



Battle Creek Area
Catholic Schools



Education for Living – Faith for Life

New Family
WELCOME PACKET

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



Welcome to the Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools!

We are so pleased to have you join our family! Please let us know when you have questions, or are in need of guidance or support. Working together, our goals are to provide each student with an excellent education infused with the Catholic faith, resulting in purpose-driven, confident, compassionate, self-disciplined young adults who are well-prepared for the challenges and crossroads of life.

About our Schools

The Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools are a three-school system; St. Joseph Catholic Elementary and Preschool, St. Joseph Catholic Middle School and St. Philip Catholic Central High School. The Battle Creek Area Catholic School system is among the twenty-one schools, which operate under the governance of the Diocese of Kalamazoo.

Faith: Our school communities have a dynamic way of living our faith. Our Catholic schools are distinctive in what a Catholic faith is and brings to each individual and their relationship with Jesus Christ. In all we do, we are devoted to our faith.

Knowledge: Each of our schools offer their own dynamic learning environment. Our teachers educate in distinctive and innovated ways rooted in the Catholic faith. Our parents, teachers, and administrators are devoted to the success of each student.

Service: Students participate in service opportunities that provide a dynamic impact. Our schools provide distinctive opportunities for students to serve all of God's creations. Graduates of our Catholic schools are devoted to serving others throughout their lives.

Our Parishes

The Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools receive financial support from St. Philip Roman Catholic Church, St. Joseph Catholic Church and St. Jerome Catholic Church. Our schools are blessed to receive spiritual guidance and support from our pastors.



47 North 23rd Street
Battle Creek MI 49015
269-965-7749



44 North 25th Street
Battle Creek MI 49015
269-963-4935



20 Cherry Street
Battle Creek MI 49017
269-963-4503



School Traditions and Faith Formation

With a history of over 100 years in education within our community, we have deep-rooted traditions and beliefs.



Faith

Daily Prayer and Theology
Weekly Student Mass
Monthly Adoration and Benediction
Annual Grade Level Retreats
Sacramental Preparation



Traditions

Homecoming Activities
Sixth Grade Camp
Senior Retreat to Notre Dame
Senior Pilgrimage to Rome
All Saints Superfest
Back to School Night
Catholic Schools Week Activities
Year End Celebrations
Band and Choir Concerts
Christmas Program
Championship Athletic Programs
Graduation Mass and Senior Walk
Holiday Celebrations
Clubs and After School Enrichment Programs

Clubs and Organizations



For Students

Athletics
Boy and Girl Scouts
Campus Ministry
Girls on the Run
Interact Club
National Junior Honor Society
Model United Nations
Ski Club
Student Council
National Honor Society
Service Learning

**Clubs vary annually based upon student interest*



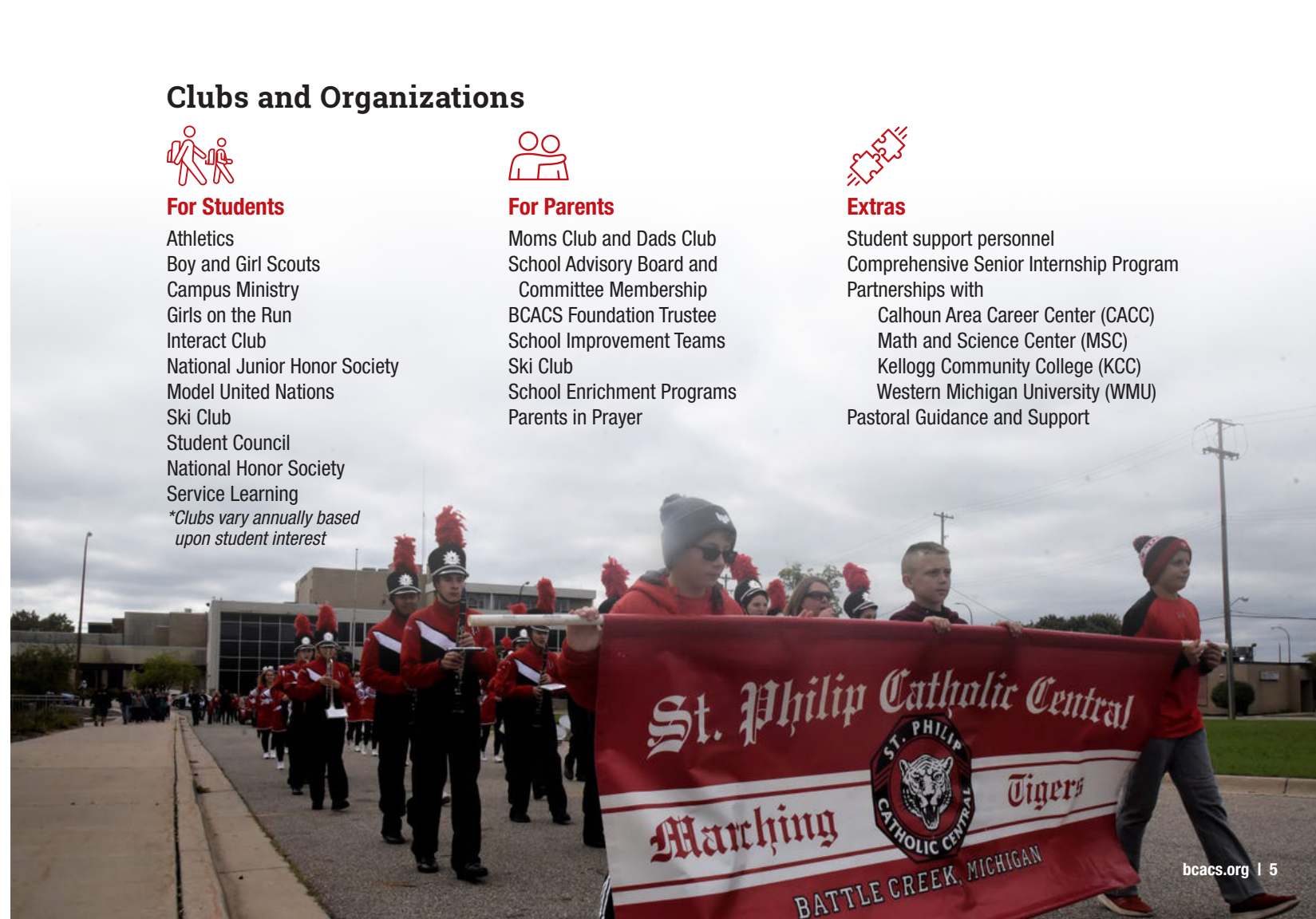
For Parents

Moms Club and Dads Club
School Advisory Board and Committee Membership
BCACS Foundation Trustee
School Improvement Teams
Ski Club
School Enrichment Programs
Parents in Prayer



Extras

Student support personnel
Comprehensive Senior Internship Program
Partnerships with
Calhoun Area Career Center (CACC)
Math and Science Center (MSC)
Kellogg Community College (KCC)
Western Michigan University (WMU)
Pastoral Guidance and Support





Common Questions and Answers

1. Where do I buy dress code items?

St. Joseph Elementary School items can be purchased at any local retail outlets. St. Joseph Middle School and St. Philip Catholic Central High School have a uniform shirt that can be ordered through our website, www.bcacs.org. All schools have a large quantity of gently used dress code items available at great prices! Contact your school office to learn more.

2. What do I do if my student is ill?

Please call your school office to report any absence as early as possible in the day.

3. How does hot lunch operate?

St. Joseph Elementary and Middle Schools work with Lakeview School District, which supplies and manages lunches and account balances. St. Philip Catholic Central High School provides hot lunch and manages student lunch account balances. Students in all schools are welcome to bring their own lunch daily as well.

4. Am I required to volunteer?

In order to support your school community, we ask that every family provides 25 volunteer hours annually. This can be for any of our schools, our BCACS Foundation or for your parish. Grandparents are welcome to volunteer on your behalf. Please note that all volunteers, prior to interacting with students, must have a completed background check and have attended the Protecting God's Children (PGC) training session. Ask your school office for complete information. The volunteer tracking form can be found at bcacs.org.

5. Does St. Joseph provide after school care?

Yes! The after school Extended Day program is available daily for preschoolers through fifth grades from 3:15pm to 6pm, and on half days unless otherwise noted. Extended Day is a drop-in site, so families may utilize as needed. There is a per hour fee for our Extended Day program. For early morning care, please contact your school office.

St. Joseph Middle School provides a supervised After School Club for students in 6–8th grades from 3:15pm to 5:30pm daily. There is a per hour fee for this program.



6. My student needs medication daily during school time. How does this work?

Each school's staff are trained to administer medication that has a signed Doctor Authorization form accompanying the medication in its' original bottle or packaging.

7. What is FACTS?

The FACTS program is our student information system. FACTS is the online program used for families to apply and enroll in our schools. FACTS also manages family tuition and tuition assistance. Each family has private access to their accounts, and can make adjustments such as new address or phone number and email address, emergency contacts, etc.. Middle school and high school families also have access to their student's grades through FACTS. Questions? Please contact your school office.



8. Are athletic programs offered?

Participation in athletics offers unique lessons and experiences that prepare students for life in the community, workplace, and family. School-sponsored athletics are available for sixth-twelfth grade students. There is a fee to participate. Some high school programs may co-op with local schools. Complete information is on our bcacs website, or through your school office.

9. How often do students attend Mass?

Student Mass is held weekly for each school, on a specified day. Individual classes may attend an additional morning Mass each week. Holy Days of Obligation and special days will also include Mass attendance.

10. My family is not Catholic. How can we learn more about Mass?

Each school office can provide you information that explains details and the order of Mass.

11. Who do I contact to work through a problem regarding my child?

Our intention is to maintain a solid partnership with every family. Following these steps is the path to resolution:

- First discuss the problem with your student's teacher
- If you are not able to achieve a solution, please contact your school principal
- If further help is needed, please contact your parish pastor

12. How can I become involved in the BCACS School Advisory Board or the BCACS Foundation Board?

The BCACS School Advisory Board welcomes parents to participate in the many committees, which work to support the goals of the board. Parents may also join the board as a member. Please see your school principal to learn more. The BCACS Foundation also welcomes parents as trustees to their board. Contact the BCACS Foundation at 269.963.4771 for more information.



Our Family

When you enter our schools, you join a family. We will celebrate your victories and hold your hand in defeat. We know and see who you are and through our commitment to providing an excellent education infused with the Catholic faith, we will help you become who God wants you to be.



Academic Excellence

BCACS is accredited by The Michigan Non-Public Schools Accreditation Association (MNSAA). The accreditation process allows our schools to remain on a continued path of excellence and improvement. The current BCACS Strategic Plan (2018–2023), stemmed from our school's philosophy and the goals of the most recent accreditation results.

Teachers are certified by the State of Michigan and are highly qualified. Student support personnel is provided at all levels. Student's high school career is customized by partnering with the Battle Creek Area Math and Science Center, Calhoun Area Career Center, Kellogg Community College and Western Michigan University.

Students in elementary and middle schools participate in NWEA MAP testing throughout the school year, with results confirming pace of curriculum taught, or need for modification to meet student needs. High school students participate in PSAT and SAT testing.

Scores for the SAT test consistently exceed state standards and our local public schools.

How does BCACS operate financially?

As a private, religious-based school, we do not receive per pupil funding through federal/state/local government. BCACS relies on family tuition, generous parish subsidy and our BCACS Foundation. In order to keep tuition affordable, fundraisers and events are held annually. The events provide an opportunity for families to become involved as volunteers. The main annual fundraisers are:

Superfest — held on the St. Joseph Campus the third weekend in September and includes a carnival, kid's games, auctions, live bands, delicious food and a gambling tent.

Cereal City BBQ Festival — held each May and includes a BBQ Contest, kid's activities, battle of the bands and more.

Big Red Open — golf outing held in June.

Full House Drawdown — held in February and includes a lottery style drawing with grand prize winning \$5,000. Additional games and ongoing dinner and beverages included in ticket cost.

How does BCACS make tuition affordable?

Tuition Assistance is a financial award, applied to your tuition as a credit. All families with enrolled students entering grades TK–12 may apply annually with the enrollment process. You are assured privacy of information. Award amounts are individualized to meet each family's need. The total Tuition Assistance amount available to disburse to families is up to \$275,000 annually!

Who can help with the process? Contact Cathy Erskine cerskine@bcacs.org 269.963.1131 for complete details on how to apply. Awards may range from \$250-\$2500. Awards will not exceed 50% of the student's tuition charged.

Recipients of Tuition Assistance support will: Maintain tuition payments, ensure students attend school regularly and support them to reach their potential. You can express appreciation by thanking the donors via the BCACS Foundation. The BCACS Foundation manages the Tuition Assistance Program. It is funded by direct individual contributions from parishioners, parents, grandparents, alumni and friends.

You can further reduce your tuition costs by using the SCRIP gift card program. Call the SCRIP office at 269.963.3034.



Top Tips for New Parents

1. Always take a few moments to read teacher and administrator emails and newsletters.
2. Show your school spirit! You can purchase spirit wear items in the St. Joseph Elementary office or through St. Philip Catholic Central High School.
3. Get to know your school's administrative assistants! These fantastic staff members are here to help you feel comfortable and part of the family. They know everything!
4. Volunteer when you can. It is a great way to make new friends, to show your students that you are involved, and care about their education and their school!
5. Attend school Masses. It will surely bring a smile to your face and peace in your heart.
6. Join the Mom's Club or the Dad's Club. These energetic groups take on projects that provide all of the extras that both teachers and kids appreciate.
7. Go to an athletic event. Even if your student isn't participating, athletes and coaches sure appreciate a cheering crowd!
8. Make sure to attend Superfest! This September event is a joint effort with our schools and parishes. There is something fun for everyone throughout the entire weekend.
9. Attend conferences with your student's teachers.
10. Your questions are important! Please ask if you need further explanation or clarification.





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Administration Office:

63 North 24th Street, Battle Creek MI 49015

269.963.1131

cerskine@bcacs.org



BattleCreekAreaCatholicSchools