



**Battle Creek Area  
Catholic Schools**  
Education for Living – Faith for Life

**St. Joseph Catholic Middle School  
Parent and Student Handbook  
2017-2018**

*St. Joseph*  
elementary &  
preschool

*St. Joseph*  
catholic  
middle school

*St. Philip*  
catholic central  
high school

Students will know the Faith, share the Faith,  
and live the Faith.

**Battle Creek Area  
Catholic Schools**



Education for Living – Faith for Life

**ST. JOSEPH MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**44 N. 25<sup>th</sup> STREET**

**BATTLE CREEK, MI  
49015**

**(269) 963 – 4935**

Dear Parents and Students of St. Joseph Middle School,

The purpose of this handbook is to share information with you and acquaint you with the middle school. It provides an overview of what students and parents can expect.

We share the responsibility of educating with you. We strongly believe that you are the primary educator and that you know your child better than anyone. We also believe that you have a responsibility to be an advocate for your child and that we will do our best to support that advocacy. Our ministry is to support and be a partner in the education of your child. We do this with compassion, care and competence. We continually strive to bring about positive intellectual, social and spiritual skills and realize the importance of your cooperation and support in doing this.

We strongly encourage you to read the Mission and Belief Statements that are part of this document. These statements truly articulate the foundations and ideals from which all of our decisions are made.

Please communicate with us. Your concerns, questions, ideas, and input are never trivial: it is what makes us a true learning community.

Sincerely,

Katie Reed, Assistant Principal  
St. Joseph Middle School

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St. Joseph Middle School is part of the educational system established by the Diocese of Kalamazoo, and is subject to the policies of the Diocesan Office of Schools. St. Joseph is accredited through the Michigan Association of Non-public Schools (MANS).

Please review this important document with your middle school student. The last pages should be signed by both parent and student and returned to the student’s advisory teacher.

**BATTLE CREEK AREA CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

**VISION**

The Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools are a pre-Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade school system dedicated to personal and academic excellence, committed to providing an accepting and nurturing Christian learning environment. This highly respected Catholic school system fosters the development of faith by building a strong relationship with God through spiritual formation. The students actively witness their faith through lifelong service within the greater community.

The Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools develop and educate the whole student- academically, morally, spiritually, emotionally, and physically. Students are engaged in a meaningful, relevant and secure learning environment that utilizes current, state of the art resources. The schools challenge, inspire and excite a diverse student population to reach their potential. We further believe:

<b><i>Learning and instruction</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students are well prepared for college and have the skills and knowledge to apply what they have learned</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teachers and administrators are of the highest quality-dedicated, compensated fairly and serve as role models of faith and learning through continued professional development</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Technology and other resources are current, dynamic and integrated in support of curriculum</li> </ul>
<b><i>School environment and culture</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learning takes place in an environment in which all students are welcome; regardless of faith, socio-economic status, physical ability, or race</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Opportunities abound for students within the academic, fine arts and extra-curricular programs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students, families, teachers, and the community form a partnership that enhances and supports student learning</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continuity and consistency exist in philosophy, curriculum, leadership and governance across the Pre-K-12 system</li> </ul>

**ST. JOSEPH MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**MISSION**

Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools, in partnership with parents, community and the Catholic Church, provides students with an excellent education and a solid faith formation. Students will know the faith, share the faith and live the faith.

**School Hours** 7:50 a.m. - 3:10 p.m.

**(Warning Bell rings at 7:45; all students must be in classroom by 7:50am)**

**Office Hours:** 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p. m.

**After School Club Hours:** 3:10 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

**Phone:** (269) 963-4935 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

**Fax:** (269) 660-0354

**After School Club** (Extended Day Room): (269) 969-0056

**Pastor Representatives**

St. Philip Catholic Church	Fr. John Fleckenstein
St. Joseph Catholic Church	Fr. Christopher Ankley
	Fr. Jose Haro
St. Jerome Catholic Church	Fr. Christopher Ankley
	Fr. Jose Haro

**Principal**

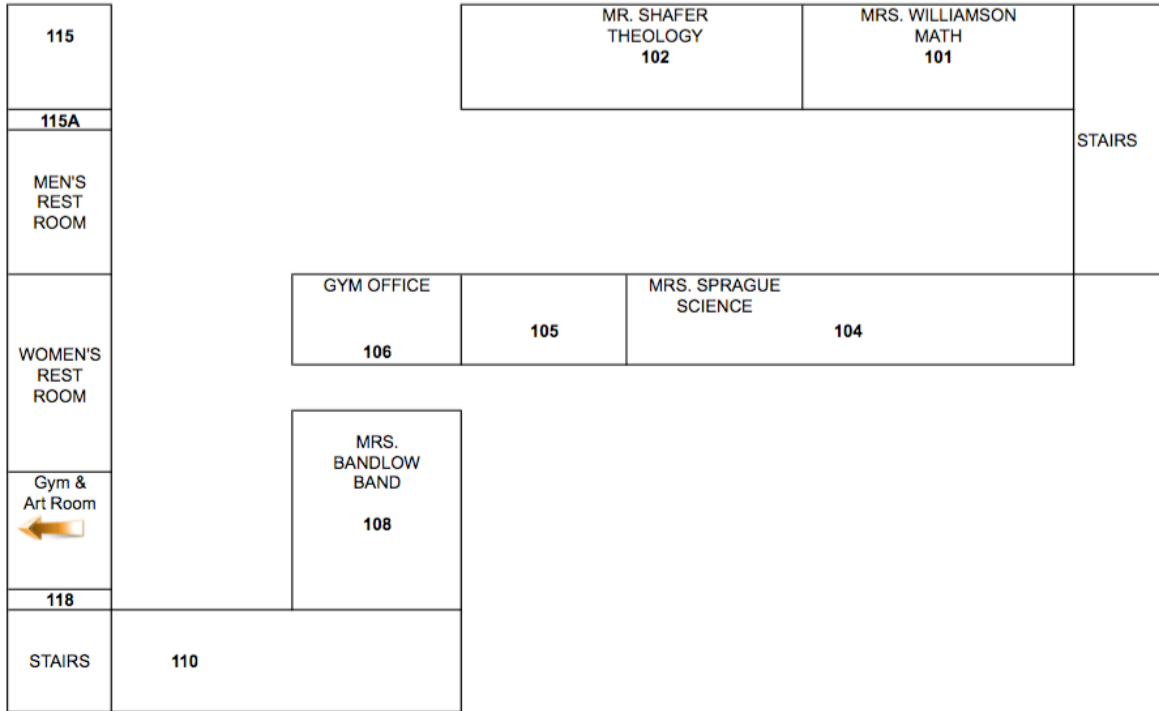
**Mrs. Sara Myers**  
Email: [smyers@bcacs.org](mailto:smyers@bcacs.org)

**Assistant Principal**

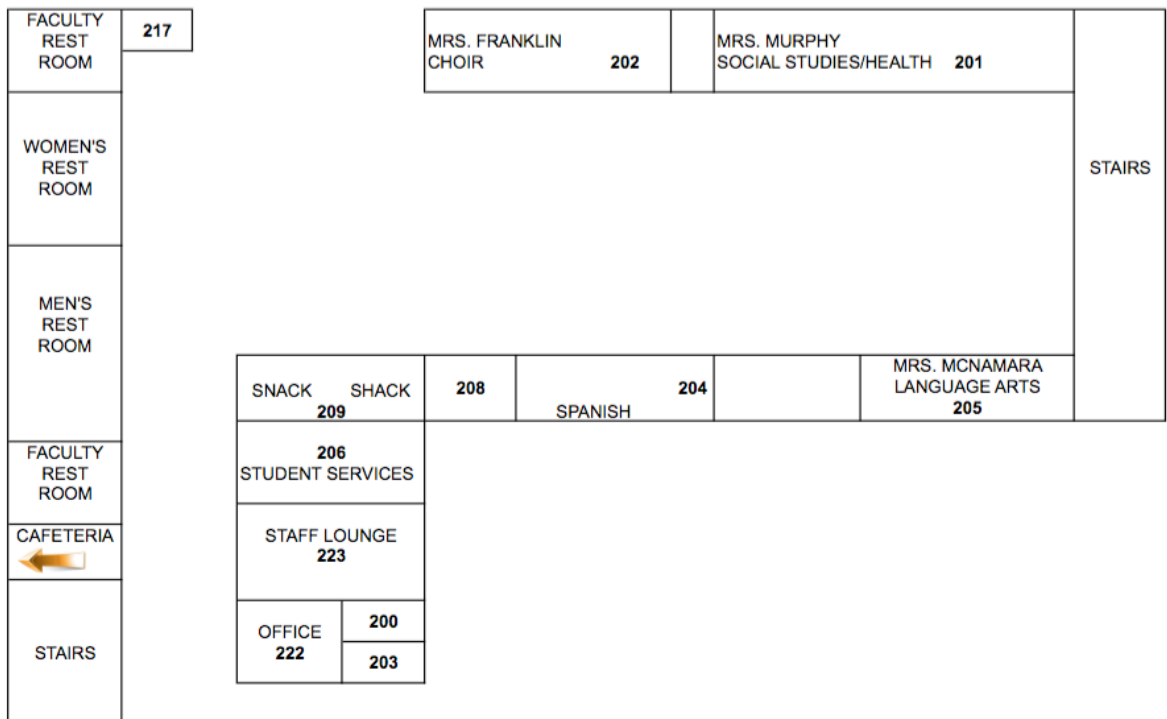
**Miss Katie Reed**  
Email: [kreed@bcacs.org](mailto:kreed@bcacs.org)

**Athletic Director**

**Mrs. Vicky Groat**  
Email: [vgroat@bcacs.org](mailto:vgroat@bcacs.org)



St. Joseph Middle School  
Lower Level



St. Joseph Middle School  
Upper Level



## **ABSENCES**

Also See "ATTENDANCE"

If it is necessary to keep your child home because of illness, we ask that you call our office (963-4935, Ext. 301) and alert us prior to 8:15 a.m. This helps to assure us that your child is safe and accounted for. Messages may be left on our phone system. You will be contacted if we do not hear from you regarding your child's absence.

When a child becomes ill at school, the parent (or emergency contact person) is called and the child is sent home. The child may either return to class to wait for their parent to arrive or he/she may sit in the office, depending on the nature and severity of their illness. **All students must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.**

Often, parents request homework for a sick child. This should be done with the morning phone call. Homework may be sent home with a sibling or friend, or parents are welcome to pick-up homework in the school office between 3:00 and 3:30pm. If you cannot pick up your child's work at that time, you may request that the work be left in the elementary extended day room for you to pick up before 6:00pm.

Parents of students whose attendance may be of concern will receive a letter outlining their child's attendance history and requesting that they take steps to ensure that the student is at school all day, every day.

## **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

Homework is expected to be handed in on the due date at the beginning of the class period. If homework is not turned in on time, the following procedures apply:

### **STEP 1 - If the student does not turn in homework at the beginning of the assigned class period:**

- The teacher will send home a "Parent Notice" with the student. The "Parent Notice" informs the parent that the homework assignment was not submitted on time and is now considered "late". It is the student's responsibility to show the notice to his/her parent and get the notice signed and returned to the teacher.
- Teachers will note any assignment at this point as M (missing) with a zero for a grade in RenWeb.
- The student must bring the missing assignment AND the signed "Parent Notice" to the teacher the next day (If the class does not meet the next day, the assignment is still due to the office and it will be placed in the teacher's box). Since the assignment is late, the student may receive 10% off of the earned grade.
- If the "Parent Notice" is not signed and brought to class the next time the class meets, the student will serve a "Lunch Detention". Three "Lunch Detentions" for any reason will result in an "After School Detention" (SEE CONSEQUENCES). Parents will be notified in the event that this occurs.

- If the assignment is not turned in the next day, the student's work is considered **incomplete**. The student will stay in at lunch to complete the work and/or should complete the work at home. If it is more than a day late, it will receive 30% off of the earned grade.
- Our goal is that all homework is completed and turned in. The school, parents, and students need to be working together to ensure all students are completing their work.

**STEP 2 - If the student receives three lunch detentions in the same quarter:**

- An "After School Detention" will be issued, and served on the Thursday that follows.
- Students will be required to **not participate** in:
  - one athletic event during the following 7-day period (must attend the event dressed up and on the bench supporting their team, but will not be allowed to play; participation in all athletic practices will be allowed and expected during that time, as usual.)

\*If detentions and/or written plans prove to be ineffective in solving either behavioral or academic problems, the principal will meet with the parents, advisory teacher, and student to discuss the situation further. Every attempt will be made to resolve the problem. The administration reserves the right to amend this policy to ensure success for each student.

### **ACCREDITATION**

St. Joseph Middle School is accredited by the Michigan Non-Public School Accrediting Association, a chapter of the National Federation of Non-Public School State Accrediting Associations. The BCACS were re-accredited in April of 2015. All BCACS schools will go through the MANS accreditation process in 2020.

### **ADMISSIONS**

In accordance with Title XI of the Educational Amendments of 1972, our Catholic middle school does not discriminate on the basis of sex in either its admission policies or its employment practices on the basis of sex, race, national origin, and/or handicapping condition, if, with reasonable accommodations the child can be serviced and/or the teacher/staff can perform their required duties. The school administrator shall be the coordinator for this title.

New students are accepted on a 90-day probationary period.

Likewise, no student who wishes to enroll in our Catholic middle school, provided there is room for additional students, shall be denied admission to the school on the basis of race, color or national origin.

Michigan law requires that each child be immunized in accordance with Michigan state law. Parents are required to submit proof of an up-to-date immunization record prior to admission.

If it is determined that St. Joseph Middle School is unable to meet the needs of a particular student, the principal reserves the right to deny admission.

Record of acceptable behavior and proof of reasonable academic records, including attendance, are especially important in determining the admission of a transfer student.

### **AFTER SCHOOL CLUB**

St. Joseph Middle School has an after school club, which is a non-licensed program where middle school students receive adult supervision and participate in age-appropriate activities until 5:30 pm.

The cost of this program is \$5.00 per hour (minimum). It includes snack and adult supervision. Students not picked up by 5:30 p.m. will be billed at the rate of \$5.00 per minute. Billing will take place bi-weekly. Parents needing to contact the school after 3:30 should call the elementary school extended day program at 969-0056. Extended day will be able to contact the after school club supervisor immediately. Pick-up of middle school after school club students must be done through the elementary school extended day room.

### **ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL**

Parents are to drop-off and pick-up students at the main entrance on 25<sup>th</sup> Street. **Students are not to arrive prior to 7:30 a.m. since supervision is not available until that time. Any student dropped off at school prior to 7:30 a.m. must report directly to the morning care program in the elementary school.**

School is dismissed at 3:10 p.m. All students are to be picked up by 3:30 p.m. Since the safety of each child is our primary concern, please make the necessary arrangements to work within these timeframes. Outdoor supervision ceases at 3:30 p.m. Students who are not picked up by 3:30 will automatically be sent to after school club. After 3:30, you will need to retrieve your child through the elementary extended day room. Parents are expected to pay for supervision after 3:30 p.m. You will be billed accordingly.

Students are not allowed to go out onto Walsh or 25<sup>th</sup> Streets for drop-off or pick-up. Parents must wait in line for student drop-off and pick-up at the base of the main school sidewalk that leads from the office area to the middle school parking lot. If time is an issue for parents, we ask that cars are parked in a legal parking spot and that the student(s) is escorted from the building to the parked car by their parent(s). Do not park in the driveway that separates the middle school from the playground area. That area is designated for emergency vehicles.

During each athletic season, athletes are to be picked up by parents after school and brought back to practice/game at the designated time or athletes need to sign in to our after school club until practice/game begins. Parents will be billed accordingly. NON-ATHLETES (including siblings of athletes) are not allowed to attend athletic practices.

## ASBESTOS

Each school building within our diocese has a management plan on file describing the following information:

- Areas of testing and location of any friable materials
- Results of tests, past and present
- Results of air sampling (if done)
- Recommendations of consultants
- Asbestos projects completed and final test clearance, etc.

It is important to note that not all asbestos-containing building materials need to be removed from our school building. If identified, a program can be implemented to ensure that the material is maintained in good condition and that appropriate precautions are followed when the material is disturbed for any reason.

## ATHLETICS

The following interscholastic sports are offered:

### Boys

Football (fall) (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> only)

Basketball (winter)

Track (spring)

Cross Country (fall)

### Girls

Basketball (winter)

Volleyball (fall)

Track (spring)

Cross Country (fall)

There is an annual middle school athletic fee of \$175.00 (\$125.00 for each additional middle school or high school sibling).

MHSAA physical forms need to be updated yearly and kept on file at school, per state regulations. Physicals must be completed **BEFORE** the first day of practice.

The staff at St. Joseph Middle School feels that involvement in athletic opportunities is an important aspect of the middle school experience. Sports give students an excellent opportunity to develop self-esteem and leadership skills. At this level, it is important that all interested students are given the opportunity to participate. However, it is essential that students understand that their academic education is the priority and their participation in athletic activities can only occur if their best effort is shown in the classroom.

Students will not be permitted to participate in any athletic competition if he/she is under Step 2 of Academic Probation or Step 3 of Behavioral Probation (SEE "ACADEMIC PROBATION" or "BEHAVIORAL PROBATION").

At the end of a student's 8th grade year, one student will be chosen by the middle school staff for the "Scholar Athlete Award". The criteria considered includes grades and the number of school-sponsored sports he/she has participated in. Club sports do not count towards this award.

## ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance and punctuality are expected of all students enrolled at St. Joseph Middle School. They are essential for a student's success in school. Subjects are taught in sequence, requiring the understanding of each concept in the order of its presentation. Persistent absenteeism causes a genuine hardship for most students. Classroom instruction and student interaction are vital parts of the learning process. Written work is only one part of the school day. A student's continual presence in school is the most comprehensive way for learning to take place.

The following attendance codes are recorded in RenWeb:

<b>A</b>	Excused Absence	<b>I</b>	Ill
<b>AP</b>	Appointment	<b>ISS</b>	In-School Suspension
<b>S</b>	School Activity	<b>OSS</b>	Out-of-School Suspension
<b>V</b>	Vacation	<b>T</b>	Unexcused Tardy
<b>F</b>	Funeral	<b>E</b>	Excused Tardy

We, at St. Joseph Middle School, believe that good attendance is critical to a child's continued growth and academic success. If a child has ten (10) absences, tardies, and/or early dismissals without medical documentation, they will be recorded as "unexcused". The absences may be investigated and a meeting with the principal may be required.

Excessive tardies are a concern, because important announcements and opening routines are held at the beginning of the day. If a child has ten (10) unexcused tardies, a meeting with the principal may be required. Five unexcused tardies will result in a lunch detention. All tardies are considered "unexcused" unless a doctor's note is provided. Exceptions to this policy must be determined by the administrator.

Early dismissals are also a concern, and highly discouraged. The last part of the school day is just as important as the rest of the day. If a child has ten (10) unexcused early dismissals, a meeting with the principal may be required.

In the case of repeated absences, tardies, or early dismissals, a county attendance officer will be notified.

We highly recommend that vacations be scheduled for days when school is not in session. We are aware, too, that occasionally circumstances may warrant an exception to this stated policy. Please contact the office at least one week prior to the start of your scheduled vacation where you will receive a pre-arranged absence form to be filled out by each teacher and handed in to the office one week prior to the planned vacation. The office will alert each teacher as to the student's absence and length of that absence.

**Students are required and expected to make up all missed assignments.** Work will be provided for them upon their return and they will have as many days as were missed to

make up that work. The final responsibility for all missed assignments, and their impact on the student's grades, lies with the parent and student. Please be aware that some lessons are activity-based. Unfortunately these are often impossible to "make up" or to duplicate at home, and therefore some concepts may be missed.

### **BEHAVIORAL PROBATION**

- **STEP 1** - Students are to follow the behavioral expectations as outlined in this handbook and by the teacher of each class. If a student fails to follow the expectations, the teacher of the class will first discuss the situation with the student.
- **STEP 2** - If a student continues to disregard the expectations outlined by the teacher, the teacher may issue a "Principal Referral". At this time, the administrator will discuss the situation with the student and the parent will be notified either by an administrator or the teacher of the class in which the referral occurred. "Principal Referrals" for serious infractions may result in an after school detention or a suspension.
- **STEP 3** - If the student is repeatedly (no more than 3 times) referred to an administrator regarding school, classroom and teacher expectations, then the administrator will issue an after school detention or a suspension. When a detention is issued, the following conditions apply:

"Behavioral probation" begins the day after the "after school detention" is issued and it remains in effect for seven days.

Students will not be allowed to participate in:

- one athletic event during that seven day period (must attend the event dressed up and on the bench supporting their team, but will not be allowed to play; participation in all athletic practices will be allowed and expected).

An after school detention will be served on the Thursday that falls within the probationary period. Occasionally, our Thursday after school detentions may be re-scheduled to an alternate date because of the school's schedule. Parents will be notified if this is the case.

Four or more behavioral detentions in a quarter, or any after school detentions due to behavior deemed inappropriate by the administrator, could result in the student serving an in-school suspension.

## **BIRTHDAY TREATS/PARTIES**

Students are welcome to bring birthday treats to share with their classmates. Please work out the details, in advance, with your child's advisory teacher. If it is your intention to provide the class with a special lunch to celebrate your child's birthday, a parent/guardian or grandparent who is VIRTUS trained must provide adult supervision in your child's classroom during the designated lunchtime. Special lunch parties cannot be celebrated in the cafeteria. Since this is also the classroom teacher's lunchtime (and often their only break from classroom responsibilities), it is unreasonable to expect the classroom teacher to give up his/her lunchtime to sit with the class. Please avoid any treats that contain peanuts or tree nuts.

Do not send party invitations to students through school unless ALL students from the class are invited. Gifts of any kind should be given outside of school.

## **BULLYING**

St. Joseph Middle School is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all students, employees, volunteer and patrons, free from harassment, intimidation or bullying. "Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any intentional written, verbal, non-verbal, or physical act, when the intentional written, verbal, or physical act:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student's property; or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; or
- Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Nothing in this policy requires the affected student to possess a characteristic that is a perceived basis for the harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or other distinguishing characteristic.

Harassment, intimidation or bullying can take many forms including: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendos, demeaning comments, drawing cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, or other written, oral or physical actions. "Intentional acts" refers to the individual's choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s). "I was just kidding around" is not an acceptable excuse for unkind behavior.

This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the educational environment. Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may still be prohibited by other district policies or building, classroom, or program rules.

Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator and remediate the impact on the victim. This includes appropriate intervention(s), restoration of a positive climate, and support for

victims and others impacted by the violation. False reports or retaliation for harassment, intimidation or bullying also constitutes violations of this policy.

### **BUS TRANSPORTATION**

Middle school students who plan to ride the Lakeview bus(es) must inform their advisory teacher of their intent by 8:00AM each day. The office calls those numbers into Lakeview Public Schools daily. A Lakeview bus form must be completed at the beginning of each school year prior to riding the bus.

### **CAFETERIA**

St. Joseph Middle School has a closed lunch policy, which requires that all students remain at school during the lunch period. Students have the option of participating in our hot lunch program on a daily or part-time basis, or they may choose to bring a sack lunch and purchase milk, water, or juice. A nutritious basic meal is prepared and served each day. The school lunch is prepared by professional cooks, with the advice of a skilled dietitian. Lakeview Public School's food services department determines the daily menu. It is published and sent home with students each month. Extra copies of the menu are available in the office and you can also access the menu from the website.

Middle school students may pay for hot lunch daily or their parents may deposit funds into an "account" established by the Lakeview lunch program (all checks should be made payable to Lakeview Schools). Each student is issued an account number that he/she will use to charge their lunches. Once an account reaches a \$5.00 deficit, students will no longer be allowed to charge lunches until the balance is paid (if this is the case, students will be provided with a peanut butter sandwich). To check the balance or to view your child's purchases, go to [www.sendmoneytoschool.com](http://www.sendmoneytoschool.com). Our cashiers are very good about verbally notifying students when their lunch account balances are getting low (or in the negative). Please also check this information online so that a positive balance can be maintained.

Our lunch program provides a variety of beverage choices including milk juices, and water. A-la-carte items (such as chips, cookies, etc..) are also available and can be charged on their account. Students are asked not to bring/consume soda pop during the school day (including lunchtime). Please refrain from sending it in as part of your child's lunch.

Specific behaviors and manners are established for our lunch/cafeteria periods. Students are expected to comply.

### **CALENDAR**

Our annual school calendar is sent home to parents each year. Additional copies of the calendar are available in our office. The calendar is also posted on the BCACS website.



### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

Every change of address or phone number must be reported to **both** the middle school office and the BCACS office immediately. Up-to-date records are essential when handling emergency situations.

### **CHEATING**

Cheating is a serious compromise of a student's integrity and it will not be tolerated. If cheating occurs, the assignment(s)/test(s) will be confiscated. A failing grade will automatically be recorded for the work, and the student will be given a principal's referral and an after school detention. Students "sharing" assignments with classmates will also be disciplined accordingly. The classroom teacher will notify parents.

### **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT GUIDELINES**

Child care providers are mandated reporters. Under the Child Protection Law, child care providers must contact Children's Protective Services (CPS) immediately when they suspect child abuse and/or neglect. The immediate verbal report must be made to Centralized Intake by calling (855) 444-3911. The verbal report must be followed by a written report. The written report must be submitted within 72 hours. DHS encourages the use of the Report of Suspected or Actual Child Abuse or Neglect (DHS-3200) form, which includes all the information required by the law. The written report may be faxed to (616) 977-1154 or (616) 977-1158 or emailed to DHS-CPS-CIGroup@michigan.gov. Reporting the situation to administration or other staff does not relieve the caregiver of their mandated responsibility to report to CPS.

When child abuse and/or neglect is suspected, the caregiver/licensee needs to only obtain enough information to make a report. If a child starts disclosing information regarding abuse and/or neglect, the caregiver/licensee must ask only open-ended questions, if necessary, to determine whether a report needs to be made to CPS. The child must not be led during the conversation. The caregiver/licensee must not attempt to conduct their own investigation either before reporting it to CPS or during the CPS investigation.

To assist in protecting children from sexual abuse, BCACS adheres to the diocesan requirements of "Protecting All God's Children". All staff members will participate in the initial three-hour training. Teachers are responsible to read and respond to the VIRTUS follow-up bulletins.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT/DISCIPLINE**

Our discipline policies and procedures are established to create the best possible safe and healthy environment to promote learning and to protect and develop the physical, social, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth of each student. They specifically limit the opportunity for an individual to interfere with the educational rights of other students, as well as those of the individual.

Our school strives to create an environment that encourages mutual respect and cooperation, while providing opportunities for students to make choices regarding their behavior. We feel we have an understanding of the developmental characteristics of the middle school student as they transition from childhood to adolescence.

We believe as students mature they will develop more self-direction. Our discipline policies and procedures have been designed to encourage this development. Each student has dignity, worth and rights... and with these rights come responsibilities. The students are responsible for their choices and the consequences of their behavior. Thus, our discipline guidelines are designed to teach and reinforce behavior that is conducive to learning, living, and working together in a harmonious manner within our school/faith community.

St. Joseph Middle School provides a unique experience for students. The home, school, and church work together in assisting students in dealing with their new interests, feelings, and anxieties, which are a part of adolescence. It is difficult, if not impossible, to list or state what is "acceptable" behavior, good conduct, proper citizenship characteristics, and the like. However, in an effort to give the student a general idea of what is expected here, we encourage and support these general guidelines:

- Students attend school regularly.
- Students are prompt in arriving at their assigned places, prepared to participate fully in class.
- Students understand and follow school policies.
- Students respect the worth and dignity of each individual.
- Students respect the rights of their classmates.
- Students respect the rights and responsibilities of faculty members as they perform their duties.
- Students respect the rights and responsibilities of support staff, such as custodians, administrative assistants, and cafeteria staff.
- Students observe a code of conduct for all citizens by the use of proper language, etiquette and appearance.

Following are some general expectations that are important to the learning environment of St. Joseph Middle School:

- Students are expected to arrive at school on time and go to all of their classes prepared with all of the necessary supplies.
- The appearance of our school will reflect the pride we take in it. Marking or damaging walls, desks, restrooms, etc...will not be tolerated. Students who are responsible for malicious damage to buildings, equipment or classroom materials will be disciplined appropriately and required to pay for damages.

- Gum chewing is not permitted at any time. All food items are to be consumed in the cafeteria during the lunch period (or in designated classrooms during snack time). Students are asked to bring in snacks that have nutritional value (or they may be purchased here at school).
- In the cafeteria, students are expected to clean up after themselves. Food throwing is not permitted and will result in disciplinary actions.
- Good sportsmanship at athletic contests has long been one of our finest traditions. Positive school spirit is encouraged and must not be confused with unsportsmanlike acts such as booing, hissing, etc. It is important to remember that the poor behavior of just one or two individuals may reflect poorly on our entire school.
- Outward displays of affection, such as kissing or inappropriate touching, are unacceptable.

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Parent/Guardians are required to report to the school office any communicable diseases their child(ren) may have.

Whenever a student is suspected of having a communicable disease, immediate arrangements will be made for the student to leave the school environment. Students are excluded from classes and school-sponsored events for the following diseases: Diphtherias, Whooping Cough, Chicken Pox, Meningitis, Tuberculosis, Smallpox, Pediculosis (Head Lice), Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye), German Measles, Ringworm, Impetigo, and Streptococcal Infections (including Scarlet Fever and Strep Throat), H1N1, and any other infectious diseases.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Emails will be sent home on a weekly basis. It contains upcoming events, due dates and information from the principal. It also includes items of interest and activities as well as important parent information.

\*Any parent wishing to send information home via email must first have any communication(s) approved by the principal. Approval must be sought at least four full days before the email is sent home.

Powerschool is our online connection to your child's grades, attendance record, daily assignments, and announcements (found under the "daily bulletin" tab).

Student assignment books are a daily resource for students and families. Your student should fill out their assignment notebook at the end of each class session to note assignments, tests and project dates. This is the student's responsibility.

We have a "Parent Communication Rack" next to the cafeteria doors in the middle school foyer. Parents are welcome to stop by any time and pick up current information. This information can also be accessed on our website.

### **CONCUSSION LAW**

We are in compliance with diocesan policy regarding concussion laws and procedures. See pg. 43 for "Concussion Awareness Acknowledgement" that is to be completed and returned to the middle school office.

### **CONFERENCES**

Parent-Teacher conferences occur during the fall and spring sessions of school. Specific appointments can be made with individual teachers, regardless of the progress of their child. These conference times, if spent wisely, can be valuable to the overall education program. It is never necessary to wait for the regular conference time if a parent has a specific concern. Parent conferences are encouraged and can be arranged at any time during the school year. Conferences with the building principals are also welcome. Please call in advance so that a designated appointment time is made.

### **CONSEQUENCES**

Teaching appropriate behavior and responsibility are important functions of St. Joseph Middle School. It is important that the consequences for chosen behaviors that do not align with the expectations set forth by the school are appropriate and consistent with the philosophy of our school. Possible consequences for violations of rules and school or classroom expectations are as follows:

- **CLASSROOM CONSEQUENCES** - Each classroom teacher has outlined expectations for their particular class and what the appropriate consequence is should the student choose to disregard that particular expectation. Students are made aware of these expectations and both the expectations and consequences are discussed in the classroom.
- **LUNCH DETENTION** - Students may be assigned a lunch detention for violation of dress code, unsigned "parent notices", inappropriate cafeteria behavior, and/or other actions that require a consequence but do not warrant an after school detention. If a student is assigned a lunch detention, he/she will either serve it that day (if the violation occurs before lunch), or the following school day (if the violation occurs after lunch). Lunch detentions require that the student eat their lunch in a designated location, they will write (copy) from the handbook or write a parent letter, and may be asked to assist with cafeteria clean up. Parents are notified of a first lunch detention within an academic quarter by email. Parents will receive a written "warning letter" if a child receives a second lunch detention within the quarter. Three lunch detentions (for ANY reason) during a

quarter will result in an after school detention. Parents will be notified of a third lunch detention (thus an “after school detention”).

- **AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION** - After school detentions can occur for a number of reasons; three lunch detentions, principal referrals, cheating, swearing, excessive disrespect or any behavior that puts another student at risk, etc... after school detentions are held on Thursdays from 3:10-4:10 p.m. in a designated teacher’s classroom. If a student is assigned an after school detention, parents will be informed of the reason(s) for the detention. If a student receives an after school detention, he/she is automatically placed on probation (see either “Academic Probation” or “Behavioral Probation”). Three (or more) after school detentions may result in an “In-School Suspension”.
- **IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION** - The student attends school, but does not attend any classes. In a designated space (usually the office), the student will be supervised by an adult and will be required to complete all assignments, which can be completed without teacher instruction, for that day from each class (this may include additional work to reinforce the curriculum). The student will receive credit for the completed assignments. However, teachers will not be responsible for teaching the content which was missed during this period. The student will also eat lunch in this room and will not be permitted to have contact with other students. Parents are notified by a letter, email, or phone call of any “In-School Suspension” and a copy may be placed in the student’s CA-60 file. The student is then placed on “Behavioral Probation” for a period of seven days following the day that the “In-School Suspension” is served.
- **OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION** - The student does not attend school. The student is required to be in a parent/guardian’s care out of the school building and will be required to complete all assignments, which can be completed without teacher instruction, for that day from each class (this may include additional work to reinforce the curriculum). The student will receive credit for these assignments. However, teachers will not be responsible for teaching the content which was missed during this period. Parents are notified by a letter, email, or phone call of any “Out-Of-School Suspension” and a copy may be placed in the student’s CA-60 file. The student is then placed on “Behavioral Probation” for a period of seven days following the day that the “Out-Of-School Suspension” is served.

\*If detentions and/or suspensions prove to be ineffective in resolving either behavioral or academic concerns, the administrator will meet with the parents, classroom advisor, and student to discuss the status of the student’s enrollment at St. Joseph Middle School.

## **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

In accordance with diocesan policies, corporal punishment is strictly prohibited.

## **CRISIS MANAGEMENT (EOP) PLAN**

All schools with the Diocese of Kalamazoo are mandated to keep a Crisis Management Plan in the school office. Parents are welcome to examine the plan at any time.

In the event of a crisis, we will contact you via email or phone regarding any changes in dismissal information. For this reason, please keep your email address and phone numbers updated with the school office.

## **CLASS LISTINGS**

### **Core Subject Areas:**

Each core class is taught daily.

- Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Theology

### **Non-Core/Elective Classes** (subject to change):

6th Grade:

- Art
- Band or Choir
- Physical Education
- Spanish

7th Grade:

- Art
- Band or Choir
- Physical Education
- Spanish
- Technology

8th Grade:

- Art
- Band or Choir
- Physical Education
- Health (High School)

## **DANCES & SCHOOL-SPONSORED SOCIAL EVENTS**

Any school-sponsored social event must be approved by the school principal or assistant principal.

Dances will usually be held in the school cafeteria. Students will be chaperoned by a combination of parents and teachers. No participant will be allowed to leave the premises unless they are not planning on returning to the dance. Students who wish to bring a guest who is not a St. Joseph Middle School student must pre-register him/her in the school office in by noon the day before the dance. Only middle school (grades 6, 7, 8) students will be allowed as guests.

Standards of behavior will be the same as those for any other school activity. Students are expected to wear modest clothing at all school-sponsored events (including dances). No spaghetti straps, strapless (or one shoulder strapped) tops for girls. Midriffs should not be exposed. Skirts and shorts must meet regular school dress code standards (with regard to length).

Every student will need to leave with a parent or guardian. If a student is leaving with another parent, a note or verbal permission must be given.

## **DELAYS/CANCELLATIONS**

Cancellation of school (or school delays) takes place only during extraordinary circumstances such as extreme weather conditions, equipment failure, or public crisis. Every practical means is used to notify parents of an impending cancellation or delay including radio and television (specifically WBCK-95.3 FM, 103.3 FM FM, and television channel 3 and 8). In addition, please check our website- [www.bcacs.org](http://www.bcacs.org). In the unusual circumstances when school must be cancelled during the school day, school personnel will determine that all students have satisfactory transportation and supervision before releasing them from school. A student will not be released without parental knowledge. No child will be left unsupervised.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Also see "CODE OF CONDUCT"

## **DRESS CODE**

\*Our dress code is included at the back of this handbook as a reference.

All students are expected to dress in a manner that reflects self-respect and simplicity. Neatness and cleanliness are the marks of a mature student. It is the responsibility of students and parents to cooperate with the school to meet the standards set at school. The dress code applies to every school day (including field trips, unless otherwise specified). Students will have opportunities to have "Out of Dress Code Days" as well as "School Spirit Days". **"Out of Dress Code" slips may only be used on Mondays when we**

**do not have Mass.** Depending on the occasion, students may be asked that they have a “Dress Up Day”. The administrator has the final word regarding what is acceptable, and in compliance with, the intent of the code. Dress code violations may result in a lunch detention. Repeated dress code violations may result in the student leaving the classroom and calling a parent/guardian for a change of clothes or staff may find a change of clothing for students from our used uniforms. Yoga pants are not acceptable dress code clothing. In addition, writing of any type on clothing or on a student’s body is not allowed. Colored hair dye is also not allowed.

### **DROP-OFF & PICK-UP**

All Middle School students should be dropped off and picked up from the parking lot adjacent to 25th Street. Please enter Walsh St. from 23rd St. and into the parking lot by making a right turn off of Walsh St. Exit the parking lot via the driveway onto 25th Street. If your child has elementary school siblings, your middle school student may go to the elementary for pick-up.

### **DRUGS (ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES)**

Alcohol, mind-altering substances, look-alike drugs, counterfeit drugs, and tobacco:

Any student who gives evidence of having consumed or has in his/her possession any alcoholic beverage, any illegal substance, or any paraphernalia pertaining to these while attending class, on school premises, or any school-sponsored activity shall be suspended (either “In-School” or “Out of School Suspension”) and is subject to expulsion from St. Joseph Middle School. The location of the activity or whether the substance was taken on or off school grounds has no bearing on this ruling.

Drugs, as defined above, are not to be carried onto, purchased, sold, or consumed by the students on the property of the Catholic school and/or parish, or at any event sponsored by the school/parish.

#### **POLICY BOUNDARIES INCLUDE:**

- School Activities (both at St. Joseph and elsewhere)
- BCACS and Lakeview bus transportation (for field trips, athletics, etc.).
- Private social activities which become public also run the risk of falling under school discipline procedures
- Anywhere on BCACS/parish grounds

**1<sup>st</sup> OFFENSE** - “Behavioral Probation” and the student will serve a “School Suspension” (Time and place will be determined by the school principal). There will be no participation in any school-sponsored activity for seven days. A conference will be required between the student, parent(s) and the school administrator before the student will be permitted back into his/her classes. Expulsion may be considered.

**2<sup>nd</sup> OFFENSE** - In addition to the above stated consequences, the student must agree to be assessed and receive treatment, if necessary, from a certified substance abuse



program or counselor at the parents' expense before returning to his/her classes. It is the parent's responsibility to provide written documentation of counseling. Any expense incurred for an assessment and counseling is also the responsibility of the parent. Expulsion will be considered.

**3<sup>rd</sup> OFFENSE** - The student is recommended for continued counseling and is subject to expulsion from St. Joseph Middle School. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide regular documentation that professional counseling is taking place. Any expenses incurred as a result of the required action is the responsibility of the parent.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

Students who leave school during the regular school day must have a note stating why they are leaving. Parents may also call the office with this information. Please call as early as possible so that teachers can be notified. This note should be dated and signed by a parent/guardian. Students are to take early dismissal notes to the school office prior to first block where an "early dismissal" slip will be issued. The student keeps this slip and presents it to the teacher of the class he/she is in when it is time to leave. Early dismissal slips are only issued when there is a note from the parent/guardian. Students report to the school office prior to leaving the building. Parents are required to come into the school office to sign students out. Upon the student's return, parents are required to sign their student in at the office.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

A student may not be permitted to participate in extra-curricular activities (including athletic competitions) or middle school sponsored social events if he/she is under STEP 2 of "Academic Probation" or STEP 3 of "Behavioral Probation" (SEE appropriate sections for details).

A student/athlete must be in attendance at school for ALL periods of the school day in order to be eligible to participate in any extra-curricular or social activity after school. Exceptions to this policy include medical appointments and funerals. Evidence of a scheduled appointment and times must be submitted to the school office prior to the start of practice/competition or after school activity.

### **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Fire drills are conducted six times per academic year and severe weather (tornado) drills are held twice each year. Escape plans are posted inside the door of each classroom. For fire drills, each classroom has a pre-determined escape route to an outside area a safe distance from the building. During severe weather drills each classroom goes to a designated area within the building. All students kneel with their heads covered and faces toward a wall. All students are expected to conduct these drills in a completely quiet, orderly, and safe manner. Lock-down drills are also practiced twice each year. Students are to remain at their designated "safe zone" until an "all clear" is given by the

middle school principal or designated staff member. Dates of completed emergency drills will be posted on the BCACS website.

### **EXPECTATIONS**

We have high expectations for our students. We expect that, together, we will help them meet and exceed these expectations:

- Homework is completed and turned in on time
- Assignments notebooks are filled in daily
- Written communication handed to your student at school is safely delivered home to your attention

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Students who qualify and/or are interested may participate in the following extra-curricular activities:

BCACS Ski Club  
Student Council  
St. Joseph MHSAA Sports

National Junior Honor Society\*

\*Students meeting the GPA/academic requirements are encouraged to apply. Written invitations and information are mailed home.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Occasionally classroom teachers schedule field trips within our city and nearby areas. These trips are designed to supplement different educational, social, or spiritual aspects of the classroom curriculum and to introduce students to the resources of the community. Parents will receive written notification of field trips in advance of the scheduled date. Each notice from the teacher will contain complete details of the trip. Field trip permission slips must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the school office before students will be allowed to participate in field trips of any kind.

Students whose behavior indicates that they would hinder the learning opportunity of a class field trip may not be permitted to attend. Those with a history of inappropriate behavior in the classroom or on previous field trips will not be allowed to participate. Those who may not attend a field trip because of a behavior-related incident may be required to stay home on the day of the event. Field trip opportunities are a privilege, not a right.

### **FIGHTING**

Fights, including assaults on other students or adults, or verbal or written confrontations against any student or employee of St. Joseph Middle School will result in at least a lunch detention or an after school detention, and most likely, an "In-School Suspension". In severe cases, the police may be called and expulsion may be

considered. While many fights begin (or are rationalized) as “just playing around”, it is important that students understand that rough play can result in physical injury. Thus, even “play fighting” will result in consequences.

### **FUNDRAISING RESPONSIBILITIES**

All of our middle schoolers are expected to fundraise during their middle school years. The following experiences/trips are what those fundraising efforts support:

- Our 6th grade students attend Sherman Lake YMCA Camp each fall as part of their curriculum. A portion of the camp experience is paid directly by the students and/or their parents. A larger portion is paid through fundraising activities.
- Our 6th & 7th graders go to Eagle Lake at the end of the year.
- Our 8th graders go on an end-of-year trip to Cedar Point.

Traditional fundraising efforts include:

- Daddy/Daughter Dance (February-sponsored by the 6th grade)
- Annual candy bar sale (fall-each student sells candy bars and the proceeds go to each class’s account accordingly)

### **GRADING/REPORT CARDS**

Report cards will be issued at the end of each quarter (see annual school calendar for dates). As soon as parents receive them, they should be carefully examined and discussed with students. Students are graded according to their academic achievement and the amount of individual effort demonstrated while mastering the various subject areas. Work habits and citizenship are also a vital part of the quarterly report. Interim (progress) reports are issued approximately mid-way through each grading period. Progress reports may be viewed through PowerSchool, or they will be mailed to the student’s home, at the parent’s request. Progress report dates are also noted on the annual school calendar.

Our grading scale is based on the Deca System, with a Grade Point Average attached to each letter grade.

A	=	4.0 (93-100%)
A-	=	3.7 (90-92%)
B+	=	3.3 (87-89%)
B	=	3.0 (83-86%)
B-	=	2.7 (80-82%)
C+	=	2.3 (77-79%)
C	=	2. (73-76%)
C-	=	1.7 (70-72%)
D+	=	1.3 (67-69%)
D	=	1. (63-66%)
D-	=	0.7 (60-62%)
E (SC)	=	0 (Below 60%)

An "I" (Incomplete) is used during extraordinary circumstances such as when a student has been away from school due to a long illness, or other circumstances beyond the student's control. The student will have fourteen calendar days from the end of the marking period to make up any incomplete or missing work, projects, tests, or quizzes.

Students also receive a Conduct grade for each class and their advisory class. The following letters are assigned to these grades:

*O = Outstanding-Student goes beyond what is expected.*

*S = Satisfactory-Student does what is expected.*

*L = Less Than Satisfactory-Student needs reminders of classroom rules on occasion.*

*N = Needs Improvement-Student is often asked to follow classroom rules; teacher is often distracted by behavior.*

### **HANDLING OF BODILY FLUIDS/ OSHA REGULATIONS**

Faculty and staff members have been trained in the proper handling and disposal of bodily fluids. Staff members have access to kits that contain latex-free gloves and various other materials that enable them to help in a medical emergency without endangering themselves.

### **HARASSMENT**

In order for St. Joseph Middle School to maintain a nurturing environment for all students, staff, and volunteers, harassment of any type, including sexual and racial harassment, will not be tolerated.

Harassment refers to inappropriate behavior that is personally offensive to someone, and fails to respect the rights of others. Some examples include (but are not limited to) the following: innuendos of a sexual, racial, or otherwise intimidating nature; propositions; suggestive pictures or cartoons; foul and/or obscene language, jokes or gestures; unwanted and unnecessary physical contact; and unwelcome comments, which are intimidating. It also includes conduct or communication that has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with another students' education, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

Racial harassment includes: making negative references to a person's cultural or racial background and creating a hostile or offensive environment through such conduct.

Other harassment or intimidation of any nature includes any conduct, which may reasonably be determined to be offensive to others in an educational setting.

Teachers and/or the administrator will investigate harassment concerns as they arise.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is important and is an extension of the learning that takes place in school. Homework can provide practice that reinforces classroom learning and can provide opportunities for independent study, research, and creative thinking. Parents can help their child by arranging a quiet, comfortable place for the student to work and by seeing that assignments are completed. All homework is expected to be submitted on time. Failure to do so will result in the student receiving a parent notice that must be signed by a parent and turned back into the teacher who issued it at the beginning of the next class period.

All students have the opportunity to purchase a school assignment book at the beginning of each year. If a student loses his/her assignment book during the year, they are encouraged to come to the office and purchase a new one. Utilization of these planners is a practical skill students will utilize throughout their lifetime.

## **HONOR ROLL**

The Honor Roll is a very special recognition for academic achievement that is recognized at the end of the school year. It is based on the total grades received during the first three quarters of the school year. We have three designated levels for Honor Roll recognition:

- Highest Honor (3.7-4.0)
- High Honor (3.5-3.69)
- Honor (3.0-3.49)

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

State law requires all students to be properly immunized and their school records reflect up-to-date requirements. For information regarding required immunizations please feel free to call our office or consult your child's physician. Students not meeting state requirements will not be allowed to attend school until the proper documentation is on file in our school office. Parents are encouraged to make sure their child's immunizations are current by June for the upcoming school year. Summer doctor appointments are often difficult to get. Waiting until the week or two prior to the opening of school could result in your child not being allowed to begin the new academic year on time.

## **INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE**

No student shall use profane, indecent or immoral language, or make obscene gestures in any building, or on the grounds of the Battle Creek Area Catholic School system/parish. This expectation also applies to any school sponsored activity (on or off school grounds). No ethnic, racial, or gender slurs will be tolerated. Students who choose to violate this expectation may receive a principal referral and/or an after school detention. Repeat offenders should expect more severe consequences.

## **INSURANCE**

St. Joseph Middle School carries liability insurance through Gallagher/Bassett of Lansing. The diocese also provides accident coverage for all students, which includes interscholastic sports programs sponsored by our school.

## **LEARNING DIFFERENCES**

It is recognized that not all students learn in the same way. Recognizing these limitations in multi-student classrooms, every effort is made to teach to the abilities of all students so that all may experience success.

St. Joseph Middle School is pleased to have the support of a part-time Student Services Coordinator, who assists teachers with classroom strategies and she designates students with special needs to be a part of his/her advisory section (which meets three times a week).

## **LICE**

If a student is suspected to have head lice, the child's parents will be notified. The child will need to be picked up from school immediately and then the parent can begin treatment. The health department recommends that we adopt a "NO NIT" policy, which means that until treatment has been completed at home (thorough cleaning, as well as removal of all lice, eggs (nits) and egg cases), that the student not be allowed back into the classroom environment. It is critical that parents continue screening for lice up to a month after diagnosis.

It is never our intent to embarrass a child when we conduct lice screenings. Screenings are done in a professional and confidential manner. Due to the highly contagious nature of head lice, it is important that as a school, we communicate any outbreaks to parents .

Keep in mind that head lice do not necessarily reflect unsanitary households or neglected children. What is important to remember is that immediate treatment and continuous home screening will help to prevent re-infestation and further transmission. Any student who has been sent home for lice treatment must report to the school office to be re-checked PRIOR to returning to the classroom.

## **LINE OF AUTHORITY**

If you and/or your child have a school problem you wish to address openly and honestly, we ask you to follow this line of authority:

Teacher  
Principal  
Pastor Administrator  
Superintendent of Schools  
Bishop

## **LOCKERS**

Hallway lockers are provided as a convenience to each student for the sole purpose of storing materials that may be required for classroom work and necessary outdoor apparel. These lockers are school property and the individual student's responsibility. Guidelines regarding lockers are as follows:

- A locker is provided for every student in the middle school. The lockers remain the property of St. Joseph Middle School and are loaned each year for student use. Students should not expect privacy regarding items placed in school property because school property is subject to search at any time by school officials. School authorities (for any reason) may conduct periodic general inspections of lockers at any time without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. School personnel will open lockers when there is a reason to believe that a locker contains stolen items or materials and/or substances that may be harmful to the student body. Any illegal items found in lockers will be considered the property of the student who is assigned that locker.
- Each locker has a built-in combination lock, which students are expected to use. Students should not share their locker combination with anyone. St. Joseph Middle School will not be held responsible for any items lost or stolen from student lockers.

## **MASS**

Students will attend Mass each Thursday morning at 9:00 a.m. There are some instances where the school Mass will take place on a different day other than Thursday. Look for those dates in Tiger Tales. Please join us for Mass each week or whenever your schedule allows. During these weekly Masses, students in each grade plan and participate in the various parts of the Mass. Students serve the church community by participating as altar servers, ushers, greeters, readers, and choir members.

Our middle school students partner with an elementary grade (8th/2nd; 7th/1st; 6th/Kindergarten) and sit together at Mass. You are always welcome to sit with your student.

Students will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation twice a year during the school day. Students who are not Catholic, but desire to receive Communion are asked to meet with the theology teacher, the building principal, or one of the parish priests to discuss the Catholic guidelines for receiving Communion.

## **MEDICATIONS**

State law and diocesan policy state that we limit the dispensation of medications to only those students who suffer from chronic health conditions. Parents are required to obtain a copy of the "Authorization for Administration of Medication" form from our

office for each and every medication dispensed at school. The form must be completed and signed by both the parent/guardian **AND** the child's physician.

Parents are also required to deliver any prescribed and/or over-the-counter medications in person to the school office **IN THE ORIGINAL CONTAINER**. We **CANNOT** accept medications delivered by students. We are not allowed to accept more than a 30-day supply of medication.

All medications will be counted when they are brought to our office. They will be kept in a locked cupboard and dispensed according to the doctor's order on the "Authorization for Administration of Medication" form.

Students who use inhalers for asthma and other respiratory problems must also provide the school with the "Authorization for Administration of Medication" form completed by the parent and signed by the child's physician. The doctor must indicate on the form whether the student may carry their inhaler or whether it should be kept in our locked storage cabinet. If the doctor indicates that the student may "self-medicate", it is the student's responsibility to inform our office when they have used the inhaler so that it can be properly recorded.

We will keep Epi-pens for students who suffer from specific allergies, (such as bee stings and/or food allergies). Parents must provide our office with the Epi-pen (also packaged in its original container), along with the "Authorization for Administration of Medication" form completed by the parent or guardian and signed by the child's physician.

We do not "stock" Tylenol or Advil type products. If a parent feels it may be necessary for their child to receive any kind of over-the-counter medication, parents are required to bring in the medication (again in its original container and not more than a 30-day supply) to be stored in our locked cabinet. We can only dispense medications with the "Authorization for Administration of Medication" form completed by a parent or guardian and signed by the child's physician.

If a student is feeling ill, we will do all that we can to make them comfortable. If it appears that the student is in need of a medication that we do not have permission to dispense, we will make every effort to contact the parent or emergency contact person by phone. At that point the parent may bring in medication and dispense it themselves, or they may take the student home for the remainder of the day.

**ALL MEDICATIONS PRESCRIBED or OVER-THE COUNTER MUST BE DELIVERED TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE BY A PARENT OR GUARDIAN. EACH INDIVIDUAL MEDICATION MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN "AUTHORIZATION FOR ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION" FORM COMPLETED BY A PARENT OR GUARDIAN AND SIGNED BY THE CHILD'S PHYSICIAN.**



## **NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

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

Non-custodial parents who would like copies of communications or copies of report cards are asked to provide the school with their email and mailing addresses.

## **OFF LIMIT AREAS**

Our schools are maintained and operated for the benefit and safety of our students. However, common sense and safety considerations dictate the designation of a few off-limit areas where students are not allowed. These areas include the boiler room, storage areas, teachers' lounge, kitchen, maintenance area, areas outside of the fenced-in playground, and trash collection area. Students are expected to cooperate and refrain from being in these areas.

## **PARENT NOTICES**

A parent notice is issued to a student when homework is not completed and submitted on the designated day. The student has until the next class period to hand in the completed assignment along with the signed parent notice. This procedure allows parents to know immediately when their student is not keeping up with class work. (See also "Academic Probation")

**REWARDS:** If a student receives no parent notices in a grading quarter, they will receive an "Out of Dress Code" pass.

## **PARENT/STUDENT CONCERNS**

Diocesan policy states that proper channels be followed in sharing concerns with school personnel. Parents and/or students are asked to discuss concerns/disagreements with the specific person with whom you disagree. If no resolution is reached after such meeting, you are to go to the next level, which is the building principal. If, after meeting with those parties, a solution is still not reached, a meeting with the pastor administrator should occur. The final step in resolving differences rests with the Diocesan Office of Schools. Parents/students may request a copy of the Diocesan "Grievance Form" from the building administrator. The grievance must be submitted to the Diocesan Office of Schools within 28 days of the act or condition which is the basis of the grievance.

## **PESTICIDE NOTIFICATION**

Due to Acts 636 & 637 of the Michigan State Dept. of Agriculture's Pesticide notification of schools, we are required to inform you of scheduled pest control service days. Pesticide treatments occur on the third Tuesday of every month.

## **POPCORN SALES**

Parent volunteers meet to prepare popcorn. The bagged popcorn is then taken to distributed from the middle school office. We do offer a one-time payment option of \$5.00 for popcorn for the entire school year. The money raised from this project are used for Parent Connection projects.

## **RECESS RULES**

Students have recess for approximately 10-15 minutes after lunch. Recess will be outside, weather permitting. Students are expected to observe the following recess rules at all times:

- Students are to observe the designated playground boundaries.
- Students are not allowed to leave the area without permission.
- Respect for all is expected; no offensive language, name calling, or other signs of disrespect will be tolerated.
- Space and equipment are to be shared.
- Playground equipment is to be taken care of and used appropriately.
- Rough play and physical contact are not permitted.
- Students are expected to wear appropriate outerwear for the weather.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are mailed home following the completion of each grading period. Please review your child's progress carefully and determine specific areas where you would like to see improvement. Be sure to make note of areas of improvement as well. You need not wait for a formal conference time to contact your child's teacher with questions or concerns.

## **RETENTION**

Determination of retention is done on an individualized basis. We do not have a "No Retentions" policy.

## **SCHOOL BOARD**

The School Board is part of the Battle Creek Area Catholic School system. Each of the Battle Creek parishes (St. Philip, St. Joseph, and St. Jerome) are represented on the board.

Positions may be elected or appointed by the parish priests. Anyone interested in serving a term on the board is welcome to call the BCACS Pastor Administrator or any building principal to find out more information. BCACS Board members are expected to serve on a committee that work for the benefit of our system. Parents at large and school personnel members also serve on these important school committees. Any time spent working on any of these committees counts toward required parent volunteer hours. Meetings are open to the public.

The current BCACS Board President is Chris Moore.

BCACS Foundation Representative  
Nicole Shugars

### **SCRIP**

Parents are encouraged to learn about and utilize the SCRIP program sponsored by BCACS. Many families have cut their tuition bills significantly as a result of their use of the program. The SCRIP office is located just inside the front door of the St. Joseph Parish Center. If you have any questions regarding the SCRIP program, give their office a call at 963-3034.

### **SICK CHILDREN**

If it is necessary to keep your child home because of an illness, **we ask that you call the school office by 8:30am** to alert us. Once this is done, the teacher will be notified. It is not necessary to send a note when the child returns.

When a child becomes ill at school, a parent is called and the child is sent home. We ask that parents be prompt in picking up a sick child. Once the child has been taken home from school, he or she should not return until the following day. **Please remember the child must be fever free for 24-hours and on proper medicine as needed to return to school.**

**On days when it is necessary for a student to be absent due to illness, etc., he/she may not attend any after-school or evening meetings/activities.**

Often parents request homework for a sick child, and this can be done with the morning phone call. Homework may be sent home with a sibling or can also be left in the office or extended day for pick-up, **at the end of the school day**. In order to have your child's work ready to be sent home at the end of the day with another student or **to be ready for pick-up, you need to call the office by 8:30am**. If a request for homework is not made by that time, we cannot guarantee that work will be able to be sent home or picked up.

### **SNACK**

Snacks are offered daily at 10:30 a.m. Since middle school lunch is at 12:30, this break helps keep energy and attention up throughout the morning. Students may bring a

healthy snack from home or may choose from a variety available for sale in the Snack Shack. The cost for snacks is between \$.25-\$.75.

### **SPECTATORS AT ATHLETIC EVENTS AND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES PARTICIPANTS**

Students who stay for after school events are required to make arrangements with their parents before leaving for school. Students will not be allowed to use the phone during the school day to make arrangements. All students need to check into after school club before any after school athletic events.

Athletes waiting for their games are to be supervised by either a coach or a parent volunteer. It is the responsibility of the coach (in coordination with the team parents) to develop a schedule to ensure student supervision. Siblings of athletes are not allowed to wait with athletes unless their parent is the designated supervisor. Siblings of athletes may attend the after school club until the athletic event start time. If a coach or a parent volunteer is unable to supervise the athletes prior to a game, those students may also attend the "After School Club" until their coach arrives. In both cases, parents will be billed accordingly.

Athletes are not to leave the premises without a signed, dated note from a parent. We do not allow students to walk off of the premises (to McDonald's, friend's house, etc). unless we have a signed note from a parent. This is for the safety of all of our students. Spectators are a very important part of any sporting event, so please come out and support our teams! If you are tempted to criticize, please refrain. We need to do all that we can to encourage, instruct and applaud our athletes. Never yell or do anything to humiliate a player who has made a mistake. We are working very hard at teaching Christian values and sportsmanship at St. Joseph. Our sporting events are designed for our students to participate in an atmosphere of friendly competition. Student spectators are to stay in the gym (unless using a restroom or purchasing an item from the concession stand) to support the team.

### **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Teachers give tests quite frequently for diagnostic purposes and to assist in evaluating a pupil's progress in school. National and state achievement and assessment tests are given to reveal specific skills that pupils have or have not attained in reading, math, science, and general academic ability. Three times per year (September, December, and April) all middle school students will be tested using the web-based NWEA-Map assessment.

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

Student records are kept locked in the administrative offices. Parents may view these records upon written request with either a teacher and/or an administrator present. While a parent may request a copy of anything in their child's record, original

documents may not be removed from the office unless they are formally requested (in writing) from the school a student is transferring into.

### **STUDENT SERVICE HOURS**

All of our middle school students are required to fulfill student service hours as part of the theology curriculum. These hours are split into semesters and the required number of hours is below:

**6th Grade:** 10 hours for the year. Five hours due at the end of semester one and five due at the end of semester two.

**7th Grade:** 15 hours for the year. Eight hours due at the end of semester one and seven due at the end of semester two.

**8th Grade:** 20 hours for the year. Ten hours due at the end of semester one and ten due at the end of semester two.

**NJHS students are also required to fulfill five additional student service hours, to be completed any time throughout the year, by May.**

### **TARDIES**

It is important that all students are punctual in arriving at school. If a student is not in his/her advisory classroom by 7:50 a.m., he/she will be marked as an “unexcused tardy”. Students who are tardy to school are to report directly to the school office upon arrival where they will be issued a tardy slip. Students who come in after 7:50 will be considered “unexcused”. Excused tardies will be issued for **appointments and funerals**, and will not count towards a consequence. Excessive tardiness (just like excessive absences) may be a detriment to your child, as the classroom teacher has already begun lessons or other activities that are difficult to duplicate upon a child’s late arrival. In addition, much social interaction takes place during the first few minutes of the school day. The “settling in” period is important for each child.

Students are also expected to arrive to each class and be seated on time. Students have ample time between classes to get to their locker and still arrive to class on time. Students who know that they will be late to class and have a valid reason must obtain the teacher’s permission **PRIOR** to the beginning of class.

Five unexcused tardies will result in a lunch detention. After ten tardies, a parent meeting may be set with an administrator to work on a plan to correct this. Tardies (like absences) become part of your child’s permanent school record.

### **TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICES**

Students are discouraged from bringing electronic devices to school. St. Joseph Middle School will not be responsible for lost or stolen items or for damages incurred.

These devices should never be brought to a classroom. **If a student carries a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or e-reader, it must remain locked in his/her locker and off throughout the school day.** Students carrying these devices (or leaving them in places other than the office or a locked locker) are subject to having them confiscated. If an electronic device is taken from a student, a parent must come in personally to pick it up from the office.

St. Joseph Middle School is not responsible for any lost or stolen devices.

### **TECHNOLOGY AGREEMENT**

All students have access to computers and teachers often use Internet sites to supplement and enrich their curriculum. Students and a parent/guardian are required to sign a "Technology Use Agreement" that will be kept on file in our office.

### **TECHNOLOGY USE**

All St. Joseph Middle School students are expected to:

- only go on approved sites for each class while on school grounds and/or while using school computers
- not go on Facebook or YouTube during school hours and while at school
- refrain from checking personal email while at school
- be respectful of all persons while on the Internet - harrassment will not be tolerated

### **TELEPHONE**

The office telephone is a business phone and should not be used by students, except in an emergency. Students are not allowed to use the phone to make personal last-minute arrangements such as requesting to go home with a friend or to stay for an after school activity. Students MAY NOT call home to have parents bring in forgotten homework or materials.

Whenever there is an emergency, students will be allowed to call a parent, guardian, or emergency contact person. Students must obtain permission from office personnel prior to using the phone.

### **TEXTBOOKS**

Textbooks are the property of St. Joseph Middle School. Textbooks which are covered tend to be better protected. All textbooks need to be returned in the same general condition in which they were given to the student. It is expected that students respect the textbooks as they are expected to respect all school property.

All textbooks are numbered and assigned to specific students. If the student hands in any textbook other than their assigned book, parents will be billed for replacement costs.

Lost, stolen, or damaged textbooks must be replaced. Parents may contact our office to inquire about the value of a textbook. Again, parents will be billed for replacement costs.

### TUITION/FEES

All tuition records and accounts are kept at the BCACS office. Parents who have questions regarding any financial matters pertaining to the school are welcome to call the BCACS office (963-1131).

### VIRTUS

All students K – 5 participate in lessons in Touching Safety as required by the diocese. In addition, the Diocese of Kalamazoo requires all volunteers within the parish and schools who work with children to participate in the VIRTUS Safe Environment program. This consists of a three hour “Protecting God’s Children” presentation and authorizing permission for a criminal background check to be done on each volunteer. To register for a Protecting God’s Children session go to [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org) and click on the registration tab. Follow the prompts choosing the Diocese of Kalamazoo and then Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools.

The Safe Environment Coordinator for the Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools is Lee Papke. She can be reached at 269-965-7749 or [lpapke@bcacs.org](mailto:lpapke@bcacs.org).

### VACATIONS

We highly recommend that vacations be scheduled on days when school is not in session. We are aware, however, those occasional circumstances may warrant an exception to this stated policy. Students are required to make up all missed assignments either before or after the vacation, **at the teacher’s discretion**. Additional work related to the educational aspects of the vacation may also be required. Please be aware that some lessons are activity-based. Unfortunately these are often impossible to “make up” or to duplicate at home, and therefore some concepts may be missed.

Parents are required to request and complete a “Pre-Arranged Absence” form from the office. It must be signed by each one of the child’s teachers and then submitted to the office **one week prior to leaving**, where it will be kept on file.

### VISITS

Parents are welcome at St. Joseph Middle School. We ask that all parents and visitors to the school stop at the office first and sign in with the administrative assistant. All visitors must wear a visitor badge provided by the front office. All visitors must also use the front entrance. All doors will be locked after the beginning of the day. If you are picking up your student at a time other than dismissal, please inform the office in advance and

sign him/her out on the clipboard on the office counter. Parents should not proceed to classrooms or lockers. Instead, please stop at the office, and we will call for your child.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteer help with many aspects of the school program are crucial to the overall success of St. Joseph School and BCACS. All volunteers must sign in at the office upon arrival and pick up a volunteer badge. Any volunteering can work toward fulfilling the 25-hour volunteer requirement.

Per the policy of the Diocese of Kalamazoo (#4500-P), all school volunteers are to abide by the regulations set forth in the Charter and to participate in the diocesan VIRTUS program. Volunteers who have regular contact with children must attend or be registered for a Protecting God's Children training session prior to volunteering. All volunteers who may have a regular contact with children are required to submit to a criminal background check to evaluate their suitability to work with children. Regular contact is defined as any contact that is planned and ongoing.

Every volunteer must complete the "Protecting God's Children" training (see VIRTUS above) and must also submit to the school office a Criminal Background Check form.

### **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

The following opportunities exist for middle school parents:

- Cafeteria - serving food (11:20-1:15)
- Transportation for service learning activities, field trip, etc.
- Dance chaperone
- Box Tops
- Sam's Club shopper

### **WEAPONS**

The safety and welfare of all students is our primary priority. Therefore, all school and parish grounds must be kept free of all weapons and explosive devices. Students who use, possess, handle, transmit, or conceal any object, which is, or could be considered, a dangerous weapon or instrument of violence, shall face immediate suspension and/or expulsion. This includes during school or parish sponsored activities off of school grounds, as well. The proper police or juvenile authorities will be notified.



**ATTACHMENT included in this handbook:**

- Concussion Law Acknowledgement
- Dress Code

\*\*\*The purpose of this handbook is to give all students and their parents a general overview of the rules and activities of St. Joseph Middle School. This handbook does not claim to contain each and every rule/policy of the school. Further, such rules and/or policies are subject to change during the course of the school year. Attempts will be made to communicate any changes or adjustments as they are determined.

This school and administration reserve the right to establish fair and reasonable rules and regulations for issues requiring action that are not covered in the handbook. In all cases, rules, regulations, and possible consequences shall be as consistent as possible with established precedents. Matters omitted from this handbook should not be interpreted as a limitation to the scope of the school's authority in dealing with any type of infraction that may not be in the best interest of the safety and welfare of the students of the middle school. The policies and regulations within this handbook apply to all school sponsored activities, including those held before or after school and those held away from St. Joseph Middle School.



## Concussion Awareness Educational Material Acknowledgement

By my name and signature below, I acknowledge in accordance with Public Acts 342 and 343 of 2012 that I have received and reviewed the Concussion Fact Sheet for Parents and Students provided by Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools.

_____	_____
Student Name (Printed)	Parent or Guardian Name (Printed)
_____	_____
Student Name Signature	Parent or Guardian Signature
_____	_____
Date	Date

Please return this signed form to the School/Parish office. The School/Parish must keep this on file for the duration of enrollment/participation and until age 25.

Students and parents should review and keep the educational materials available for future reference.

**DRESS CODE – 2017-2018**  
**ST. JOSEPH MIDDLE SCHOOL**

*This dress code applies to every school day and every field trip unless excused by the school administrator.*

*At all times, attire must be neat and clean.*

**SHIRTS**

- “Uniform” is defined as an approved shirt that bears the official crest of St. Philip/ St. Joseph Catholic School, which can be obtained through the official vendor of St. Philip Catholic Schools, Action Gear.
- All students must wear the school’s uniform shirt that displays the St. Philip/ St. Joseph Catholic School logo.
- Students may wear the following color *uniform* shirts: red, white, or black (long or short-sleeves are okay).
- Shirts may be worn outside the pants, and shall be appropriately sized. Only the top button may be unbuttoned. Shirts must never be form-fitting, and they shall fall below the beltline. **Only plain, white non-logo t-shirts may be worn under the approved uniform shirt. No undershirt of any color shall extend past the hemline of the uniform shirt at any time. Colored undershirts (t-shirts) are not allowed.**

**SWEATERS/SWEATSHIRTS**

- V-neck, crew-neck, or cardigan sweaters may be worn with the approved uniform shirt. The collar of the shirt must be visible. A cardigan is defined as a collarless, knitted sweater that opens down the front. Cardigans with hoods are not permitted. Sweaters must be red, white, or black.
- Only St. Philip/ St. Joseph/BCACS crew-neck sweatshirts may be worn, and St. Joseph uniform shirts must be worn underneath. The collar of the shirt must be visible. School sweatshirts in red, black, white, or gray can be worn.
- Torn sweatshirts are strictly prohibited and may not be worn at any time.
- Black or red fleece jackets ordered through our Spirit Shop may be worn.

**PANTS**

- Cotton twill/Docker-style, waisted pants in khaki or black are required. Corduroys are not permitted. (Capri pants may only be worn during the “Shorts Season”)
- Jeans, denim, knit or yoga-style pants are not permitted.
- Leggings are not permitted.
- Pants with cargo pockets are not permitted.
- Pants with outside stitching or metal rivets on seams or pockets are not permitted.
- Pants must fit a student properly. Form-fitting pants or pants that cannot be held up without a belt are not permitted.

**SKIRTS**

- Skirts, culottes, or jumpers in khaki or black are permitted for girls. Jean skirts in denim material are not permitted at any time.
- Leggings are not permitted to be worn under a skirt or jumper. **Skirts must be knee length** (this standard also applies to skirts on “Out-of-Dress-Code” Days).

**SHORTS & CAPRI PANTS**

- Shorts and capri pants may be worn from the beginning of the school year until October 31, and from the first day following Spring Break until the end of school.
- Cotton twill/Docker-style, waisted shorts and capris in khaki or black are permitted.
- Cargo pockets on shorts and capris are not allowed.
- Shorts and capris with outside stitching or metal rivets on seams or pockets are not allowed.

- **Shorts shall measure no more than 3” above the knee/** (this standard also applies on “Out-of-Dress-Code Days).
- **Gym shorts** must be modest in length (basketball or soccer). Spandex and short running shorts are not permitted during gym class.

### **SOCKS**

- Plain white or black socks are required with shoes. Socks do not have to be worn with sandals.

### **SHOES**

- Boots and heels are not permitted.
- Sandals (non-plastic/rubber) will be permitted during “Shorts Season” only.
- Shoes shall match at all times.

### **ADDITIONAL ITEMS**

- Hats, coats, and jackets are not to be worn in class.
- For boys, the length of hair may not exceed the bottom of the collar or a ponytail must be worn. Hair must **always** be kept trimmed and groomed in such a way that a student’s eyes and face are clearly visible at all times.
- For boys and girls, hair coloring (including colored sprays) that are unnatural are unacceptable. Facial hair is not permitted, and sideburns may be worn only to the bottom of the ear.
- Mohawk-style hair is not permitted.
- Visible tattooing or body piercing is not permitted.
- Simple jewelry may be worn. Due to safety issues, dangle and large hoop earrings are not allowed.
- Makeup must be minimal (no heavy eye makeup allowed).

### **SPIRIT DAYS**

- On announced Spirit Days, clean, neat jeans or sweatpants may be worn. Torn jeans or sweats shall not be permitted at any time. Pajama pants may not be worn.
- St. Philip/St. Joseph T-shirts may be worn on Spirit Days.
- Unless otherwise announced, the regular dress code shall be followed if “St. Philip/ St. Joseph spirit attire” or red, white and black spirit colors are not worn.

### **OUT OF DRESS CODE DAYS**

- Occasionally, the school administrator may announce an out of dress code day. Clean, neat, and appropriately sized clothing may be worn.
- Legging or yoga-type pants may be worn on out of dress code days with a long tunic top.
- Out-of-Dress-Code slips may be given to students to use on Monday’s only, and only on a Monday when we do not have Mass.
- Articles of clothing may never advertise or refer to tobacco or alcoholic products, or anything contrary to the mission of a Catholic school, as determined by the school administrator.

**\*The school principals have the final word in what is considered acceptable and in compliance with the intent of the code. Dress code violations may result in a “lunch detention”. Dress code violations may result in the student being asked to leave the classroom to call their parent/guardian for an appropriate change of clothes.**

**SCRIP certificates are available for purchase of the above items from many stores and companies (with the exception of the polo shirts, which must be bought from Action Gear), including JCPenney, Sears, and Target.**

# St. Joseph Middle School

## Parent/Student Handbook Agreement

Parents and students are required to sign the acknowledgement below and return this form to the middle school office within five days of receipt.

I have read and reviewed the contents of the St. Joseph Middle School Handbook with my student:

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print first and last name)

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Cursive first and last name)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_