

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL



2025-2026  
PRESCHOOL PARENT/STUDENT  
HANDBOOK

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
2 NORTH ALTON STREET  
FREEBURG, IL 62243  
(618) 539-3930

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**PRESCHOOL PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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**INTRODUCTION**

August 2025

Dear Parents,

Thank you for entrusting the spiritual and academic development of your child(ren) to our faculty and staff. It is our promise to you, to continue the tradition of academic rigor that has been the hallmark of the educational experience at St. Joseph Catholic School for nearly 150 years.

Please set aside some time to read and understand the contents of this handbook with your child(ren). This handbook contains policies and procedures for the 2025-2026 school year. As it is impossible to address every situation that may arise during the school year, the school administration reserves the right to amend or revoke the policies and procedures in this handbook at any time as circumstances may warrant. When changes are made, parents and students will be informed of the changes in a timely manner. Please note, throughout the handbook the use of the term “parent” shall refer to the legal guardian of the child regardless of the biological relationship to the child.

The administration, teachers, and staff look forward to working with you in a school-parent partnership that provides many educational opportunities for academic development and faith formation for your child.

Blessings,

Brandy Hildebrand  
Principal

**St. Joseph Catholic School follows all of the policies of the Diocese of Belleville**  
[www.diobelle.org/education/catholic-schools/policies-regulations-index](http://www.diobelle.org/education/catholic-schools/policies-regulations-index)

## FACULTY & STAFF

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Ms. Brennan Kolbo	Pre-K Aide	618-539-3209 ext.	-
Mrs. Denise Wilson	Custodian	618-539-3209 ext.	-

**Handbook Agreement:** Each family receives a St. Joseph Catholic School Handbook electronically. It is also available on the school website. It is each family's obligation to review and comply with policies therein. **Families sign a Signature of Agreement that is kept on file in the school office.**

**\*The Principal/Pastor reserves the right to amend the handbook as necessary.**

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of St. Joseph Catholic School is to provide a well-rounded, faith-based curriculum that promotes the academic, spiritual, social, emotional, and physical development of each child in a safe and nurturing environment.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

St. Joseph Catholic School, founded in 1869, provides an affordable, quality, Catholic education for the families of St. Joseph Parish in Freeburg, St. Agatha Parish in New Athens, and for non-Catholics who accept our mission and philosophy. Relying on the help and guidance of our Lord, the school works in partnership with families to pass on our Catholic values, traditions, and heritage. Emphasis is placed on the importance of Christian values, the development of a positive self-concept and a strong academic background through discipline, cooperation, and responsibility.

As a community of caring individuals working together, we continue to grow closer to God through loving, respecting, and serving one another, and by praying and worshipping together. The philosophy of our school is anchored in the belief that God creates men and women in His image and that He desires them to find happiness in knowing, loving, and serving Him. St. Joseph Catholic School focuses on teaching Catholic doctrine, building Christian community, and helping students acquire skills, virtues, and habits of heart and mind required for effective service to others. As a school community we strive to educate the whole person in an atmosphere of love, respect, and concern for one another. St. Joseph Catholic School is dedicated to maintaining high academic standards and to providing daily opportunities to live our Catholic faith.

## **OBJECTIVES OF ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

### **Intellectual Development**

- To provide academic programs which meet the needs of our students
- To challenge and encourage each student to develop to their potential
- To encourage students to experience and accept consequences for their decisions

### **Social Development**

- To develop an awareness and appreciation for each person's talents and abilities
- To develop an awareness and responsibility for the world in which they live
- To develop the willingness to serve others who are in need
- To teach and practice respect for life in all of its forms

### **Emotional Development**

- To encourage development of a healthy self-concept
- To provide an environment where students feel safe, valued, and loved
- To encourage students to deal with their emotions in a healthy Christian way

### **Spiritual Development**

- To provide instruction and example in living out the Catholic way of life
- To provide an environment for the development of Gospel values
- To provide opportunities for participation in prayer and Liturgical celebration

### **Physical Development**

- To develop motor skills and coordination

- To provide instruction to increase fitness at each stage of physical development  
To provide activities that promote exercise and joy to the participants

### **AMENDMENTS**

This Parent-Student Handbook contains established policies and procedures for the 2025-2026 school year. Since it is not possible for a Handbook to address every situation that may arise during a school year, the school administration reserves the right to amend or revoke the policies and procedures in this Handbook at any time as circumstances may require. When changes are made to the Handbook, you will be informed of the change in writing in a timely manner, as well as when the change will take effect.

### **PERSONNEL NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY (Diocesan Policy 5111.1)**

In employment practices, the school and/or parish shall not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, unfavorable military discharge, marital status, and mental or physical handicap unrelated to ability to perform duties of the position. This policy shall be interpreted consistently with the religious mission and teaching of the Catholic Church. This policy applies to all professional and nonprofessional personnel hired by the school and/or parish.

### **ADMISSION TO ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

Attendance at St. Joseph Catholic School is a privilege and not an inherent right of students. It is equally important to note that St. Joseph Catholic School, in accordance with the Diocese of Belleville, admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. St. Joseph Catholic School does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, national, and ethnic origin in the administration or educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and local programs, athletic and other school administered programs.

St. Joseph Catholic School is committed to providing a quality, affordable Catholic education to the children of St. Joseph Parish, St. Agatha Parish, and any family in the Freeburg, Illinois area that seeks a quality education for their children. All students are expected to accept the total program of the school, including religious instruction and attendance at liturgical service.

#### **Pre-Kindergarten Admission Policy**

St. Joseph Catholic School has established a priority for Pre-Kindergarten registration. Priority is given to St. Joseph and St. Agatha Parish families and siblings of families currently enrolled at St. Joseph Catholic School. If maximum enrollment levels are not reached after parish families have registered, open registration will be held. When maximum levels are reached, a waiting list will be established with students accepted in the order of placement on the waiting list.

Pre-Kindergarten students must be fully potty-trained prior to admission to St. Joseph Catholic School. This means the child knows how to go to the bathroom without being reminded to do so and is capable of cleaning/wiping their body sufficiently without any aid from a staff member. Continuous bathroom accidents may jeopardize a child's enrollment status in the Pre-Kindergarten program.

#### **Age Requirements**

- A child who is three years of age (by September 1<sup>st</sup>), fully potty-trained, and meeting all other admission requirements may enter the Pre-Kindergarten program.

- Children five years of age or a child who will reach the age of five by September 1 may enter kindergarten of the current school year (DP 5111)

#### **Required Paperwork for Admissions**

- An original copy of your child's birth certificate (a copy will be made for the child's school file)
- Baptismal certificate (children baptized at St. Joseph Parish already has a certificate on file)
- Completed online enrollment
- Registration fee (to be paid at the time of registration)
- Signed Tuition Agreement Form
- All health examinations (physical examination, immunization record, dental examination, and eye examination shall be required as stipulated by the Administrative Code of the Illinois State Board of Education)
- Proof of Insurance Form (must be submitted no later than the first day of attendance)

The following forms are also required prior to the first day of attendance:

- Application for Reduced/Free Lunch (if applicable)

#### **Proof of Insurance**

The St. Joseph Pre-Kindergarten Program, in accordance with the policy of the Diocese of Belleville, requires that all students have insurance coverage, and parents must sign a statement to this effect at the start of each school year. Children whose parents refuse to sign this statement concerning proof of private coverage and release of liability, or who refuse to purchase insurance, will not be accepted into St. Joseph Catholic School. (DP #5143)

#### **Open Enrollment Period**

St. Joseph Catholic School hosts an annual open enrollment period for all grade levels during the months of May through August for the coming school year. During this time, families may register their child or children by contacting the school office. A registration packet will be provided. The contents as well as all other required paperwork and fees for admissions must be returned to the school office prior to the first day of student attendance.

#### **Mid-Year Enrollment Procedures**

St. Joseph Catholic School does accept mid-year transfers during the school year using the following process. Prospective families are asked to schedule an appointment with the school principal and receive a tour of the facility. A registration packet will be provided to school families interested in midyear enrollment at the end of the tour. A spend-a-day visit for the student will be scheduled providing an opportunity to meet possible classmates and teachers. After the spend-a-day visit, all required admissions paperwork and fees must be provided to the school office, including a request for student records from prior schools, in order for the child to be eligible for admissions. Families should allow one or two weeks for the school to verify all admissions paperwork. After such time, a mutually agreed upon start date will be set by the prospective family and school administration. Tuition rates will be prorated based on the agreed upon date of admittance.

#### **Probationary Enrollment**

Any transfer student who registers to attend St. Joseph Catholic School shall be considered probationary. This probationary status will remain effective until such time as the student's school records are received from the transferring school, and a sufficient period of time has passed to ensure that any special needs of the child can be met by existing school curriculum and resources. The school reserves the right to

deny enrollment, at any time, to any student with needs that cannot be met by the existing curriculum or staff. All students who transfer at the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade level are accepted conditionally and shall remain on probation for the entire academic year.

### **TUITION AND FEES**

Tuition for the 2025-2026 school year for children enrolled in Pre-Kindergarten is:

5 full days a week	\$6,500
4 full days a week	\$5,425
3 full days a week	\$4,225

\*\*\*There is a one-time \$500 voucher available to any incoming kindergarten student baptized at St. Agatha or St. Joseph\*\*\*

\*\*Please note: The above listed amount does not include the \$75 non-refundable registration fee which is due at the time of registration, or the \$200 art/snack fee which is due by July 31, 2025. Registration after April 11th will increase to \$100/child and after May 30th it will increase to \$125/child.

### **Payments**

Tuition is payable in one of several ways. Payment may be made monthly, quarterly, bi-annual, or annually. We highly recommend/prefer payments are made online through our tuition billing system, FACTS. We do not accept credit or debit cards at school, only cash or check. Checks are to be made out to St. Joseph Catholic School.

Monthly payments are to be paid either on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. Quarterly payments are to be made at the beginning of each school quarter. Bi-annual payments are to be made in August and January. Annual payments are to be made in August.

### **Fees**

The above listed amount does not include the \$75 non-refundable registration fee which is due at the time of registration, or the \$200 art/snack fee which is due by July 31, 2025. Registration after April 11th will increase to \$100/child and after May 30th it will increase to \$125/child.

### **Baptism Discount**

St. Joseph will grant a \$500 education voucher for all children baptized at St. Joseph or St. Agatha Catholic Church. This one- time voucher is valid toward tuition at St. Joseph Catholic School beginning with enrollment in kindergarten only.

### **STUDENT TRANSFERS**

Parents planning on transferring their child from St. Joseph Catholic School must notify the principal of the withdrawal from school. St. Joseph Catholic School follows the procedures determined by the Diocesan Office of Education in regard to transferring and maintaining all records. A copy of these regulations (DP 5119r) is available from the principal upon request.

Parents will be asked to complete the withdrawal form available in the school office. Written permission from a parent must be given before information can be sent to another school. All textbooks and property of St. Joseph Catholic School must be returned. Once all financial obligations to the school are satisfied, the official permanent records of the student (health records, report card, and attendance record) will be forwarded to the new school. This includes students graduating from St. Joseph Catholic School and enrolling in the ninth grade at another school. If excess funding remains in a student's

account (i.e. tuition or lunch account), the school will reimburse the family via check no later than June of the current school year.

### **ATTENDANCE (Diocesan Policy 5113.1)**

Regular attendance is essential for academic achievement. Teachers are required to keep a daily record of attendance for the students' permanent record. This information is tracked on FACTS communication portal. If attendance is not possible, we ask that you please contact the school office prior to 8:30 AM.

#### **Absenteeism**

When a child is absent from school the parent is to notify the school office before 8:30 AM. Failure of the parent notification to the school via phone or email may result in an unexcused absence. In the event of an unexcused absence the child may be granted no more than two days to complete any work missed, including tests, during the time of the unexcused absence regardless of the length of absence. Upon a child's return to school, a parent note must be provided to the teacher to file as part of the child's yearly absenteeism records. In the event of student absence of more than 20 days in a given school year, a meeting will be held with faculty and administration to discuss the possibility of student retention. If sufficient evidence is provided to consider retention, a parent meeting will be called immediately to discuss the findings as well as ways to best meet the child's needs.

#### **Planned Absence**

St. Joseph Catholic School discourages planned absences during the school year. However, the school realizes that there may be circumstances that require a student to be absent. When it is known ahead of time that a student will be absent from school, the parent is to notify the school office and the child's teacher(s) of the upcoming absence.

**Family Vacation Absences:** Family travel during the school year does interrupt a student's regular progress; however, we recognize the potential educational value of these trips. Therefore, five (5) vacation days per school year will be allowed as excused. Any days after five (5) school days will be unexcused. Early notice of travel will help school personnel to accommodate parents and students during that period. It will be the student's responsibility to obtain all the work missing from their teachers during their absence. Some assignments may not be available until the student returns to school. All missed assignments will be prepared for the student upon his/her return. Work shall be completed and returned to the teacher. . **Please note:** If sufficient notice is not given prior to a planned vacation or absence, the teacher may not be able to prepare and provide classwork or assignments in advance.

#### **Excused Absence and Unexcused Absence**

Both Excused Absences and Unexcused Absences are tracked yearly by the student's homeroom teacher and can be viewed by parents in FACTS. In Illinois, a valid cause for absence is defined as illness, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family (nuclear family, maternal and/or paternal grandparents, Direct aunts, uncles and/or first cousins), family emergency, and shall include such other situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the administration, or such other circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent for the safety or health of the student. Under any of these circumstances, students are considered to have an excused absence from school. In any case, however, a parent must inform the school of the child's absence. Failure of a parent to notify the school of an absence, including a planned absence, shall be considered unexcused. Absences for reasons other than those stated above may also be determined as an unexcused absence.

Students who are absent from school for five or more consecutive or non-consecutive days due to illness may be required to have a physician's note in order to excuse the absences. All work missed during an unexcused absence, including tests, may receive a zero unless prior plans were discussed with faculty and administration. Furthermore, if any of the above procedures regarding attendance, absenteeism or tardiness are not followed, the student will be considered unexcused and any work not completed within two days of the unexcused absence will result in a zero.

**Truant Absences:** Truancy is defined as absence without a valid cause for one or more periods of the student's school day. Parents/guardians may be notified following 3, 5, and 9 days of absence or tardies within a school year, and a school intervention may be initiated. After the 9<sup>th</sup> school day (5% of regular attendance days) on which a student is absent without valid cause, he/she is deemed to be truant under Illinois law. Interventions to address truancy may include attendance letters, parent/teacher/principal conferences, student counseling, and/or involvement of the county truancy officer and/or local law enforcement. No punitive action, including out-of-school suspensions or court action will be taken against the student, or offered to the student and refused. Any person who has custody or control of a child subject to compulsory attendance who knowingly or willfully permits the child to persist in truancy, if convicted, is guilty of a C class misdemeanor and may be subject to up to 30 days imprisonment and/or fine up to \$1,500.

### **Students Leaving School Early**

When a student must leave school for any reason (appointments, extracurricular activities, etc.) before the dismissal time, the school office must be notified of the reason and the time that the student(s) is to be released from school along with the expected time that the student(s) will return to school. The parent or authorized person picking up the student must come to the office and sign the student out. The student must report to the office upon his/her return to school and be signed in to school by the parent or authorized person.

Neither the principal nor any teacher shall permit a student to leave the school grounds before the time for dismissal without a written request from the parent or guardian. The request should state the reason for dismissal. Students should never be sent home for homework or books or sent on errands during school hours. (DP 5113.1)

### **Tardiness**

A student is considered tardy if he/she is not in their designated homeroom by 7:55 AM. The only exception is those students who arrive by school bus after 7:55 AM. Students arriving late must report to the school office before proceeding to the classroom. If it is a day that the student's class is attending mass, the student is to go to the office, NOT directly to church. A staff member will get the student to church after they have been signed in by a parent. Quarterly, tardy and absence totals will be provided under the Conduct portion of a student's report card. Excessive tardiness will be addressed to the parent by the homeroom teacher. Should the pattern continue, the administration may ask to meet with parents to discuss possible solutions.

The following guidelines are used when a student is tardy or absent:

- When a student arrives after the start of school but within one hour of the start of the school day (8:30 AM) the student will be considered tardy

- When a student arrives at school one hour after the start of the school day (9:00 AM) the student will be considered half-day absent
- When a student arrives at school and leaves to go the doctor or another appointment and returns within one hour, the student will not be considered as absent. If the student is absent for more than one hour, the student will be considered half-day absent. If a student leaves school within one hour of normal dismissal (after 2:00 PM), the student will not be considered absent. If a student arrives late to school because of a doctor or dental appointment, a note from the doctor or dental office is required. (DP 5113.1)
- For every **five (5) tardies**, one (1) **absence** will be recorded. Consistent punctuality is important for student success.

### ARRIVAL / DISMISSAL

The school day begins at 7:55 AM and concludes at 2:55 PM. Students should not enter the school building before 7:45 AM. When a student arrives at school, they should proceed directly to their classroom. If there are items to drop off in the office, they may send them down at the start of the school day. Once a student is on the school grounds, he/she may not leave the grounds without the expressed written permission of his/her parent.

Students in the Pre-Kindergarten program will be individually dismissed to their parents or designated adult at the end of their school day, 2:30 PM. The parent or designated adult must sign-out the child in the appropriate classroom before leaving school. The teacher needs to have met and have the names of the designated person(s) who picks up the child. If the designated person changes, a phone call and email or note signed by the parent must be made to the teacher. The teacher will not release any child to someone unknown to the teacher and who is not designated by the parent.

#### **Morning Drop Off**

Parents are allowed to drop off their children in the designated area between the Parish Center and the School's Main Entrance; however, if a parent is to park and leave their vehicle, they must use one of the full-line parking spots in the middle of the parking lot. Parents are not to use the short-line spots directly in front of the Parish Center. This area is to be kept clear to create a safe lane for parents to drop off their children in a quick and orderly manner. Please pass this information on to anyone picking up or dropping off your child.

#### **Before Care**

Before care will be available to families. Hours for this service are 7:00 AM to 7:45 AM. This service is offered free to our families.

#### **Extended Care**

Registration Fee: \$15.00 for one child; \$5.00 for each additional child in the family. Please note that the registration fee will not be charged until the first visit. Any application must be turned in each year for this service.

### Daily Fees

Child	1	2	3
3:15 - 4:30 pm	\$10	\$15	\$20
After 4:30 until 5:30 pm	\$15	\$20	\$25

#### **Office Hours**

On regular school days, the main office is open from 7:30 AM – 3:30 PM. After this time, the school is locked down for the day. After hours, please know that the phone call button at the front door is inactive after 3:30 PM.

#### **Restroom Requirement**

Preschool students must be able to use the restroom independently, with no assistance. “Pull-ups” are not permitted. In case of accidents, all students are required to keep a spare pair of clothes at school. At the beginning of the year, students bring in a spare outfit (including underwear and socks) in a sealed plastic bag (Ziploc) labeled with their name. A student who has accidents habitually may be determined unable to use the restroom independently and not ready for admission to preschool.

Accidents are considered habitual when:

5-day students - 4 accidents in a two-week period

4-day students - 4 accidents in a two-week period

3-day students - 3 accidents in a three-week period

If a student begins a pattern of habitual accidents, parents will be notified by the teacher/nurse/principal and the child will be put on a two-week probation period and will be required to stay home until they are fully potty trained.

### COMMUNICATIONS

#### **FACTS**

FACTS is the electronic system used by the school to communicate reports, memos, emails, calendars, important dates, events, lunch menus, tuition information, tuition payments, required forms, extracurricular activities and schedules, and report cards. FACTS also contains an automated telephone system component that is used to relay emergency messages to parents, including school cancellations due to inclement weather conditions. Because this system relies on accurate telephone numbers, parents are responsible for notifying the school when telephone numbers change or when numbers need to be added or deleted from the system. This system is tested at least once a year for parents to verify they are correctly placed into the system.

#### **Parent-Teacher Communication**

Parents may contact their child’s teacher via email or by phone. Phone messages may be left after school hours at the teacher’s assigned extension. A list of these extensions can be found at the beginning of the handbook. If it is an immediate matter during the school day, call the main office to relay the message to your child’s teacher. Please allow 24 hours for a teacher to respond to a message. Teachers are on campus until 3:30 PM each school day. Parents are welcome to discuss matters with a teacher before this

time. If a later time is needed, parents are encouraged to schedule an appointment in advance. If a parent is having difficulty reaching a teacher, or the teacher has not responded in a timely manner, please contact the principal at 618-539-3930 ext. 111.

### **Distribution of Materials**

St. Joseph Catholic School will not distribute information to parents or students in any form that has not been approved by the principal.

### **School Cancellation**

School cancellations will be broadcast via email through FACTS. Please note, we do not always follow FCHS snow day closures. In the event of school cancellation, remote learning plans may be put into effect. If a remote learning plan is used, students will be responsible for attendance, participation and assignments set forth by St. Joseph faculty.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-Teacher Conferences shall be scheduled at the discretion of the principal, at least once a year and whenever parents, teachers, or principals deem necessary. (DP 5124) Parent-Teacher Conferences are generally held in the fall of each school year after the conclusion of the first quarter. In order to build and continue the necessary parent-school partnership necessary for maximizing student achievement, it is important that all families attend this event. If you cannot meet on the designated event date, you are encouraged to contact your child's teacher to schedule a conference on another day. Teachers or parents may request additional conferences as necessary.

### **STUDENT RECORDS (Diocesan Policy 5125)**

Catholic elementary schools in the Diocese of Belleville are required to keep a written record of each student who is currently attending or has attended the school. During the time a student is officially in attendance, the record is considered to be active and is to be kept in the local school file. There are two parts to each record: a permanent record and a temporary record.

All student records are kept according to federal, state, and Diocesan guidelines and procedures. Release of information from a student's record to someone other than the student is only done according to federal and state guidelines. (DP 5125)

St. Joseph Catholic School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of the non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

### **FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

In the event a student or parent acting on behalf of their child believes a school policy or procedure has been violated, they have the opportunity to file a formal complaint. A true violation is either a misapplication or misinterpretation of a school policy. An example of a formal complaint is when a student disagrees with how a teacher responded to a situation based on pre-determined protocol. The following formal process is used to resolve the issue to the point of clarity. The purpose is to provide an equitable and orderly process to resolve any such issues. To maintain good relationships, these steps

should be initiated and processed as rapidly as possible. Whether there is an academic or non-academic issue, students and their parents should follow the following procedure:

1. Communicate your concern as clearly as possible to the teacher or staff member. If necessary, communicate the matter in writing.
2. Schedule a time with the teacher or school personnel to discuss the issue further, as appropriate.
3. Make every effort to reach an understanding with the other party. Prayerfully, these efforts will result in a satisfactory mutual understanding and resolution.
4. If the matter cannot be resolved, advise the teacher or school personnel that you wish to refer the matter to the principal. If the matter involves the principal instead of a teacher, you may refer the matter to the Pastor if the situation cannot be resolved through a conference.
5. Submit a request to meet with the principal within ten days of the meeting with the teacher or school personnel.
6. The principal should respond within four weeks and take the appropriate steps to work with both parties to resolve the matter.
7. The resolution determined by the principal or Pastor is final.

### **STUDENT CONDUCT (Diocesan Policy 5142)**

Attendance at Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the Diocese of Belleville is at the will and discretion of the particular school. As such, attendance and enrollment may be terminated at any time when the school determines that continued enrollment would not be in the best interests of the students, the school, or the educational purposes of the school. All students who attend a Catholic school in the Diocese of Belleville are expected, as a condition of continued enrollment, to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the policies and principles of the school.

Conduct by a student in which a school determines is contrary to, or inconsistent with, the Catholic/Christian principles of the school, is grounds for terminating the student's enrollment in the school. These principles and expectations apply to students both on campus and off campus during school and non-school sponsored programs and events. These principles and expectations apply during and after school hours, and during times when school is in session and when school is out of session.

The students' interest in receiving a quality, morally-based education can best be served when students, teachers, and school officials all work together and set a proper example. In some instances where differences cannot be resolved, the school may find it necessary, in its discretion, to require parents/guardians to withdraw their child/children from the school. (DP 5131)

#### **Pre-Kindergarten Discipline Policy**

This policy is currently being reviewed and developed by the principal and the board of education. More information will be sent home when the policy has been completed.

### **SCHOOL DRESS CODE**

#### **Pre-Kindergarten Dress Code**

Pre-Kindergarten students may wear the school uniform, but it is not required. Children should wear comfortable clothes, but tank tops and spaghetti straps are prohibited. If your child is unable to button his/her pants, please use pants with elastic waists. **Children MUST wear tennis shoes with socks.** Socks

are to be visible above the shoe during normal wear. For Pre-Kindergarten students, it is also required that parents provide a change of clothes in the event of bathroom accidents. Accidents will be handled with a minimum of attention.

### **Spirit Days**

Spirit Days are held every Friday. Spirit day shirts can be worn with uniform bottoms. Due to Mass days and non-attendance days, Spirit Day may be moved in a given month. St. Joseph Catholic School or St. Agatha Catholic School Spirit Wear are allowed on spirit days, but tournament t-shirts from various athletic events are allowed but needs to represent the Hawks/Jaguars. Plain, solid denim blue jeans or shorts, athletic pants or shorts may be worn if they are not torn, ripped, frayed, holed, stained, or contains ornamentation. Shorts must have a hemline longer than the midpoint between the hip and knee. If the jeans have belt loops, a solid-colored uniform belt is required for 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade. Leggings are allowed, as long as the shirt they are wearing covers back and front. Solid white socks must be worn at all times (in accordance with uniform sock requirements) with tennis shoes. Students choosing not to wear spirit wear must wear their regular school uniform.

## **SCHOOL HEALTH**

All Catholic schools in the Diocese of Belleville shall follow the Illinois Department of Public Health Rules for School Health Exams and Immunizations, Illinois Department of Public Health Rules, and the Control of Communicable Diseases. The only exception to this policy is in the case of a medical exemption. Exemptions from the physical examination or immunizations on religious grounds are not accepted for students in a Catholic school in the Diocese of Belleville because the Catholic Church holds no position in opposition to immunizations. Therefore, all students who attend the Catholic school must be immunized regardless of religious affiliation. An exemption may be granted on the basis of medical reasons if verified by a Medical Doctor (M.D.), or Doctor of Osteopathy (D.O.) in written documentation. This is to be sent to the Office of Education for approval prior to the acceptance of the student in the school. (DP 5141.3)

### **Health Examination (Diocesan Policy 5141.3)**

A health examination, including a health history and immunization record, shall be submitted by students entering pre-kindergarten, kindergarten or first grade, and by students entering the sixth grade. The examination shall be conducted within one year prior to the date that the student enters school. Students transferring into an Illinois school from an out-of-state school must present copies of their current health record and such records in accordance with Illinois requirements. Transfer students have thirty days to submit the required health records.

Health examinations shall be recorded on the Certificate of Child Health Examination form as required by the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois State Board of Education. The health history portion of the physical examination form must be completed and signed by the parent in order for the student to be in compliance with the health examination requirement. Lead screening is a required part of the health examination for children age 6 years or younger prior to admission to kindergarten or first grade. Please note that a sports physical may not be accepted as proof of compliance with the health examination required for entrance into pre-kindergarten, kindergarten or first grade, and the sixth grade.

### **Immunizations (Diocesan Policy 5141.3)**

All students attending a Catholic school in the Diocese of Belleville are required to be in compliance with the law of the State of Illinois with respect to health examinations and immunizations, including but not limited to the Illinois School Code, 105 ILCS 5/27-8.1 (or any successor provisions), and regulations promulgated thereunder, including but not limited to the Department of Public Health's Child and Student Health Examination and Immunization Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code Part 665 and 695) (or any successor provisions), as well as the Communicable Disease Prevention Act (410 ILCS 315/0.01 et seq.) (or any successor provisions) and regulations promulgated thereunder, including but not limited to the Department of Public Health's Control of a Communicable Diseases Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code Part 690) (or any successor provisions.).

### **Medical Objections**

If the parent or legal guardian of a student who attends a school in the Diocese of Belleville refuses to vaccinate a student and claims a medical exemption for doing so, the school shall follow these procedures:

1. The school shall determine whether a valid medical objection has been made;
2. If a valid medical objection has not been made, the school shall within a reasonable time inform the parent or legal guardian that the student may not be present at the school until either (a) a valid medical objection is made; or (b) the student is vaccinated in accordance with applicable Illinois law;
3. If a valid medical objection has been made, the school shall inform the parent or guardian of the Diocese of Belleville's Office of Education Exclusion Procedures and shall attach the documentation of the medical objection to the student's health record and place the record in the student's permanent record.

In determining whether a valid medical objection has been made, the school shall comply with the Illinois Department of Public Health's Child and Student Health Examination and Immunization Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code Part 665 and 695) (or any successor provisions). The school shall access the requirements of a valid medical objection, including but not limited to:

1. The objection must be made by a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches or an advanced practice nurse or physician assistant responsible for the performance of the student's health examination;
2. The objection must indicate the medical condition of the student which makes administration of one or more of the required immunizing agents medically contraindicated;
3. The physician or advanced practice nurse or physician assistant responsible for the performance of the student's health examination must sign the student's health examination form indicating medical objection.

The procedures for determining the validity of a medical objection are subject to change without notice, including (but not limited to) upon the occurrence of a change in Illinois law regarding the same.

### **Religious Objections**

If the parent or legal guardian of a student who attends a school in the Diocese of Belleville refuses to vaccinate a student and claims a religious objection for doing so, the school shall follow these procedures:

1. The school shall determine whether a valid religious objection has been made;

2. If a valid religious objection *has not* been made, the school shall within a reasonable time inform the parent or legal guardian that the student may not be present at the school until either (a) a valid religious objection is made; or (b) the student is vaccinated in accordance with applicable Illinois law;
3. If a valid religious objection *has* been made, the school shall inform the parent or guardian of the Diocese of Belleville's Office of Education Exclusion Procedures and shall attach the documentation of the religious objection to the student's health record and place the record in the student's permanent record.

In determining whether a valid religious objection has been made, the school shall comply with the Illinois Department of Public Health's Child and Student Health Examination and Immunization Code (77 III. Adm. Code Part 665 and 695) (or any successor provisions). The school shall assess the requirements of a valid religious objection, including but not limited to the requirement that the parent or legal guardian must present to the school a Certificate of Religious Exemption, in a format consistent with that promulgated from time to time by the Illinois Department of Public Health, setting forth the specific religious belief that conflicts with the examination, test, immunization, or other medical intervention that is the subject of the parent or legal guardian's objection. The Certificate of Religious Exemption must be signed by the health care provider responsible for the performance of the student's health examination and stated that the health care provider provided the parent or legal guardian of the student with information regarding (1) the required examinations, (2) the benefits of immunizations, and (3) the health risks to the community from the communicable diseases for which immunization is required in Illinois.

These procedures for determining the validity of a religious objection are subject to change at any time without notice, including (but not limited to) upon the occurrence of a change in Illinois law regarding the same.

### **Exclusion Procedures**

All Catholic schools and childcare facilities in the Diocese of Belleville shall maintain an accurate list of all students who have not presented proof of immunity against any or all diseases for which immunization is required under Illinois law.

The following Exclusion Procedures apply when the parent of a student attends a school in the Diocese of Belleville has claimed a valid medical or religious objection to vaccinating the student in accordance with applicable Illinois law.

Upon the occurrence of a case or suspected case of one or more communicable diseases, from which a student has not been vaccinated pursuant to a medical or religious objection, at the school where the student attends, the school may exclude a student who has not been vaccinated against the communicable disease(s) from entering the school's premises for a reasonable period of time in accordance with applicable Illinois law, including but not limited to the Control of Communicable Diseases Code (77 III. Admin. Code, Part 690) (or any successor provisions) to ensure the safety of the student as well as other individuals.

If a student who has claimed a valid medical or religious objection to one or more vaccinations becomes a case or suspected case having a communicable disease, the school may exclude the student from entering the school's premises for a reasonable period of time in accordance with applicable Illinois law, including but not limited to the Control of Communicable Diseases Code (77 III. Admin. Code, Part 690) (or any successor provisions) to ensure the safety of the student as well as other individuals.

These Exclusion Procedures are subject to change at any time without notice, including (but not limited to) upon the occurrence of a change in Illinois law regarding the same.

#### *Immunization Requirements for Pre-Kindergarten*

- Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus: 4 doses of DTP/Dtap
- Polio: minimum of 3 doses of IPV
- Measles: 1 dose received on or after the 1<sup>st</sup> birthday (usually given as MMR)
- Mumps: 2 doses, one received on or after the 1<sup>st</sup> birthday and the second no less than four weeks (28 days) after the first dose (usually given as MMR)
- Rubella: 2 doses, one received on or after the 1<sup>st</sup> birthday and the second no less than 28 days after the first dose (usually given as MMR)
- Hepatitis B: 3 doses received at required intervals
- Haemophilus Influenza B: Hib vaccine appropriate to age
- Chickenpox (Varicella): 2 doses, one received on or after the 1<sup>st</sup> birthday and the second no less than 28 days after the first dose; or physician's statement verifying disease history, or laboratory evidence of varicella immunity.

#### **Compliance**

The completed Certificate of Child Health Examination form which includes the physical examination, immunization record, and health history must be submitted on or before October 15 in order for the child to be in compliance. Students needing immunizations after October 15 must submit to the school a signed appointment schedule from the person administering the immunizations. Students who fail to receive the immunization(s) at the appointed time will be considered non-compliance. Students who are not in compliance with the health examination and/or immunization requirements will be excluded from school until compliance is met.

#### **Health Insurance**

The St. Joseph Catholic School, in following the policy of the Diocese of Belleville, requires that all students have insurance coverage, and parents must sign a statement to this effect at the start of each school year. Children whose parents refuse to sign this statement concerning proof of private coverage and release of liability, or who refuse to purchase insurance, will not be accepted into St. Joseph Catholic School. (DP #5143)

#### **Medication**

The administration of medication to students during regular school hours and during school-related activities is discouraged unless absolutely necessary for the critical health and well-being of the student. Under no circumstances shall teachers or other school employees be required to administer medication to students. Only school personnel authorized by written permission of the principal may administer medication to students during regular school hours.

Only those medications which are necessary to maintain the student in school and must be given during school hours may be brought to school. All medicine, including prescription and over-the-counter medicine that is to be taken at school must be brought to the school office. **This includes cough drops.** All medications, including non-prescription drugs, given in school shall be prescribed by a licensed prescriber on an individual basis as determined by the student's health status. All prescription medication brought to school must be in its original container with the prescription label attached. Nonprescription, over the counter, medication shall be brought to school in containers with the

manufacturer's original label with the ingredients listed and clearly visible; and the student's name affixed to the container.

A written order for the prescription and non-prescription medication must be provided to the school from the student's licensed prescriber. Prescriptions will only be valid for not more than one school year. In addition to the licensed prescriber's order, a written request shall be obtained from the parent requesting the medication be given during school hours. The parental request form and the physician's order form are available in the school office. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the licensed prescriber order, written request and medications are brought to school.

Medications will be stored in a separate locked cabinet. Medications requiring refrigeration will be refrigerated in a secure area. The parents will be responsible at the end of the treatment for removing any unused medication from school. If a parent does not pick up the medication by the end of the school year, the medication will be discarded. If a child requests medication for an acute ailment, the parent will be called and assumes responsibility for bringing the medication to school, refusing the request for medication, or taking the child home. Students with asthma are permitted to keep their inhalers with them and self-administer medication as prescribed. A written order for the inhaler and a written authorization form must be completed and signed by the parent before a child can self-carry and self-administer asthma medication.

All health forms, including the physical examination form, sport's physical form, dental form, eye examination form and eye examination waiver; emergency form, health insurance form, physician's and parent's authorization forms for medication, and asthma inhaler authorization form are available in the school office.

### **Contagious Illness**

Any student diagnosed with any of the following contagious diseases must be excluded from school for not less than the period of isolation set by the Illinois Department of Public Health:

Chickenpox	Strep Throat	Pinkeye	Pediculosis	Fifths Disease
Diphtheria	Scarlet Fever	Infantile Paralysis	Smallpox	Scabies
Rubella	Impetigo	Measles	Mumps	Tuberculosis
Typhoid Fever	Whooping Cough	Ringworm	COVID-19	

Any student who has had any of the following contagious diseases must present a physician's statement attesting that the student is no longer contagious before being readmitted to school:

Diphtheria Tuberculosis Fifths Disease Impetigo Typhoid Fever Measles Whooping Cough Ringworm  
Rash of undetermined origin

In addition, we ask that you please DO NOT bring your child to school if they have had any of the following symptoms within the last 24 hours:

Sore Throat	Fever	Rash	Swollen Glands	Vomiting
Skin Sores	Earache	Respiratory Infection	Head Lice	Diarrhea

In the event of a positive COVID test, the school will follow the guidelines set forth by the IDPH and the Diocesan Office of Education with regards to quarantine and return to school

**Students are to be fever free without medication 24 hours before returning to school.**

**Head Lice**

Children found to have possible symptoms of head lice may be asked to leave and see a physician. If a case is confirmed, students are to be held from school until the day after the first shampoo, lotion or cream rinse pediculicide is properly applied. When head lice are found in multiple students throughout the building, the school will provide examinations to all students by a licensed professional

**Disposition of Minor Illness or Minor Injury**

If an injury or illness is minor, it may be appropriate to retain the student in school for the remainder of the day. The principal, or designee, will contact the parent to inform him/her of the situation. If the parent cannot be reached, the alternate contact provided by the parent on the emergency form will be contacted. If a student requires medical attention, the parent will be notified and the parent will be asked to arrange for treatment. In non-emergency situations, if efforts to reach the parent or contacts provided on the emergency form are not successful, the student will be kept in school under the observation of a staff member or principal.

**Disposition of Major Illness or Injury**

If a major illness or injury occurs, the parent will be contacted immediately. If the parent cannot be reached, the alternate contact on the emergency form will be contacted. If the illness or injury is thought to be serious enough to warrant emergency care, an ambulance will be called to transport the student to the emergency room. The protocol is to transport people to the nearest emergency room.

**Emergency Form**

An emergency form must be completed for each child enrolled at St. Joseph Catholic School. The emergency form is part of the registration packet and must be completed at the time the student is registered for school. It is the parent's responsibility to keep all information accurate and current and to contact the school office of any changes.

**Allergy Management Policy**

The administration understands the increasing prevalence of life-threatening allergies among school populations and recognizes that the risk of accidental exposure to allergens can be reduced in the school setting. St. Joseph Catholic School is committed to working in cooperation with the parents, students, and physicians to minimize risks and provide a safe educational environment for all students. The focus of allergy management shall be on prevention, education, awareness, communication, and emergency response. There are a variety of student care plans and accommodations that are appropriate to use for students that experience health conditions that may impact a student's school day and academic program. It is the policy of the school to provide students, through reasonable accommodations where required, the opportunity to participate in all school programs and activities.

It shall be the responsibility of the parent to:

- Inform the school of a child's allergies prior to the opening of school (or as soon as possible after diagnosis)
- Provide documentation of the allergy from the child's physician

- Teach the child not to share food, drinks, or utensils
- Sign release for school personnel to consult with family physician/allergist/ and all medical providers
- Provide the school with the Allergy Action Plan completed and signed by the child's physician
- Meet with school officials to review the Allergy Action Plan
- Complete and submit all required medication forms
- Provide the school with all necessary medication
- Provide the school with current emergency information and maintain updated emergency contact numbers and medical information
- Consider providing a medical alert bracelet for the child
- Provide safe snacks in the classroom for the child
- Accompany the child on field trips and extracurricular activities whenever possible
- Inform the school of any changes in the child's health status
- Provide the school with the physician's statement if the student no longer has an allergy

It shall be the responsibility of the school to:

- Follow Diocesan policies and guidelines
- Develop and maintain an Allergy Management Packet that includes the following forms:
  - Allergy Assessment
  - Authorization for Emergency Care of Student with Allergies
  - Allergy Action Plan
  - Medical Alert Letter to Parents
  - Medical Alert for Teachers and Substitutes
- Familiarize teachers and other school personnel with the Allergy Action Plan on a need-to-know basis
- Provide mandatory in-service training and education on reducing life-threatening allergy risks, recognizing food allergy symptoms, and emergency procedures for appropriate staff to include:
  - A description of severe allergies
  - The signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis
  - The correct use of Epinephrine
  - Specific steps to follow in the event of an emergency
  - Ensure that all personnel know where medication is located in the school
  - Ensure that substitute teachers are informed of students with severe allergies

### **DIOCESAN CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

All adults working with children at school must be in compliance with the Office of Child Protection requirements. The school secretary is the liaison between the school, the parish, and the Office of Child Protection. She/he is responsible for reviewing that all of the following requirements are met:

- Application for Volunteer Service on file
- Cants form completed every 2 years
- Proof of completion of the Initial Protection Policy training
- Successfully completion of the annual refresher course (done each year)

### **Mandated Reporter/Abuse and Neglected Child Reporting**

The Abuse and Neglected Child Reporting Act (1982) mandates suspicion of child abuse or neglect be reported to the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). The law covers all children up to the age of 18. All parish and school personnel, including, but not limited to teachers, administrators, volunteers, coaches, staff, teacher aides, and others to work with children are to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect to DCFS. The DCFS may ask that licenses/certificates be suspended and/or revoked if it has proof that professional personnel had knowledge of child abuse and/or neglect and did not report. When a suspected case is reported to the DCFS, the person reporting the case should inform the school principal. If the principal is unavailable, the Pastor should be informed. (DP 5141.4)

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Asbestos Abatement Act**

The Asbestos Abatement Act (P.A. 83-1325 and amended by P.A. 84-1096) requires all schools to be tested for asbestos and have a management plan for their buildings. St. Joseph Catholic School buildings have been inspected for asbestos-containing building materials by a licensed inspector. In addition, an Asbestos Management Plan has been prepared by a licensed Management Planner. The Inspection Report and Management Plan are on file in the main office and open to anyone for review during regular school office hours. The report states asbestos containing materials were found, and copies of these reports are available upon notification of the facility administrator along with a payment of a fee to cover copying costs.

### **Deliveries to Students during School Day**

Any type of delivery to a student during the school day must go to the main office (i.e. lunch, P.E. clothes, etc.). The office will get the item(s) to the student at an appropriate time that does not disrupt class time. A child's teacher and the main office should be notified of any special delivery in the middle of the school day (i.e. birthday treats, flowers, etc.). In general, calls will not be made home for things other than glasses, medication, or student illness.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are privileges afforded to students. No student has an absolute right to a field trip. Students can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements. A parent may refuse to allow a child to participate in a field trip. The child will then be assigned to another teacher at the school and given the appropriate work for the day. Students will not be permitted to participate in a field trip when serving a detention or suspension. Only signed official permission forms from the school office will be accepted for a child to go on a field trip. Telephone calls, emails, or notes will not be accepted in lieu of the official form. (DP 6153) Permission slips should be returned by the designated deadline in order for students to be eligible to participate on the field trip.

Parents are encouraged to chaperone on field trips. Please note that any parents or adults who chaperone will need to have completed a Volunteer Form and complete all required information outlined by the Diocesan Child Protection Policy. If a parent is driving students, a driver information and insurance sheet must be on file in the main office. Verification of participation in the Safe Driver training module must also be done prior to the field trip. For younger students, proper car seats are required in all parent vehicles for student transportation. Parents may not bring additional non-St. Joseph students (including younger family members) along with them if they are attending as a chaperone.

### **Classroom Interruptions**

Classroom time is not to be interrupted by parents or visitors. The office is to be contacted for messages, etc. If it is necessary to bring something for your child to school, the item is to be brought to the school office. This includes but is not limited to books, homework, P.E. clothes, lunches, glasses, etc.

### **Damage to School Property**

Fines will be assessed to replace or repair damaged property. The amount of damage done to books or school property will determine the fine. Students who lose textbooks will pay the cost of replacement.

### **Lost and Found**

Apparel and personal items should be marked to facilitate return if they become lost. Articles which have been found are placed in Lost and Found near the main office. Articles not claimed will be given to charity.

### **Lunch**

Students will have the opportunity to **pre-order lunch from an outside vendor three days a week (MWF)**. Additionally, **microwaves will be available for students' use** if they choose to bring lunch from home and need to heat it.

Extra milk and juices are available for purchase. Students will need to bring their own plastic eating utensils. Chewing gum is not permitted at lunch time or any other time during school hours.

### **Snacks and Treats**

On special occasions such as a birthday, a student may bring a treat to share with his/her classmates or participate in the PTF birthday program. Parents should bring the items to the school door if delivering during the day. The student's parent must inform the teacher no less than a day ahead of time if bringing/sending a treat to school. It is important to check with your child's teacher to know if there is a child with food allergies, including peanut allergies, in the classroom. **According to health regulations, treats brought to school shall be pre-packaged store-bought snacks.**

### **Recess**

Students in grades Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 3 have a mid-morning recess. All students will have a recess either directly before or directly after lunch. A note signed by the parent must be sent to the school office if a child is not to go outside for recess due to illness or injury. If the student is to be excused from recess or P.E. for more than one day a doctor's slip will need to be turned in to the office. All students need to dress properly for the given season in order to participate in outdoor recess. Students cannot participate in recess or other outdoor activities without coats on colder days as determined by the principal. Instead, students will either use the gymnasium or the school building for an indoor recess.

### **Video/Photograph/Taping of Students**

A written parental consent form must be obtained by the school in order to use any videos, photographs, slides, audio tapes or any other visual or audio reproductions in which their child may appear. The consent form releases the school, parish, and the Diocese of Belleville from any liability connected with the use of any visual or audio formats as part of any promotion, recruitment or fundraising program. The consent form is part of the FACTS online enrollment process. Only those children whose parents have signed the consent form will be photographed or taped.

## **Parent Volunteers**

Parents and volunteers are an important part of St. Joseph Catholic School. A parent may volunteer to be the room parent or may be asked by the teacher to serve as the room parent. Parents will be contacted by the teacher or room parent to assist with special projects, field trips, and holiday parties. All parents and volunteers who are in contact with children at St. Joseph Catholic School must complete all required information outlined by the Diocesan Child Protection Policy. Parent volunteers will park in the teacher parking lot.

## **Family Volunteer Hours Requirement**

Beginning with the 25-26 School Year, St Joseph Catholic School is implementing the requirement for each family in Grades Pre-K-8 to provide a minimum of 20 volunteer hours within a school year. Not only will you be helping the school, but you will be able to get to know other families in our community. The hours can be served by a parent, grandparent, or a family member who is 18 years of age or older, with current Criminal Background Clearance and Child Protection Compliance on file in the School Office. Volunteer hours must be completed between August 1st and May 14th.

Families may accumulate service hours in many ways such as volunteering for:

- Committees
- Classroom Assistance
- PTF Events (sign up genius will be sent out)
- Dinner Auction
- Recess Duty
- Fish Fry
- Sports Activities
- Parish Events
- Church Picnic

If you are in need of service hours, please look in the Friday newsletter for service hour opportunities or contact our school office.

## **SCHOOL BOARD**

All parish and school boards of education in the Diocese of Belleville are consultative boards. A consultative board is established by the Pastor to assist him and the principal in the governance of the parish education program. The board's responsibilities are in policy matters. They are not responsible for administration or the details of administration. The board has responsibilities in the following areas: Finance and Budget, Policy and Strategic Plan, Development, Marketing, PTF Liaison. Eight members serve three-year terms. The school board is comprised of members from St. Joseph's and St. Agatha, with at least, one member being a parishioner of each parish without a child in the school. The principal and Pastor are ex-officio members of the board. If a parent or guest would like to address the Board, arrangements shall be made no less than one week in advance with the President of the Board and the Principal. The topic to be presented shall be noted on the agenda.

## **PARENTS-TEACHERS-FRIENDS (P.T.F.)**

The P.T.F. organization supports the school in a variety of ways. All parents, teachers, and friends of St. Joseph Catholic School are considered members and are invited to participate in this organization. This group meets monthly throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to be active in the school's parent organization. It is required that families help with at least three school or P.T.F. events throughout each school year.

## **PARENTS AS PARTNERS IN EDUCATION**

Parents are the child's primary teacher and St. Joseph Catholic School recognizes the importance of parents working with their children to help assure that children are prepared for school and for a lifetime of learning. It is important that parents:

- **READ** to their elementary age school children and set an example that reading is fun. Read stories, nursery rhymes, bible stories, road signs, cereal boxes, etc.
- **ENCOURAGE** your children to complete age-appropriate tasks around the house...picking up after oneself, setting the table, putting clothes in clothes hamper, taking care of family pet, household chores, etc.
- **PRACTICE** good health and safety habits...always wear a seat belt when riding in a motor vehicle, have children wear a helmet when riding a bike, keep a consistent bedtime, exercise and play with children, eat healthy snacks, help children develop healthy routines such as showers and brushing teeth, have and practice an escape route from the home in the event of fire, help promote internet safety, discuss safety habits when home alone, etc.
- **DISCUSS** your child's day with them. Hear about their educational experiences by asking about favorite subjects and activities from the week. By encouraging students to tell stories, this practice can assist in developing stronger writing skills. These discussions can also lead to areas in which parents can help students with school work or with issues a student may be having at school. Keeping an open dialogue at a young age can encourage continued discussions throughout adolescent years.
- **COMMUNICATE** with your child's teachers and the school office. Let us know what is going on and what we can do to help ensure your child receives the best education in a safe and nurturing school environment.

**St. Joseph Catholic School Parent-Student Handbook Acknowledgement**

**\*\*Acknowledgement was completed at the time of FACTS online enrollment\*\***

Dear Parents:

You have been emailed a copy of the St. Joseph Catholic School Parent-Student Handbook, and the handbook can also be found on our school website. It outlines important information pertaining to the policies and procedures followed by our school. After reviewing the contents of the handbook, return the signed section below indicating that you have read and understand the contents.

Please note that the St. Joseph Catholic School Principal and Pastor retain the authority to amend the handbook for the betterment of the school community at any time. Parents will be notified concerning any changes.

Thank you for your cooperation and continued support of St. Joseph Catholic School.

Sincerely,

Brandy Hildebrand  
Principal

**Please Return to the School Office**

**I have read and understand the information contained in the St. Joseph Catholic School Parent Student Handbook.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Name of Student(s) and grade:**

\_\_\_\_\_