



PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK
2024-2025



SERVING THE CHILDREN OF TAMPA SINCE 1896

**2200 N. Gomez Avenue
Tampa, Florida 33607
Phone: 813-879-7720**

**School hours: 8:00 am – 3:00 pm
Half Days: 8:00 am – 12:00 pm
Office hours: 7:30 am – 3:30 pm**

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INTRODUCTION

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Joseph Catholic School leads students on the path to College and Heaven by doing the right thing at the right time for the love of God.

Our mission is characterized by our three Root Beliefs

- God is in all things
- We are called to offer our best to God.
- Every moment matters.

We live our mission through our five Core Values

- Seek
- Persist
- Excel
- Love
- Serve

Intellectual Goals:

Because we are called to offer our best to God, students are actively involved in the process of learning. St. Joseph leads students on the path to College and Heaven by:

- Encouraging independent learning.
- Offering a variety of intellectual, spiritual, and cultural activities.
- Integrating technology into the curriculum.
- Instructing students in a manner that considers different learning styles and multiple intelligences.
- Incorporating critical thinking skills throughout the curriculum.
- Optimizing the use of government funding to bolster our learning environment.

Spiritual/Moral Goals

Because God is in all things, St. Joseph provides an environment rooted in our Roman Catholic faith where an Incarnational theology fosters in each child an internalized love of God, neighbor, and self through:

- Liturgies and celebrations of Church feasts.
- Frequent prayer as a school community, as a class or individually.
- Highlighting Tradition and Scripture as the basis of our faith.
- Enabling students to make practical applications of faith.
- Instilling moral and spiritual responsibility.
- Providing opportunities for service to others.
- An age-appropriate thematic program promoting the learning and living of virtues.
- Assisting parents in preparing their children to receive the sacraments.
- Encouraging stewardship for all of God's creation.

Personal/Social Goals:

Because every moment matters, St. Joseph strives to maintain each individual's God-given dignity through:

- An environment where each child feels capable of sharing his/her accomplishments publicly.
- Modeling and rewarding appropriate reactions, emotions, and ideas.

- Teaching respect for others.
- Instilling in all students the basic virtues of honesty, sincerity, and responsibility.
- Fostering an appreciation for multiculturalism and working towards peace and justice in our world.
- Providing extra-curricular activities to promote social and physical development.

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

St. Joseph School has served the Tampa Community since 1896. As our mission states, St. Joseph leads students on the path to College and Heaven by doing the right thing at the right time for the Love of God. In order to reach these goals, our school seeks to provide academic excellence in a quality Catholic setting to children of varied backgrounds from Early Childhood through Eighth Grade.

St. Joseph School provides holistic education based on the Gospel and Tradition of the Roman Catholic Church. In partnership with our parents, we are committed to meeting the spiritual and intellectual needs of each student. Modeling and teaching the message of Christ, we foster the establishment of life-long values and growth in the spirit of worship. We attempt to meet the individual needs of our students through developmentally appropriate learning activities where children are encouraged to become eager independent learners.

St. Joseph serves an ethnically diverse community creating a safe, loving, and disciplined environment that allows its students to feel accepted and valued. In this family spirit, we welcome and encourage all to live in true Christian unity.

ACADEMICS

Core Curricular subjects include:

Catholic Formation	Science
Language Arts/English and Reading	Social Studies
Mathematics	

Core curricular subjects are taught in self-contained classes for children in Kindergarten through grade 5. Core curricular subjects are departmentalized for students in grades six through eight.

Additional curricular subjects (referred to as Core II) include:

Music	Media/Library
Guidance	Spanish
Performing Arts	Art
Physical Education	

Academic Probation

Academic probation is a close monitoring of an individual student's progress over a period of time set by the parents, teachers, administration, and guidance. Specific guidelines and consequences will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Students will be placed on Academic Probation for the following reasons.

- Retention in the previous school year
- New students entering on a probationary basis

- Students earning two or more F's during any twelve-week marking period.

The following recommendations will be made at the time of academic probation review.

- Academic probation will be lifted for those students who earn no F's (below 60%)
- Academic probation will be extended for those students who earn 1 or 2 - F's (below 60%)
- Attendance at St. Joseph Catholic School may be terminated for students who have earned 3 or more F's (below 60%) or who have been on Academic Probation for two or more successive grading periods.

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism

In order to fulfill the St. Joseph Catholic School's academic and moral missions, it is imperative that students produce work that comes from their own time and effort. Work that is achieved dishonestly robs them of the ability to learn for themselves, produces inaccurate results for the teachers to assess knowledge, and teaches students an unfortunate lesson in deceit. As a Catholic school, centered in the Holy Spirit, it is important to instill virtues of honesty and perseverance. Once in high school and college plagiarism is grounds for expulsion, therefore students need to avoid habits in academic dishonesty. Different forms of "academic dishonesty" are as follows:

Cheating: Willfully giving or receiving an advantage on an assignment in unfair or dishonest ways. This can mean stealing, copying, talking, gestures, or using unauthorized information such as notes, books, or other forbidden data

Lying: Purposely and knowingly telling an untruth relating to academic work. This refers to lying to teachers, administration, or staff, falsifying letters or signatures from parents, and anything else intended to purposefully mislead a member of the faculty, staff, or administration.

Stealing: Taking or using property or information that does not belong to the individual including school property and work of other students.

Plagiarism: Taking another person's work and representing it as one's own. Specifically, it means to use the exact words or opinions of another person without giving proper credit through proper citation. This includes not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and summaries of the other people's work. There is some information that does not need citation. It includes information such as names, dates, and other information that can be deemed "common knowledge." However, it is best to assume that all information gleaned from another source should be cited in a manner described by the teacher. This applies to information and images coming from both written and internet sources. Ignorance is not an excuse for plagiarism

Consequences: Academic dishonesty is a serious offense where no student benefits. If students choose to do this, work will be marked incomplete, will receive a failing grade, and are eligible for appropriate consequences discussed under Major offenses, deemed on a case-by-case basis.

Religious Education

At St. Joseph Catholic School, Religious Education is a very important part of the student's day. Keeping in mind that not all of the families enrolled at the school are Roman Catholic, it

is important for each student to understand the Religion practiced by their family. Religion is not only a way of life to be lived, but also a subject to be learned. Therefore, each student participates in the academic program established by the Diocese of St. Petersburg and St. Joseph Catholic School. No student is ever forced to believe in the faith that is presented, but is required to learn it as a subject.

The spiritual participation of each student involves daily prayers, classroom projects as a part of the religious instruction, Mass, and participation in the Sacraments. Sacramental Preparation for First Penance, First Communion, and Confirmation is also made available for the students who wish to receive these sacraments in the Parish and fulfill diocesan requirements for the Sacraments.

Since we strongly believe that the spiritual aspect of the child is very important for the formation of proper moral values, we strongly encourage the family's participation in the full life of the Church which includes their obligation for Sunday Mass. If a child has not been baptized in the Church, we will do what we can to assist the parents in their desire to have this done.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Academic and Conduct Requirements

For placement purposes, students are required to be screened for academic competency by a member of our Administrative team. The principal requests academic and conduct records from previous years for further evaluation. Students requesting admission to grades K-8 will be placed on academic and conduct probation for the first trimester of the new school year. Students who have shown unsatisfactory conduct throughout the year will not be permitted to re-register with St. Joseph's School for the following academic year.

Conditions for Admission and Readmission

Admission/readmission to St. Joseph School is subject to the following conditions:

- Support of the rules and policies of St. Joseph School.
- All students must have up-to-date state-required immunizations
- All financial obligations must be fulfilled and up to date.
- Contribution of at least 20 service hours to the School during the school year.
- Support of all mandatory fund-raising efforts sponsored by St. Joseph School and its Parent Teacher Committee.
- Any unfulfilled service hours will be billed at \$15 per hour to be paid through FACTS by May 2, 2025.

The purpose of these fundraisers is to assist our school in keeping our tuition costs down, so, in effect, although you are participating in fundraising activities, you are supporting your child's education by keeping tuition costs at the lowest possible rate.

ALLERGIES

The significant increase in allergies poses a difficulty within the school environment. It is very important that parents keep the teachers and office aware (in writing) of any allergy that a child may have. In particular, food and environmental allergies should be known.

APPOINTMENTS

Medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours when possible. If an appointment must be made during school hours, the teacher must be notified in writing by the parent/guardian in advance. Upon returning, the student is to bring a note signed by the doctor's office to the school office. The parent/guardian must report to the school office if they are picking up or dropping off a student for an appointment. Students are responsible for any work missed due to appointments.

ARRIVAL

All children arriving in cars must be dropped off at the back gate behind the cafeteria on Walnut St. The back gate opens at 7:15am. The front gate opens at 7:30 and is only for students that walk to school and for parents that wish to park and walk their children to the classroom. If a parent wishes to drop off their child, they must use the back gate. It is essential that each child be present at announcements from the beginning. All students arriving after 8:00 a.m. will be marked late and will be subject to appropriate consequences (see Tardiness).

ATTENDANCE

Success in any field requires a continuous daily effort. Nowhere is this truer than in education. The quality of learning for any student reflects the regularity with which he/she attends classes. Our attendance regulations have been formulated as a means of helping our students develop habits, which will serve them best while in school and in later years.

State of Florida law requires those children between the ages of 5 and 16 attend school. Regular attendance and punctuality have a marked influence upon scholastic achievement. Attendance is an essential element to good progress in school.

Students are expected to attend school regularly. The following is the minimum amount of instructional time per year expected for each student in the respective grade levels:

Kindergarten: 170 days and 540 hours of school

First to Third Grade: 170 days and 720 hours of school

Fourth to Eighth Grade: 170 days and 900 hours of school

School calendars are distributed to families to aid them in planning family vacations. Schools strongly encourage families to plan vacations during scheduled school vacations. Any vacation related absences will be included in the student's total number of absences.

Parents/guardians must notify the school office of a child's absence prior to 9:00 a.m. When a student is absent, the school must receive communication from parents/guardians explaining the reason for the absence, either voice message or electronic. The communication must include 1) the child's full name, 2) dates of absence, and 3) the nature of illness or reason for absence.

In the case of prolonged medical absence, three or more days, parents should call the office before 9:00 a.m. for missed class work and homework, so the work can be prepared and be ready for pickup at dismissal time. Due to teaching schedules it may take up to 24 hours to have materials prepared for pick up in the school office. Based on the number of days absent and the amount of work missed, a reasonable amount of time will be allowed for its completion.

Five (5) tardies in a trimester are considered excessive. A notification will be sent home on the fifth tardy.

Four (4) absences in a trimester are considered excessive. A notification will be sent home on the fourth absence. On the tenth (10) absence, the parents will be required to meet with the school counselor and/or homeroom teacher. Continued unexcused absence may result in expulsion. Any student with excessive absences may be retained in their current grade level pending standardized testing results and classroom progress.

If your child is going to be out for any length of time due to a family commitment, please send a note to the school office at least a week in advance.

Students should not be permitted to return to school unless well enough to participate in school activities. Students must be present for at least four (4) hours of the school day to be considered present that day. In order to participate in any after school activities, including the extended day program, students must be present on that day. Students who are absent more than 20 school days during the year will be under administrative review for academic retention and may be asked to withdraw from St. Joseph Catholic School.

Students who are absent are required to make up work missed in each class. If a student is out for only one or two days, upon return to school, the student should meet with the teacher about the work missed. The student will be given a deadline by the teacher to complete and turn in these assignments. It is the responsibility of the student to see that the work is completed. The student or parent may log on to the portal to check the homework missed. If work is not made up by the deadline specified by the teacher, the grade for work missed will be recorded as a zero.

Any student who is absent on the day of a scheduled summative assessment will be expected to make it up upon his/her return to school. For every day a student is absent, he/she has that number of days to make up the summative assessment (Ex. 1 day missed = 1 day for summative assessment.) It is the student's responsibility to speak with his/her teacher regarding missed assessments. In the event of multiple-day absences, the teacher will determine when all assessments will be taken.

BOOKS

Students are responsible for the care of all books. Textbooks are leased to the students over a period of years and must be protected. Books are to be covered at all times. The covers are to be kept clean and in good repair. Covers should not be taped to the inside of the books. At no time should a hardbound book be covered with clear contact paper. Softbound books must be covered in contact paper. Student's name and grade should be written neatly on covers in ink. A fine or replacement fee will be charged for damaged or lost textbooks or workbooks.

Should any library book be damaged, lost, or need replacement, the family will be charged the cost of the book.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between the school and the home takes place through a variety of ways:

Electronic Communication:

Please feel free to email the Office or teachers with questions, comments, or concerns. The school communication system, FACTS/RenWeb will be updated to reflect students' classroom grades.

Home-School Committee Meetings:

The Home-School Committee meetings are held periodically. The dates for the meetings will be communicated to parents through FACTS/RenWeb, teacher email, and Remind communications. These meetings are held at school. Parents are encouraged to attend and participate. Parental involvement is one indication of your interest in your child's life at school. Attendance will be taken at each meeting; parents may receive one service hour for attending meetings.

Parent-Principal Conferences:

Any parent wishing to obtain a conference with the principal should call the office for an appointment. The principal will be available for parent conferences by appointment and will address issues with parents promptly.

Parent-Student Handbook:

The Handbook contains the rules and regulations of St. Joseph School. It is the responsibility of both the parents/guardians and students to read and adhere to the contents of this handbook.

Parent-Teacher Conferences:

After each distribution of report cards, teachers will be available for conferences. Conferences can be arranged at any time during the school year by sending a written note in the agenda or by sending a form of electronic communication. In the event that a problem should arise concerning your child, every effort should be made to communicate with the teacher prior to contacting the office. *Parents are requested not to call teachers at their homes or try to meet with teachers before, during, or after school without an appointment. All teachers have assigned supervisory duties at those times.*

Conflict Resolution

If a conflict or concern occurs regarding your child's teacher, first make contact with your child's teacher to discuss and resolve the issue. It is against school policy for the Principal or designee to meet with the parent before they have discussed the issue with the teacher. If this does not resolve the situation then the parent/guardian must submit the concern in writing to the Principal for consideration. If the situation warrants, a conference will be held with the teacher, student, parent(s) or guardian(s), and administration.

Yearly/Monthly Calendar:

The tentative calendar was provided in the summer envelope and is posted on the school website. *Please be advised that this calendar is subject to change.* If adjustments to the yearly calendar need to be made, you will be notified through the monthly calendar or a written memo. The monthly calendar will contain dates and times of all monthly events and activities. It is your responsibility to keep the calendar in a safe place and consult it often.

St. Joseph also maintains a virtual Google calendar that can be accessed on the website under Parent Resources - Calendar.

CUSTODIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Please make the school principal and class teacher aware of any particular custody arrangements that are in effect. For the safety of the children and in order to maintain our compliance with any legal documentation, the school needs to have, on file, a copy of specific custodial arrangements. St. Joseph Catholic School is only responsible for implementing what is part of the written custodial agreement. We request that any transfer of a child from one parent's custody to another parent's custody be done off school grounds.

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

DISCIPLINE

Conduct

All actions taken and disciplinary consequences at St. Joseph Catholic School reflect its mission. Students are expected to consistently abide by this mission

The fact that a student has been registered at St. Joseph School indicates that its rules, regulations, and consequences have been examined and accepted by parents and guardians. It is expected that the judgment of school authorities concerning the discipline of the students will be respected and supported by the parents and guardians. If conflicts arise, parents and guardians are expected to discuss the problem privately with those concerned and not in front of the student, or other parents or guardians.

Students will receive a conduct grade on their report card that reflects how successfully they have complied with the rules, policies, and procedures of the school.

Consequences for misbehavior may include:

- Notes and messages home with possible mandatory parent conference
- Loss of privileges
- Detention
- Referral to guidance and/or administration
- Probationary period imposed by the Principal after suspension.
- Numerous referrals may result in suspension and/or expulsion.
- Expulsion for severe offense: to be determined by the Principal.

The principles of Respect and Responsibility are the focus for conduct. The following are the indicators of Respect and Responsibility:

Respect

- Demonstrates a good attitude
- Is respectful to adults and peers in speech and action
- Maintains positive peer relationships
- Respectful of personal, peer, and school property

Responsibility

- Exhibits self-control
- Follows directions and does not need constant reminders
- Socializes only at appropriate times
- Takes ownership for behavior

The following is a rubric for the reporting of *Conduct*.

	Respect	Responsibility
4 Exceeds	Consistently respectful, kind and cooperative.	Consistently follows school/classroom rules and directions.
3 Meets	Frequently respectful, kind and cooperative.	Frequently follows school/classroom rules and directions.
2 Developing	Occasionally respectful, kind and cooperative.	Occasionally follows school/classroom rules and directions.
1 Rarely	Rarely respectful, kind and cooperative.	Rarely follows school/classroom rules and directions.

Valuables/Cell Phones:

Valuables should not be brought to school. Students may not bring toys, electronic devices, or other nonessential items on campus. Any cell phones brought to school must be turned off and remain in the student's backpack or in a teacher-designated area during the day. If a student has any of these valuables on their person they will be confiscated and taken to the school office. Only the parent may retrieve the item from the office (on the third offense item will be returned at the end of the school year).

Suspension

Suspension is the temporary removal of the student from his/her regular program for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days. The times of suspension may be served either in or out of school. Suspension from school is a severe disciplinary consequence and is imposed only for severe misconduct at the discretion of the administration.

In-School Suspensions

In-School Suspensions are assigned at the discretion of the administration for severe or repeated major offenses. Students will be removed from the classroom and placed in a setting where they are constantly supervised. There they will complete academic or research based assignments and/or other service activities. Any class work missed will be the responsibility of the student to complete. Tests will be administered to the student during in-school suspension. The student is responsible for meeting all class deadlines independent of suspension. In-school suspensions may result in a failing (1) conduct grade.

Out-of-School Suspensions

Out-of-School Suspensions are imposed at the discretion of the administration for severe or repeated major offenses. Out of school suspensions may result in a failing (1) conduct grade.

Expulsion

Expulsion is the permanent removal of the student from the school. Expulsion of a student from a Catholic school is serious and is invoked only as a last resort. If the serious nature of the situation warrants, (e.g., drugs, alcohol, assault, vandalism, lack of parent support, etc.) expulsion may be imposed against a student for a first time offense. Expulsion may also be imposed for repeated serious infractions. The Principal has the discretion and final authority regarding expulsion of students. The Diocesan Office will be consulted in all situations where an expulsion is warranted.

Antibullying

The Office of Catholic Schools and Centers of the Diocese of St. Petersburg (herein referred to as the "DOSPC") and each school within the DOSPC (herein referred to as the "School") are committed to promoting a safe, healthy, caring, spiritual, and respectful learning environment for all our students. The DOSPC and each School is committed to protecting its students from bullying and/or harassment. As such, bullying and/or harassment is strictly prohibited, will not be tolerated and shall be just cause for disciplinary action. Therefore, this anti-bullying policy prohibits any unwelcome physical, social, electronic, nonverbal, verbal, or written conduct directed at a student by another student that has the effect of:

- Physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student
- Damaging, exhorting, or taking a student's personal property
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of emotional or mental harm
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property or (5) creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities of the Catholic mission of the school or (6) disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Definitions:

The definitions hereunder apply to any student who either directly engages in an act of bullying and/or harassment, or who, by their behavior, actions and/or conduct, supports another student's act of bullying and/or harassment.

- **Bullying** is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying results in physical hurt or psychological distress of an individual. Bullying is unwanted purposeful written, verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior and/or actions, including, but not limited to, teasing, name-calling, slurs, rumors, jokes, false accusations, intimidation, threatening, stalking, innuendos, demeaning comments, pranks, social isolation, gestures, public humiliation, theft, destruction of personal property, physical violence, cyberbullying, and cyberstalking.
- **Harassment** means to engage in a course of conduct directed at a specific student, which causes emotional distress to that student and serves no legitimate purpose.
- **Cyberstalking** means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication directed at a specific student, causing emotional distress to that student and serving no legitimate purpose.
- **Cyberbullying** is the willful and repeated harassment and intimidation of a student through the use of digital technologies, including, but not limited to, email, blogs,

texting on cell phones, social websites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) chat rooms and instant messaging. Cyberbullying includes the following misuses of digital and/or electronic technology: teasing, intimidating, and/or making false accusations about another student by way of any technological tool.

- **Course of Conduct** means a pattern of conduct consisting of a series of acts over a period of time, however short, which evidences a continuity of purpose.

Scope/Expectations

St. Joseph expects students to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and the educational purpose underlying all School activities. As such, St. Joseph prohibits bullying and/or harassment of any student

- That occurs on school premises at any time.
- During any educational program or activity conducted by the Diocese of St. Petersburg (DOSP) or St. Joseph.
- During any school-related or school-sponsored program or event.
- That occurs on any bus or vehicle as part of any school activity.
- Through threats and/or other communications made outside of school hours, which are intended to be carried out during any school-related or school-sponsored activity or program
- Though an incident of alleged bullying and/or harassment may occur off the School's campus and may not entail threats of acts to occur during school hours, if a student's ability to receive an education or St. Joseph's ability to provide an education is significantly impaired, as determined by the School and/or the DOSP, disciplinary sanctions may be issued.

Reporting Complaints

Each student, parent, and/or any other members of the School's community has a duty to immediately report any incident of bullying and/or harassment to the School administrator. The administrator will provide the reporting party with the Bullying Complaint Report Form which must be completed, dated, and signed by the reporting party so that the School may initiate further inquiry and investigation, when appropriate.

Disciplinary Action

Concluding whether a student's action, conduct, behavior, or a particular incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on the facts and circumstances of each complaint, followed by the determination of disciplinary sanctions. Any student found to have violated this anti-bullying policy will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action, which may include, but is not limited to, temporary removal from the classroom, loss of privileges, detention, counseling, parent conference, suspension, expulsion, and/or notification to appropriate authorities. The disciplinary action may be unique to the individual incident and may vary in method and severity based on the St. Joseph and/or DOSP's sole discretion. False reports or accusations of bullying and/or harassment also constitute a violation of this anti-bullying policy and will subject the offending party to disciplinary action.

Harassment/Sexual Harassment

St. Joseph Catholic School strives to establish a Christian, professional, and supportive educational community for administrators, faculty, staff, parents, and students. The Diocese of St. Petersburg has adopted and promulgated a harassment policy for its schools that addresses behaviors that interfere with fulfilling the school's mission. We, at SJCS, condemn

any form of harassment. Concerns should be reported directly to the school administrator. All credible allegations will be addressed according to Diocesan policy.

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Forms of harassment:

1. Demeaning comments
2. Repeated annoyance
3. Creating an intimidating, hostile, offensive or unsafe environment
4. Suggesting or demanding involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats
5. Jokes of a demeaning or sexual nature
6. Touching
7. Showing of sexually explicit pictures, cartoons, etc.
8. Requesting sexual favors
9. Laughing about sexual references
10. Passing on stories about others (true or untrue)
11. Impeding or blocking movement
12. Demeaning or obscene notes, letters, or invitations
13. Visual leering
14. Inappropriate gestures
15. Any act of retaliation against an individual who complains of harassment

Disciplinary Procedures

The objectives of disciplinary procedures are:

- To stop improper action;
- To give students the opportunity to explain and reflect on action and cause;
- To modify and/or teach appropriate behavior;
- To keep concerned parties informed.

DISMISSAL

All students must be picked up promptly at 3:00 P.M. at the designated dismissal area on Gomez Avenue. Parents should bring their school-provided QR code to be scanned by a school official. The scan alerts each classroom to send the student to the pavilion to be loaded into cars. Please be patient during the first days of dismissal; after that, once we know your cars and your children, dismissal will be complete in twenty-five minutes or less.

For the safety of your child, it is important that you are here on time for dismissal. If you are going to be late for pick-up, you must notify the office. Any child not picked up by 3:30 pm will also be brought to the extended day care program and the parent will be billed the drop-in fee of \$15.00 and the extended day registration fee if not already registered.

Parents must notify the school in writing should a change in transportation be necessary and should share their child's QR code with the person picking up their child. Teachers will only release students to those adults authorized in writing. Unless engaged in an organized school sponsored activity or enrolled in the Extended Day Program, no student should remain on school grounds after 3:30 p.m. Club or team members may stay for meetings or practices. Brothers, sisters and friends of athletes or club members must go home at the regular time or sign up for the extended care program. The coaches and activity leaders are responsible for the supervision of their students and will bring them to the extended care

program (if they are registered for that) or will remain with them until they are picked up after an activity. Since these individuals are donating their time for the children, please be prompt in picking them up at the conclusion of an afterschool activity.

Should any authorized adult come to the school grounds and be suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, students will not be released to that person, and the authorities will be informed immediately by the school principal.

EARLY DISMISSAL

If it is necessary to pick up a student before 3:00pm, a written note from the parent/guardian notifying the teacher is required prior to 9:00am. Unless the note has been received by the teacher, No special accommodations will be made by the teacher to provide homework assignments. The student will be called to come to the office when the parent arrives to pick them up. At no time is the parent/guardian permitted to go beyond the office to pick up a child. Students that are picked up before 11:00am will be considered absent for the day.

Do not pick up students between 2:30pm and 3:00pm to allow for an orderly end of the school day.

EMERGENCIES

SAFETY PROCEDURES: St. Joseph Catholic School Catholic School is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all students. To this end, the following safety procedures are in place on the campus:

- All visitors to St. Joseph Catholic School Catholic School must report to the school office to sign-in and obtain a visitor's badge. Only visitors with Safe Environment Training, Level II background check, and driver's license check may visit classrooms for activities, lunch, or parties.
- No parent may attend a field trip or other such event without authorization from the school office.
- In keeping with the Diocesan policy, St. Joseph Catholic School has procedures in place for handling emergencies (see below in this section). It is the expectation that parents and students will follow the directions of the school in the event of an emergency.
- In a weather-related emergency, St. Joseph Catholic School follows the school closing guidelines from the Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools and Centers.
- Safety procedures such as fire drills, lockdowns, and hurricane drills are routinely conducted throughout the course of the school year with the students.
- St. Joseph Catholic School abides by the U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, which mandates training for individuals who come into contact with children and youth and to help recognize, report and prevent child abuse, including sexual abuse.
- As directed by the Diocese of St. Petersburg, St. Joseph Catholic School has a school-wide Safe Environment Curriculum for students. The School Counselor oversees the Safe Environment Curriculum.

A complete Emergency Operations Plan has been completed in accordance with the Diocese of St. Petersburg policies. Emergency communication, chain of command, release policy, etc. are all implemented in this Plan. Each class is equipped with emergency communication, as well as, emergency supplies such as food, water, blankets, and

medicines.

In the event that a crisis or emergency should occur on campus, the Diocesan Crisis Team will be available on site to speak with students, faculty, parents, and staff as needed.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

In the event of an emergency closing, please check Bay News 9, local newscasts, or radio and e-mail announcements. St. Joseph Catholic School will be closed if the Hillsborough County Schools are closed.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Parents must maintain updated contact information for themselves and their children. It is essential that any change in home/work phone numbers or addresses be communicated to the school office as soon as possible. It is for the safety of your child that we have up to date emergency contact information.

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM

The Extended Day Program (for grades EC-8) is from 3:30pm to 6:00pm each day. The children will be provided with a snack. The students will be given an opportunity to play and work on homework assignments. All parents/guardians who wish to enroll their children in this program must complete the appropriate registration forms. The students and parents must abide by all rules and regulations set by the school. The program will usually be available on days when there is Early Dismissal. There will be no Extended Day Program during the last day of school, before the Christmas break, and before the Easter break. Any other changes to this program will be communicated to the parents and students registered for this program.

Students who are not picked up from extracurricular activities on time will be sent to the Extended Day Program and charged the appropriate drop-in rate of \$15 and the registration fee.

Should any authorized adult come to the school grounds and be suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, students will not be released to that person, and the authorities will be informed immediately by the school principal.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Participation in a school sponsored extracurricular, i.e. sports, junior varsity, varsity, drama, choir, etc. is a privilege that requires a student to balance participation times, games and their academic responsibilities. Students must maintain a 70 percent or above in all subject areas. Students with a Student Support Plan may have alternative criteria and will be assessed by teachers for consistent academic effort. Grades will be checked on Fridays for the next week of extracurricular eligibility. It is the responsibility of the student to let the athletic director or advisor know that they brought the grade up to eligibility. If a student does not meet these requirements, they will be ineligible for the first game that week and/or meeting of the week.

The student must have a 3 or above in both Conduct and Approaches To Learning (ATL) for all subject areas. Students may not participate in an extra-curricular activity on the day he/she serves an in/out of school suspension.

Students must be present for a minimum of 4 hours of the school day in order to be considered eligible for an extracurricular activity. If a student is absent from school or leaves school early due to illness (even if they meet the 4 hour minimum), the student cannot participate. If the activity is on a Saturday, the student must be at school on the Friday before.

If a student is shadowing at a high school, it is the student's responsibility to get a shadowing form signed by the high school office, at the end of the day, to ensure they are present. The shadowing form needs to be turned in to the athletic director or school office to ensure eligibility for their game.

The athletic director, adviser, or coach, in consultation with the principal, reserves the right to suspend or remove any student from the school-sponsored activity. The principal does have the discretion to adjust the consequences as needed.

FIELD TRIPS

Designed to enrich the child's curriculum, Field Trips are an invaluable tool in teaching. Since Field Trips are a part of the curriculum, every child is expected to participate. However, participation is a privilege and may be denied to a child who has exhibited poor behavior. Any child who does not participate in a class trip will be required to attend school or be marked absent. Family members (other than chaperones) and friends of the student may not attend.

Chaperones are required to pass a Level II Background Check and complete a Safe Environment course prior to the field trip. Before the trip, the classroom teacher will send home the pertinent information describing the trip and any cost it may incur. The official permission slip will be signed by the parent/guardian and must be returned to school by the due date. No student will be allowed to go on the trip unless the form is properly filled out, signed, and returned.

Since we do not wish to place parents or staff members in positions of liability in regard to the transportation of other parents' children, all field trip transportation will either be by bus or by having the children dropped off and picked up at a local field trip location. Any other transportation arrangements specifically organized by the parent must be communicated to the class teacher in writing.

FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS

In accordance with the Florida State Laws and the guidelines established by the Diocesan School Office, fire drills will be held monthly. Keeping in mind the serious nature of these drills, the students are expected to conduct themselves in a very disciplined manner. Students are to follow the directions of staff members and evacuate the building in a quiet and orderly manner. Appropriate evacuation routes are posted in each classroom and the classroom teacher will review routes and evacuation procedures for each class. During a fire drill, any visitors on school premises must follow the same procedures as the students.

St. Joseph utilizes the Raptor System for planning, recording, and tracking of emergency drills. In the event of an emergency that requires reunification, school personnel will use the Raptor system to track reunification of families with their children.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the serious nature of these drills and for the safety of everyone, any student who does not follow the proper safety procedures will be sent to the Principal's office where the parents/guardians may be called and the student sent home for the remainder of the day. It will be considered an out of school suspension.

GRADING SYSTEM

A. Philosophy

We believe ...

- Students should have a clear understanding of the learning objectives.
- Our system of grading should be timely, specific, fair and accurate.
- Grades should be based on a well-defined set of standards.
- Grades should be an accurate measure of a student's ability to demonstrate understanding.
- Criteria that are not a direct measure of student learning, such as work habits and behavior, should be reported separately from the academic grade.
- Assessments are critical to the teaching and learning process.

B. Purpose of Assessment

An assessment is defined as any instrument that is able to indicate or provide feedback on student achievement or performance. The purpose of an assessment may be summarized as follows:

1. To provide information to students in regard to their progress towards mastery of a learning standard(s). In addition, it provides information for self-evaluation and the incentives to learn.
2. To provide information to teachers on the individual student's level of mastery of the content/skill.
3. To allow teachers to use assessment data to plan instruction that will meet the needs of students.
4. To communicate information to parents about student achievement and performance in school.

C. Types of Assessments

While assessments will take many forms and types, they will be grouped under two broad categories.

1. Formative:

Whenever a student learns new material, they need time to practice and gain familiarity with the material. It is expected that the student will make mistakes during this learning process. Any work done during this learning period is considered *formative*. The purpose of a *formative* assessment is not to judge a student's final competency on a topic or unit, but to evaluate where he or she is in the learning process, diagnose any problems, and motivate and help the student learn the material. Formative assessments also inform the teacher of learning areas that may need reinforcement or re-teaching.

2. Summative:

After a student has had sufficient instruction and practice on a topic, including assessments of a formative nature, it is then reasonable to judge mastery of

understanding, content or skills. The purpose of a summative assessment is to evaluate how well a student knows and understands the material after sufficient engagement and practice with it.

D. Purpose of Grades

A grade is a recorded score derived from an assessment or assessments. The purpose of grades may be summarized as follows:

- To provide information to students with regard to their performance relative to the learning standard(s).
- To provide information to teachers on the individual student’s level of mastery of the content/skill.
- To communicate information to parents about student achievement and performance in school.
- To document student performance for transcripts and to evaluate the effectiveness of school programs.

E. The Grade Composition

In order to represent an accurate measure of student performance, the academic trimester grade needs to be based on work that is evaluated for an appropriate level of mastery of the standards. Summative assessments will therefore be the primary constituent of the trimester grade. They will account for no less than 70% of the trimester grade. Formative assessments will account for no more than 30% of the trimester grade.

1. All grading is done using the 100-point scale.
2. The lowest “earned” grade is 50.
 - a. An “earned” grade is derived from any assessment that is attempted and handed in.
 - b. An attempted assessment is one where the student has made a diligent attempt to follow the instructions and complete the assessment.
3. Assessments not attempted or not handed in will receive zero points.
4. Assignments handed in late will receive a maximum of 75%. Assignments will not be accepted late after the completion of the summative for the unit.

Completed student work will be assessed and is a direct measure of student learning. Non-academic attributes will be reported separately. Please see *Section H: Reporting Conduct and Approaches to Learning*.

F. Reporting Grades (3rd to 8th Grade)

Letter Grade	Descriptor	% Score
A	The student provides evidence of deep understanding and fluent application of the target standard(s).	90-100
B	The student is close to meeting the target standard(s).	80-89
C	The student meets part of the target standard(s).	70-79
D	The student is just beginning to address the basic ideas of the target standard(s).	60-69

F	The student provides little to no evidence of addressing the target standard(s), including missing or incomplete work.	50-59
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At the end of the marking period (trimester or semester), the mean of all assessments (with appropriate weights) is matched to the scoring guide for a final letter grade and the awarding of corresponding quality/grade points (if applicable).

G. Core Classes (Kindergarten to 2nd Grade)

	Organization
4 Exceeds	Based on teacher observation in the classroom and completed assessments, and virtual meetings with students, the child has consistently and independently exceeded expectations for this skill
3 Meets	Based on teacher observation in the classroom, completed assessments, and virtual meetings with students, the child has consistently and independently met expectations for this skill
2 Developing	Based on teacher observation in the classroom, completed assessments, and virtual meetings with students, the child is approaching expectations of this skill with assistance.
1 Rarely	Based on teacher observation in the classroom, completed assessments, and virtual meetings with students, the child has not met expectations for this skill, even with assistance
NA	Not Assessed this Trimester

H. Reporting Conduct and Approaches to Learning (ATL)

The Diocese recognizes that the cultivation of good behavioral and learning habits and behaviors support learning in the long run. While schools may create their own rubric for ATL, the principles of Organization, Communication / Collaboration and Reflective Thinking should be the focus for all ATL behaviors. The following are the indicators of Organization, Communication/ Collaboration and Reflective Thinking.

Organization

- Prepared for class
- Punctual with homework and in-class assignments
- Completed homework and in-class assignments

Collaboration & Communication

- Participates in class
- Attentive and engaged during instruction
- Demonstrates helpfulness and teamwork

Reflection & Personal Initiative

- Open to teacher help and correction
- Makes effort to improve behavior/performance by seeking help when needed
- Makes time for personal study and improvement

The following is a rubric for the reporting of ATL.

	Organization	Collaboration & Communication	Reflective Thinking
4 Exceeds	Consistently displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality and task completion.	Consistently attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Consistently open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.
3 Meets	Frequently displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality and task completion.	Frequently attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Frequently open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.
2 Developing	Occasionally displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality and task completion.	Occasionally attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Occasionally open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.
1 Rarely	Rarely displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality and task completion.	Rarely attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Rarely open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.

I. Other Matters on Assessment and Grades

Honor Roll

Honor Roll is awarded to students who encompass merit and integrity that results in academic and behavioral success.

Honor Roll eligibility is determined by:

1. Grades in all subject areas
2. Approaches to Learning (ATL's) in all classes
3. Conduct in all classes

Since we desire our students to achieve a higher quality of education, we expect that they go beyond the norm for honors recognition. Therefore, the following standards for Honors are as follows:

First Honors: All A's in all major subjects, and a Conduct/ ATL marks of 4 or 3 in all subjects.

Second Honors: All A's and B's in all major subjects and Conduct/ATL mark of 4 or 3 in all subjects.

Major Subjects are Reading, English, Math, Social Studies, Religion, and Science.

Distribution of Report Cards

The report cards for each marking period will be emailed to parents via the FACTS/RenWeb portal. Report Cards will not be sent home with the student unless approved by the Principal. Parents that desire a paper copy should contact their teacher.

Make-Up of Academic Work during Absence

Students who are absent are required to make up work missed in each class. If a student is out for only one or two days, upon return to school, the student should meet with the teacher about the work missed. The student will be given a deadline by the teacher to complete and turn in these assignments. It is the responsibility of the student to see that the work is completed. The student may log on to the portal to check the homework missed. If work is not made up by the deadline specified by the teacher, the grade for work missed will be recorded as a zero (0).

In the case of prolonged absence, three or more days, parents should call the office before 9:00 a.m. for missed class work and homework so that the work can be prepared and be ready for pickup at dismissal time or sent via email. Based on the number of days absent and the amount of work missed, a reasonable amount of time will be allowed for its completion.

Homework assignments for extended absences should be arranged with the teacher. Parents may pick up textbooks, if necessary, at the end of the school day but should email the teacher by 10:00 a.m. to arrange this. Requests for homework should be made by contacting the classroom/subject teacher. Due to teaching schedules requests may take up to twenty-four hours to be completed.

Make-Up of a Scheduled Summative Assessment during Absence

Any student who is absent on the day of a scheduled summative assessment will be expected to make it up upon his/her return to school. For every day a student is absent, he/she has that number of days to make up the summative assessment (Ex. 1 day missed = 1 day for summative assessment.) It is the student's responsibility to speak with his/her teacher regarding missed assessments. In the event of multiple-day absences, the teacher will determine when all assessments will be taken. Make-up tests will not be given during class time.

Retake Policy:

The focus of the Office of Catholic Schools and Centers of the Diocese of St. Petersburg is to always encourage and support the learning process that leads to mastery. St. Joseph students and faculty have a growth mindset that believes that students are capable of improvement. This retake policy supports this emphasis on learning and relearning.

Teachers have the discretion to refuse retakes to students who do not fully engage in the learning process prior to the summative assessment.

The following retake policy is designed to encourage relearning on the part of the student.

Criteria for Retakes

Grades K-5

1. The retake process will be initiated by the teacher. The teacher will communicate with the parent when a retake is necessary. Students will qualify for a retake if a student scores a 69% or below on a summative assessment. The original summative and the retake will be averaged into a final summative score. Formative assessments are not eligible for retakes.
2. A student may retake a summative once.
3. Students may be required to participate in additional practice in order to qualify for a retake. Students are ineligible for retakes if there are any missing assignments prior to the summative assessment.
4. Reading Comprehension Proficiency summative assessments – also referred to as “Cold Reads” are not eligible for retesting.

Grades 6-8

1. The retake process must be initiated by the student.
2. A student may retake a summative once.
3. The Application for a Retake should be completed by the student (with parent, if needed), signed by student and parent, and returned to the examining teacher no more than five (5) school days after the grade has been posted. Students will qualify for a retake if a student scores a 69% or below on a summative assessment. The original summative and the retake will be averaged into a final summative score. Formative assessments are not eligible for retakes. Students are ineligible for retakes if there are any missing assignments prior to the summative assessment.
4. Reading Comprehension Proficiency summative assessments – also referred to as “Cold Reads” are not eligible for retesting.
5. On the Application for a Retake, the student will identify the deficient standards/topics and include a clear learning plan and timeline to close the learning gap.
6. Students may be required to participate in additional practice in order to qualify for a retake.

Limitations and Deadlines (K-8)

1. Only one retake will be allowed per summative.
2. All graded formative assessments must be completed prior to the original summative.
3. The retake for any summative in a unit must be completed before the date of the first summative of the following unit.
4. Summative assessments that are extended projects with ongoing feedback and clear completion deadlines do not qualify for retakes.
5. The student will forfeit the retake opportunity if either the scheduled retake date or a scheduled teacher required additional practice is missed, unless excused or rescheduled by the teacher.

Teacher Facilitations (K-8)

1. Teachers will group summative assessments around specific learning standards to help the student identify deficiencies and plan a successful retake. Teachers will post

retake dates when the summative assessments are returned.

2. Teachers have discretion over the format of the retake assessment.

Teachers reserve the right to deny a student from a retake before, during, or after the retake form is completed if the teacher can show due cause as to why there should not be a retake. This may include, but is not limited to, situations that involve academic dishonesty.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to receive a diploma from St. Joseph Catholic School, a student must have a yearly average of 60% or above in all core subjects. All financial obligations to the school must be fulfilled in order for your child to receive the diploma. Any student with excessive absences may be pending standardized testing results and classroom progress.

HEALTH AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

In order to provide care for your child in case of injury or illness, many of our staff members have been trained in First Aid and CPR.

The following communicable diseases have been specified as diseases for which a child may not be admitted to or remain at school:

- COVID-19
- Chicken Pox (all lesions crusted over)
- Lice (treated and nit free)
- German Measles
- Impetigo (treatment & dry lesions)
- Strep Throat (24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment)
- Conjunctivitis (treatment and clear eyes)
- Scabies (treatment; 24 hours after initial treatment)
- H1N1 Virus
- Whooping Cough
- Tuberculosis
- Vomiting
- Measles
- Shingella
- Diarrhea
- Giardia Lamblia (after 3 negative stool cultures)
- Hemophilus Flu (symptom free)
- Mumps
- Temperature over 98.6 degrees (fever free for 24 hours)

Children, who had been ill with a communicable disease, will not be readmitted to class until reception of a note from the child's physician stating that the child no longer presents any danger to others.

In addition to these communicable diseases, children will be excluded from school if they exhibit green or colored discharge from the nose, fever, vomiting, or diarrhea. Our teachers will also notify parents if their child has expressed lethargy, pain, or discomfort during the school day.

Children should not be sent to school if they have fever or have been sick during the night. Children who have been ill with a fever must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. If a child becomes sick during school or is injured, parents will be notified by phone to pick up the child. Please ensure that the child is picked up within one hour of notification. For this reason it is essential that any change in home or work phone number be communicated to the teacher and the school secretary.

All children must have a Florida State Physical Form (DH3040 – yellow) signed by a physician including notation of a physical examination and a Florida Certificate of Immunizations (DH680-blue). As per the policy of the Diocese of St. Petersburg, no child will be admitted to school without the required immunizations. Only medical exemptions, signed by a licensed physician, will be accepted.

HOME-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

All parents of St. Joseph School students are members of the Home-School Association, which meets periodically to facilitate communication and cooperation between home and school. Parents and teachers alike are required to attend these meetings. In order to ease the financial burdens faced by the school, the Home-School Association pledges to raise a determined amount of money each year. This can be done only through parental support of Home-School Association fundraising events and their cooperation in the Service Hour program.

ILLNESS OR INJURY

Parents are requested to keep their children home if they are sick. If a child becomes sick or is injured during school, parents will be notified by phone to pick up the child. Students who have been excluded from Physical Education class by their doctor must present a physician's note to this effect. It should also include when they will be able to resume their physical education activities. This note should be sent directly to the classroom teacher, and a copy will be placed in the student's folder.

Students with a fever should remain at home until the fever has abated for 24 hours.

In the event of any accident/injury, parents/guardians will be notified through phone or note from the child's teacher. If it is anything serious, St. Joseph will use all the phone numbers provided to us in FACTS/RenWeb; if it is just to inform the parent or guardian what occurred, St. Joseph will leave a message at your primary contact number.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

St. Joseph School will notify parents prior to dismissal in regard to hazardous weather conditions, such as hurricanes, flooding, etc. Please listen to your local news for announcements on school closing. If Hillsborough County Public Schools are closed, St. Joseph Catholic School will be closed. If WiFi is available, St. Joseph will conduct classes virtually instead of holding face to face classes.

ITEMS INAPPROPRIATE FOR SCHOOL

The use or possession of any items in school except for school or special events approved by the Administration and any other distracting or inappropriate items are prohibited. Any such items found in the possession of a student will be confiscated and turned in to the Principal and the student will be subject to minor or major consequences. St. Joseph School will not be responsible if these items are damaged, stolen, or lost.

Parents will retrieve the item from the office after the 1st offense; if there is a 2nd offense, the item will remain in the school office until the end of the school year.

LOST AND FOUND

Parents are required to label all their children's belongings with permanent marker or sewn labels. Lost and found articles will be placed in the cafeteria on the stage. Articles/items that are not claimed within a week will be sold or discarded. The school is not responsible for unclaimed items.

LUNCH

St. Joseph School will offer a daily hot lunch program. A monthly menu will be provided and the lunch fee must be paid within 5 days of its distribution. Parents must send the money in an envelope with their child's name and grade attached to the menu. Lunch money should not be included with tuition or other activity money. If your child is absent, credit will not be applied. Students may bring their own lunch, as long as it does not require the use of the microwave. Please be sure your child has a nutritious and filling lunch and include any plasticware and napkins as needed. Soda, either in a can, a bottle, or thermos is not permitted. Students will need to bring their own lunch on "early dismissal days" if they are attending the Extended Care program.

All lunches need to be sent in with the child in the morning. Students are not allowed to leave the school premises during the lunch/recess period. Parents will be charged \$4.00 for a replacement lunch for any students that do not come to school with lunch.

MEDICATION

Parents must bring to the school office "in person" any medication to be administered at school. A form must be signed when sending medicine of any kind. The medication must be delivered in the original bottle or container. Medication should not be transported between home and school on a daily basis. Separate containers should be kept at home and at school. When a physician orders prescription or non-prescription (over the counter) drugs, a signed physician's order must accompany the medication. Any medication not accompanied with a physician's note will not be accepted in the School Office. All medication must be labeled with the student's name, dosage, frequency of administration and physician's name.

Parents of children taking a daily medication during school hours should see to it that a constant supply of medication is available in the school office. Students are not permitted to keep their medication with them. All medicine (including over-the-counter drugs) must be turned into the school office. Parents should notify the homeroom teacher in writing when their child requires medication. Throat lozenges and cough drops are considered over the counter medication and must be sent to the office following the above directives.

NON-INTERFERENCE POLICY

If, for any reason, a situation occurs between two students or a group of students, the parents/guardians should notify the principal and/or students' teachers. The school personnel will seek to resolve the issue at hand in an appropriate, professional manner. Parents/guardians should refrain from public expressions of disciplining their own child or other person's children. It is the responsibility of the teachers to maintain discipline in the school. Parents are not permitted to discipline or confront other children on school grounds.

NOTIFICATION STATEMENT

St. Joseph Catholic School maintains an Asbestos Management Plan. It is available for review in the School Office.

PARTIES

Holiday parties may be held only with the prior approval of the classroom teacher. They may be arranged with the help of the homeroom parents. The teachers must be aware of everything being planned and have the approval of the Principal. Invitations to home parties may not be distributed at school unless given to every child in the class. The school will not provide any student's home address and/or phone number.

Parents/guardians are requested to send in only cupcakes and juice, which will be given to the children at lunchtime. Birthday items are to be sent with the child in the morning. No visitors should be in the lunchroom with the children since other classes will be present, unless approved by the Principal.

PAYMENTS

Parents have an obligation to make payments on time and with accuracy, avoiding over-draws on bank accounts.

Delinquent Payments (Tuition, Extended Day, Lunch)

- After one month of outstanding payments, the parent/guardian will receive a written notice and a request that they contact the school immediately.
- After two months of nonpayment, parents will no longer have access to student grades, report cards, or progress reports until the balance is paid.
- Parents will not be allowed to register their children for the following school year until outstanding payments are made.
- Eighth grade balances must be paid in full in order to participate in graduation. In addition, school records will only be sent to matriculating schools when the balance has been paid in full.
- Records for students transferring to another school will only be sent once current balances are paid in full.

The parent/guardian has until the date of termination of services to pay the delinquent fees. There will be a one-week grace period after termination of services given to pay the fees and have the student(s) reinstated.

It is part of our mission as Catholic educators to assist you in having your child(ren) continue attending our school. Should you be experiencing financial difficulties, please speak with our Principal.

All payments must be paid in full prior to the end of the school year. Report cards and end of the year packets will not be provided until all balances, including lunch, after school care, and other fees are paid.

Tuition payments can be made through FACTS, which is part of RenWeb. Any families that set up a payment plan of three or more payments will be charged a FACTS management fee.

PICTURES

Individual or class pictures are taken during the school year for purchase by parents. Parents will be notified in advance of the photographer's schedule. Yearbooks will be available at the end of the year with the opportunity to order them in advance.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students must participate to their fullest capability in PE class. They are responsible to have their complete PE uniform on the designated days. If a student does not have the complete PE uniform, they will be subject to consequences for MINOR offenses and it will be reflected on their report card. If a student cannot participate in PE for medical reasons; he/she must present a note to the classroom teacher.

PROMOTION/RETENTION/SUMMER SCHOOL

In order to be promoted to the next grade level, students must meet the curricular and developmental requirements of their current grade.

If the teachers and administration feel that it is not in the best interest of the student to advance to the next grade based upon criteria listed below, retention may be considered.

PreK-2

Students in Grade Levels (e.g. Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, first grade, second grade) using skill development terms and identifiers must meet the academic requirements for his/her grade level in order to be promoted to the next grade level. If the teachers and administration feel that it is not in the best interest of the student to advance to the next grade based upon criteria listed below, retention may be considered. In such cases, a great deal of communication will take place between parents and the school staff. Parents will be given ample opportunity to express their concerns regarding the academic needs of the student. The final decision will rest with the principal as advised by the student's teacher.

Some questions that would influence the staff's decision regarding promotion are:

1. Has the student mastered basic concepts and skills in the core subjects especially reading, language arts and math?
2. Has the student met academic standards, and benchmarks?
3. Is the student consistently able to complete class work at grade level expectations?
4. Does the student assume responsibility for work assignments?
5. Does the student have excessive absences from school?

Remediation options:

Refer to the remediation options listed below in Grades 3-8

Grades 3-8 (Letter Grades)

The core subjects in the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of St. Petersburg are religion, math, language arts, science, and social studies. A student enrolled in a Catholic School who fails one core subject must participate in a remedial program. Failure of two core subjects will result in remediation or retention at the discretion of the principal. Failure of three or more core subjects will result in retention. Any student with excessive (20 or more) absences may be retained in their current grade level pending standardized testing results and classroom progress.

Students have the following options for remediation:

1. Florida Virtual School
2. Private Tutoring – minimum of 20 hours per subject
3. Remedial Program – minimum 20 hours per subject

Teacher(s) or programs providing remediation must meet the following requirements:

1. Hold current certification in the subject area in which the student needs remediation
2. Be contracted by the parent
3. May not be a member of the family
4. Meet the school principal's approval
5. May not be the student's current teacher or have the possibility of being the student's teacher in the future
6. All remedial services must follow the guidelines of the Office of Catholic Schools and Centers at the expense of the parents/guardians.

Prior to the beginning of the next school year, the principal must receive:

1. Tutoring Verification Form to validate attendance
2. Proof of proficiency in the subject area(s) including work samples and test scores

Failure to meet any of the above remediation guidelines will result in retention.

The following documentation guidelines will be followed after meeting remediation guidelines:

1. The original failing grade is recorded on the permanent record and may not be altered. Proof of proficiency in the subject area must be recorded separately on the permanent record.
2. TRANSFER RULE: Any student who fails one or more core subjects must meet the remediation guidelines of the originating school. After these criteria have been met, further assessment may be administered by the school principal to ensure proper placement.

Upon returning to school, students who have completed remediation will automatically be placed on academic probation for one trimester. Academic probation includes the following:

1. Three parent-teacher conferences during the first trimester
2. School counselor or resource teacher meets with student regularly to offer support

NOTE: Situations involving students with an existing Student Support Plan will be reviewed individually utilizing the student support team process.

REPORTING OF ALCOHOL OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Any adult or student who is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs will be dismissed from the school immediately. In the case of the student, parents/guardians will be notified. The school also reserves the right to involve legal authorities if deemed necessary. In order to ensure the safety of our students, we ask that any suspected drug or alcohol activity that is observed on or around the school property be reported to the Police immediately.

Should any authorized adult come to the school grounds and be suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, students will not be released to that person, and the authorities will be informed immediately by the school principal.

REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

Occasionally it comes to the attention of a teacher or the Principal that a student is physically bruised or injured to such an extent that the school personnel suspect that it could be the result of physical or sexual abuse.

THE STATE OF FLORIDA MANDATES US TO REPORT ALL SUSPICIONS IMMEDIATELY TO THE BUREAU OF CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES. Under the directives of the State and the Diocese of St. Petersburg, we fully comply in the reporting of suspected child abuse.

SAFETY IN PRIVATE PLACES

The school complies with the requirements of §553.865, Florida Statutes, “The Safety in Private Spaces Act”, which is consistent with the teaching and tenets of the Catholic Faith. Except where facilities are specifically designated as unisex, the school’s bathroom and locker rooms/changing facilities are designated exclusively for use by biological females or biological males. Any student who willfully enters a school restroom or locker room/changing facility designated for the opposite sex and refuses to depart when asked to do so by any school personnel will be subject to disciplinary consequences as established by the school principal unless a specific statutory exception applies. This handbook provision shall be considered a part of the school’s code of student conduct.

SCHOOL HOURS

Daily: 8:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.

Half Days: 8:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

St. Joseph Catholic School reserves the right to search students, their desks and personal belongings if there is a suspicion of weapons, drugs or other inappropriate items. No adult or student may enter the campus with any object that can be used with the intent of causing bodily harm or destruction to another person or school property. Parents will be notified and the object will be confiscated. The school reserves the right to involve legal authorities if necessary.

SPECIAL NEEDS

St. Joseph provides a guidance program to meet the needs of all its students. Individual and group counseling techniques are used in conjunction with conferences with parents, faculty and appropriate agencies to promote positive conditions for the personal growth of individual students. Parents are encouraged to call the school counselor when educational, personal, or social difficulties arise at home or at school and are interfering with the students’ ability to work at his/her potential.

Students with identified special needs will be provided with accommodations via a Student Support Plan (SSP) after receiving proper documentation. Teachers, parents, and the guidance counselor will meet as needed to discuss the SSP and any accommodations needed.

Parents that are concerned that their student may need accommodations for learning difficulties, behavioral concerns, or speech and language issues should contact the classroom teacher or resource teacher.

St. Joseph follows the Response-to-Intervention process for identification of students with learning or behavioral difficulties.

SPORTS PROGRAM

The students of St. Joseph School have the opportunity to participate in a variety of sport programs during the school year. These sports may include basketball, volleyball, softball, track, and soccer.

TARDINESS

A student is unequivocally late if he/she arrives after 8:00 a.m. and must report to the office. Normal traffic congestion is not an excuse for tardiness. Tardiness is considered a minor infraction and is subject to appropriate consequences.

Five (5) tardies in a trimester are considered excessive. A notification will be sent home on the fifth tardy.

TRANSFERS

If it is necessary to transfer a student during the school year, parents must notify the school secretary in advance of the date of transfer. A transfer information form must be filled out before transfer is completed and all academic and health records are sent.

Transfers and records will not be released if financial obligations are outstanding. All classroom textbooks and library books must be returned to the school or an additional payment will be required.

UNIFORMS

We, at St. Joseph School, believe that the school is the student's place of work. We also believe that the mood and conduct fitting our school are encouraged by the appearance of our students. Students are required to report to school wearing the complete school uniform except on PE days when the PE uniform is to be worn. Students that do not wear the proper uniform to school will be subject to minor infractions (see Discipline above)

Cleanliness

Uniforms should always be clean. Each student should give attention to personal grooming.

Consequences:

Repeated infractions to the uniform regulations will result in consequences for minor infractions.

Hair

Hair should be well groomed and neatly combed at all times. Extreme hair styles, as determined by administration, fads, color rinse, hair dyes, sprays, or razor designs are not permitted. Boys' hair length must be above the collar of the school shirt. Girls' or boys' hair should not fall into their face or eye.

Lost and Stolen Items

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen jewelry. Inappropriate jewelry will be confiscated and held in the school office for the parents to reclaim.

Make-up and Jewelry

Girls' use of makeup, lipstick, eyeliner, etc. must be modest. Nails are to be kept neat and trim. Simple color nail polish may be worn. For safety extra-long nails are not permitted. Girls

may wear one pair of small or stud earrings in the ear only for safety purposes. No other body piercing is permitted. This will prevent the loss of valuable objects. Tattoos, including rub-ons, are not permitted.

Marking Uniform Items

The cost of uniforms can become expensive, especially sweaters, jackets and gym clothes that may become lost. Therefore, all students should have their name clearly marked on all of their clothing and personal belongings. The school will not be held responsible for lost items. A laundry pen or a fine-tip permanent marker works well.

Early Childhood

Students in our EC4 Program will be required to wear ONLY the PE Uniform. Parents may purchase the entire school uniform, as listed below, if they wish to, but our requirement is simply for the PE uniform. This allows the children the freedom of educational play without damaging their regular school uniforms.

BOYS K through Grade 8

- Pleated khaki trousers with belt (solid brown or black).
- Khaki walking shorts with belt (solid brown or black).
- All elastic shorts may be substituted for EC4 up to 2nd grade.
- Navy blue, short-sleeve oxford shirt with school logo.
- Solid white or black socks above the ankles.

GIRLS: K through Grade 8

- The proper length of dresses, skirts, and skorts shall be no more than two inches above the top of the kneecap at the discretion of the administration.
- All dresses, skirts, skorts, and pants should be loose with breathing room for girls' legs. Dresses, skirts, skorts, and pants should not be skin tight.
- Khaki skort (all elastic shorts may be substituted for EC4 up to 2nd grade).
- Khaki pleated slacks with belt (solid brown or black)
- Khaki girls' shorts.
- Navy blue short-sleeved oxford blouse with logo.
- Solid black or white socks above the ankles.

BOYS AND GIRLS

- Uniform Shoes: Mostly black, brown, or white shoes not over one inch heel. No bright colors, sandals, high tops, or boots; no wheels, rollers, or lights on shoes.
- Undershirts: Only white T-shirts may be worn under the uniform shirt or PE shirt.

The following articles of clothing may be worn inside the class during cold weather. No other type of sweater or jacket will be allowed:

- Sweatshirts: Navy-blue sweatshirts, sweaters, fleece jackets, or cardigans.
- Jackets: Navy jackets and navy fleece jackets. In extreme cold weather, other jackets may be worn outside the classroom only.

P.E. UNIFORMS

- Navy mesh shorts with SJS logo
- SJS gray T-shirt with logo (shirts tucked in)
- Black or white athletic shoes with matching laces (laces must be tied)
- Plain socks above the ankles

- Navy sweatpants
- Navy sweatshirt

Students must be in full compliance of PE uniform on PE days or it will reflect on their report card. Repeated infractions will also result in consequences for minor infractions (See Discipline above).

St. Joseph sweatshirts may be worn over the uniform on cold days. School uniforms must be purchased at:

Risse Brothers School Uniforms
4228 N Armenia Ave, Tampa, FL 33607
(813) 282-8338
www.rissebrothers.com

DRESS-DOWN DAYS

On dress-down days, students can wear jeans/slacks without rips or holes, t-shirts except those that advertise alcohol, tobacco, drugs, have inappropriate or obscene references or slogans or are contrary to Catholic teaching and values.

Any student in violation of the preceding Uniform / Dress Code is subject to losing their option of participating in Dress-Down Days, will receive alternative clothing in the office, and are subject to minor infractions.

VISITORS

For the safety of our children, all visitors must report to the main office, submit a driver's license or other form of identification and receive a visitor's sticker through Raptor Security Services. Classroom visits will only be allowed with the consent of the Principal. Parents are asked to wear proper attire when they come on the school premises.

The Diocese of St. Petersburg mandates that all volunteers must have a Diocesan Level II background screening which includes fingerprinting as well as Safe Environment Training before they can work at the school during the hours of 8:00am – 3:00 pm The fingerprints will be maintained in the school office. The process takes approximately 4 - 6 weeks. Information can be obtained at the school office.

*****REVISED JUNE 3, 2024*****