBOOK CAREFULLY

Failure to abide by the regulations and policies of the school handbook by either the student or his/her parent/guardian may result in the student's removal from the school.

All decisions regarding this handbook are up to the final discretion of the administration. The administration is the final recourse and reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time. Parents and other school community members will be given prompt notification.

St. Joseph School is a Catholic elementary school that is part of the school system of the Diocese of Baton Rouge. Students are formed through the religious program presented by the school, including classroom instruction in the Catholic faith, attendance at Mass weekly, and participation in the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation. Student behavior is expected to reflect the values of love of God, love of self, and service to neighbor which forms the basis of the Catholic faith.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

I am honored and blessed to be a part of St. Joseph Catholic School. I believe our school provides a faith-filled environment where our students can thrive in their Catholic faith and academic success. We have a great sense of community and rigor in our educational expectations. My vision is to continue to foster these goals and provide our students with an education and atmosphere that will be a vital part of their growth into strong Catholic adults.

-- *Mrs. Danette Ragusa*

PHILOSOPHY

St. Joseph School is committed to the Catholic formation and education of our students. We pledge to provide an environment in which we are open to God in all the events of life and to provide an education in truth, justice, and love according to the teachings and way of life of Jesus Christ.

ACCREDITATION

St. Joseph Catholic School is accredited through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement. The school maintains approval status by the Louisiana State Department of Education.

HISTORY OF ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL

St. Joseph School was established in 1896 to serve the Catholic students of St. Joseph Church Parish. It has been a landmark of the Ponchatoula area for generations.

The school is operated by the church parish which for years was served by the Dominican Fathers. We are now blessed to be served by Fr. Paul McDuffie, a diocesan priest.

For many years, the Notre Dame Sisters administered and staffed the school.

Presently the school is staffed by thirty-six certified faculty members and eleven classroom paraprofessionals, and 4 support staff members.

The school now serves over 500 students and their families.

CLASSIFICATION OF STUDENTS

Pre-Kindergarten – 2nd grade is considered “Early Learning”

3rd and 5th grade is considered “Elementary”

6th grade – 8th grade is considered “Middle School”

ACADEMICS

1. GRADING SYSTEM

Academic Grading Scale

A = 93-100%	B = 85-92%	C = 75-84%	D = 67-74%	F = 66% and below
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Academic Progress

Academic progress, including mid-quarter reports, can be tracked online at any time via FACTS.

Major Subjects

Kindergarten through 3 rd Grades	Religion, Reading, Math, Language Arts
4 th -8 th Grades	Religion, Reading, Math, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies

Minor Subjects

Kindergarten through 4 th grades	Social science, Handwriting, Enrichment
5 th – 8 th grades	Enrichment

Report Cards

Report cards are available at the end of each quarter. The report card can be accessed on RenWeb.

- **Academic Calendar:**
 - 1st quarter – August 7, 2024 – October 11, 2024
 - 2nd quarter – October 14, 2024 – December 19, 2024
 - 3rd quarter – January 6, 2025 – March 14, 2025
 - 4th quarter – March 17, 2025 – May 23, 2025

Final Report Cards will be mailed home.

On the report card, a letter grade will have an equivalent in quality points on a four-point scale:

A=4	B=3	C=2	D=1	F=0
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Courses for high school credit will be valued on a five-point scale for academic honors and ranking purposes. Quality points for the nine week periods will be averaged to determine final marks. Example:

$C+B+B+B = 3.75 = B \text{ average for the year, or}$ $3+4+4+4 = 15 \div 4 = 3.75 = B \text{ average for the year}$

Honor Roll

Honor Roll is earned each quarter in grades Second through Eighth and includes all major subjects and conduct.

Principal's Alpha Honor Roll = All "A's" in every subject and conduct.

Alpha Academic Honor Roll = "A"s in all academic subjects.

Principal's Beta Honor Roll = "A's" and "B's" in every subject and conduct.

Beta Academic Honor Roll = "A"s and "B"s in every academic subject.

The handwriting grade does not count toward either Honor Roll.

2. QUARTER EXAMS

Students in grades 6-8 will take end-of-the-quarter exams in the following subjects: Math, ELA (English/Language Arts), Science, Social Studies. The exams are to be comprehensive.

Exemption – **8th grade students only** who have maintained an "A" on the report card for every quarter and who have an "A" average at the end of the fourth quarter may be exempt from the final exam in that subject.

3. ACCELERATED CLASSES (includes those for high school credit)

Criteria for Acceptance

Students will qualify for the accelerated/high school credit classes based on standardized test scores, grades, teacher recommendations, conduct, work ethic, and placement tests (for Algebra I only). **We follow the grading scale per the policy of the Diocese of Baton Rouge (elementary and high school). Please note this is the grade sent to future high schools and will impact their overall high school GPA.**

Criteria for High School Course Credit (8th Grade)

Students who receive two “C” report card grades in 1st-3rd quarter may be removed from the class and no high school credit will be given. Students who receive a report card grade of “D” or lower at any time will be moved to the regular class, and no high school credit will be given.

*****All students will take a high school Science course. They must maintain an A or B to receive the high school credit. A grade of C or below will show an 8th grade Science course on their transcripts.**

4. HOMEWORK

Teachers assign homework with great care and for the purpose of fostering habits of independent study. Each student in grades Second through Sixth has a homework assignment book and is expected to write assignments and test dates in that book. Assignments may also be found on FACTS. *****If a student forgets materials, they must come to the school office before 3:30pm and be escorted to the classroom to retrieve materials.**

The amount of homework depends upon the student’s progress in school. It is important to keep in mind that written work is not the only kind of homework. Study work is important.

The best way for a parent to assist a child with his/her homework is to provide him/her with a quiet hour or two in the evening, from television, the noise of younger children, and other distractions.

Homework assignments vary by grade, teacher, class, or student ability. Some students may complete homework faster than others.

A homework grade is factored into each class. Failure to complete homework in a satisfactory manner may adversely affect the student’s grades.

Procedures:

- Students will have approximately 10 minutes of homework times(x) the grade they are in. (ex. 10 minutes x 4th grade = 40 minutes of total homework time per night) This does not include studying and may vary among students. Students will probably need to study every night for at least one subject. **All concerns about homework should be sent to the teacher.**
- Homework the night before a test may only consist of studying for the material that will be assessed the next day. No new material will be given for homework.
- Students may not have any more than two tests in one day. There will be no more than one quiz on a day with two tests.
- Practice pages with more than 10 items will be assigned as odd or even problems.

5. PROMOTIONS/RETENTIONS

Eighth Grade Promotion

The Eighth Grade class promotion exercises consist of Mass and the presentation of certificates and major awards. All financial obligations to the school must be paid before a student is allowed to participate. (ex. – cafeteria, tuition, technology, parent service hour fee etc.)

Caps and gowns will not be distributed until all debt is paid in full.

Participation in promotion exercises is a privilege which can be denied for behavior judged inappropriate by the administration.

PreK-Kindergarten Closing Programs

The PreK and Kindergarten classes have short programs in the gym. All financial obligations must be paid before a student is allowed to participate.

Retention

- Kindergarten students will repeat if the teacher indicates that the student does not have the skills and/or maturity to do First Grade work.
- A First through Third Grade student will repeat if his or her average is below 1.0 in Reading OR Math OR multiple major subjects. (Refer to page 4 for “Major Subjects”). A failing average in Reading or Math in the 2nd semester in First through Third Grades will also necessitate repetition of the grade.
- Fourth through Eighth Grade students will repeat if his or her average is below 1.0 in two or more major subjects. (Refer to page 4 for “Major Subjects”). **To earn credit in a**

subject (ex: Math), a student must have a minimum quality point average of 1.0 for the four nine week periods, however students who fail the 2nd semester will fail the course for the year.

- If a student in 4th- 8th grade fails one major subject, he/she will be required to complete additional course work during the summer with a certified teacher to earn credit for that subject. Summer requirements will be determined by administration. **Failure to complete summer requirements will result in retention.**

6. SPECIAL EDUCATION

St. Joseph School does not have a special education program at this time.

- However, students with special education services are accepted into St. Joseph School with the understanding that the administration makes the final determination of whether the student can be adequately served by this school and receive a quality education.
- St. Joseph does receive limited special education services from the civil parish school system. These services include speech therapy and some academic support which is available to students who qualify under this special education designation. Eligible services will be identified through the evaluation process and a plan will be implemented according to the civil parish school system. Those services are determined by the student's evaluation.
- *Guidelines for Catholic School in the State of Louisiana for Addressing Individual Student Needs* revised July 1999 by Louisiana Diocesan Superintendents, "Under Section 504 of federal law, a private school without a special education program that is a recipient of federal funds may not, on the basis of handicap, exclude a qualified handicapped person from its program if the person can, with minor adjustments, be provided with an appropriate education."

ADMISSIONS

1. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

St. Joseph Catholic School is open to students from Pre-Kindergarten through Eighth Grade and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin. The school admits students regardless of race or ethnic background, but preference in admission is given in the instance of a waiting list to Catholic students from St. Joseph Church Parish and neighboring Catholic parishes. ***Parents are deemed by enrolling their children in the school to agree that they and their children will abide by all health/safety guidelines issued by applicable civil authorities, as well as those issued by the Diocese of Baton Rouge and the school. The school will comply with all health information reporting mandated by civil authorities.***

2. GUIDELINES FOR ADMISSIONS

Preference will be given to students entering St. Joseph Catholic School in the following order:

- Students presently in attendance and their siblings
- Registered parishioners who financially support St. Joseph Parish
- Students of the Catholic faith from other parishes
- Students not of the Catholic faith

Pre-Kindergarten Admissions

A student must be four (4) years old on or before September 30th to be eligible for Pre-Kindergarten.

Kindergarten Admissions

A student must be five (5) years old on or before September 30th to be eligible for Kindergarten.

Registration Fee

A student is not considered registered until the registration fee has been paid and all documents are on file.

The registration fee is refunded to any child not accepted into the school.

The registration fee is not refundable if the student is accepted into the school.

New Admissions

The following forms are needed for registration:

- Completed SJS registration form
- Birth certificate
- Baptism certificate (if Catholic)
- Social Security card
- Immunization record
- Pertinent custody documents
- Standardized test scores
- Previous school academic records

All students are accepted on a probationary basis. Any student placed on probation will remain as such for a full year. At the end of probation, the student's records may be reviewed for academic or disciplinary reasons and to assure that the child's needs are being met.

New admissions for eighth grade students will only be considered if the student is currently attending a Catholic School outside the local area.

Registration

Re-registration of current students is completed at the end of January.

All current students are considered eligible for continued enrollment unless/until their parents have been notified.

Current students whose fees are not paid by the end of registration are dropped from the rolls.

Registration of new students takes place following the registration of current students. No student is considered registered until all documentation is on file in the office and the registration fee has been received.

ATTENDANCE

1. ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

School Hours

The regular school day begins at 7:35 a.m. and ends at 2:35 p.m.

Arrival

Students may not arrive on campus before 7:00 a.m. Once on campus, students are to report to the gym and remain seated by classes. **Students must be in their class line/classroom by 7:35 a.m. to be considered present and on time. On Wednesdays, students will report to their homeroom class in preparation for attending mass.**

Students are not allowed in the classrooms before morning assembly unless accompanied by a teacher.

Parents are to drop off their students through the carpool line ONLY. Walkers must be accompanied by parents/adult chaperone **to the entrance area of campus.**

Morning Assembly

Morning Assembly begins at 7:35 a.m. in the gym or classrooms and opens the school day with group prayer and announcements.

Dismissal

Dismissal time is very busy for everyone. Please follow these dismissal rules:

1. All car riders are to be picked up in the carpool line.
2. **Students will only be dismissed to cars with the proper hang tag displayed** (*car tag numbers will remain the same throughout your attendance at SJS*)
3. Students are not allowed to walk to a parked car on or off campus.
4. No parent is allowed to pick up a student from the classroom.
5. Walkers must be met by a parent or designated adult to leave campus. **Please contact the school office for the Walker Permission Form. This form must be updated annually.**
6. **Changes in transportation must be completed by 1:30 p.m.** (See page 14 “Transportation Messages”)

Transportation Guidelines

General Information:

- **Please remember that all procedures are in place for the safety of all students.**
- PK – 8th grade students are dismissed at 2:35 p.m.
- The latest the office can accept a change in transportation is 1:30 p.m. **We must have an email or a note to change afternoon pick-up for a student.**

Carpool Procedures:

- All vehicles must follow the designated carpool route. Map available on school website under “About SJS” tab.
- Cutting in line **from a side street** is not allowed. Please be courteous and respectful to all drivers and our neighbors.
- **All vehicles must have a St. Joseph hang car tag to pick up a student.**

Bus Procedures:

- St. Joseph students who live within the Ponchatoula School District may ride the public school buses.
- Students who ride the buses must have the appropriate bus form/s completed, signed and turned into the school office. **Contact the school office for these forms.**
- Before a student can be dropped off at any address other than his/her home address, a “Special Request Bus Form” must be completed and have prior approval by Tangipahoa Parish Department of Transportation. *****Special Transportation Request forms must be completed online. This form is located on the TPSS website – www.tangischools.org. This service is determined by the Tangipahoa Parish School System and may not be available.**

Walker Procedures:

- Only students who live within the immediate area of the school and have a “Walker Permission Form” on file in the school office may be walkers on a regular basis. This form must be updated annually.
- Students will be escorted by a teacher and released to a parent/adult in the designated area for walkers to exit the campus. Walker tag must be present to claim the student.
- In the event of inclement weather, we will send a text by 1:45 p.m. via FACTS that all walkers will be carpool. The change will stay in place even if the weather clears.
- **Parents/Care Givers may not park a vehicle or golf cart in the church parking lot and pick up a child from the walker area.**

2. ATTENDANCE

It is the responsibility of the parent and school to encourage students to establish a good school attendance record. Every school day is important.

Louisiana state law requires that all elementary and middle school students attend school 160 days to receive credit for the school year.

St. Joseph Catholic School must follow state mandates in this regard. By law, the school will report to authorities, parents/guardians of students who have excessive absences.

Attendance for Middle School (6th-8th grade) will be taken at the beginning of each class. Excessive absences in a subject can impact eligibility for course credit.

Extended personal illness or extenuating circumstances need to be verified and approved by the principal to be considered an exception.

Students must be present at least ½ day in order to participate in a sport event or extra-curricular activity. **They must have a doctor's excuse and a release to play if applicable.**

Please be attentive to this matter. It is most important that children be at school on a regular basis in order to assure their academic progress. Parents will be notified via FACTS when a student has three or more absences or tardies. **Every accumulation of five tardies will result in a full day absence.**

Tardies and Early Checkouts

Tardiness and early checkouts are VERY disruptive to the classroom and causes the student to miss crucial instructional time.

A student is late if he/she arrives at school after 7:35 a.m. A student is considered late if the student is not in his/her class line when assembly begins. **Both types of late arrival show as tardy in the FACTS student information system.**

A student is early checkout after 12:50 p.m. **(this is also considered a tardy)**. Students may not check out after 2:15 p.m. unless extenuating circumstances occur. Please consider this when making appointments. Any special requests must be approved by administration.

A tardy in the FACTS system includes late check-ins and early check-outs. FACTS records any partial day absence as a tardy or half day depending on the amount of time that is missed within the school day.

3. ABSENCES/MAKE-UP WORK

All students are expected to be in school every day from beginning bell to the end of the day unless they are ill or have a serious reason to be absent.

Students are considered absent one half day if they arrive between 9:20 a.m. and 11:05 a.m. Students arriving between 11:05 a.m. and 12:50 p.m. are considered absent for the full day.

When a student returns to school following an absence, a parent letter or doctor's note explaining the reason for the absence is to be presented to the office. An absence is automatically considered unexcused if the student returns to school without presenting a parent/doctor note within 48 hours of the return to school.

The student is allowed to make up missed work and tests with an excused absence. It is the responsibility of Middle School Students to make arrangements with the teacher(s). Reasonable time will be allowed for make-up work. Choosing to not complete an assignment is not an option. Middle School students will make up missing assignments during their lunch and recess time **in the Make-Up room** if they are not turned in in a timely manner.

Excused absences include: illness of the student or grave illness in the immediate family, death in the immediate family.

Medically, a person is not considered to have a significant fever until the temperature is above 100.4 F. Students must be fever free for a 24 hour period **without the aid of fever reducing medication** before they can return to school.

Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to, vacations, hunting trips, concerts, ballgames, dance and/or dance competitions.

For short absences, students will be given make-up work upon their return to school. **For longer absences (three days or more), parents/guardians must contact the teachers for assignments via email.** Assignments may not be picked up before 2:00 p.m. All assignments are posted on FACTS.

No work will be given ahead for students on vacation during the school year. Work is to be requested upon return to school and/or retrieved from FACTS.

Please be aware that unexcused and excused absences accumulate for the total missed days in a school year.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In case of an emergency, St. Joseph School follows the directives of the Catholic Schools Office. The school conducts emergency drills monthly. Emergency plans are in place for fire, dangerous weather, shelter-in-place, evacuations, and an intruder on campus. At the given signal, all students and school personnel are to follow procedures for the specified emergency. All drills are conducted in silence for the safety of all students and personnel.

1. DANGEROUS WEATHER

If school is dismissed early or canceled due to dangerous weather, St. Joseph School usually follows the same directive regarding inclement weather as the Tangipahoa Parish School System. Parents will be notified via our FACTS parent communication system by phone and/or text message. **If the staff and students are required to move to our safe places during dangerous weather, parents will not be allowed to check out a student until the threat has lifted.**

2. EVACUATION

In the event of an evacuation off campus, the school would notify the Diocesan Superintendent and the necessary civil authorities. Initial relocation would be St. Joseph Church unless otherwise directed by the civil authorities. Parents will be notified via the FACTS parent communication system and will pick up students at the safe evacuation area. Parents should not call the school as this could tie up phone lines and prevent Civil Defense or the Diocesan office from communicating with our administration.

3. SHELTER-IN-PLACE

In some situations, authorities may direct us to remain on the school grounds and shelter-in-place. The following steps will be taken:

- All students will be brought inside.
- Doors, windows, and blinds will be closed, and, if necessary, cracks or openings will be covered.
- Students will remain in their classrooms or move inside to secure rooms if outside.
- Heating or cooling systems will be turned off.
- Administration will be directed by authorities from the Catholic Schools Office and Ponchatoula Fire Department.
- Parents will not be allowed to pick up their students until the event is declared over and safe for everyone to move around the campus.

4. INTRUDER/LOCK DOWN

If the students and staff are directed to move into Lock Down, students and staff will remain in locked classrooms until directed that it is safe to return to normal activity or move to a safe evacuation site. You will be notified of these types of drills. **Parents/Family Members may not check out a student during a Lock Down situation.**

5. PARENT TELEPHONE BROADCASTS

Unless otherwise directed, an attempt will be made via telephone and/or text to notify parents of an emergency. **It is imperative that we have correct emergency numbers on file.**

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege. **Students, parents, and coaches** who participate in these extracurricular activities represent St. Joseph Catholic School and are expected to conduct themselves in an exemplary manner.

Disciplinary infractions may result in the moderator or the school administration excluding that student from participation. Students in leadership positions in all extracurricular activities will be expected to demonstrate values deemed necessary and appropriate by the faculty and the moderator.

If a student is placed on disciplinary probation, he/she will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities.

Sports teams will adhere to policies covered in the St. Joseph Catholic School Athletic Handbook which will be distributed to team members prior to each season. Our sports include but are not limited to – Volleyball, Basketball, Soccer, Cross Country, Track & Field, Softball, Baseball, Cheerleading, Dance Team, Flag Football. *****All uniforms for all sports must be approved by the administration. This includes the type of clothing and the logos.**

All clubs, including but not limited to, Drama, Jr. Beta, 4-H, Student Council, and Choir will receive guidelines and expectations from the club sponsors.

PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS

1. CHILD PROTECTION

Safe Environment Training

Safe Environment training is required by the Diocese of Baton Rouge for adults who have, or who will have, ongoing, unsupervised contact with minors in the course of their work or service as an employee, chaperone, or volunteer.

ALL field trip chaperones and any other volunteer operating in a supervisory capacity over children must meet all requirements set forth by the Diocese of Baton Rouge Office of Child and Youth Protection. All required forms must be on file in the St. Joseph School office.

The following is required in order to be considered as a field trip chaperone or for any other supervision of children:

1. Child Protection Certificates
2. Code of Ethics Signature Sheet (updated)
3. State Background Check (This has to be done at a specific place)
4. eAPPS (Volunteer Application) Form

Please contact the office to obtain a Child Protection packet with these forms.

Campus Security

Due to the insecurity of the world in which we live today, anyone not employed by the school is not allowed on campus without a visitor badge from the office while school is in session. This includes the gym prior to and as school lets out. Visitors will be asked to present photo identification. Please sign out in the office after your visit and return the identification badge.

ALL VISITORS MUST PRESENT PHOTO IDENTIFICATION

2. COMMUNICATION

School Wide Communication

St. Joseph School uses many forms of electronic communication to keep parents informed.

- The SJS website (www.sjscrusaders.org) is the major communication tool for the school. The weekly Newsletter is updated on Wednesdays and available on this website.
- Every school employee has an email which can be accessed via the school website.
- The school has a Facebook page which also updates parents of upcoming events at school. **Class Facebook pages should be used for homework or class questions and updates. It is not a tool to express or solicit opinions. School concerns can only be resolved by contacting the school. Any form of negative communication can be viewed as a break in the educational partnership between parent and school.**

- FACTS is our student information system. Parents may access grades, attendance, forms, and other pertinent information. It will also be used as a tool for communication of events.

Please check these sources often to be well-informed of school events.

Parent/Teacher Communication & Conferences

Parents may schedule a conference at any time during the school year by either e-mailing the teacher, contacting the school office, or writing a note to the teacher. Parents are asked to arrange conferences during school hours according to the individual teacher's schedule. Before or after school conferences are at the teacher's discretion.

Teachers may be contacted either by e-mail, written note, or by calling the office and asking the secretary to have the teacher return the call. Please allow teachers 24 hours to respond. **Please remember Facebook and social media is not an effective means of school communication and should not be used to discuss school matters or express negative opinions. The only effective way to resolve situations is direct communication with teachers or administration.**

A great rule of thumb for all types of Social Media is "Boast Don't Roast".

Proper protocol for conflict resolution is normally teacher ⇒ administration ⇒ pastor. Our goal is to always resolve issues in a timely manner and with a positive outcome for everyone involved. Please know our door is always open. Our mutual goal should always focus on fostering a positive educational partnership.

Counselor

SJS is very blessed to have a full-time guidance counselor, Mrs. Ashlee Dunham. She will work with parents, students, and staff as a support system. The counselor may be involved with administration when resolving peer issues. Parents may call the school office to contact Mrs. Dunham or email her directly (adunham@sjscrusaders.org) for assistance with student concerns.

Cell Phones

Student cell phones are **strongly discouraged**. **If a 5th – 8th grade student carries a cell phone, it must be turned in to the homeroom teacher each morning in the off mode and will be returned at the end of each school day during homeroom/dismissal.** If the student chooses not to follow these guidelines, disciplinary action will be taken and impact the student's conduct grade. Abuse of this policy will result in additional conduct points being deducted, and may result in confiscation of the phone, parent pick up of the phone from the school office, loss of cell phone privileges, and/or the assigning of a major referral. The school is not responsible for lost or damaged devices. **Students and Parents will be required to sign a cell phone agreement at the beginning of each school year.**

Messages for Students

Only messages of vital importance will be relayed to students during class time. When it is necessary to contact your child at school, please call the school secretary, and the message will be relayed to your child. Such communications should be kept to an absolute minimum. School personnel will not accept gifts (i.e. flowers, balloons, etc.) sent to the school for students.

Transportation Messages

Transportation arrangements for after school should be made PRIOR to coming to school. Messages involving changes in transportation must be made in person, via Fax (985-386-0560), or email in order to secure a parent signature, and should be made PRIOR to 1:30 p.m. After school visitation and overnight arrangements will not be made through the school.

All-Call System

The school will issue an “all-call” to every phone number listed as **custody**

to inform families of weekly events, reminders, and emergency notifications. **Please be sure that all contact numbers are updated in FACTS to ensure that messages are received.**

Parents may also receive Text Messages from the school.

FACTS

St. Joseph School uses a web-based school information system called FACTS to enhance communication between teachers, parents, and students. Parents Portal is the private and secure component of FACTS that gives parents and students 24/7 access to grades, attendance, homework, and conduct, as well as access to other useful school information. **It is the school’s expectation that parent/guardians will access FACTS a minimum of once a week for updated information concerning homework, tests, grades, behavior, etc.**

Wednesday Packet

Teachers will forward graded papers in a Wednesday Packet. Parents should ask students and/or check backpacks for the packet each Wednesday. Parents are to sign the papers where indicated by the teachers and return all items to the school by Friday of the same week.

3. CUSTODY ISSUES

St. Joseph Catholic School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment (*Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act*). Thus, non-custodial or legal guardians, upon written request, will be given access to the information regarding the academic progress of their child/children unless there is a court order specifically stating that the non-custodial parent or legal guardian is denied access to such information.

The school is not the setting to resolve family issues. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

4. EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the school. Parents are expected to cooperate in a positive manner with administrators, teachers, staff members, and all members of the school community. Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines the partnership no longer exhibits the characteristics of a respectful and Christian relationship.

5. EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Emergency Contact Information in FACTS is to be updated by parents as needed. **It is imperative that the names, phone numbers, emails, and addresses listed be current.** If the parents cannot be reached in the event of accident, illness, or emergency, the other contacts will be called in the order given. Students **will not** be released to persons not listed. **A photo ID must be presented by anyone checking out a student.**

6. FAMILY SERVICE HOURS

The School Advisory Council and Administration believe St. Joseph School is very blessed to have two fundraisers that provide the majority of the funds used to assist with purchasing necessary supplies for the school and contribute to projects that will improve the quality of our campus and academic settings. We recognize that time is valuable and families are very busy, but it takes all of our families to make these events a success. Parents/Guardians are **required** to work a minimum of **4 service hours** between the Strawberry Festival Parking and Spring Fair events, which are the school's largest fundraisers. When the Strawberry Festival Parking positions are filled, parents will need to complete their hours at the Spring Fair. If these four (4) service hours are not completed, a family will be charged \$400. This fee will be due before the end of the current school year and **may not** be financed with tuition. **If this fee is not paid, before the start of the 2024-2025 school year, students will not be scheduled for classes. 8th grade students whose families do not complete their service hours, will not be allowed to participate in all End of Year activities (including 8th grade graduation) until the fee is paid.**

7. FIELD TRIPS

Classes are permitted to participate in education field trips. Teachers will send home details for the trips and proper dress regulations. Students are permitted to attend the field trip only if parents complete, sign, and return field trip forms and bring in the necessary funds on time to pay for the trip. Field trip funds are non-refundable unless the event is cancelled by the school. Verbal permission will not be accepted.

- Participation in field trips is a privilege, not a right. Students whose disciplinary record is being monitored may have field trip privileges revoked.
- Students who choose not to accompany their class on a field trip are expected to attend school and will be assigned to another classroom. If the child does not come to school, it will be considered an unexcused absence.
- The Student Handbook, specific rules, and field trip directions are to be followed at all times. Offenders will not be allowed to participate in future field trips.
- Students are not allowed to carry cell phones on field trips.
- Students will be supervised by an adult at all times during the field trip.
- Students must ride the school bus to and from the field trip destination.

Parents who volunteer and are chosen to chaperone field trips:

- MUST meet the requirements set by the Diocese of Baton Rouge Child Protection Office. (These requirements MUST BE COMPLETED and on file no later than 2 weeks before the field trip.)
- Are not to bring other children on the field trip.
- Must wear appropriate dress for a Catholic school field trip.
- Must sign in at the office for a tag prior to the field trip
- Must take their own vehicles and follow the bus to field trip destination
- Must follow the directions as set forth by the teachers.
- Must be willing to chaperone a group of students
- As an additional safety measure, parents cannot post pictures on social media during a field trip; due to the privacy of others, please use discretion before posting pictures on social media.
- Alcoholic beverages are not to be any part of school field trips.
- Parents and students are not allowed to join field trips at the destination.

8. FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Tuition

The St. Joseph School Advisory Council along with St. Joseph School Administration and church pastor approves tuition every year. If the parent is a registered, financially supporting member of St. Joseph Catholic Parish, a tuition benefit is available to that parent. To qualify for tuition as a financially supporting parishioner, a family's weekly contribution to St. Joseph Church should be a minimum of \$8.00/week (\$416 annually). **These contributions are to be made in full by December 31, 2024. Contributions made after December 31, 2024 will not count toward tithing for 2024 and tuition rates will not be adjusted for the next school year. Regular use of the Sunday envelope or on-line contributions are necessary as a sign of financial support of the Church.**

Tuition-in-Full

Tuition-in-full for the following school year is due by April 30th or the last work day in April.

Financed Tuition

Parents also have the option to finance tuition through **Gulf Coast Bank**. Important features of this loan program include:

- Loan applications are submitted online by the first business day in May. After this date, a late fee is assessed.
- Payments are made on a 10 month cycle (July 5-April 5).
- This tuition loan contract is a binding agreement between the parent, **Gulf Coast Bank and the school.**
- Prompt payment is required for continued participation in this program.

Registration Fee

A registration fee is assessed to each student registered at St. Joseph School. Students are not added to the roster until the fee is paid. The fee is refundable **ONLY** if the student is not accepted into St. Joseph School.

Early Withdrawal Fee

An early withdrawal fee **of \$200** will be assessed for any student withdrawn after August 1. Registration fees are non-refundable.

Cafeteria

The St. Joseph School cafeteria is directed by the Diocese of Baton Rouge and the State of Louisiana.

All lunch, breakfast, and extra sales prices are set each year by the Diocese which can be found on the cafeteria link on our school website.

Students may eat the lunch provided by the cafeteria, or they may bring a bag lunch from home.

1st-8th grade students may have visitors eat lunch with them. However, visitors must be on the Emergency Contact List or a note from the parent may be sent prior to the visit. **Visitors may begin having lunch with students after Labor Day on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Students and their visitors will eat lunch at the outdoor tables due to a full capacity in the cafeteria. Please be mindful that we will not be able to allow visitors on inclement weather days. Wednesday is our normal mass day and we follow an adjusted schedule. If we attend mass on a different day due to a special event, visitors will not be allowed to have lunch with students on those days.**

Fast food cannot be brought into the cafeteria in the paper, container, or bag displaying the name of the restaurant. Carbonated drinks are also not allowed. This includes lunches brought in by parents/family when eating lunch with students.

Breakfast is an option for students in Grades Pre-K-8 from 7:00-7:25 a.m. at an extra charge. Breakfast will not be served to students arriving in the cafeteria after 7:25 a.m.

If a child requires a special diet, a diet prescription form is needed. Arrangements need to be made between the parent/guardian and the cafeteria manager for possible solutions. Please contact the cafeteria at 985-386-8075 for these needs.

Checks for payment to the cafeteria must be made out separately than those to the school. Please visit the Cafeteria Link on the school website for information regarding accounts and payment options. Fees are determined by the Diocesan Child Nutrition Office each year. Notification of non-payment is sent home as a paper statement and via email. You may contact the cafeteria manager Mrs. Ella Beall if you have questions about your bill at 386-8075 or josephcafe@diobr.org.

After School Care

St. Joseph School offers an After School Care program for students in all grades from the close of the school day until 5:30 p.m. Registration forms and rate schedules are available on the After School Care Link on the school website. Parents of students picked up after 5:30 p.m. will be assessed a substantial penalty of \$1.00 per minute. See the After School Care guidelines for details.

Families with an outstanding balance over 30 days will not be allowed to use After School Care services until the balance is paid.

Parents can contact Mrs. Delise Savoie, the After School Care Coordinator, at dsavoie@sjscrusaders.org

Collections/Sales

No collections, regardless of the worthiness of the cause or sales of any nature, may be made without the permission of the principal.

9. MEDICAL INFORMATION

Parents are deemed by enrolling their children in the school to agree that they and their children will abide by all health/safety guidelines issued by applicable civil authorities, as well as those issued by the Diocese of Baton Rouge, and the school. The school will comply with all health information reporting mandated by civil authorities.

Medications

If at all possible, a child's medication schedule should be arranged before and after school and, therefore, be taken at home. When this is impossible, the proper forms and required information need to be completed before medication may be dispensed to a child.

The school can only administer ongoing, maintenance-type or rescue prescription medication to students.

Medication, except rescue medicine that parents have approved by the principal, must be brought to school by a parent/guardian. It will be dispensed from the office only. The prescribed medication must be in the original bottle/container, currently dated, and marked with the child's name, name of the medication, and directions for use. **It must also be accompanied by the school consent form signed by the parent/guardian and physician.**

DIRECTIONS ON THE MEDICINE AND ON THE "MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION FORMS" MUST MATCH.

Students may not give any type of medication to a fellow student.

Aspirin, cough drops, and/or other similar medicines will not be given or supplied by the school office. These over-the-counter medicines should not be brought to school.

Rescue medicines can be carried by students. They must be kept by the students in the appropriate medical bag provided by the school. Additional documents must be completed for this to take place.

In the event of a medical emergency, St. Joseph Catholic School will call 911, notify parents/guardians, and have the injured student(s) transported to the nearest medical facility.

Illnesses/Communicable Diseases

Students who are ill should be kept home. The following guidelines will help you determine when a child should not attend school:

- **Diarrhea/Vomiting:** Students who are vomiting or having diarrhea will be sent home from school. They will not be allowed to return until they are symptom free without the use of medication for 24 hours.
- **Fever:** Medically, a person is not considered to have a significant fever until the temperature is above 100.4°F. Students who have a fever of 100.4° F or higher will be sent home. Students will be readmitted after they have been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications, i.e., Tylenol, Motrin, and Advil.
- **Pink Eye:** Symptoms of pink eye such as eye drainage, crusty eyelids, redness on the white part of the eyes, swelling, and itching may indicate pink eye, which is a contagious disease. Children with these symptoms will be sent home and should be seen by a doctor for a diagnosis. A doctor's excuse that states WHEN the student will be allowed to return to school will be required. No eye drop medication is allowed at school.
- **Rash/lesions:** A student with an undiagnosed rash or lesions will not be allowed to stay at school. Skin rashes or lesions will be considered possibly contagious. A doctor's excuse is required in order for the student to return to school.
- **Head lice:** To help prevent the spread of head lice infestations, school employees shall report all suspected cases of head lice to the trained school personnel. The student shall be examined to determine an infestation by looking closely through the hair and scalp for nits or live lice. St Joseph School has a "no nit" policy. If nits are discovered before or after a child has been treated, they will be sent home and will not be able to return to the classroom until office personnel have checked them. They must be "nit free".

COVID-19:

If a student tests positive for COVID-19, they must notify the school and follow the current guidelines for isolation and return to school.

If a family member who lives with a student tests positive for COVID-19, the school must be notified and the student will need to follow the current guidelines for quarantine and return to school.

10. PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

Advisory Council

The St. Joseph School Advisory Council is comprised of the pastor, principal, and nine members who are nominated and voted on by the faculty and parents. They are elected for a three year term. Members are eligible to serve no more than two consecutive terms.

Members must be a Catholic, financially supporting parent of a St. Joseph School student. They must have a child in the fifth grade or below at the time of election in order to be eligible to seek membership.

The Council serves as an advisory board to the principal. The Council meets on designated months of the year. All meetings are open. To be placed on the agenda, contact the president no later than one week before the meeting.

Home & School Association

The Home and School Association works solely for the benefit of St. Joseph School. Every parent with a child enrolled in the school is automatically a member. Meetings are held 5 times throughout the year. Members are asked to participate in a variety of activities/roles such as Spring Fair, Strawberry Fest Parking, Room Moms, Crusader Dads, Catholic Schools Week activities, and other events throughout the year.

SAVE THE DATE:

Strawberry Festival Parking: April 11th – 13th 2025.

SJS Spring Fair: May 2nd – 4th 2025.

11. PARTIES/DANCES/DELIVERIES

Holiday Parties

Christmas parties are arranged by the teachers through the room mothers for *all grades*.

Valentine parties are arranged by the teachers through the room mothers for grades *Pre-K through 3rd*.

Birthday Celebrations

Teachers in Grades Pre-K through 3rd will have appropriate recognition of individual birthdays in the classrooms.

Due to the great liability associated with the increasing number of allergies present in our student population, treats from home are not permitted with each birthday.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding for the safety of our students.

Birthday Invitations

Birthday party invitations may be passed out at the school ONLY if the entire class or all the students of one gender (all girls or all boys) are included and the distribution of these invitations causes no class disruption.

Dances

School dances are held throughout the year for 6th – 8th grade students. **No outside guests are allowed.** Proper dance attire (see page 40 of this handbook) is expected for all who attend. **Students will not be allowed to enter the dance if their attire does not meet our guidelines.**

Deliveries

The school will not accept deliveries of flower arrangements, balloon bouquets, gifts, etc. for students.

12. PUBLICITY

From time to time, students might appear on the SJS website or in the local newspapers. If you do not wish your child to appear on the internet or in the paper, please let the administration know in writing.

For the safety of our students and because some parents have requested this privacy, no one should take it upon herself/himself to post pictures or videos of any St. Joseph Catholic School student(s) other than your own on various social media outlets.

Pictures may be submitted to the school for printing or posting by emailing sjsoffice@sjscrusaders.org.

13. VISITORS

All visitors to the school campus are to report to the office to sign in and obtain a visitor's pass. No one is to go directly to the classrooms, cafeteria, gym, or other areas of the school. **Visitors will be asked to present photo identification.**

14. WELLNESS POLICY

The Diocese of Baton Rouge in cooperation with all of the schools has implemented a policy that went into effect July 1, 2006. In part, it consists of these criteria:

All schools will ...

1. Engage in developing and reviewing nutrition and physical activities policies.
2. Provide students with opportunities to be physically active on a regular basis.
3. Participate in federal school meal programs.
4. Follow state requirements on competitive foods and extra food sales.
5. Encourage serving healthy food at school parties
6. Promote and implement nutrition education
7. Use a program to evaluate student's physical fitness

8. Encourage school staff, parents and guardians to participate in physical activities to serve as role models.

PERSONAL CONDUCT

“... education in a Catholic School must be based on the principles of Catholic doctrine, and the [students] must be outstanding in true doctrine and uprightness of life.”

Canon 803

- **INTRODUCTION**

This personal conduct section is not considered all-inclusive. Enforcement of these policies and interpretation of the school discipline code remains the discretion of the principal. The administration reserves the right to waive and/or deviate from any and all disciplinary regulations for just cause at his or her discretion.

- **BCC – OUR POSITIVE ACTION PLAN**

- ***Building Crusaders for Christ*** (BCC) is based on learning rather than punishment. Students are expected to be responsible for their own actions in spite of the actions of others. Students are expected to **be safe, be respectful, be prepared, and be compassionate** within the school environment. Positive behavior schools have clearly outlined expectations and explicitly teach those expectations to their students. Staff members have identified what those expectations mean in a variety of environments, both inside and outside of school. The expectations are defined on posters which hang throughout our school.

At St. Joseph School, we will focus on creating a positive, safe, and nurturing community. We have consistent, school-wide expectations for all our students. With Building Crusaders for Christ (BCC), it is our goal to celebrate students making great choices through words of encouragement and praise, but to also have a consistent plan to support students who need help meeting the school-wide expectations.

School-Wide BCC Code

- St. Joseph Catholic School has implemented this system of teaching all students school-wide procedures and recognizing them with incentives.
- BCC is a broad range of systemic and individualized strategies for achieving important social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behaviors with all students.

- Students who behave appropriately and abide by the school rules will receive CRUSADER CASH, which can be used to “purchase” rewards and privileges. Pre-K through 2nd grade will cash in for bi-weekly incentives within their classrooms. 3rd – 8th grade will cash in at the “Cash-in Counter” located in the gym. Students in grades 3rd – 8th may also choose to spend their cash to participate in quarterly “BCC Fun Day” activities.
- Students will be introduced to *School-Wide Expectations* at the beginning of the school year and will be reminded of the *Crusader Pledge* each day during morning announcements.

• BEHAVIOR CONSEQUENCES

A notification will be emailed via FACTS when daily disturbances interrupt classroom learning.

Pre-K – 2nd Grades

In the event a student in these grades is unable to adapt to the classroom environment and repeatedly disturbs others in an unacceptable fashion, the classroom teacher will meet with the parents/guardians to address the difficulty.

In cases where a remedy for the behavior is not found, administration will assist with creating a plan. If the behavior does not improve, the parent will be asked to find a more appropriate educational setting for the student.

3rd – 8th Grades

A major/minor referral system of discipline is also used for all students. This system serves as a reinforcement and reminder of classroom rules and procedures and conveys the expectation that Christian behavior and academic performance are our top priorities.

6th – 8th Grade Procedures & Consequences:

1st RenWeb Behavior Notification...1 point deducted from conduct **and loss of one day of recess**

2nd RenWeb Behavior Notification...1 point deducted from conduct **and loss of one day of recess**

3rd RenWeb Behavior Notification...1 point deducted from conduct **and loss of one day of recess**

***When the 3rd behavior notification is earned, a Minor Referral is issued, 5 points are deducted from the student's conduct grade for the quarter, and the student receives 3 days of recess detention. – These minor referrals will be issued by the homeroom teacher.

***Three Minor Referrals result in a Major Referral - 8 points lost in addition to the points lost for each Minor Referral

-A Minor Referral may be given for a one-time incident - 5 points lost and 3 days of recess detention.

-A Major Referral may be given for a one-time incident - 8 points lost and additional consequences determined by administration.

Example- 3 FACTS Behavior Notifications (3pts) = 1st minor referral (5 pts)

One-Time Behavior Incident = 2nd minor referral (5 pts)

Total Points Lost - 13 pts – Conduct Grade for the nine weeks = B

Recess Detention

6th – 8th grade students who must serve recess detention will meet the detention teacher in the designated classroom. Students will then pick up their lunch if needed and immediately report back to the detention room. They will remain in the detention room throughout lunch and recess. **An accumulation of 8 days of detention at any time during the school year will result in one day of morning detention assigned by administration. This additional detention will take place on the 1st & 3rd week of each month from 6:30 am – 7:30 am in the library. If a student is late, the detention will be rescheduled.**

Referrals

A disciplinary referral form (major or minor) is given to the student at or near the occurrence of specified infractions, as well as an email notification to parents via RenWeb. Student and teacher sign the form. The student is responsible for taking the referral home to be signed by a parent/guardian and returned the next school day. **Students will serve an additional day of detention and lose an additional point from their conduct grade for each day the signed referral is not returned.**

Three minor referrals in the same quarter result in a major referral.

A major referral results in an automatic consequence determined by administration.

• BULLYING

To reflect Gospel values and to ensure a positive and safe learning climate, St. Joseph Catholic School does not permit harassment, hazing, or bullying of any kind. All school community members are to treat everyone with dignity and respect. In that spirit, these acts of harassment, hazing, and bullying applies to all students, both on and off campus. It is recognized that harassment, hazing, or bullying can involve verbal, physical, written, or electronic communication whether currently in use or any new electronic devices that may be developed in the future.

Definitions

Harassment is unwelcome offensive conduct, whether physical or verbal, that is directed toward another person or group of persons when the person exhibiting the behavior knew or should have known that it would cause the person or persons to whom it was directed to be fearful, anxious, or emotionally upset as a result of the behavior. Offensive conduct may include, but is not limited to, offensive jokes, slurs, epithets or name calling, physical assaults or threats, intimidation, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs, offensive objects or pictures, and interference with school performance whether the interference is direct or indirect, unwarranted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberated impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal school work or movement.

Sexual Harassment involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Any of the above-stated forms of harassment that are of a sexual nature are considered sexual harassment when they are unwelcome and create an environment or causes an atmosphere that affects a student's school performance in any way or affects a student's ability to take advantage of the school's programs.

Hazing is a form of harassment that involves intentional, knowing, or reckless acts that induce pain, embarrassment, humiliation, deprivation of rights, physical pain, or mental discomfort. It is directed against a student for the purposes of being initiated into, affiliated with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization, club, athletic team, or other group. Culpability includes hazing practices mandated or voluntarily entered into by any party.

Bullying behavior is the **repeated** harassment and targeting of another person or group of persons with the intent to cause emotional, physical, or psychological harm after being notified to stop the behavior **which consists of multiple occasions of the same inappropriate behavior directed at the same student**. The student (victim) must tell an adult on campus when an incidence occurs. They should also tell the student who is causing the distress that they want them to stop. The student who is accused of such actions will be addressed by administration and

notified that their actions toward the other student must stop. Disciplinary actions will be taken if any further harassment or bullying occurs and is proven.

Consequences

The administration of St. Joseph Catholic School will not tolerate bullying of any kind. Detentions, suspension, or expulsion will result, depending upon the age of the students involved and the severity of the offense.

- **PRIVATE DOMAINS**

There is no private domain at St. Joseph Catholic School. In order to safeguard the moral and physical welfare of all students, all spaces and property are subject to inspection. This includes for example: students' desks, purses, book bags, cell phones, computers, etc.

Any materials obtained from these inspections may be confiscated for use as evidence in all disciplinary procedures. Anything brought onto the campus may be subject to search.

- **ON/OFF SCHOOL CAMPUS BEHAVIOR**

St. Joseph Catholic School students represent the school at all times. They are expected to maintain a high level of conduct both on and off campus. Students who engage in unacceptable behavior whether it be **on or off** campus, will be subject to the school discipline code. Such behavior is not limited to school functions. The administration has the final decision on these matters.

- **VIOLATIONS OF LAWS**

In the case where a law is violated, especially in the matter of possession, use, or sale of controlled substances, the carrying of firearms or any other deadly weapon onto the school grounds, the police and juvenile authorities will be called.

Students who engage in these particular activities will be expelled.

It is against the law for **anyone** to carry a firearm onto school property. School property is defined as school campus, or within a thousand feet of school campus, or on a school bus.

TECHNOLOGY

(Diocesan Technology Acceptable Use Policy is sent home as a separate document.)

St. Joseph School intends that all electronic equipment, property, Internet access, Internet service providers, hardware and/or software, be used for purposes consistent with the mission and educational goals of our school. St. Joseph School has taken precautions to prevent access to materials that are not in accordance with those missions and goals. Nonetheless, those precautions in no way diminish each user's responsibility to act ethically and to conform to school policy. All students and parents are asked to read and agree to the Acceptable Use Policy. By signing the Acceptable Use Policy, the parents and student acknowledge that they understand the policy and agree completely to the terms and conditions contained therein. Any student who fails to conform to this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or dismissal.

1. Use of technology resources (computers, scanners, cameras, TVs, calculators, etc.) at St. Joseph School is a privilege.
2. **Students will NOT be allowed to call home for their iPad.**
3. Users must demonstrate honesty and respect for others at all times. Appropriate manners and language is required. Sending, displaying, or downloading offensive messages or pictures or harassing, insulting, or threatening others is not allowed.
4. All printing must be done with teacher approval. Students are not to intentionally waste limited resources, i.e. paper, print cartridges, etc. Unnecessary waste may result in disciplinary action.
5. The administration reserves the right to use, at its discretion, any form of discipline with respect to any act or actions not specifically listed herein but which actions are determined by the administration to be illegal, immoral, unethical, criminal, a violation of any local, state or deferral law or regulation, and/or a violation of the goals, principles, or educational objectives or policies of St. Joseph School or the Diocese of Baton Rouge.

Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy Student Agreement

St. Joseph School's Technology Department provides a full range of educational and religious tools as well as services to promote communication, research, resource sharing, and creativity. All users are expected to conduct their on-line activities in an ethical and legal fashion. The use of these resources is a privilege, not a right. While impossible to control all materials available

on the Internet, St. Joseph Catholic School believes that the valuable information and interaction available on the network is educationally beneficial to teachers and students.

Diocesan Policy States:

“The use of the Internet and related technologies must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of the diocesan school district. It is expected that both faculty and students comply with the acceptable use policy.”

The equipment, software, and network capabilities provided through the school’s technology department are and remain the property of the school. Any information contained on a school computer hard drive, network hard drive, computer disks, and school email system purchased by the school are considered the property of the school.

The following is a list of procedures to be followed for Internet access and use. The administration retains the right to amend these rules at any time.

1. At all times access shall be under the direction and supervision of classroom teachers.
2. Students in grades PK through 3rd will access the network under a generic username and password. Students in grades 4th through 8th will have specific usernames and passwords. This information should not be shared with anyone other than the teacher, Technology Administrator, Principal, or Assistant Principal.
3. No student will be allowed to use a computer in which a faculty member is currently logged in.
4. It is the responsibility of the student to log off of the computer once he/she is done using the computer. If a student proceeds to use a computer that is logged on under a different user, that student must log off and log on using his/her own information.
5. No Student shall access social network sites such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, or TicToc.
6. No student shall access any web mail service email such as, but not limited to, Yahoo, Google, or MSN, except as authorized to use the school’s Google Domain resources.
7. No person is permitted to post information related to the school, including the school’s name, our staff, and our students, use images of the school, the school logo or seal, school staff, or students in any form on the Internet or in any form of electronic communication without specific written permission from the administration. This includes on-line journals such as, but not limited to, Instagram.com and Facebook.com. The posting of any such information on any website, bulletin board, chat-room, e-mail, or other messaging system without permission, or the posting or transmission of images or information in any format related to the school, staff, or students that are defamatory, scurrilous, pornographic, or which could be construed as threatening or impugning the character of another person is prohibited.
8. Students in grades 5th through 8th will be given access to RenWeb via a username and password. This information is not to be shared with anyone other than their parents.
9. Any accidental violation of the above code must be reported immediately to the teacher or other school officials and without demonstration to other students, in order to protect him/her against a claim that he/she has intentionally violated the policy.

10. Inappropriate or illegal use, access, or activities will result in disciplinary action which may range from loss of Internet privileges to expulsion and legal action. These actions include but are not limited to copyright or contract violations, plagiarism, threatening or abusive messages, damage to software or equipment, hacking, invasion of privacy, creation or spread of viruses, use for personal financial or commercial gain, product advertising, political lobbying, or sending of unsolicited junk/chain mail.
11. Users will be held accountable for their actions. Privileges will be lost if the Acceptable Use Policy is violated and disciplinary consequences may be imposed.
12. The administration reserves the right to impose disciplinary consequences with respect to any act or actions not specifically listed herein but which actions are determined by the administration to be illegal, immoral, unethical, criminal, a violation of any local, state or deferral law or regulation, and/or a violation of the goals, principles, or educational objectives or policies of St. Joseph Catholic School or The Diocese of Baton Rouge.
13. The decision of St. Joseph Catholic School regarding inappropriate use of the technology or telecommunication resources is final.

Monetary reimbursement will be sought for damage necessitating repair or replacement of software and/or hardware equipment.

Equipment/Repair Fees:

- Cracked Screen \$150
- Charging Block \$20
- Charging Cable \$20
- Protective Cover \$65
- Lost/Stolen iPad \$400

It is the responsibility of the parent to read over the Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy: Student Agreement with the student and ensure that the student understands the information outlined in the policy.

Use of Student Information / Pictures

The school reserves the right to use student pictures in all forms of publications and on the school’s website. Any parent who does not wish her or his child’s picture used must notify the principal in writing prior to the beginning of the school year.

Parent Best Practices for Internet Safety at Home

- **Keep computers in a central place.**
 - This will make it easier for you to monitor and keep an eye on your child's activities.
 - You can clearly monitor their internet activity.
- **Know when your children are online.**
 - Establish specific times when access to Internet is permitted and keep that schedule.
 - Limit the length of access time. This will encourage your child to go directly to the information required, rather than aimlessly surfing the Internet.
 - Talk about what kinds of sites that they like to visit and establish what is and isn't appropriate for your family.
 - You can also check where your kids have been by looking at the history in the browser menu.
- **Teach Internet Safety.**
 - It's impossible to monitor your child's online activity all the time.
 - As they get older, they need to know how to use the Internet safely and responsibly.
 - Teach children **not to communicate** or share any personal information with strangers on the Internet.
- **Use Privacy Settings and Sharing Controls.**
 - Many sites that feature user-generated content, YouTube, Facebook, and other social networking sites, have sharing controls that put users in charge of who sees personal blogs, photos, videos, and profiles.
 - Teach your children to respect the privacy of friends and family by not identifying people by name in profiles and pictures.
- **Protect Passwords.**
 - Remind your children not to give out their passwords to anyone for any reason.
 - Make sure they make a habit of unclicking "Remember Me" settings on their computer.
- **Teach Your Children to Communicate Responsibly.**
 - Instruct your child to talk to you if he or she finds anything on the Internet that makes them feel uncomfortable.
 - Ask about their Internet experiences and what they have learned.
 - Remind them not to text, email, instant message or post any hurtful or inappropriate things on someone's page.
- **View all Content Critically.**
 - Just because you see it online doesn't mean that it is true.
 - Children should learn how to distinguish reliable sources from unreliable ones, and how to verify information that they find online.
 - Make sure that they understand that cutting and pasting content directly from the Internet is plagiarism.

UNIFORMS

• UNIFORMS

All students attending St. Joseph Catholic School must wear the appropriate uniform daily beginning with the first day and throughout each school day until the closing of school except for announced days. **Uniform notices will be sent home when students are not in compliance. The student will be given a maximum of three days to correct the uniform issue.**

St. Joseph School uniforms must be purchased from **School Time**. **All new uniform purchases must be made from our School Time uniform supplier.**

The store has a complete list of the correct uniforms for school. **Items may be purchased in their stores or online.**

SCHOOL TIME

12 St. Ann Dr.

Mandeville, LA 70471

(985) 626-7335

***Additional stores located in Baton Rouge and Metairie.

• SHOES and SOCKS

- All students in all grades wear **solid white crew socks**. **Ankle socks and “no show” socks are not allowed. No logos or emblems.**
- **All students in grades 1-3 may wear any solid black (including the sole and logos), laced or Velcro, athletic tennis shoe.**
- All students in grades 4-8 will wear any **solid black (including the sole and logo)**, laced, athletic tennis shoe.
These shoes must have a non-marking sole.
- Shoes must not cover the ankle. (***) **no high-top or mid-top shoes**
- Laces should also be black.
- PreK and Kindergarten boys will wear the solid black, Velcro tennis shoes with the non-marking soles.
- PreK and Kindergarten girls will wear navy Mary Jane-style shoes with non-marking soles which are closed with Velcro.

- **HAIR**

- Hair is to be well-groomed and not unusual or drastic in style. **Hair is to be of the student's natural color (no highlights, colors, or enhancements) Students may not have carvings or a dramatic change in length between the shortest and longest hair. Example – part of the hair is shaved while another section is cut and significantly longer. Hairstyles should be gradually faded. No mullets.**
- Girls - Hair accessories are to be simple and not distracting. Hair accessories are to match the school uniform. This includes all colors visible in the school plaid. **Hair, regardless of the style, may not be longer than the eyebrows when pulled down in front.**
- Boys - Hair may not touch the collar in the back and the full ear must be visible on the sides without pulling the hair behind the ears. **Hair, regardless of the style, may not be longer than the eyebrows when pulled down in front.**

- **MAKE-UP and JEWELRY**

- Girls are allowed to wear one pair of stud earrings in the ear lobe. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings.
- **One** standard-type watch may be worn. **NO Smartwatches can be worn. (Ex. Apple watch, Fitbit, etc.)**
- **One** conservative ring may be worn.
- **One** religious medal or cross on a chain or cord may be worn. (Chokers are not allowed.)
- **One** simple religious bracelet may be worn.
- Students are not to wear **any** makeup, nail polish, **or artificial nails**. As a privilege, girls in Eighth Grade may wear very light makeup and nail polish of a neutral color.
- *****No eye makeup or artificial nails may be worn in any grade level.*****

- **OUTERWEAR/COLD WEATHER WEAR – BOYS & GIRLS – ALL GRADES**

- Jacket - solid navy blue jacket with or without imprinted school logo – **no hoods allowed.**
- Crew Neck Sweatshirt - solid navy blue crew neck sweatshirt imprinted with the school logo - (available only at **School Time**). **Hoodies are not allowed.**
- Sweaters - solid navy blue, button front.
- **NO OTHER OUTERWEAR WILL BE ALLOWED TO BE WORN IN THE CLASSROOMS OR HALLWAYS.** Coats or heavy jackets may be worn to school,

during recess, or other outdoor activities. This outerwear can be of any style or color, and will not be worn inside the buildings. **Hoods are allowed on outer wear only.**

- **GIRLS - FORMAL UNIFORMS**

Grades PreK-4th:

- blue plaid jumper (**length must be to the knee**)
- white broadcloth blouse with school monogram and pointed collar in either long or short sleeves
- navy blue shorts
- solid white crew socks (no lace)
- an optional **plain white t-shirt** with no writing may be worn beneath the uniform blouse
- Girls may wear white or navy blue tights during cold weather. They may also wear navy blue leggings (not sweat pants) with crew socks during cold weather beneath the uniform skirt.

Grades 5th-8th

- blue plaid skirt (length should be to the knee)
- white oxford blouse with school monogram and buttoned-down collar in either long or short sleeves
- navy blue shorts
- solid white crew socks (no lace)
- an optional **plain white t-shirt** with no writing may be worn beneath the uniform blouse
- Girls may wear white or navy blue tights during cold weather. They may also wear navy blue leggings (not sweat pants) with crew socks during cold weather.

- **BOYS - FORMAL UNIFORMS**

Grades PreK- K

- long or short gray twill pants (elastic waist encouraged)
 - plain solid black or brown belt with simple buckle (if belt loops are on pants)
 - navy blue polo shirt with school emblem printed on the left front
 - solid white crew socks
 - an optional **plain white t-shirt** with no writing may be worn beneath the uniform shirt
- ***NOTE: Long pants must be worn from November 15 – March 15.

Grades 1st-8th

- long or short gray twill pants
- plain solid black or brown belt with simple buckle
- navy blue polo shirt with school emblem printed on the left front

- solid white crew socks
 - an optional **plain white t-shirt** with no writing may be worn beneath the uniform shirt
- ***NOTE: Long pants must be worn from November 15 - March 15.

SPIRIT DAY UNIFORMS – BOYS & GIRLS – ALL GRADES

- Students may wear spirit dress each Friday and other designated days.
- Crusader Spirit shirt – **purchased from school**
- blue jeans (long, solid blue, no decorations, no holes) **Tight fitting jeans (ex: jeggings, skinny jeans, etc.) regardless of the current styles are not allowed.**
- simple belt with simple buckle or school belt
- white crew socks (no lace)
- uniform shoes

FREE/BIRTHDAY DRESS

- **All clothes must be modest and reflective of the values expected at St. Joseph Catholic School.** Students must be able to perform all regular school activities, including P.E., without changing or removing any parts, shoes, or clothing.
- Shorts (if weather permits) must be **KNEE-LENGTH for boys and girls.**
- Blue jeans (long, solid blue, no decorations, no holes) **Tight fitting jeans (ex: jeggings, skinny jeans, etc.) regardless of the current styles are not allowed.**
- **LEGGINGS (short or long) ARE NOT ALLOWED.**
- Dresses/skirts must be **KNEE-LENGTH** or longer.
- All shirts, blouses, etc., must have sleeves.
- Writing or symbols on shirts must be appropriate for school.
- Shoes must have a back strap or closed heel. **Crocs, high heels, and boots are not allowed.**
- Costumes are not allowed.

DANCE ATTIRE (6TH – 8TH GRADE)

- Dances are usually casual dress.
- No shorts for girls and boys
- Girls are not allowed to wear strapless or spaghetti strap dresses or tops. Back may not be exposed. No rompers.
- Dresses must be appropriate length.
- Clothing must not have any offensive pictures or words.
- No spike heels that might damage the gym floor.

CONSEQUENCES FOR NOT ADHERING TO SPIRIT/FREE/BIRTHDAY DRESS RULES

The school reserves the right to determine whether or not dress and/or hairstyle is appropriate.

Consequences:

1. The first offense in failing to comply with special dress guidelines will result in calling home for **an appropriate outfit. This will be documented.**
2. On the second offense, students will call home for a school uniform.
3. On the third offense, students will call home for a school uniform, a minor referral will be issued, and the student will lose privileges for the next special dress event.
4. On the fourth offense, students will call home for a uniform, another minor referral will be issued, and the student will lose special dress privileges for the remainder of the year.