



St. John the Baptist Catholic School

PARENT AND STUDENT

HANDBOOK

2026 – 2027

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Table of Contents

Welcome	5
Mission Statement	5
Statement of Catholicity	5
Accreditation	5
Nondiscrimination	6
Purpose of Handbook	6
Application of Policies	6
General School Information	7
Daily Schedule	7
School Calendar	7
Attendance	7
Transportation to and from School	8
Before and After School Care	8
Authorized Pick-up	9
Lunch Program	9
After School Events	9
Parent Messages for Students	9
Building Use	9
Lost and Found	9
Directory	9
Photo Release	10
Admission/Enrollment Policies	10
Enrollment for New Students	10
Enrollment for Current Students	10
Registration Requirements	10
Probationary Period	10

Financial Policies.....	11
Tuition and Fees	11
Financial Assistance	11
Academic Policies	11
Integrated Curriculum	11
Homework	12
Assessment	12
Report Cards and Student Progress	12
Promotion/Retention	12
Student Records	12
Academic Services for Students with Special Needs	13
School Culture Policies.....	13
Extracurricular Activities	13
Field Trips	13
Dress Code	14
Smart Device Policy	14
Prayer and Worship	15
Sacramental Preparation	15
Technology and Acceptable Use Policy	15
Guiding Principles Concerning Human Sexuality and Sexual Identity	17
Behavior Policies	17
Student Conduct Guiding Principles	17
Discipline Policy	18
Harassment	20
Weapons/Dangerous Items	21
Drug Use Policy	21
Theft, Vandalism, Destruction of Property	22
Property Searches	22
Safety and Well-Being Policies	22
Entry Information and Visitors	22

Fire, Tornado, Lockdown and Safety Drills	22
Emergency Response Plans.....	23
School Closing	23
Emergency Contact Information.....	23
Health Services	23
Accidents/Injuries.....	23
Health Records.....	23
Medication During the School Day	23
Illness and Staying Home	24
Reporting Child Maltreatment	24
Background Check Requirements.....	24
Asbestos Disclaimer	24
Wellness Policy	25
Leadership and Governance	25
Head of School	25
Committees	25
School Structure.....	26
Pastor	26
School Advisory Council	26
Parent Involvement, Roles, and Responsibilities	26
Parent/Guardian	26
Parent Conduct	27
Non-Custodial Parents	27
Volunteer Policies	27
Family Grievance Policy.....	28
Communication Between Home and School	28

Welcome

Welcome to St. John the Baptist Catholic School! We are a preschool through 4th grade Catholic school, committed to partnering with families to educate children academically, socially, and spiritually.

St. John the Baptist Catholic School is across the street from St. John the Baptist Catholic Church on Main Street in Vermillion, Minnesota. The church was founded in 1882 by a group of dedicated German, Luxembourg, and Irish Catholics. The school was completed in 1958 and was staffed with sisters from the School Sisters of Notre Dame Mother House in Mankato, Minnesota. The Franciscan Clarist Congregation from Keral, India joined the faculty in 1994 and continues to serve the school and parish.

Currently we serve 3-year-old preschool through 4th grade. After leaving St. John the Baptist Catholic School, many of our students attend Hastings Middle School, Randolph Public School, Farmington Public School or St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School (Hastings) or St. Joseph Catholic School (Rosemount).

In 2005, due to a lack of space in the existing school, the parish decided to add offices, a library, music room, classrooms, conference room, handicapped bathrooms, health care room and a multi-purpose room to the exiting school building. Construction started in March 2005, and the new building was blessed and dedicated by Archbishop Harry J. Flynn in October 2005.

Mission Statement

St. John the Baptist Catholic School is an enduring community welcoming students to be known and loved, to excel academically, thrive spiritually, and lead with generosity and joy.

Statement of Catholicity

At St. John the Baptist Catholic School, our Catholic identity is not just an aspect of who we are, but the very essence of our mission and purpose. Rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ and the rich traditions of the Catholic Church, our educational approach is holistic, nurturing the spiritual, intellectual, and moral development of each student. Every aspect of our curriculum, activities, and community life is infused with Catholic values, guiding our students to grow in faith, knowledge, and love. We are dedicated to fostering an environment where the Gospel message is lived and witnessed daily, creating a foundation for lifelong discipleship.

As Pope Benedict XVI said, “First and foremost every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth (Benedict XVI, Address to Catholic Educators, 2008). This profound understanding underscores our commitment to excellence in education, while also ensuring that our students experience the love and truth of Christ in every aspect of their school life. At St. John the Baptist Catholic School, our Catholic faith is the heart of all we do, inspiring us to cultivate a community where each person is valued, and every student is prepared to contribute meaningfully to the world.

Accreditation

St. John the Baptist Catholic School is accredited by Minnesota Non-public School Accrediting Association. Every seven years, St. John the Baptist Catholic School renews its accreditation by meeting

or exceeding accreditation requirements. Our school was last accredited in 2023 and is on target to again be accredited in 2030.

Nondiscrimination

At St. John the Baptist Catholic School, we are committed to fostering an inclusive, respectful, and supportive environment for all members of our community. Rooted in our Catholic values, we uphold the dignity of every individual and ensure that all students have equal access to the benefits and opportunities provided by our school, without discrimination.

In alignment with Catholic social teaching and applicable federal and state laws, St. John the Baptist Catholic School prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national or ethnic origin, sex, disability, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, or any other characteristic protected under applicable law in the administration of our educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and tuition assistance, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

As a Roman Catholic religious institution, the school also has the right and duty to conduct its school, programs, and activities in a manner consistent with the Catholic faith and doctrine. Accordingly, nothing in this handbook precludes the school's ability to act in conformance with its Catholic beliefs and identity, including taking appropriate actions with respect to students, parents, or volunteers, whose actions are inconsistent with the religious teachings of the Catholic faith. This applies to actions on school grounds, at school functions, or off school grounds if such actions interfere with or obstruct the mission or operations of the school.

Purpose of Handbook

This handbook is designed to help parents, teachers, staff, and students partner together for success, and to provide a general framework for policies and procedures at our school. It is not all-inclusive, and when unique circumstances arise administration will provide direction on a case-by-case basis.

St. John the Baptist Catholic School retains the right to change, modify, suspend, or interpret any policies whether written or not, without notice, at its discretion. The provisions of this handbook do not, and should not be construed to, constitute a contract between any applicant, student, or parent, and St. John the Baptist Catholic School.

Application of Policies

School policies are enforced year-round, for the duration of a student's enrollment. St. John the Baptist Catholic School may impose discipline for student misconduct on school grounds, at school functions or activities, or on school transportation. Discipline may also be imposed on any student whose misconduct or policy violation at any time or in any place interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school or the safety or welfare of the student or other students, or materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.

General School Information

Daily Schedule

- 8:00 Office opens
- 8:50 School Day begins. Students not in their classrooms are considered tardy/absent.
- 3:30 School Day ends. Students are dismissed.
- 4:00 Office closes

School Calendar

The school year generally runs from late August to the end of May or early June. The school calendar can be found on the main school webpage, along with a list of non-attendance days, parent transportation days, and holidays.

Attendance

When students are tardy or absent, this causes interruptions and hinders learning for both the individual student and the classroom. The purpose of this policy is to encourage punctuality and regular school attendance.

Families must inform the school office by 9:00 a.m. on or before the day of the absence if a child is to be absent or tardy for any reason. This can be done via email, phone call, or voice message to the main office. Please provide your child's name, grade, and the reason for the absence.

If we are not contacted by 9:00 a.m., families will receive a call from the school.

- Students arriving before 10:30 will be counted as present all day but marked tardy.
- Students arriving between 10:30 and 1:00 will be marked 0.5 days absent.
- Students leaving between 10:30 and 1:00 will be marked 0.5 days absent.
- Students leaving after 1:00 will be excused.

Excused and Unexcused Absences/Tardies. There are two types of absences/tardies – excused and unexcused. School administration has the final determination regarding which type of absence applies. Please note that the school is required to report excessive tardies and absences to the county truancy office. Excused Absences/Tardies include illness, funeral, doctor/dentist/orthodontist appointment, vacation or family emergency when the school office is notified at least 48 hours in advance.

Unexcused Absences/Tardies include oversleeping, missing the bus, refusal to go to school, attending or participating in a sporting event or activity.

Absence due to illness. If a student misses one day due to illness, please do not call for make-up work. The student will receive any missed work the following day. If a student will be absent longer than one day, families should contact the student's teacher regarding make-up work. Teachers will decide which items may be given during the absence and which will be made up after the absence. If a student is absent for an entire day due to illness, they are not allowed to participate in after school activities.

Absence due to vacation. Vacations taken while school is in session are strongly discouraged. If a family takes a vacation while school is in session, the school office must be informed as far in advance as possible, and at least 48 hours before the planned absence. Teachers are not expected to prepare assignments in advance to accommodate vacation plans. When the student returns to school after a vacation, the assignments will be given out together with a deadline for their completion.

Transportation to and from School

Drop-off/Pick-up by Car

Students arriving by car may be dropped off at the main front entrance beginning at 8:30 a.m. For afternoon pick-up, students are called by name when their designated adult arrives and are dismissed individually to the front door. Students who walk to and from school are greeted in the morning and escorted out at the end of the day through the elementary wing front door.

Busing

District 200 (Hastings Public School District) operates buses for our students. Parents will be notified when and where the bus will stop for their children. The public school has sole discretion, control and management of scheduling, routes, bus stop locations, and discipline.

Riding the bus is considered a privilege. The bus is not a place to be rambunctious, and each student must do his/her part to keep the bus quiet, orderly, and clean. Students should always remain seated, except to board or leave the bus. The driver is in complete control and has the authority to enforce all rules of safety and conduct.

Arrival and Dismissal

Students may arrive at school before school starts no earlier than 8:30 a.m. Students arriving in the morning before 8:30 a.m. will be placed in BASE (Before and After School Enrichment) and the student's tuition account will be billed accordingly. Beginning at 8:30 a.m., students should line up in the designated area.

Students will be dismissed beginning at 3:30 p.m. All walkers, bikers, and bused students are to line up when called. Students who walk or are picked up by a parent are dismissed first. Parents are to wait outside, and an adult will come out and call the students. Students who are not picked up by 3:45 p.m. will be placed in BASE (after school care) and the student's tuition account will be billed accordingly.

Before and After School Care

St. John the Baptist Catholic School offers a Before and After School Enrichment (BASE) program on regular school days, Monday through Friday. Students enjoy a safe, supervised environment filled with fun, games, homework time, and active play.

Open to all students in PreK through 4th grade, the BASE program runs from 7:00–8:45 a.m. for \$10 per child, per day, and from 3:30–5:30 p.m. for \$10 per child, per day.

Authorized Pick-up

Students will only be released to parents or an authorized pick-up person. If you have designated another person to pick up your child on a specific day, please inform the school no later than that morning.

Lunch Program

St. John the Baptist Catholic School offers a hot lunch program through CKC Good Food. Elementary students can receive breakfast and hot lunch for free. Students may choose to order hot lunch or to bring lunch from home. Breakfast and lunch orders must be filled out ahead of time to be eligible. Preschool students can order breakfast, hot lunch and milk with charges applied through TADS.

The menu is included in the lunch order, and a menu calendar is sent home. The menu is subject to change by CKC Good Food. All meals conform to USDA nutrition guidelines.

After School Events

When a student participates in a school activity that does not begin immediately after school, it is necessary that parents plan for their children in the interim. Unless specifically arranged for, St. John the Baptist Catholic School does not supervise children after school. Generally, students should leave school grounds and return at the appropriate time for the event.

Parent Messages for Students

Messages for students regarding a change in plans for the end of the school day (e.g. busing, pick-up, etc.) should be left at the main office. Please limit messages to your child to urgent matters only, as messages are disruptive to class. Whenever possible, messages regarding the end of the day should be called in at least one hour before the school day ends.

Building Use

Any person or group can request to use the school facility during non-school hours. Requesters will be required to complete an application for use, must certify that their use will not violate parish or school policies or contradict Catholic doctrine, and may require a fee and proof of insurance. Please contact the school office to inquire about building use.

Lost and Found

The school maintains a lost and found for misplaced in the lobby area of the school. Please check the lost and found if you are missing an item. St. John the Baptist Catholic School is not responsible for lost items, and the lost and found is periodically cleaned out. Items that remain in the lost and found for more than one month may be discarded.

Directory

A family directory is published each year in the fall. The directory includes family information (family names and email contact information) unless a parent specifically requests to not have that information included.

Photo Release

Throughout the year, there are many occasions to share photos and details about what is happening at our school, through newspaper articles, social media posts, and school communications. Families who opt out of the release will be noted and their children's photos/academic work will not be published.

Admission/Enrollment Policies

Enrollment for New Students

St. John the Baptist Catholic School accepts applications for new students year-round. Should more applications for admission be received than spaces are available, applications will be considered in the following priority:

- Siblings of students already enrolled at St. John the Baptist Catholic School
- Children of Catholic families who are members of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church
- Children of Catholic families who are members of our partner parishes, St. Mary's Catholic Church in New Trier and St. Mathias Catholic Church in Hampton
- Open to all children

St. John the Baptist Catholic School may admit students who are not Catholic, provided they understand that participation in Catholic religious instruction and school religious activities is required, and that our faith is a part of everything we do at the school.

Enrollment for Current Students

St. John the Baptist Catholic School utilizes continuous enrollment, meaning that after a student is initially enrolled, enrollment for each successive academic year will occur automatically unless notice of withdrawal is provided in accordance with the continuous enrollment agreement.

Registration Requirements

To complete registration, each family must pay all registration fees and submit all required paperwork, including a completed application and tuition contract.

Students entering Kindergarten must be 5 years of age prior to the first day of September of the Kindergarten year.

Probationary Period

All new and transfer students will be accepted on a probationary period of 60 days. This period is intended to allow both the family and the school the opportunity to determine whether the school is a good fit for the student. During this time, the student should maintain passing grades, display good behavior, have no disciplinary concerns, and no attendance issues. If there are academic or behavior concerns, the student may be asked to withdraw.

Financial Policies

Tuition and Fees

Tuition from families plays a vital role in meeting our school's budget needs. Each year, tuition rates and fees are reviewed and communicated during the annual enrollment process. However, tuition alone does not cover the full cost of educating a student. As a ministry of the parish, the school benefits from parish subsidies, and ongoing fundraising efforts are essential to maintaining one of the most affordable tuition rates in the area.

Tuition payments are handled through TADS tuition management system. Information about how to set up an account and make payments is provided during enrollment.

All tuition and fees must be paid on time. A family who has a delinquent tuition account will be contacted and we will work to resolve the situation with the family. If a resolution has not been achieved within 30 days of delinquency, a student may not be allowed to attend school, and the family may not be allowed to re-enroll for the following year.

Financial Assistance

While we strive to keep tuition at an affordable rate, we understand that private school tuition can be a major expense for families. St. John the Baptist Catholic School has financial assistance funds available. Distribution of funds is based on financial need and availability of funds.

Families wishing to apply for financial assistance from the school should complete the tuition assistance application in TADS. Documentation of income, assets, expenses, and special circumstances is required for the application. Families who experience a change in financial circumstances during the school year which makes fulfilling their tuition obligation difficult should contact the school office for assistance.

Academic Policies

Integrated Curriculum

St. John the Baptist Catholic School is dedicated to providing an integrated curriculum that is academically excellent but also instills strong Catholic moral values. The curriculum is presented with a coherent vision of reality through the lens of the Catholic intellectual tradition. This comprehensive approach encompasses intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual development honoring the truth of what it means to flourish as a human person. The impact of this wholistic formation is mature young men and women who can engage the civic, spiritual, moral and professional challenges of their society and assisted by God's grace, use their success to transform our world for the good.

The curriculum at St. John the Baptist Catholic School for preschool through 4th grade integrates core subjects—religion, language arts, math, science, and social studies—with instruction in virtues, social-emotional learning, art, music, STEM, and physical education. Each discipline is taught with appropriate instructional time to support well-rounded academic and personal growth. Further information on the St. John the Baptist Catholic School curriculum can be found on the school website.

Homework

Homework is a part of the learning process, and generally expands on or reinforces classroom objectives and teaching. Homework can include reading, memorizing, reviewing, studying, researching, and working on long-term projects. Whatever type of homework is assigned, the student must accept responsibility to be prepared for the upcoming class and do their best to complete the assignment. It is the student's responsibility to turn in completed work as assigned.

Homework for children in the primary grades (K, 1, and 2) is limited. Students in the intermediate grades (3, 4) generally have daily homework. Students are responsible for all assignments given in class during any absences.

Assessment

An essential part of educating students in the academic dimension of the curriculum is assessing their progress in the learning of rigorous academic standards. To this end, St. John the Baptist Catholic School will administer NWEA MAP standardized assessment and AimsWeb oral reading fluency benchmark assessments three times a year to measure student achievement and growth in the academic curriculum. St. John the Baptist Catholic School will ensure that all parents: receive their child's standardized test scores; understand the purpose of the standardized test; know how the school uses the information about student performance; and understand how they can use that information to help their child. Standardized testing is one of multiple measures St. John the Baptist Catholic School uses to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of academic performance.

Report Cards and Student Progress

At the end of each trimester students receive report cards. These are intended to inform parents and students regarding the student's progress. This is an opportunity to assess how a student is progressing and to set goals for the year. Report card grades are final. If a student or parent has questions or concerns about report cards, they should contact their teacher.

Promotion/Retention

Promotion and graduation take place when a student demonstrates satisfactory completion of grade level work. The decision to retain a student at current grade level will be made only after an evaluation has been made which indicates the student would benefit from retention.

Student Records

St. John the Baptist Catholic School maintains and manages student records following its policies and practices and in accordance with federal and state law. Student records may include identifying data, academic work completed, level of achievement (grades, standardized achievement test scores), attendance data, scores on standardized tests, health data (maintained as separate records), teacher or counselor ratings and observations, and verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns.

Parents can make a request with the school office to review their child's record. Such requests will be responded to in a reasonable amount of time.

No one except appropriate school personnel, parents of minors, and students who have reached legal age shall have access to student records without either a subpoena or appropriate written authorization from the parent.

Academic Services for Students with Special Needs

St. John the Baptist Catholic School is committed to fostering an inclusive environment that supports the diverse needs of all learners. When a student is identified as potentially having special educational needs, St. John the Baptist Catholic School follows a collaborative process involving parents and, when appropriate, other professionals to develop a tailored support plan. This plan is distinct from those offered by local public schools and is designed to address the student's unique needs within the scope of the school's available resources.

The plan may encompass accommodations for diverse learning styles, mental and physical health needs, and social and emotional development. When deemed necessary and beneficial, St. John the Baptist Catholic School may also collaborate with the local public school district to access additional supports that enhance the student's academic progress.

School Culture Policies

Virtue and Extracurricular Activities

All student programming should direct students to be formed in the virtues. Enrichment and extracurriculars should cultivate in students a strong character so that they can grow into adulthood living responsible, productive and holy lives. Virtues acquired by education are purified and elevated by grace, and with God's help, allow each child to become the person God has made him or her to be. Therefore, it is necessary that all curricula, programs, experiences, athletics, extracurricular, and other school activities be deeply grounded in the Church's virtue tradition and designed and operated to form students in Catholic virtue.

St. John the Baptist Catholic School is proud to offer a range of extracurricular activities and clubs in which students may choose to participate, including cross country running club, Spanish Club, Art Club, Game Club.

Students who are not present for a school day are not eligible to participate in extracurriculars on that day.

All school policies apply at extracurricular events (including practices), whether on or off campus.

Field Trips

Field Trips are part of the educational curriculum and are designed to support the curriculum and introduce students to learning opportunities beyond our campus. Since field trips are learning situations, they are counted as a school day and attendance is generally required.

Prior to scheduled trips, an authorization form signed by a parent is required. Students without a signed form are not allowed to go on the field trip and must stay at school. Handwritten notes and phone calls are not accepted in place of a signed authorization form.

Whenever possible, transportation for field trips is by bus. If it is necessary to use transportation provided by vehicles, parents will be notified.

Chaperones may be needed for field trips; all chaperones must comply with all volunteer requirements.

Dress Code

The Dress Code Policy is designed to reflect the dignity of the body and the modesty taught by our Catholic tradition. It enhances a sense of school pride and belonging, while encouraging discipline and eliminating unnecessary distractions. Additionally, it creates opportunities to share our mission in the wider community. Because of this, all students are expected to dress in a neat, clean, respectful, and modest manner. Complying with the dress code is a requirement for attending school.

The following dress expectations list covers many specific expectations but is not exhaustive, and school administration reserves the right to amend the dress code as needed:

- Hair styles, highlights, braids, and extensions must be modest and of a natural color.
- Simple earrings are allowed for girls only. Facial jewelry (excluding earrings) or visible body piercings and/or tattoos are not allowed. Jewelry should not be distracting.
- Clothing and other items or grooming in a manner that represents and/or promotes politics, political candidates, inappropriate messages, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or other illegal substances, violence, threats, gangs, hate groups, or any messages that are immoral or contradict the teachings of the Church, are prohibited.
- Hoods and/or hats may not be worn during the school day.
- Low cut tops, or tops which expose shoulders, back, or midriff are not allowed.
- Shorts, skirts, or dresses must be mid-thigh or longer.
- Leggings/jeggings/yoga pants may only be worn with a top or dress that is mid-thigh or longer.
- No ripped or torn clothes.
- Bare or stocking/sock feet are not permitted.
- Students should wear clothing that does not require regular adjustment to abide by the dress code expectations.

If a student violates the dress code policy, they will be informed, and the student's parents may be notified. Students will be sent to the school office for violations that are substantial, relate to modesty, or create a distraction to the academic environment. Options to address the violation may include turning clothing articles inside out, being provided replacement clothing (when possible), parents bringing other clothes, or being sent home. Ongoing dress code violations, or individual instances of severe violations, may result in disciplinary actions.

See the *St. John the Baptist School Dress Code Policy* for detailed information.

Smart Device Policy

St. John the Baptist Catholic School prohibits students from bringing Smart Devices to school.

For the purposes of this policy, "Smart Device" refers to any internet-enabled digital tool with a visual display or screen. Common examples include smart phones, smart TVs, computers, iPads, and

Chromebooks. If a student brings a Smart Device to school, it will be confiscated, and parents will need to pick it up from the school office and/or principal.

Prayer and Worship

Formation in the spiritual life leads children to deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church. A robust and intentional program of spiritual formation encourages the life of grace through daily personal and communal prayer, regular opportunity for reception of the sacraments, and participation in the liturgical life of the Church. With a strong faith that continues to grow, Catholic school students find in God the ultimate meaning and purpose of their lives. Students participate in daily prayer, seasonal prayer services, retreat experiences, vocational information, and liturgical celebrations. Students also attend Mass weekly. We invite parents to join us for Mass and liturgical celebrations throughout the year.

Sacramental Preparation

In coordination with our parish, St. John the Baptist Catholic School provides a preparation program for students in second grade for receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Eucharist. Parental involvement is important in a child's preparation, so we ask parents to work at home with their children and to attend parish parent meetings relating to sacramental preparation. Parents are expected to communicate to the school which parish their child will make their sacrament at so the proper arrangements can be made in coordination with the parish.

Technology and Acceptable Use Policy

St. John the Baptist Catholic School offers students access to the internet and other technology resources, which are essential learning tools in 21st-century education. Our school is committed to improving students' educational experience using technology. Student use of technology is a privilege and must be consistent with the school's mission and values. Using digital tools correctly and responsibly is very important. All student policies, including this policy, apply to all students using school technology resources, including computers, tablets, and the internet.

Given the well-documented risks of internet-capable devices, the school maintains a responsibility as an educational institution to teach students how to become discerning users of the internet and Smart Devices to bring about God's glory and is taking steps to minimize these risks. We believe the best way to prepare children to flourish in a digital world is to teach them the intellectual and moral virtues, skills, and habits that our children need to have so that they can use digital tools in a way that makes them more human, not less.

Parents are encouraged to discuss this policy with their children and to monitor their technology use at home. Ensuring that students understand and adhere to these guidelines is a shared responsibility between the school and families.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to loss of technology privileges, detention, suspension, or expulsion.

General Guidelines

- **Educational Use:** Technology must be used to support learning and adhere to Catholic values. Students must follow all school policies when using technology, including appropriate language and respectful communication.
- **Behavior:** Users are expected to act respectfully, responsibly, ethically, morally, and legally. Respect for others is paramount.
- **Internet Safety:** Filtering software may be installed to block inappropriate content. Users must report access to inappropriate sites immediately.
- **Equipment Care:** Treat all technology equipment with respect. No food or drink near devices.
- **Supervision:** When possible, staff will supervise student use of technology to ensure it is appropriate for their age and aligned with educational goals.
- **Personal Information:** Do not share personal addresses, passwords, or phone numbers.
- **Privacy:** Users have no expectation of privacy in their use of school technology. The school reserves the right to monitor and review all technology use to ensure compliance with this policy or in conjunction with any disciplinary matter or investigation.

Unacceptable Uses

- **Illegal or Unethical Behavior:** Engaging in activities that are illegal or violate school policies.
- **Inappropriate Content:** Accessing, downloading, or distributing material that is inappropriate, offensive, or immoral.
- **Off-Task Use:** Using technology for non-educational purposes during instructional time.
- **Inappropriate Communication:** Sending or receiving messages that are harassing, threatening, obscene, or that use offensive language.
- **Plagiarism and Cheating:** Using others' work without proper attribution or engaging in academic dishonesty.
- **Unauthorized Access:** Attempting to access restricted areas or other users' accounts.
- **Tampering, Security:** Disabling filtering software, altering device settings, or installing unauthorized software. Attempting to bypass or undermine network security measures, including unauthorized access to restricted areas of the network, the introduction of malware, and other activities that could compromise network integrity.
- **Privacy and Misuse Violations:** Sharing personal information or accessing others' information without permission or using another person's password or device.
- **Misuse of Resources:** Misusing or damaging technology resources. This includes physical damage to devices and tampering with software or hardware configurations.
- **Personalization:** Altering school devices without explicit permission from staff.
- **Harassment:** Using technology to harass, bully, or mistreat others.

- Commercial Use: Using school technology for commercial or political purposes.
- Malware: Introducing or spreading viruses or other malicious software.
- Copyright Infringement: Copying or distributing copyrighted material without permission.
- Violations: Engaging in activities that violate laws or school policies.
- Encouraging Misconduct: Helping others violate these guidelines.

Guiding Principles Concerning Human Sexuality and Sexual Identity

St. John the Baptist Catholic School is committed to providing a safe environment that allows students to flourish academically, physically, and spiritually. Our school provides an education and resources consistent with Catholic teaching. The starting point for Catholic education is a deeply held understanding that affirms the God-given irrevocable dignity of every human person. St. John the Baptist Catholic School will relate to each student in a way that is respectful and consistent with each student's God-given sexual identity and biological sex.

Behavior Policies

Student Conduct Guiding Principles

Each student is responsible for behavior that maintains a respectful, welcoming, and joyful learning environment within the school. Respect for oneself, others, authority, and property are expected from each student. Students are to behave in a manner that is morally responsible and brings credit to themselves, their families, and the school community, and to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment.

St. John the Baptist Catholic School provides every student an opportunity to pursue excellence consistent with the school's mission and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Through personal example, teaching, and the written policies stated in this handbook, faculty and administration at St. John the Baptist Catholic School strive to encourage right order through true freedom for every student. True freedom rooted in the growth of virtue cultivates confidence, strength, and success in all aspects of life, including work, school, athletics, relationships and most importantly, faith. For children and young adults especially, it gives them the power and inner strength needed to overcome many of life's major challenges.

In addition to promoting the three theological virtues of faith, hope and love; special attention is paid to the cardinal virtues of prudence, temperance, justice and fortitude. St. John the Baptist Catholic School strives to develop the virtues of sound judgment, responsibility, and self-control. The school promotes and encourages human virtues like punctuality, diligence, and organization. In doing so, St. John the Baptist Catholic School faculty and administration make every effort to maintain a respectful environment that fosters a commitment to doing what is right, because it is right.

As a Christ-centered school, we value learning, respect, and responsibility. Our general school rules are:

Be respectful

- Show respect to everyone and all property.
- Follow directions in a timely manner and without argument.
- Always speak respectfully, even when in disagreement.
- Be attentive and respond appropriately when greeted or spoken to

Be responsible

- Be prepared and ready to learn.
- Complete work carefully and punctually
- Arrive to school and classes on time.
- Be in control of your own words and body.

Be safe

- Follow school rules.
- Use materials appropriately and as directed.
- Avoid any type of conduct that could hurt someone else.
- Seek an adult if you see anyone being unsafe.

Be like Jesus

- Be kind to others.
- Include others and make everyone feel welcome.
- Be a peacemaker.
- Be willing to forgive.
- Treat others as you would like to be treated.

Discipline Policy

Minor Misconduct

Consequences for minor misconduct will typically be managed by the classroom teacher. Generally, minor misconduct or policy violations will result in lighter discipline. This may include, but is not limited to, a verbal warning, time-out, written warning, call to parents, reparation of damage, loss of privilege, detention, or being placed on a behavior plan. Continued infractions, aggravating factors, or more severe behavior may result in more substantial discipline. Because each child and situation are unique, in determining the appropriate response to a disciplinary situation the school may consider contextual factors such as the age of the student, the type of misconduct, the frequency of the student's misconduct, and the severity of the problem.

Examples of minor misconduct include (but are not limited to):

- Inappropriate language
- Not following directions promptly
- Disruptive behavior to learning/teaching
- Dress code violations
- Running in the hallways

- Teasing, insulting, or otherwise being unkind to others
- Other minor policy violations

Major Misconduct

There are certain behaviors where, due to the severity of the action, more substantial and immediate consequences are necessary. Discipline may include any minor misconduct disciplinary actions, as well as immediate removal of the student from the classroom, meeting with parents, in school or out of school suspension, and expulsion. Disciplinary actions for major misconduct are determined by the principal. If necessary for the safety of other students or to avoid significant disruption to the school's social or academic environment, the student may be placed on a temporary out of school suspension pending appropriate resolution.

Examples of major misconduct include (but are not limited to):

- Continued misconduct and/or disruptive behavior
- Violence
- Bullying/Harassment
- Disrespect for authority, refusing to follow directions
- Any willful conduct that disrupts or threatens to disrupt the ability of others to learn and/or teach
- Lying, cheating, plagiarism, or academic dishonesty
- Use or possession of alcohol, drugs, or weapons on school property or at school events
- Abusive behavior (verbal or physical)
- Inappropriate language or actions
- Sexual misconduct
- Theft, property destruction, or vandalism
- Any willful conduct that endangers or has the potential to endanger the student or other students, faculty, and administration
- Other major policy violations

Students, employees, or volunteers who are aware of major misconduct should report it to the principal as soon as possible.

Guidelines

The disciplinary procedures set forth in this handbook are intended as general guidance policies. Any step in the procedures may be bypassed or modified at the discretion of the teacher or administration. The school has the right to discipline or ask a student to withdraw for any reason. Failure to comply with expected standards of conduct will subject the student to potential disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion or dismissal.

Behavior On & Off Campus

The school may impose discipline for student misconduct on school grounds, at school functions or activities, or on school transportation. Discipline may also be imposed on any student whose misconduct at any time or in any place interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school or the safety or welfare of the student or other students, or materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.

Harassment

St. John the Baptist Catholic School, in partnership with families, strives to create and maintain a positive learning environment where students are treated with dignity and respect so that they can celebrate and grow in their faith, discover their academic potential, and become concerned, respectful, and responsible young people. This philosophy is the foundation of our harassment policy.

Harassment Definition

Harassment is any unwelcome behavior (verbal, physical, written, or electronic) which has the intention or effect of intimidating, degrading, humiliating, or offending another person, or that interferes with another person's academic performance or participation in school activities. Whether an action constitutes harassment is determined by school administration, and not by the intentions of the accused.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- **Bullying:** Intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and: (1) an actual or perceived imbalance of power exists between the student engaging in the prohibited conduct and the target of the prohibited conduct, and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or (2) materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.
- **Cyber-Bullying:** Bullying performed using technology or other electronic communication.
- **Hazing:** Any activity undertaken by a student or group of students towards another student or group of students with the purpose of "initiation" into the school, a student organization, a team, or a social group, including but not limited to, any physical, sexual, verbal or psychological abuse that is demeaning, harming, or embarrassing anyone as a "rite of passage."
- **Physical:** Unwelcome physical force or unwanted touch that shames, hurts, alienates, threatens, intimidates, or attacks another person, or stealing, damaging, or destroying another's property.
- **Psychological:** Humiliating or abusive behavior that lowers a person's self-esteem or causes torment or emotional harm.
- **Sexual:** Includes unwelcome sexual advances, gestures, jokes, comments, actions, or symbols, unwelcome sexual questioning, remarks, or touching, pressuring for sexual activity, displaying sexual images, videos, or sounds, and/or promoting rumors of a sexual nature
- **Verbal:** Face-to-face or otherwise spoken harassing action, including the use of offensive speech, taunts, name-calling, put-downs, intimidation, slander, and threats of any kind toward another person or group.
- **Written:** Written statements that taunt, name-call, put down, intimidate, slander, or threaten another person or group.

Procedure

Any student who is a victim or witness of harassment is encouraged to deal with the situation immediately by politely and firmly advising those involved that the behavior is inappropriate and should stop. However, if the individual does not wish to deal with the problem directly, the harassment is severe, or if a request to stop is not respected, the student should report the incident to the principal, or any teacher or staff member.

Teachers and staff members who witness harassment or receive a report of harassment should make reasonable efforts to promptly address the harassment and must inform the principal as soon as possible.

The school will promptly initiate an investigation into any reports of harassment. The investigation may include interviews with the complainant, the alleged harasser, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident. The investigation will be conducted in a confidential manner to the extent possible, but confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

The school may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the victim, complainant, or others pending completion of an investigation of alleged harassment.

The school will determine, based on the preponderance of the evidence (“more likely than not”), whether the alleged conduct occurred and was a violation of this policy, and if so, will take appropriate disciplinary action. If appropriate, an investigative report documenting interviews, conclusions, and outcomes will be completed. The complainant, victim, alleged harasser, and their parents, will be informed of the outcome of the investigation, to the extent permitted by law. However, the school may not disclose private educational or personnel data regarding an alleged perpetrator who is a student or employee of the school.

No Retaliation

Retaliation of any form against any person making a good faith report of harassment or participating in an investigation regarding harassment will not be tolerated.

Weapons/Dangerous Items

St. John the Baptist Catholic School strictly prohibits the unauthorized carrying or possession of weapons on its premises. For this policy, the term “weapon” shall include, but not be limited to, firearms, ammunition, knives, explosives, or any device, material, or substance that is used for, or readily capable of, causing death or serious injury or any other object that can reasonably be considered a weapon (including replicas).

Any student violating this policy will be subject to discipline, up to an including detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. Local law enforcement may be contacted.

Drug Use Policy

The use, possession, sale, purchase, transfer, or being under the influence of tobacco, nicotine, alcohol, mood altering chemicals, or any other illegal or controlled substance by students on school grounds, or at any school event is strictly prohibited.

When it is determined that a student has violated this policy, the following actions may be taken:

- Parents notified
- Law enforcement officials notified
- Required drug screening at a facility approved by the school, with results of the screening shared with the school
- Chemical use evaluation
- Referral to an outside agency for treatment/counseling options

- Detention/suspension/expulsion
- Parent-student conference with the principal required before the student can resume attendance at school

Theft, Vandalism, Destruction of Property

Theft, vandalism, or destruction of school property or the property of others will result in discipline. Students are expected to exercise reasonable care in the use of school property and school provided resources and equipment. Students may be required to pay for damage to desks, lockers, other equipment, or property.

Property Searches

St. John the Baptist Catholic School is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment. To help ensure the safety of students and compliance with school policies, the school reserves the right to inspect and search student lockers, desks, and any other school property provided for student use (including electronics) at any time, with or without notice, to ensure compliance with school policies. The school reserves the right to search students' personal property, including backpacks, purses, other containers, and electronics, when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of school rules or laws. Students should not expect privacy for school technology or personal belongings brought onto school premises.

Safety and Well-Being Policies

Entry Information and Visitors

All entrances to the school are locked during the day, except during designated arrival and dismissal times.

All visitors (including parents) may enter the building through the main doors at the front of the school. You must ring the bell and be allowed to enter into the building. All visitors must report to the main office and sign in.

Any person in the building or on school grounds without permission will be considered a trespasser. If any student believes a person is in the school building or on school grounds without permission or without having followed visitor procedures, they should immediately inform a teacher or staff member.

Students should not open an exterior school door to anyone, even if they know the visitor. Visitors must ring the bell and be buzzed in by the main office. Students should not prop doors open for any purpose.

Fire, Tornado, Lockdown and Safety Drills

St. John the Baptist Catholic School participates in fire, tornado, lockdown, and safety drills. When an alarm sounds or other emergency alerts are raised, students are expected to act quickly, quietly, and in an orderly fashion and to follow the directives of teachers and staff.

Emergency Response Plans

St. John the Baptist Catholic School has an emergency management plan in place should a crisis occur. These plans are reviewed annually with all employees. Safety drills are practiced in accordance with state laws. The school will use alarms or coded signals through the PA system to alert staff of situations. The crisis plan includes procedures for severe weather, fire emergencies, hazardous spills, safety threats and lockdown procedures, and bomb threats.

School Closing

In case of an emergency or severe weather, the school will notify families by email and the school social media outlets (Facebook and Instagram). Closing announcements are also made through Fox 9 TV and WCCO 4 TV, KSTP – 5. As we share busing with the public school district, when the Hastings Public School District (ISD200) closes schools or has a late start or early closing due to weather, St. John the Baptist Catholic School will follow suit.

Emergency Contact Information

To ensure that the school can contact families should the need arise, and especially in case of emergency, families are responsible to keep their contact information current. Each school year, emergency information must be filled out for each child, including parent phone numbers and emergency contact phone numbers. Parents must notify the school office of any changes in address or phone number.

Health Services

The school nurse, secretary, or principal may approve the dismissal of a student who becomes ill or hurt during the school day. Parents will be contacted when a student reports to the office or school nurse with an illness. If a parent is unable to come for the student, arrangements for a relative or other authorized person must be made to pick up the student. No student will be sent home due to illness if no one is at home to be with the student.

Accidents/Injuries

If a student is injured at school, our first concern is to care for the student's comfort and safety, followed by contacting the parents. If it is determined that the injury requires immediate emergency health care, 911 will be called for emergency vehicle transportation to the hospital or to the urgent care center identified by the parents.

Health Records

Health records are required for every student. This includes results of required health exams, screenings, immunizations, and specific health concerns or conditions. Health records are maintained and managed as confidential documents.

Medication During the School Day

Medications, both prescribed and over the counter, should be taken at home if possible. If medication must be taken during the school day, there must be a current form signed by a licensed physician and a parent regarding the medication.

Any such medication must be sent to school in a labeled prescription bottle or in the original over-the-counter container.

Administration of the medication during school hours may only be performed by qualified personnel and in a manner consistent with instructions on the label. Students may *not* self-medicate (other than an inhaler or EpiPen as provided in this policy).

Students who wish to carry and administer their own inhaler or EpiPen must have on file in their health record written consent from the parent, physician, and the school nurse to carry the medication.

Illness and Staying Home

We believe it is important that children are in school as often as possible in order to provide the best opportunity for learning and development. However, it is everyone's responsibility to help stop the spread of contagious conditions and communicable disease. We ask that parents refrain from bringing children to school if they are sick or displaying symptoms of illness such as: fever (100 degrees or higher), vomiting or diarrhea, rash, eye drainage, uncontrolled coughing, sore throat. If a student develops these symptoms during the school day, parents will be called to pick up their child and bring them home.

A student cannot return to school unless they are fever *free without fever reducing medication* and without vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours. If your child has been placed on antibiotics for an infection, they must have been on them for 24 hours before they return to school. If a child has a rash of an unknown origin, a note from a healthcare provider must be provided for their return to school.

Reporting Child Maltreatment

Out of concern for the care of children and to abide by legal requirements, faculty, staff and members of the clergy are required to report a suspected case of child maltreatment to the local law enforcement agency or local welfare agency within 24 hours. This must be done if they know or have reason to believe maltreatment is occurring presently or has occurred within the past three years. If the report is made verbally, a written report must be filed within 72 hours of the verbal report.

Maltreatment is defined by Minnesota Statutes Section 260E.03 and includes egregious harm, neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, substantial child endangerment, threatened injury, mental injury, and maltreatment of a child in a facility.

Background Check Requirements

School policy requires that all employees and volunteers, as well as any vendor who interacts with students, must successfully undergo a background check, complete safe environment training, and sign a Code of Conduct before beginning employment, volunteering, or providing services. This is also an ongoing requirement and must be completed at least once every three years. Contact Sr. Navya, Safe Environment Coordinator, for more information

Asbestos Disclaimer

In compliance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), St. John the Baptist Catholic School has an Asbestos Management Plan in place to monitor and address asbestos-containing materials (ACM) within the school. These materials are in good condition and are regularly inspected as

part of our ongoing management plan to ensure they pose no risk to the health and safety of students, staff, and visitors.

The Asbestos Management Plan, which includes inspection reports and response actions, is available for review in the school office during normal business hours. For questions or further information, please contact Mark Peine, Director of Facilities at 651-437-2644.

Wellness Policy

St. John the Baptist Catholic School is committed to promoting the health and well-being of all students by supporting healthy eating, physical activity, and a positive school environment.

- **Nutrition Standards:** All meals provided through the National School Lunch Program will meet or exceed federal nutrition standards. Foods sold outside the meal program will comply with USDA Smart Snacks standards.
- **Nutrition Education:** Students will receive nutrition education as part of the curriculum to encourage lifelong healthy eating habits.
- **Physical Activity:** St. John the Baptist Catholic School will provide regular opportunities for physical activity, including physical education classes and twice daily recess, to support students' physical and mental health.
- **School Environment:** Celebrations, rewards, and events will align with wellness goals. Staff will model healthy behaviors to reinforce these values.
- **Policy Monitoring:** The principal, or a staff person designated by the principal, will oversee the implementation of this policy, conduct periodic reviews, and communication to the community about this policy.
- **Community Involvement:** Parents, students, and staff are invited to participate in the development, implementation, and review of the wellness policy.
- **Assessment:** Every three years, the school will measure the extent to which the school complies with this policy, the extent to which our policy compares to model policies, and the progress made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy.

Leadership and Governance

Head of School

The principal is the head of the school and is responsible for day-to-day operations and management of the school and its activities. The principal has decision-making authority on all matters related to students, staff, facilities, curriculum, textbooks, athletics, discipline, health and safety, and extracurricular activities.

Committees

School Advisory Council

The School Advisory Council (SAC) of St. John the Baptist Catholic School is established to assist the pastor and the principal in the governance of this parish school. SAC meets monthly during the school

year to discuss topics such as school policy, tuition rates, events, strategic planning, new programs, and to provide a variety of viewpoints for advising the pastor and principal.

Home and School Association

Home and School Association (HSA) is a key vehicle through which parents can provide service to the school (e.g. volunteering, fundraising, social events). It is the Home and School Association's responsibility to support the principal, teachers, staff, and overall school program.

The HSA meetings are held five times per year – typically in September, November, January, March, and May. All parents/guardians of students enrolled in St. John the Baptist Catholic School are automatically members of this group and are encouraged to attend the meetings. The HSA has elected officials holding one-year terms.

PARISH SCHOOLS:

School Structure

St. John the Baptist Catholic School is a parish school. This means that we are an integrated mission of the St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, and the school does not have a separate corporate identity. Recognizing the value of Catholic schools, St. Mathias in Hampton and St. Mary in New Trier have entered a partnership agreement to support St. John the Baptist Catholic School.

Pastor

The pastor is responsible for governing the school, providing high level oversight of all school operations and ensuring the Catholic identity of the school now and well into the future. Daily management and decision-making authority are generally delegated to the principal; however, the pastor remains the final authority on all school matters. Parish councils provide consultative support the pastor in his role governing the school.

School Advisory Council

The school advisory council serves in an advisory and consultative capacity to the pastor and the principal. The council consists of five to nine members who are appointed for three-year terms by the principal, in consultation with and after receiving the approval of the pastor. The establishment of policy is accomplished through the activity of the SAC. The SAC's responsibility is solely for policy matters; it has no authority for the school's administration or daily operations, including employment related matters for school administration, faculty, and staff.

Parent Involvement, Roles, and Responsibilities

Parents are the primary educators of their children. Parents possess the right and obligation of educating their children and selecting a school that best matches their vision for their child's flourishing. Parents are invited to cooperate closely with teachers in the growth and maturation of their child's total development.

Parent/Guardian

For purposes of this handbook, the term parent includes both parents and legal guardians of a child.

Parent Conduct

Our school community is a special place, rich with opportunities for learning, growth, and belonging. It takes all members of our community, working together, to maintain our strong school environment. We expect all parents of our students to commit to support the faith, support the school, be respectful and positive, and follow school policies. Parents sign a partnership agreement which further details these expectations.

If the partnership is no longer viable in the principal's opinion, the school reserves the right to ban the parent from school grounds/events, require the parent to withdraw their child, or to not accept registration for the next school year.

Non-Custodial Parents

It is the school's policy to comply with federal and state laws regarding parental rights. If a court order exists which limits a parent's access to a student or to student or school information, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide a non-custodial parent with access to records and other school-related information regarding the child upon request.

If a legal document is on file for a student limiting non-custodial access to the child, but arrangements are made between the custodial and non-custodial parent to pick up or see a child, the custodial parent must inform the school.

Volunteer Policies

Our school is kept going daily through the efforts of many volunteers, and we are so grateful for parents who volunteer their time and talent to help make our school a special place! There are many opportunities throughout the year to volunteer.

Volunteer Hour Requirements

Involvement of parents is essential for our school to operate and for our community to thrive! To this end, every family is expected to volunteer at least 20 hours per year. Failure to register these 20 hours of volunteer hours will result in a \$400 charge to tuition account at the end of the school year.

Confidentiality

Volunteers at St. John the Baptist Catholic School are expected to treat student matters that they happen to observe or be involved in confidentiality, to refer all discipline matters to school employees, to follow all applicable employee policies while serving as a volunteer.

Safety Requirements

All volunteers at our school must follow the Archdiocesan requirements for school volunteers. This includes undergoing a background check, completing safe environment training, and signing a Code of Conduct, every three years. All volunteers are also required to complete the Reporting Suspected Child Abuse training module. Information about scheduled training in the VIRTUS Protecting God's Children program will be provided.

Please contact the main office for more information on volunteer safety requirements.

Family Grievance Policy

As we work together in partnership to educate children, difficulties and differences of opinion and approach inevitably arise due to human nature. When concerns or conflicts arise, all members of our community are expected to work together in good faith to find solutions.

Whenever possible, concerns should be raised first with the person with whom you have a concern or complaint, to try to come to an understanding or mutually agreeable resolution. Only after this has been attempted and is unsuccessful, should concerns be brought to the principal. *Note: if at any time concerns exist regarding student safety or mistreatment, such concerns should be immediately brought to the principal's attention.*

When a concern is brought to the principal in accordance with this policy, the principal will determine appropriate action, which may include but is not limited to mediating a conversation between the parties, proposing a resolution, or investigating the issue.

Throughout the process, all parties are expected to remain respectful, professional, and to act in good faith. While parents of course may discuss the situation at home, they should remember that their child must still function within the school setting and that these conversations can undermine the administrator's and teacher's authority to do their jobs. Just as the teacher or administrator is responsible to respect the child and parents even when difficulties arise, the parents are responsible to see that the problems do not affect the child's respect for the position of the teacher or the administrator.

Communication Between Home and School

As parents are the primary educators of their children, we place great importance on open and frequent communication between the school and home. These are just some of the many ways we communicate with parents: school website, student/parent handbook, school newsletter, phone calls, email, and school events.

When parents have questions or concerns about anything happening at the school, they should communicate respectfully and openly at the appropriate level – teacher, staff, or leadership. As a community, we assume the good will of others and work together to address issues with the appropriate parties, and refrain from gossip.

A Prayer for the New School Year

Loving God of wisdom and might,
We thank You for the gift of each student and family, and for the wonder of how You made us—
mind, body, and spirit. As we begin this new school year, be with our children, their families,
and all who support them. Bless their teachers and school staff with patience, joy, and guidance.
Give strength and grace as growing bodies learn and play, wisdom and curiosity as young minds
seek to understand, and peace and passion as hearts grow in love and faith.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.