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2024-2025  
STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

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# STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

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## **WELCOME TO SAINT PAUL CATHOLIC SCHOOL!**

We are happy that you have chosen to become a member of our school family. May your 2024 – 2025 school year be a memorable one, blessed with growth in faith, knowledge, and love.

### **THE PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK**

The Saint Paul Catholic School Parent/Student Handbook is part of the agreement between you and Saint Paul Catholic School and is used to answer any questions you may have regarding the general philosophy of our school, as well as to acquaint you with the policies, rules, and procedures that will be followed. Please read this handbook and familiarize yourself and your children with the information it contains. At the beginning of the academic year, you will be asked to sign an agreement form that indicates that you have read and promise to abide by the policies and procedures stated in the handbook. Please complete these forms and return them to school in a timely manner. Interpretation of all rules and regulations are subject to the discretion of the school administration. Please note that all items in **red** reflect a change/addition to last year's handbook.

This handbook provides valuable information and is used to answer any questions you may have regarding the general philosophy of our school, as well as to acquaint you with the policies, rules, and procedures that will be followed. The regulations cited are general guidelines and are not all-inclusive. Each teacher will provide additional information regarding policies, rules, and procedures specific to their grade level. Read all materials thoroughly and reference them throughout the year as needed. We hope this handbook will promote understanding, cooperation, and a spirit of support within the Saint Paul Catholic School family. Please consult the handbook prior to calling the school with a question. You may find the answer right here.

The Principal and Pastor retain the right to amend this handbook for just cause at any time throughout the school year. Please keep any notification of changes with this handbook for easy reference.

**Please read the handbook carefully prior to signing, as there are some changes.**

By signing off on this Handbook, each family understands that Saint Paul Catholic School will do everything in its power to provide a quality Catholic education in the safest manner possible using reasonable protocols and policies.



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Saint Paul Catholic School is a 2022 National Blue Ribbon School. Accredited by the State of Indiana and Cogna, we offer grades Preschool through eight.
- The SPCS mascot is a panther.
- The school colors are blue and gold.
- In addition to religion classes, students attend Mass twice each school week.
- Saint Paul Catholic School is a Christian family, founded in God's love. Mindful of the fact that God lives in each one of us, we believe that everyone deserves to be treated in a respectful manner. "Whatever you do to these, the least of my brothers, you do unto Me." (Matthew 25:40) In view of this philosophy, we have developed a school-wide code of conduct.
- Grades six, seven, and eight are organized in a middle school concept with students changing classes.
- Some of the middle school classes are divided into smaller sections for certain subjects.
- Students in grades six, seven, and eight have lockers.
- Grades K-5 have aides in the classroom.
- Licensed/certified teachers instruct in the core academic subjects and other subjects such as computers and physical education.
- An enrichment teacher works with individual or small groups of students.
- The school is a state-of-the-art facility with current computers in the Computer Lab where class is led by a Computer Technology instructor.
- CYO **band**, sports, scouting programs, Science Olympiad, and the children's church choir are available.
- In conjunction with the Valparaiso Community Schools, SPCS offers a hot lunch program, bus service, and speech service.
- Traditionally SPCS students score well above the state averages on the ILEARN tests and comparably to the local community schools.
- RenWeb is our online grade book and staff/parent communication system.
- The Panther Post is our weekly newsletter.
- The school website is <[www.stpaulvalpo.org](http://www.stpaulvalpo.org)>.
- The Student Family Program groups students in cross-grade-level "families" which meet monthly and are led by an eighth grade "parent" and are under the supervision of a staff member. Group activities include prayer services, parties, and service projects. This program fosters leadership and mentoring skills; cooperation; and cross-grade-level friendships — and it is fun!

### Expectations

Saint Paul Catholic School assumes that all students will come to school with a serious intention to learn and expects them to be responsible for such. Students are expected to listen attentively to their instructors, follow directions carefully, participate in class discussion, and complete classroom and homework assignments on time. Parents will be kept informed as to whether or not their child is fulfilling these academic expectations. Those students who fail to put forth academic effort will be subject to expulsion or refused enrollment for the following school year.



## **OFFICE HOURS**

Monday – Friday 7:15 am - 3:15 pm

## **DAILY SCHEDULE**

Outside doors open 7:30 am                      Arrival in the classroom 7:30 am - 7:45 am

School starts 7:45 am                              Mass starts 8:00 am                      Dismissal 2:40 pm

## **TELEPHONE DIRECTORY**

Saint Paul Catholic School Office (219) 462-3374

School Fax Number (219) 477-1763

Saint Paul Catholic Church Office (219) 464-4831

Religious Education Center (219) 464-8502

Bus Transportation Office (219) 531-3120

## **HISTORY OF SAINT PAUL CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

In 1867, a priest from Ireland, Reverend Michael O'Reilly, along with a few Sisters of Providence, three lay teachers, and a supportive parish, made Saint Paul Catholic School a reality with \$8,000. Later, a permanent appointment of the Holy Cross Sisters added stability to the fledgling school.

In 1988 the last two nuns left the school. Saint Paul Catholic School remains blessed with dedicated priests whose preaching, teaching, presence, and leadership in the school community have enhanced the students' spiritual development and connection to the Church. Due to the strong support of parents, school advisory council members, parishioners, and a dedicated staff, we offer over 225 students a faith-centered academic curriculum.

Saint Paul Catholic School has a reputation in the Valparaiso community for setting high expectations, fostering leadership skills, and building a strong foundation of Catholic/Christian values. SPCS has strong collaborative relationships with many local organizations including Valparaiso Community Schools, Valparaiso University, the YMCA, the Boys and Girls Club, and the Valparaiso Public Library.

Saint Paul Catholic School offers a creative balance of information and formation. While many things have changed, the reason for our existence remains the same: the integration of gospel values into the curriculum and daily school life. A solid foundation of faith and academics allows students and faculty to reflect, pray, and worship together as they engage in the educational process.

The Education Center, located on the Saint Paul Catholic Church campus on Harrison Boulevard, houses Saint Paul Catholic School, Religious Education, and LIFE TEEN. The building serves the entire parish by hosting parish events as well as educational and parish ministry meetings and events. We are blessed with our building and the people who help support us so we can continue to grow!



## **MISSION STATEMENT OF SAINT PAUL CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

“At Saint Paul Catholic School, teachers, parents, and students work together to create a safe, caring environment, based on Christian values and service to others that enables students to learn and develop spiritually, academically, emotionally, and physically.”

## **PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT**

Called by Christ to spread His Word, Saint Paul Catholic School is an educational community of families which endeavors to:

- Integrate our Catholic Faith with learning to educate the whole child.
- Pursue academic excellence in a trusting and caring environment that serves the unique needs of each student.
- Instill a lifelong commitment to learning, Christian values, and community service.
- Emphasize the joy of stewardship - sharing time, talent, and treasures - within our community, our country, and our world.
- Develop each child's God-given talents to the fullest potential.
- Encourage children to listen for and be open to a calling to a vocation to religious life.
- Educate each child to respect others as found in Catholic beliefs and teachings.
- Emphasize participation in athletics and other extra-curricular activities that promote teamwork, sportsmanship and develop mind, body and spirit.

## **OUR FAITH**

### Altar Servers

All students are given the opportunity to serve at daily Mass at the school. Starting in fourth grade, students may go through altar server training to be an altar server at weekend Mass. Saint Paul Catholic School students who have gone through altar server training are sometimes asked to serve at funerals at the church during the school day.

### Liturgy

The celebration of liturgies plays a vital part in the life of the students of Saint Paul Catholic School. A fully Christian life cannot be conceived without participation in the liturgical services in which we gather together to celebrate the paschal mystery.

During the school year, we encourage your child's active participation in the liturgy by having each class prepare and practice the readings and hymns for Mass each week. Parents/guardians are encouraged to attend these liturgies, especially when their child's class is involved. The entire school attends liturgy together every Friday, on Holy Days of Obligation, and for special occasions. Prayer services are held in the classroom, with groups of classes, and for the entire school at various times throughout the year.

### Religion Classes/Activities and Sacraments

All Saint Paul Catholic School students must participate in religion classes and complete the required assignments used to reinforce learning. Service learning projects are done on both an individual classroom and all-school basis during the year. Religion is considered a core subject for everyone and is included in averaging all honor rolls. Non-Catholic students will participate to the extent that their religion permits.



The Religious Education Office, in conjunction with the classroom teachers, administer the sacrament preparation programs. To be eligible for invitation to receive the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist, several conditions must be met:

- Regular class attendance in one consecutive Catholic school or Religious Education academic year directly prior to the reception of the sacrament, or its equivalent, is required.
- Active participation in the church community, including attendance at Sunday liturgy is mandatory.
- Parents are obliged to attend parent sacrament meetings.

Children are formally invited to prepare for the sacrament of First Reconciliation in Second grade. Children are formally invited to prepare for the sacrament of First Eucharist in Third grade. A fee of \$25 per child is charged to cover the cost of sacrament preparation.

#### Mass Schedule

Tuesday	Grades 5-8	8:00
Wednesday	Grades K-4	8:00
Friday	All School	8:00





## ABSENCE

Students absences must be called in before 8:30 a.m. on each day the child will be absent. The parent/guardian will be called if a student is not reported absent. RenWeb messages regarding absences will not be accepted, unless it is an e-Learning Day absence.

Students are not to be sent to school ill (i.e. temperature above normal). Temperature must be within normal limits (97.6F - 99.8F) without the use of fever-reducing medicines for 24 hours before returning to school. Students must not be in school if they are vomiting, have diarrhea, a rash of undetermined origin. Students must also be free from vomiting, diarrhea, and rash for 24 hours prior to returning to school. Students who are sent home during the school day for any reason, including illness, may not participate in after school activities and will not be allowed to return to school the next day as this would not allow for the 24-hour protection of the entire school community.

Students may not participate in any school sponsored activity/program (e.g. party, study group, field trip, dance, game, practice, etc.) if they have been absent on that day or have not been in school for at least four (4) hours of instructional time on that day in the afternoon.

A doctor's note is **required** after a child has three (3) consecutive days of absences. If the child has had a contagious disease, a written return release by a physician is required. If a child has an injury or illness that restricts activities, a physician's note is required. A doctor's note is also required to reinstate participation in restricted activities. A student missing two consecutive physical education (P.E.) classes must have a doctor's excuse/release.

When a student returns after an absence, a written note with parent/physician signature (not an e-mail or RenWeb message) must be given to the school office. This is done in addition to the phone calls on absent days.

**Make-up Work during Absence**—make-up work will only be sent home when a child has a prolonged illness (3 or more days). Students who are absent with a short-term illness (1 or 2 days) will obtain the work they missed when they return to school and have one (1) day for each day ill in which to make up their work and turn it into their teacher(s) without penalty. After this time, late work policies apply. **The one exception to this rule is for scheduled exams or tests where the review was already given to the student before he / she was absent.** Students must make arrangements with teacher(s) to make up tests and quizzes after school or during specials. Make-up testing may not be administered during class time, especially with older students and may require before school or after school times for the testing to take place. Students may not be allowed to participate in sports or other school activities until their classwork is made up. One day for make-up work is allowed for each day of absence.

It is the student's responsibility to request assignments upon returning to class. Middle school students should check Google Classroom.

The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Family vacations scheduled outside of regular school vacations are **unexcused** absences and are strongly discouraged. Parents/guardians must realize that when unexcused absences occur, it puts the student at a disadvantage because there is a gap in the learning process. The children miss out on academics and some social times that are an important part of their educational process. Beyond the academic and social ramifications, these absences affect the school's attendance rate which is reported to the Indiana Department of Education and which can affect the school's accreditation. We ask you to consider this when scheduling vacations.



Two Types of Absences:

- **Excused**- absence due to illness or injury; absence due to a death in the family; absence due to an unusual or emergency nature which is approved by the principal.
- **Unexcused**-absences due to an out of school suspension or expulsion; planned vacations or trips that fall outside of the school calendar's vacation times

## HABITUAL TRUANCY/CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Habitual truancy includes students with unexcused absence of ten (10) days or more within a school year, and Chronic Absenteeism includes students with absence for ten percent (10%) or more of a school year for any reason including excused absences. Absenteeism/Truancy is a serious matter and administrative actions/discipline **will** be taken as stated above, **including notifying Project Attend**.

## ABSENCE DUE TO VACATION

Requests for absence from school for vacations are strongly discouraged. Indiana State Law requires a child to be in attendance at school while it is in session except for emergencies. Saint Paul Catholic School's attendance rate, a legal standard to maintain school accreditation, depends on students being in attendance for the full school year. Parents who insist on taking a child out of school for non-emergency reasons are responsible for the impact that this absence may have on the child's academic grades. Parents must notify both the school office and the teachers about the vacation **at least one week** in advance of the leave. Parents must **ALSO** complete an Absence/Vacation Notification Form. Absence/Vacation notification forms are available in the office. These forms must be completed and returned to the school **one-week** (7 calendar days) prior to leaving on vacation. Principal's approval does not constitute an excused absence. Students whose parents do not complete the form will be given an unexcused absence and will not be permitted to make up work. It is the policy of the school that:

1. No assignments will be given in advance for students leaving for non-emergency reasons.
2. Upon returning from a vacation which is not at the end of an academic grading period, students will be given one day for every day absent to complete and submit all missed assignments and to take all tests/quizzes.
3. If a vacation falls at the end of an academic grading period, the student must make up any missed homework, tests, or quizzes after school.
4. It is the parents', rather than the school's responsibility, to initiate and receive all non-emergency vacation communication.
5. Students whose parents do not complete the Anticipated Absence Form or who do not submit the form seven days prior to leaving will be given an unexcused absence and **will not be permitted to make up work.**

When parents/guardians will be out of town for an extended period of time, the school office should be notified and given names and phone numbers for emergency contacts.



## **MANDATORY UNEXCUSED ABSENCE REPORTING**

Per Indiana Law, students who receive 10 or more unexcused absences will be reported to Project Attend for absence and educational neglect.

## **ABSENCE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

Students needing medical appointments during school hours require a written note by the parent. If the student is dismissed early due to a doctor's appointment, a note from the doctor is required the next day. Parents/guardians must sign the child out in the school office prior to 2:20 pm. No student will be released between 2:20 pm and 2:40 pm. If a child must be dismissed early from school, the child will be called down to the office when the parent has arrived. If the child returns to school during the same school day, he/she must be signed back in at the school office.

## **ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE**

If a student is having an academic problem, a teacher or student may arrange a time for additional academic assistance. Arrangements must be made at least a day in advance. Students must be picked up promptly. No student may stay after school without an appointment.

Organizationally challenged students may benefit from academic assistance. Students recommended for such organization intervention will meet with a designated staff member, usually their classroom or homeroom teacher, after school for a short period of time. It is anticipated that students will exit Academic Assistance after six weeks of extra assistance. Students who need this program beyond the anticipated six weeks may be encouraged to seek other out-of-school organizational programs.

## **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

Saint Paul Catholic School is fully accredited by the State of Indiana and Cognia Accreditation and follows the state and diocesan curriculum for all grade levels. The curriculum will be created in accordance with the guidelines of the Diocese of Gary and the State of Indiana.

Saint Paul Catholic School offers students opportunities for growth in the following major subjects:

### Religion

Catholic doctrine and traditional bible study, social justice, preparation of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist.

Liturgical services are held on Tuesdays for 5-8th grades and Wednesdays for K-4th grades. The entire school community attends on Fridays and Holy Days of Obligation.

Required prayers for each grade level are set by the Diocese of Gary.

### Computer Literacy

Word processing, database, spreadsheets, web design, power points, effective use of social media, and integration with curriculum subjects.



### Fine Arts

Art (K-8), Band (4-8), Music (K-8)

Band is offered to our students in **grades 4-8** through the **CYO band program**. At the end of **third** grade, students are introduced to band instruments. Those interested can choose an instrument and take summer classes. **In the Fall of fourth grade**, they are introduced to band instruments. Those interested can choose an instrument and take summer classes. **Students are responsible for all activities and assignments missed.**

### Foreign Language

A foreign language exploratory class may be offered to students in middle school. The class is meant to give the children a flavor for the language and culture to help them make an informed choice of language in high school. The selection of languages depends on teacher availability.

### Handwriting

Students begin learning cursive in 2nd grade. All submitted work by students in grades 3-8 must be written in cursive.

### Language Arts

Reading, English, spelling, vocabulary, composition, library skills, and appreciation of literature.

Students learn composition skills beginning in Kindergarten, learning how to construct a statement and three supports. The writing program culminates in 8th grade with a major research paper.

### Mathematics

Mathematics skills and Algebra I.

### Physical Education

Physical fitness programs appropriate for each grade.

### Science

Students in grades K-3 focus on Life Science. Students in grades 4-5 begin exploration of Physical and Earth Science. Students in grades 6-8 are exposed to Life, Earth, and Physical Science, with an emphasis on application skills and hands-on learning.

### Social Studies

Students in grades K-3 focus on learning about their community. Students in grade 4 learn about Indiana History. Students in grade 5 learn about American History. Students in grades 6-7 learn about ancient cultures and their impact on the modern world. Students in grades 8 continue their study of American History with a focus on citizenship.

### Middle School Honors Math and Science

Saint Paul Catholic School's middle school honors program is designed to meet the needs of students who require additional challenges in the areas of math and science at the middle school level. Students should be self-motivated, participate actively in class, produce quality work consistently, complete nightly homework and long-term projects, and demonstrate a strong desire to be challenged by advanced course content.

Student placement after completing 6<sup>th</sup> grade is based on the following criteria: 1. High ability functioning as indicated through grades and effort (they can do the work) 2. Rating of "Above Proficiency" on state Math, ELA, and Science I-Learn tests. 3. NWEA Math percentile score of 90 or



higher. 4. It is clear cut that their ability and knowledge exceeds the standards of norm for their grade level. (They need additional challenges above the norm) 4. Teacher recommendation

#### Contest Participation

Throughout the school year various local, state, and national contests are offered to our students. Our students participate in any number of poetry, story, essay, art, math, social studies, language arts, science, spelling, and geography contests.

#### Standardized Testing

Standardized testing is essential to assessing student progress. It is important that students be present during testing. Please do not make any appointments for your children during testing weeks. Check the school calendar for testing dates and plan accordingly.

The following standardized tests are given to help determine student achievement:

- ILEARN in grades 3-8
- IREAD in grade 2
- NWEA in grades K-8

#### Summer Reading and Skills Books

Reviewing skills over the summer is important. Students are required to do summer reading and math activities. The reading lists are given out in May along with the study skill books. Cost of these books is included in the book fees in the Fall. Only newly registered students must pay the fee for the study skills book. Spanish and Keyboarding books are also available for a fee. Both the required summer reading and study skills review books are due the first week of school. Students will be given a completion grade.

## **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

A student will be put on probation for **any** of the following reasons:

1. Conduct grade of "1" on a report card or on a progress report.
2. On the progress report/report card, having a total average of core subject percentages that is below 75% (C-) or a composite score below C-.
3. On the progress report/report card, having a percentage or grade in any subject, core or non-core, of below 70%, an F, or an unsatisfactory.

A teacher/parent/student conference may be scheduled for each student on probation. Students with a real need in a specific area of study will be handled on an individualized basis to determine the appropriate measures necessary. This probation policy applies to all students in grades five through eight.

Any student on probation may not participate in any SPCS extracurricular activity, such as an Academic Bowl competition or any CYO school related sports event. A student may also have to miss a class reward or field trip, depending on the visible effort made by the student.

The above rules also apply for Saint Paul student athletes. The probation period will last until the next grading report (progress report or report card). During this time, the student will NOT be allowed to play in any game, but may attend practice.

If a student's grades on the following grade report (progress or report card) qualify for probation again, that student will not be allowed to participate in any school sponsored activity, sport, etc., including practices, until the next satisfactory report card or progress report.



## ACCREDITATION

Saint Paul Catholic School is duly-accredited through the State of Indiana and Cognia. It is also a 2022 National Blue Ribbon School, is repeatedly recognized as a 4-Star School, and has an A state rating.

## ADMISSION POLICY

Saint Paul Catholic School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, ancestry, or sexual orientation in the administration of its education policies, admissions policies, or athletic or other school-administered programs.

As openings become available, the following priorities will be used to accept students to Saint Paul Catholic School:

1. Returning students and their siblings
2. Members of Saint Paul Parish
3. Members of other parishes of the Diocese of Gary
4. Non-Catholic students

Students entering Prekindergarten must be 4 years of age by August 1<sup>st</sup>, those entering kindergarten must be 5 years of age by August 1<sup>st</sup>. Students will be conditionally accepted into kindergarten with full acceptance contingent on displayed readiness on the Kindergarten entrance test. Pre 3's and Pre 4's must be 3 or 4 by August 1 and fully potty trained.

Students who are non-citizens of the United States must meet all admissions requirements. Current, relevant federal and state laws will be followed when admitting non-citizens.

All prospective students will be interviewed by the principal and may undergo testing in reading and math to determine if our school will best meet their needs. All children must meet the immunization requirements. Parish families also must sign a Pastoral Covenant to remind them of their religious obligations as well as their financial contract. Students may be admitted on a probationary status.

No child may enter our school owing an outstanding financial bill from the previous school year either from another Catholic school or our own school.

For additional information, see Registration.

## ALLERGY POLICY

Saint Paul Catholic School recognizes that an allergy is an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all pupils with allergies. Saint Paul encourages children with allergies to achieve their potential in all aspects of school life by having a clear policy that is understood by school staff and pupils. Teachers and new staff are also made aware of this policy. All staff who come into contact with children with allergies are provided with training on allergies. Training is updated as needed.

1. Asthma Medication  
Immediate access to reliever inhalers is vital. Children are encouraged to carry their reliever inhaler. Parents are asked to ensure that the school office is provided with a labeled spare reliever inhaler. All inhalers must be labeled with the child's name by the parent.



2. Record Keeping

At the beginning of each school year, or when a child joins Saint Paul Catholic School, parents are asked to submit a child's medical record. From this information, the school keeps its asthma/allergy register which is available for all school staff. If medication changes in between times, parents are required to inform the school office in writing.

3. The School Environment

The school does all that it can to ensure the school environment is favorable to children with asthma or allergies. As far as possible, the school does not use chemicals in Art and Science lessons that are potential triggers for children with asthma/allergies.

4. Food Allergy Policy

Saint Paul Catholic School recognizes that life threatening food allergies are an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all pupils with food allergies. In order to minimize the incidence of life-threatening allergic reactions, Saint Paul Catholic School will maintain a system-wide procedure for addressing life-threatening allergic reactions and maintain an Emergency Action Plan for any student(s) whose parent/guardian and physicians have informed the school in writing that the student(s) has a potentially life-threatening allergy.

5. Classrooms

Teachers must be familiar with the Emergency Action Plan of students in their classes and respond to emergencies as per the emergency protocol documented in the Emergency Action Plan.

In the event of a suspected allergic reaction (where there is no known allergic history), the emergency medical services will be called immediately.

Information will be kept about students' food allergies in the classroom and in the substitute emergency folder, accessible by teachers, substitutes or other responsible adults. All teachers and substitutes will be educated about the risk of food allergies.

A parent/guardian of a student with food allergies is responsible for providing all food for his/her own child. Snacks will be kept in a separate snack box or chest provided by the parent/guardian.

Tables will be washed following any food related events held in the classroom.

Proper hand cleaning techniques will be taught and encouraged before and after the handling/consumption of food.

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing written updates of changing or additional allergies.

## **ANIMALS**

Animals may be brought into the building only with prior permission of the teacher and principal. Animals should not be out of vehicles during carline. All animals' shots must be up-to-date.

## **ATHLETICS**

Saint Paul Catholic School is a member of the Northwest Indiana Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) [www.nwicyo.org](http://www.nwicyo.org)



Athletic competition is promoted as an extension of the school's physical education program. The intention is to teach and develop physical skills, mental discipline, sportsmanship, and the spirit necessary for successful living. Religious Education students can play only if there is a need to fill an existing roster.

Parent involvement and support are important ingredients in the ultimate success of the program. All students are encouraged to participate. Prior to participation in any team sport, a student must present verification of a current physical examination by a physician.

At the end of the playing season, uniforms must be returned to the coach. Severe consequences will result in failure to do so.

Basketball	Boys teams for Grades 5 - 8	Fall
	Girls teams for Grades 5 - 8	Winter
Volleyball	Girls teams for Grades 5 - 8	Fall
	Boys teams for Grades 5 - 8	Spring
Cross Country	Coed team for Grades 5 - 8	Fall
Track	Coed team for Grades 5 - 8	Spring
Soccer	Coed teams for Grades 5 - 8	Fall

Be aware that a change was made to CYO participation rules. The new wording reads "An individual player may participate simultaneously in both CYO and community league programs. But CYO games and practices must take precedence. Failure to abide by this policy may result in removal of that player from the team. Individuals participating in public school programs may not participate in comparable CYO programs."

At Saint Paul Catholic School, we want to promote inclusion for all of our eligible players. We understand the need for coaches to be able to plan around their team and roster, but also understand the need for some flexibility in dealing with children with multiple activities. Therefore, we have adopted the following guidelines to address the above CYO policy:

#### Sports Scheduling Conflict Policy

A player will give a coach one week's notice of a conflict in order to provide the coach an opportunity to plan around the absence. If notice is not given, then the absence will be considered "unannounced". After two unannounced absences due to conflicts, the coach and Athletic Director will have a conference with the player and the parents. A decision will then be made on the player's status after the meeting. The decision could range from a warning, to suspension, to removal from the team.

#### Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated at Saint Paul Catholic School. Such conduct must be reported to the Athletic Director and/or Principal immediately. The unsportsmanlike actions will be reviewed and action, up to removal from the team, will be taken based on the following guidelines:

A player will not

- Disrespectfully address or contact an official, coach, or another player
- Gesture in a such a manner as to indicate resentment
- Use profane or inappropriate language or obscene gestures
- Show disgust with officials' or coaches' decisions
- Display any other unchristian behavior before, during, or after the game

Spectators, coaches, or players will not

- Disrespectfully address an official
- Attempt to influence an official's decision





- Use profane or inappropriate language or obscene gestures
- Disrespectfully address or bait an opponent
- Incite undesirable crowd reactions
- Object to an official's or coach's decision by rising from the bench or using gestures
- Display any other unchristian behavior before, during, or after the game

#### Suspension Determinants

- 1st Infraction – one game suspension (if last game of the season, it will carry over)
- 2nd Infraction – two game suspension
- 3rd Infraction – permanent suspension

#### Home Games

Rules for using the gym should be followed by all school parents, coaches, and students.

- All children attending home games are expected to be in the gym or concession area. The academic area will be off limits during athletic events and practices.
- Parents are expected to supervise their own children.
- Students who cannot comply with staying in the gym and watching the game will be asked to leave. Parents will be notified to take their children home.
- No one may use the gym playing floor unless s/he is a participant and is wearing designated gym shoes.
- Fans, including small children, must stay on the runner in front of the bleachers when entering and leaving the gym or on the bleachers.
- There will be no playing on the gym floor during half time or between games.

## **ATTENDANCE**

It is the responsibility of parents or guardians to see that students are in attendance for each minute of every required school day (180). After excessive absences, a parent conference with the principal and teacher may be deemed necessary. If your child has been absent or tardy for ten days or more, your child will be reported to the Porter County Juvenile Detention Services "Project Attend" office. A child who accumulates more than twenty days of absence during a school year risks possible retention. Depending upon the circumstances, a licensed tutor may be required to avoid retention.

Please review "Attendance Guidelines" published by the Indiana Department of Education in the Appendix.

## **BIRTHDAY OBSERVANCES**

Saint Paul Catholic School publicly recognizes the birthdays of students during daily announcements. In addition, students are invited to visit the principal to receive a birthday treat.

**For reasons including student allergies and promotion of a healthy diet, birthday treats are not to be brought to school.** So as not to create a classroom disturbance, birthday gifts sent to school for a child will be given to the child at the end of the day.



## BUCKLEY AMENDMENT

Saint Paul Catholic School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) in regard to student records and the rights of non-custodial parents. It is the responsibility of the parents to share any official custodial information determined through the courts. Official custodial agreements will be kept in a confidential file in the office.

A non-custodial parent, unless restricted by court order, will be given access to all student report cards, student records, and disciplinary notices. He/she will also be allowed to participate in conferences, classroom visitations, and all other school activities. The non-custodial parent may not visit the student during the school day, nor may the student be released to the non-custodial parent unless written permission is given by the custodial parent.

## BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING

Saint Paul Catholic School strives to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats, including the use of technology, made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual, including students, employees, and volunteers, are taken very seriously. Examples include, but are not limited to: teasing, embarrassment, intimidation, defaming, threatening, or terrorizing another by sending or posting e-mail messages, videos, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, website posting, blogs, and social media sites, also may constitute an act of bullying regardless of whether such acts are committed **on or off Saint Paul School property and/or with or without the use of school resources.** Therefore, Saint Paul Catholic School reserves the right to discipline any student for actions taken both on and off campus if they are intended to have an effect on a student, teacher, administrator, volunteer or other employee of Saint Paul Catholic School, or they adversely affect the safety and well-being of any stated individual or Saint Paul School. Students making such threats (seriously or in jest in any manner) face detention, suspension, expulsion and/or other disciplinary action.

Bullying of any form may be addressed at school, regardless of where it takes place, when the situation interferes with or threatens school discipline or safety, or is detrimental to the reputation of the school, other students, or staff members. (See section on Discipline for further explanation.)

## CARE OF PROPERTY

Each student and adult is expected to take care of all school property. Destruction and/or defacing of school property will not be tolerated. The parent of a child who carelessly destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property will be obligated to pay the full amount of repairs and labor or replacement.

Each student and adult is responsible for keeping our building clean. Students are expected to keep desk, coat, and locker areas clean. No littering will be tolerated in any part of the building or on the school grounds. Students will be expected to share in light school cleaning duties in the classroom (e.g. washing desks and whiteboards, picking up paper, etc.).

Every student is expected to be respectful of the property of staff and other students. Disrespectful behavior has consequences.

### Chromebook and Book Care

All Chromebooks, textbooks, and equipment belong to the school. Books should be handled with care so that they can be used for several years. It is the student's responsibility to keep all books covered and return them in good condition. No writing in textbooks is permitted.



Students should report any problems with a book when it is issued. Books must be repaired with proper mending materials. Contact the librarian at any time throughout the year to have damages repaired.

Fines are charged for damages that are not from normal usage. Please note: use of any adhesive cover is not allowed because of potential damage to books. No stretch book covers will be allowed. If a textbook is lost, the replacement cost will depend on the age of the book and will include the cost of shipping and handling.

Any student needing to replace their Student Songbook due to excessive damage and/or loss will be charged a replacement fee.

#### Book Bags & Instrument Cases

All book bags/back packs and instrument cases must be kept in lockers or designated areas during the school day. All instrument cases should have identification tags.

#### Valuables

Common sense and consideration are the best guides in determining whether or not to bring personal possessions to school. The school staff and administration cannot be responsible for valuables that students bring to school. It is recommended that students leave their valuables at home.

#### Cell phones

Once a student is on school grounds, all cell phones must be turned off. If a student needs to make a phone call after school, they are to go to the school office to do so. Phones may not be used for taking pictures, text messaging, game playing, Internet use, math calculations, or email access while students are at school. Students may never keep phones on their person during the school day. For emergency messages to parents during the school day, students will consult with school personnel first and use the school office phone. Students are NOT ALLOWED to text, take pictures, or use their cell phones while on school property, during field trips, or during school sponsored events.

#### Prohibited Items in School

Gum, candy, or any food that is not part of a student's lunch.

Electronic items, including but not limited to cell phones, earbuds, headphones, GameBoys, iPads, Smart Watches, Kindles, sound activated devices, radios, recording devices, laser pointers or electronic games etc., may not be brought to school premises or onto buses unless authorized by the principal. Students with unauthorized equipment will have those things confiscated and kept in the office until the end of the school day or longer. The equipment will be returned to the parents.

Students must not bring any weapons or look-alike weapons to school or display them on any virtual platform (including email or videos) that could cause a disruption to the school environment. Possession of, or a display of, these items will likely result in disciplinary action, including the possibility of expulsion. WEAPONS such as knives of any kind: plastic, rubber, Swiss Army, traditional; handguns of any kind, including: plastic, "toy," paintball, BB, or water – as well as those not specifically mentioned; and any other item used as a weapon could result in disciplinary action including detention, suspension, or expulsion from Saint Paul Catholic School.

In addition, no cigarettes, alcohol, or illegal substances are permitted on the school premises. Any prohibited item brought to school will be confiscated and kept in the office for an indeterminate period of time.



## **CHILD ABUSE LAWS**

Saint Paul Catholic School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of Indiana. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services.

## **CLASSROOM PARTIES**

Students are permitted three classroom parties a year: All Saints Eve, Christmas, and Valentine's. Room parents must consult the classroom teacher regarding these parties.

## **CLOSINGS AND DELAYED STARTS**

If extreme weather conditions exist, you will be notified by our RenWeb phone messaging service. Or you can tune your radio to:

Indiana 105 (105.5 FM)  
WAKE (1500 AM)  
WNWI (1080 AM)

The announcement will be made between 5:30 am and 7:00 am. Please do not call the school office, the rectory, or the radio station.

You might also try this websites: <[www.valpo.k12.in.us](http://www.valpo.k12.in.us)>

If Valparaiso Schools are closed or delayed, then Saint Paul Catholic School is closed or delayed.

2 Hour Weather Delay - 7:45 am start becomes a 9:45 am start. Please do not drop off students until 9:25 as there is no supervision before the delayed start.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT / BEHAVIOR**

Saint Paul School is a Catholic, Christian family, founded in God's love. Mindful of the fact that God lives in each one of us, we believe that everyone deserves to be treated in a respectful manner. "Whatever you do to these, the least of My brothers, you do unto Me." (Matthew 25:40) In view of this philosophy, our focus and expectations are as follows:

### Respect yourself and others.

What we believe of ourselves affects our relationships with others. Therefore, it is important that our self-respect be established and fostered.

### Be honest.

Honesty and integrity are at the very heart of God's people. Stealing, lying, destroying property, or cheating in any form affects us all and will not be tolerated.

### Remember that we are all God's children.

Cultural diversity is one of our most precious gifts. We will always work toward an appreciation of the richness that a diverse population brings to our lives.

### Find peaceful solutions.

Problems with relationships will inevitably occur. We trust that all members of our school community will work to resolve their conflicts in a just and peaceful manner.



Be polite and kind to others.

We are all people of God. Hurtful behaviors such as name calling, ridicule, bullying, mean spirited teasing, and excluding others have no part in our dealings with others and are never acceptable.

Always do your best.

God has given us intelligence in various forms, along with so many other gifts. We will use those gifts to the best of our ability. We will accept the challenge to be the best that we can be.

Play fair and cooperate.

Competition is a valued part of society. We will encourage a healthy balance between competition and cooperation in academics, sports, and other activities. We will always seek and support “win-win” situations.

Character Pledge

Saint Paul Catholic School believes that a strong character is essential to a student’s development. The Character Pledge is recited every morning as a school and is as follows:

“Because I believe that we are all God’s children, I shall try to treat everyone with politeness and kindness, doing my best to work and play fairly and honestly. I know that what I say and do shows respect for myself, so I will try to do what is right and accept responsibility for my choices and behavior.”

Classroom Behavior

All students deserve the right to an environment conducive to learning. No student has the right to interrupt either the teacher’s instruction or the education process of the other students in the class and to be disrespectful to either the teacher or another student. Therefore, students are to abide by the general rules of order established for the classroom by their teacher. Failure to do so will result in an appropriate consequence, such as a detention, a Student/Principal Conference, a Student/ Principal/Parent Conference, suspension or expulsion.

THE CODE OF BEHAVIOR FOR ALL STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND PARENTS AT SAINT PAUL CATHOLIC SCHOOL:

- Treat people and property with respect
- Be polite, friendly and helpful toward others
- Value others’ time and needs
- Be dependable and responsible
- Address concerns at the appropriate level
- Be pure in thoughts, words and actions
- Be honest and trustworthy

Expectations

Saint Paul Catholic School expects each student to behave in a courteous, honest, and respectful manner to teachers, fellow students, staff, and visitors to our building. Furthermore, these same expectations will be carried into the community and at home as each Saint Paul student is a representative of the school. Disciplinary cases will be dealt with on an individual basis and could include the involvement of professionals such as child psychologists, law enforcement, school safety specialists, counselors, or others as deemed appropriate. All decisions will be made with children’s best interest in mind. Generally, classroom teachers will handle disciplinary matters as they occur in a way they feel is effective for their particular grade. Each teacher will provide parents and students with a copy of their classroom rules and regulations early in the school year. When students fail to respond to warnings given by the teacher to correct their behavior, consequences will be assigned appropriate to the offense. In some instances, detention time may be given. Parents will be notified at least two days in advance that their child will be serving detention and will be responsible for providing transportation for their child. Students will not be



excused from detention for any reason. Failure to report to detention without prior notice from the parent will result in an in-class suspension. In the event of illness, the detention must be made up the following week or an in-school suspension will result. Students who have served three detentions in a quarter are informing the school that they have not accepted the rules and policies set forth by Saint Paul Catholic School. These pupils will be required to attend a conference with the principal, teacher and their parents to discuss the terms of continued school attendance.

## **COMMUNICATION**

As partners in education, it is the parents' responsibility to stay informed as to school happenings. Below are listed the many methods of communication utilized by Saint Paul Catholic School. It is important to utilize these methods to stay informed about student progress and school functions.

### Emergency Communication

Official school-wide emergency communications are sent using the RenWeb phone/texting system.

### RenWeb

RenWeb is our electronic message system. It is the primary way receive immediate communication from the school. It is also the method to monitor student academic progress, disciplinary concerns, and financial obligations. Messages to all school staff may not be answered immediately, but will be responded to in a timely manner. As with all messaging systems, politeness, courtesy, and professionalism are paramount. The Golden Rule applies to all messages, whether to school staff or to other parents.

RenWeb is to be used as a communication tool and may not be used as a personal marketing tool. If interested in marketing personal business, contact the TRIP office to become part of our Trip/Voucher program.

### Message/Telephone Usage

Relaying messages to the students is an interruption of the educational routine. Therefore, only true emergency messages should be called in to the secretary.

- It is the responsibility of parent and child to discuss and make all arrangements for transportation and after school activities prior to arrival at school.
- Student use of ALL school phones is limited to school-related matters.
- Students are not allowed to use phones in the building without permission.

### The Panther Post

The Panther Post, our weekly e-letter, is sent via RenWeb. All articles for The Panther Post must be submitted to the Marketing Director by Monday morning for consideration for publication in the same week's issue. Items may be emailed to [marketing@stpaulvalpo.org](mailto:marketing@stpaulvalpo.org).

### White Envelope

Other important information is sent home in a large envelope (the "white envelope") with the oldest child in the family on Thursday afternoons. (You may request that a different child accept this responsibility by contacting the school office.) Please empty the envelope, read everything carefully, and post all important information on your calendar. Return the envelope to school the next day. Only families with returned envelopes will receive that week's envelope information. If you lose your envelope and need another, please contact the school office. Please note that occasionally urgent information has to be sent home with students without the envelope.

All notices, letters, flyers, and other communications for distribution via the white envelope must be sent to and approved by the principal. Information to be sent only to specific families need to have the "Family Envelope Number" placed in the upper corner of the item to be stuffed. Please request a copy of the "Family Envelope Number" list by contacting the school office.



## COMPUTER ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Access to the school computers and the school network is given to students who attend our school for their responsible use. Often the teachers will guide and direct students to retrieve information from the Internet for research. At school, students are limited to access sites in the context of the assignment. All students, teachers, and staff are required to comply with the policies outlined by the school for the use of school issued computers both at school and at home. This includes the use of the Internet in school and in school-related assignments and activities. The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. Administration reserves the right to search chromebooks, laptops or cell phones for phone call history, text messages, pictures, and emails if there is good reason to believe that evidence exists therein which will reveal a violation of school policy. If that evidence is found, the offending student will be subject to an administrative sanction by the school. The administration, faculty, or staff of Saint Paul Catholic School may request that a student's use of any school computer equipment be denied if a student fails to follow school policy regarding Chromebook use. The computer network and Internet use policies are outlined in an Acceptable Use Agreement. A copy of this policy and the student-parent agreements are located in the Appendix of the handbook. All students and their parents are required to sign the agreement and a copy of the agreement is kept on file for the calendar year. Student websites referencing the name Saint Paul Catholic School or any member of the SPCS community should reflect Christian values. Failure to abide by all of the terms of the agreement may lead to termination of the student's computer privileges and possible disciplinary action up to and including suspension from school or referral to law enforcement authorities. (See appendix for our Acceptable Use Policy.)

## CONFERENCES/ADDRESSING CONCERNS

Open communication between parents/guardians, teachers, and administration is vital to your child's spiritual and emotional growth. Family problems do affect your child's performance in school. Please inform us of any such problems that may affect your child's behavior, academic performance, or social growth. Your child spends greater than one-fourth of his/her day with us. He/she needs to know that you are interested in school, and that we are working together to meet his/her needs.

It is in the best interest of the child that concerns be addressed and solved with the **teacher first**. If you have any questions concerning your child and school, please make an appointment:

- Elementary and Middle School parents should meet with their child's teacher first if there is a single teacher/student concern. If a conference with several teachers is needed, such as might be the case with Middle School, contact your student's homeroom teacher to schedule a team meeting.

### Appointments

Appointments with the principal or teachers should be made by sending a request directly to the principal or teacher via phone call or RenWeb.

### Parental Redress

Our purpose is to be fair to all. Therefore, concerns may be addressed in the following ways:

1. A parent-teacher meeting should be scheduled to voice concerns and ask questions. The child may or may not be present, at the parents' and / or teacher's discretion, so that they may:
  - a. openly discuss issues and air both teacher's and parents' viewpoints
  - b. protect teacher-child relationship
  - c. develop a specific plan of action by parent-teacher-child



2. If concern continues, the parent or principal can request a meeting with the teacher, child, and parent. The principal should attend as an observer and mediator, making any suggestions at this time. The principal will also make extra classroom observations if needed.
3. A follow-up meeting with the teacher and parent should be made within a certain time frame (10-14 days). The principal should be there to report her observations as well. If, at that time, the issue is not resolved, then the principal shall request a meeting with a higher authority (pastor). A report will be made and filed in the principal's office.

## **CRISIS PLAN**

Saint Paul Catholic School has implemented a "crisis plan" in case of a lockdown emergency. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedure to follow to keep students safe. In the event of such an emergency, circumstances permitting, the building will be evacuated and students will be moved to one of two secure designated locations:

1. Saint Paul Catholic Church
2. Off Campus

## **DISCIPLINE**

Discipline is the student's ability to manage him/herself within the limits set by school policies and procedures with respect for self and others so that goals may be accomplished. Parents or guardians and teachers share equally the responsibility for discipline. Acceptable behavior provides a climate where Christian community can be experienced and a positive attitude toward life can grow. Each student who follows the Code of Conduct, as well as all the school's policies and procedures, is well disciplined. At school, discipline is primarily handled by the classroom teacher, but each staff member has the right and duty to correct any student of any grade level. Unacceptable behavior deprives others of the right to a happy learning situation in school. If students do not respond positively to reasonable attempts of correcting and modifying their behavior, parents will be notified and appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken. Generally, the procedure is as follows:

1. The teacher notifies the parent with a note or phone call when a problem arises.
2. If the parent has any questions or concerns, the teacher should be the first one to be contacted.
3. If the situation is not resolved, a Principal/Parent/Student/Teacher conference will be arranged.

When serious breaches of discipline occur, teachers will involve the principal immediately.

There are certain types of behaviors that are totally out of context in a school where the primary focus is on Christian life. Some behaviors are minor infractions and some behaviors are much more serious. Consequences will vary according to the nature and seriousness of the rule infraction. Consideration will be given to the circumstances involved, prior offenses committed by the student, the age of the student, and the ability of the school to obtain accurate information.

A student may be disciplined for violating what school personnel consider to be proper student behavior. The items listed under Student Behavior Expectations are not "inclusive". Other student acts may be considered a breach of student behavior and will be handled accordingly.

Saint Paul Catholic School personnel may use any of the following disciplinary tools:

- phone calls home
- loss of privileges





- missed recess
- detention
- assignment of work which will benefit students and the school
- written notice
- behavioral contracts
- progress alerts
- missed field trips
- suspension

In an effort to assist a student in his/her efforts to modify behavior, the principal may deem any tool, including referral to professional counseling, an appropriate disciplinary tool.

Some behaviors are very serious in nature and will be treated as such. Parents will receive immediate notification and meet with the principal. The student may be suspended or asked to withdraw. If the student remains at school, he/she will be on probation for the remainder of the school year. A second incident within this probationary time could result in immediate withdrawal of the student from the school. If any offense is of a criminal nature, proper authorities will be notified.

#### Detention

A Detention may be issued for a breach of classroom and/or school rules. Parents are provided with a Detention form with written notification of the detention. The day, date, and time of the detention are at the discretion of the Teacher/Principal who monitors the detention. Detention takes precedence over appointments, practices, lessons, tutoring, athletic events, etc.

#### Suspension

##### In-School Suspension

Students who are given an in-school suspension will be required to report to school each day and work with a teacher.

##### Out-of-School Suspension

Students who receive an out-of-school suspension will not be allowed on campus during the time of their suspension. Students must complete all class work and tests from the days of suspension but failing grades will be recorded for this work.

#### Expulsion

Expulsion is an extremely serious matter. Students who pose a threat to themselves or to others may be expelled from Saint Paul Catholic School. Students who have been expelled will not be allowed to return without prior permission from the principal and pastor.

Verbal and written notification of suspension will be given to the parent/guardian of the student. Except for standardized testing, any tests or quizzes given on the day(s) of suspension result in a zero. Suspended students are not eligible to make up tests or quizzes.

A copy of the student's misconduct record and the warnings of the consequences given to the student and his/her parents or guardians will be retained in the school files.

#### Off-Campus Behavior

What happens outside of school sometimes carries over and affects the school environment. The administration of Saint Paul Catholic School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not in line with behavior expectations of its students during the course of the school day. This off-campus behavior includes, but is not limited to, cyber-bullying.



Conflict Resolution - Incidents of harassment should be brought to the attention of the teacher and building principal. They will explore the situation. Bystanders and witnesses may be brought in to gather information. Each student involved in the situation is met with to gather information. Parent permission is not required for school personnel to meet with students. If appropriate, both parties are brought together to discuss the incident and let them know about future consequences should the behavior continue. The principal works with students to resolve conflicts on the school level. If the principal determines a need, parents will be contacted and brought into the process.

Referral to Administration - If a second incident of harassment is reported to the teacher and building principal, the process in level I is followed. Parents are contacted for a conference and written acknowledgement is provided to parents noting further consequences should the behavior continue.

Consultation with Pastor and/or Catholic Schools Office - If a third incident of harassment is reported, administration investigates the situation and consults with the pastor and/or Catholic Schools Office. Consequences of a third incident of harassment can include, but is not limited to, counseling, in or out of school suspension or expulsion.

**Students are reminded that they are never to engage in an action that is harmful to the safety of others, such as running in the hallways, pushing or shoving, pulling chairs from under people, etc. “We were only playing” will not be accepted as an excuse for violating this safety policy and avoiding corrective consequences.**

**Attending Saint Paul Catholic School is a privilege and not a right, administration and staff exercise professional judgement and discretion to address each situation fairly and consistently. However, when interventions have been implemented and unacceptable behavior continues, it may be necessary to remove a student from Saint Paul Catholic School in order to preserve school values, climate, and/or safety. Prayerful support as well as practical help will be offered to families in moving the student to another school.**

## **HARASSMENT**

Saint Paul Catholic School considers harassment, including bullying, as a severe infraction. As a result, any reports or claims of harassment brought to the attention of teachers or administration will be explored. A referral to administration occurs when a student engages in harassment. Consequences up to and including expulsion, may be taken against a student who engages in any type of harassment.

Harassment includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following behaviors:

- Unwelcome repeated or persistent behavior that makes a person feel threatened, humiliated, uncomfortable, or unsafe including bullying in all forms – physical, verbal, relational, etc.
- Cyber-bullying is defined as the use of the internet, cell phone or other electronic devices to send or post messages or visual images intended to hurt or embarrass another person. Cyber-bullying includes, but is not limited to the following:

- sending cruel instant messaging or threatening emails
- sending mean, repeated cell phone text messages
- creating websites for the purpose of mocking students or school personnel
- posting humiliating or digitally modified images of students or school personnel
- forwarding private photos or videos to others
- pretending to be someone else by using their online screen

- Verbal conduct such as the use of racial slurs, vulgar or obscene language, derogatory jokes or comments, social ostracization, and/or personally damaging statements about others.

- Behavior that is sexual or lewd in nature, including sexual advances, physical contact, and other verbal, physical or visual conduct of a sexual nature.



• Behavior that is intimidating, including but not limited to threatening gestures, assault, unwanted touching, and blocking of normal movement that interferes with another student's work, study, or play. Retaliation or intimidation for having reported or threatened to report harassment, or for assisting the school in the investigations, is strictly prohibited. Acts of retaliation will result in disciplinary action. Students experiencing or witnessing any type of harassment need to report this to school personnel directly. Reporting is the first step in getting help with any type of harassment. When harassment is reported, the school handles the report by working through the following procedures.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Saint Paul Catholic School strives to provide an environment for students and staff that is free of drugs, weapons, or any other item or substance that may impair or impact the school's ability to implement policies, procedures, and/or programs. The school is co-tenant of individual student lockers and desks. Without prior notification of students or parents, upon cause deemed reasonable by administration, the administrator or a representative of the administrator, may conduct a search and inspection of any area of the school and all personal effects, lockers, baggage, and/or other student property. The administrator or representative of the administrator may seize and retain any illegal or unauthorized item discovered on school premises or in the possession of a student, whether discovered as a result of the search and inspection or otherwise. Any substances or items confiscated by the school may be turned over to the proper authorities.

**SMOKING** - Saint Paul Catholic School prohibits smoking in all school and church facilities as well as grounds of the school and church.

**POSSESSION OR USE OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES** - The use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful. If a student is suspected of using illegal or unauthorized drugs, the administration may request that parents/guardians have the student tested at the family's expense. If warranted, a sobriety test may be used to determine if a student has consumed alcohol. A student is subject to removal from class which may result in suspension, expulsion or referral for prosecution if he/she:

- Possesses, uses, sells or dispenses illegal drugs or narcotics including hard or soft drugs, alcohol, inhalers, marijuana, or other controlled substances
- Acts under the influence of an illegal drug or other controlled substance
- Misuses or overdoses on prescription or over-the-counter medication Upon discovery of a drug-related situation, the administration reports the incident to the pastor and superintendent, and notifies the parents/guardians requesting an immediate conference.

Prayerful support will be offered along with the recommendation for evaluation and possible treatment for the student. In the spirit of justice, redemption, restitution, and reconciliation the student may be allowed to return to school under the care of a licensed counselor/therapist upon completing a drug treatment program. The school promotes the choice of a safe and drug-free life.

Per Indiana Code 20-20-40 it is required that the following statement be added to our handbook: As part of the emergency procedures in place in our school, no student will be restrained and/or placed in seclusion by staff unless the student's behavior poses an imminent risk of injury to him/herself or others. However, significant violations of the law including assaults on students and staff will be reported to the police. As soon as possible after any such use of restraint or seclusion, the parents or guardian will be informed when any of these actions have incurred and will be provided with a detailed account of the incident including the circumstances that led to the use of restraint or seclusion.

## **DRESS CODE**

Student uniforms, worn by all students in **Grades K-8** at Saint Paul Catholic School are a sign of the Saint Paul Catholic Educational Community. We are PROUD of our students and our educational community. The dress code is in effect from the first day of school to the last day of the school year. The principal reserves the right to determine modifications of the dress code and the judgement of all hairstyles.



**NOTE: All uniform items are available exclusively at Dennis Uniform's website. (dennisuniform.com) Our School code is GSPSH.**

<b>GIRLS' UNIFORMS</b> Grades K-8 (Only purchase at Dennis Uniforms)	
<b>Tops</b>	<b>Bottoms</b>
<p><b><u>K-2</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>White Short Sleeve Pique Polo to wear under uniform jumper</li> <li>White Long Sleeve Pique Polo to wear under uniform jumper</li> </ul> <p><b><u>K-8</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Royal Short Sleeve Pique Polo with School Logo</li> <li>Royal Long Sleeve Pique Polo with School Logo</li> </ul> <p><b><u>K-8 Optional for additional warmth:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oxford Quarter Zip Pullover Sweatshirt with School Logo</li> <li>Long Sleeve V-Neck Button Cardigan</li> <li>Pullover Sweatshirt with School Logo</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE: A uniform polo shirt should always be worn underneath a sweatshirt or quarter zip</b></p>	<p><b><u>K-2</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mayfair Plaid Box Pleated Jumper               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Dark Navy Uniform Bike Shorts must be worn under jumper</li> </ul> </li> <li>Khaki Irvington Flat Front Walk Short               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <i>Only allowed April 1- October 31</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>Khaki Irvington Flat Front Dress Pant</li> <li>Black Belt               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <i>MUST be worn with shorts and pants</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b><u>3-4</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mayfair Plaid Box Pleated Jumper</li> <li>Mayfair Plaid Stitched Down Kick Pleated Skirt with Side Zipper               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Dark Navy Uniform Bike Shorts must be worn under jumper or skirt</li> </ul> </li> <li>Khaki Irvington Flat Front Walk Short               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <i>Only allowed April 1- October 31</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>Khaki Irvington Flat Front Dress Pant</li> <li>Black Belt               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <i>MUST be worn with shorts and pants</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b><u>5-8</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mayfair Plaid Stitched Down Kick Pleated Skirt with Side Zipper               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Dark Navy Uniform Bike Shorts must be worn under skirt</li> </ul> </li> <li>Khaki Irvington Flat Front Walk Short               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <i>Only allowed April 1- October 31</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>Khaki Irvington Flat Front Dress Pant</li> <li>Black Belt               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <i>MUST be worn with shorts and pants</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Shoes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Navy, Black, or Brown dress shoes</li> <li>Athletic shoes are permitted.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary shoe colors: White, black, navy, royal blue, or gray.</li> <li>Logos like Nike, Adidas, Vans, etc. are acceptable</li> <li>No fluorescent or wild patterns</li> <li>No high-top or light-up shoes</li> </ul> </li> <li>No Boots like ankle boots or UGGs</li> </ul>	
<b>Other</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solid white, navy, or black crew socks.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Socks should be 1" above the ankle so they are covering the ankle.</li> <li>No leggings or footless tights.</li> </ul> </li> <li>White or Navy knee high socks are also acceptable</li> <li>White or Navy blue tights can be worn under jumpers or skirt</li> <li>Simple crucifix, medal on a chain or plain chain is acceptable</li> <li>Watches, small bracelets and small rings are acceptable</li> <li>Small stud earrings are acceptable (one piercing per ear). No dangling earrings are allowed.</li> <li>Undershirts should be white and not visible under the uniform polo shirt.</li> </ul>	



**BOYS' UNIFORMS** Grades K-8 (Only purchase at Dennis Uniforms)

Tops	Bottoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royal Short Sleeve Pique Polo with School Logo</li> <li><b>Optional for additional warmth:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Long Sleeve Pique Polo with School Logo</li> <li>○ Navy V-Neck Front Cardigan w/ School Logo</li> <li>○ Oxford Quarter Zip Pullover Sweatshirt with School Logo</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE: A uniform polo shirt should always be worn underneath a sweatshirt or quarter zip</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Khaki Irvington Flat Front Walk Short → <i>Only allowed April 1- October 31</i></li> <li>• Khaki Irvington Flat Front Dress Pant</li> <li>• Black Belt → <i>MUST be worn with shorts and pants</i></li> </ul>
Shoes	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navy, Black, or Brown dress shoes</li> <li>• Athletic shoes are permitted.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Primary shoe colors: White, black, navy, royal blue, or gray.</li> <li>○ Logos like Nike, Adidas, Vans, etc. are acceptable.</li> <li>○ No fluorescent or wild patterns</li> <li>○ No high-top or light-up shoes</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White, navy, or black crew socks.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Socks should be 1" above the ankle so they are covering the ankle.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Simple crucifix, medal on a chain or plain chain is acceptable</li> <li>• Watches are allowed</li> <li>• Undershirts should be white and not visible under the uniform polo shirt.</li> </ul>

**P.E. UNIFORMS** Grades K-8

P.E. uniforms should be worn on gym days only. The P.E. uniforms can be worn all day on gym days. Students in grades 6-8 can change from their school uniform into their gym uniform and back again. Gym locker rooms will be



available for changing, but no clothing will be stored nor gym lockers issued for the 2021-2022 school year.

The only part of the gym uniform acceptable on non-gym days is the royal classic crew pullover sweatshirt shown to the right → This can be worn with any of the girl's or boy's uniforms if the student would like an extra layer for warmth. If this sweatshirt is worn, a uniform shirt needs to be worn underneath.



**Gym uniforms are a requirement for gym class.**

Girls (K-8)	Boys (K-8)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royal Micro Mesh Gym Short with School Logo</li> <li>• Royal Pull On Sweat Pant with Jogger Bottom with School Logo</li> <li>• Oxford Grey Active T-Shirt with School Logo</li> <li>• Optional: Royal Classic Crew Gusset Front Neck Pullover Sweatshirt with School Logo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royal Micro Mesh Gym Short with School Logo</li> <li>• Royal Pull On Sweat Pant with Jogger Bottom with School Logo</li> <li>• Oxford Grey Active T-Shirt with School Logo</li> <li>• Optional: Royal Classic Crew Gusset Front Neck Pullover Sweatshirt with School Logo</li> </ul>

<b>DRESS ALTERNATIVE DAYS</b>	
<b>SPIRIT WEAR DAYS</b> (last day of each month)	<b>DRESS DOWN DAYS</b> (first Monday of each month)
<p>On scheduled Spirit Wear Days, students are expected to wear either their regular school uniform, or they may choose to wear a Saint Paul Catholic School/ Panther Spirit Wear Top with their uniform bottoms.</p> <p><b>SPIRIT WEAR INCLUDES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sweatshirts/Hoodies</li> <li>• Polos</li> <li>• T-Shirts</li> </ul> <p><b>Spiritwear items must have the Saint Paul Catholic School logo or school mascot</b></p> <p>Uniform bottoms must always be worn on Spirit</p>	<p>The following guidelines apply to scheduled Dress Down Days as well as days when a student chooses to use a N.U.T. card.</p> <p><b>PANTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blue/Black Jeans</li> <li>• Cargo Pants</li> <li>• Athletic Pants</li> </ul> <p><b>***No ripped, frayed, or jeans with holes can be worn.</b></p> <p><b>No jeggings, leggings, or ultra-skinny jeans. (NO skin tight clothing of any kind)</b></p> <p><b>SHORTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shorts with an inseam that is 6" or fingertip length</li> <li>• Girls may not wear spandex or lycra athletic shorts</li> </ul> <p><b>SKIRTS/DRESSES:</b></p>



<p>Wear days</p> <p><b>** NOTE:</b> Only if Spirit Wear Day falls on a student's scheduled P.E. day, then, uniform P.E. bottoms may be worn with the Spirit Wear Top all day, including gym class.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Skirts and dress length must be no shorter than 3" above the crease line at the back of the knee</li></ul> <p><b>TOPS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Saint Paul Catholic School Spirit Wear Items</li><li>• Casual T-Shirts, Sweatshirts, or Hoodies</li></ul> <p><b>***No Spaghetti straps, tank tops, exposed midriffs, tube tops, etc.</b></p> <p><b>SHOES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shoes with out of uniform colors are allowed on this day</li><li>• Boots like ankle boots or UGGs are allowed this day</li><li>• High Top gym shoes are allowed on this day</li><li>• Socks are required</li></ul>
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Every student must comply with the dress code regulations. It is each student's responsibility to arrive at school clean, well-groomed, and neatly dressed in appropriate school clothing, with hands washed, and hair clean and combed.

It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to purchase clothing that complies with the dress code regulations. **If uncertain about the appropriateness of an outfit, parents should contact the principal before the outfit is worn to school. Students who wear clothing that does not comply with the dress code will lose the privilege to dress down on the next dress down day.** It is also the parents' responsibility to check their children before they leave for school to make sure they are well-groomed and neatly dressed in appropriate school clothing and have appropriate P.E. clothes/shoes when necessary. The dress code will be strictly enforced. Staff members will check every child's uniform periodically — daily if necessary.

Uniforms should fit properly, neither oversized nor undersized. Clothing should always be neat and clean. No torn or ripped clothing may be worn. Alterations may be needed during the school year to accommodate growing bodies.

It is the school's responsibility to review the dress code with the students and resolve any questions or concerns. The principal makes the final decision regarding any dress code concern. All school personnel are responsible for the consistent enforcement of the dress code regulations throughout the entire school day. Therefore, daily homeroom checks, as well as periodic checks and observations throughout the day, will be used to ensure compliance. The first violation will result in a written warning given to the student to be signed by the parent. If a student comes to school a further time dressed inappropriately for the same infraction, we shall call the parent who will then be required to bring uniform clothing to the school. Repeated infractions will result in loss of future dress alternative privileges, detentions, or conferences with student, parent, and principal. We hope that everyone will work together and bear the responsibility of a successful implementation of the dress code policy.

#### Spirit Wear

Saint Paul Spirit Wear (hoodies, long-sleeve t-shirts, etc.) may only be worn on Dress Alternative Days or Spirit Wear Days. Uniform bottoms are to be worn on Spirit Wear Days.

#### Footwear

- Footwear should be suitable for school and playground.
- For safety reasons shoes should be secured to the foot by ties or straps.
- Footwear should not have soles that leave black marks on floors.



- No flip flops or crocs, slip-ons, or shoes with wheels, clogs, or hard plastic.
- Sandals with backs may be worn in warm weather; backless sandals may never be worn; socks are required with sandals.
- Socks must be a matching pair of solid color – white, black, red, or navy blue – and must be ankle-length (over the ankle bone) or knee-length (girls) or crew-length (boys). Tights must be an opaque, or solid color of white, black, red, or navy blue. Tights with any ribbing or cabling, lace, or other types of decoration or pattern are not permitted. Pantyhose are not permitted. No leggings, cropped-stockings, or leg-warmers are allowed.
- Boots, fashion or winter, may not be worn in the classroom (except on Dress Alternative Days). No high-top sneakers.
- No moccasin or moccasin-type footwear, fur-lined footwear, or similar style footwear may be worn.

#### Cosmetics, Toiletries, and Jewelry

- No make-up is to be worn at school.
- No make-up, nail polish, perfume, or hair spray should be brought to, or applied, at school.
- Girls may have their nails painted in neutral, basic colors.
- No scented hand sanitizer or lotion should be brought to, or applied, at school.
- No body decorations are allowed. Tattoos or drawings of any kind are not allowed.
- Jewelry may consist of a watch, a simple religious necklace, and/or earrings. These must be appropriate for the school setting and should not be a distraction to the educational process.
- Earrings are only allowed for female students. All earrings must be worn on the lobe, earrings that dangle are not allowed.

#### Hair

- Bangs should not be in student's eyes.
- Boy's hair length in back should be above the shirt collar. The style must be neat in appearance.
- No extreme hair styles are allowed. This includes but is not limited to: stripes, shaved sides, mohawks, faux hawks, spiked hair, etc. Since fad hairstyles change rapidly, this policy statement includes fads of today and in the future.
- Girl's hair accessories should be of moderate size in proportion to the age of the child. Headbands should be worn over the top of the head, not across the forehead.
- No recoloring, highlighting, streaking, etc. of hair is permitted. Student's hair should remain its natural hair color.
- The administration will determine the acceptability of any questionable haircut, hairstyle, or hair accessory.

#### Consequences of Dress Code Infractions

The first violation will result in a written warning given to the student to be signed by the parent. If a student comes to school a further time dressed inappropriately for the same infraction, we shall call the parent who will then be required to bring uniform clothing to the school. **Repeated infractions will result in loss of future dress alternative privileges, detentions, or conferences with student, parent, and principal.** We hope that everyone will work together and bear the responsibility of a successful implementation of the dress code policy.

## **E-LEARNING DAYS**

The purpose of holding E-Learning Day in the case of inclement weather is to provide the students with continuity of learning throughout the school week without disruption due to weather emergencies. Not only does this provide a seamless learning continuum throughout the winter months, but also it provides for maximum learning opportunities for students. E-Learning days will also be used for professional development for the faculty. These special days can be used as half days or whole days. Preplanned,





non-weather related E-Learning Days will be included on our school calendar. Instructions for these days are sent home at the beginning of the school year and are available through the school's website.

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

According to safety regulations, fire, tornado, and other emergency drills are held at frequent intervals during the school year to acquaint the students with emergency procedures.

Indiana State Law requires that fire drills be held monthly. During fire drills, students should follow these regulations:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds
2. Close windows and doors
3. Walk to the assigned place briskly, in single file at all times, and in silence
4. Return to the school building when the signal is given

Tornado drills are held periodically. The procedures are:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds
2. Walk briskly to the assigned place in single file
3. Kneel, face wall, and put hands over head
4. Return to the classroom when the signal is given

Man-made occurrence drills are held once a semester. The procedure is to act on the teacher's instructions in silence and immediately.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are a privilege, not a right. Students may not participate in field trips unless an official school permission form is signed by parent/guardian and returned by the assigned date. Permission by way of telephone or with an unofficial signed note is unacceptable. Students have deadlines for returning the permission slip and money for trips. A student may not be able to go on a trip if this deadline is not met. The teacher can deny a student the privilege of participation in an activity outside the school or require a student's parent to accompany the student for reasons relating to unacceptable behavior or academic performance, including missing assignments.

Field trips always have an educational purpose directly related to the curriculum being studied.

Parents/chaperones who accompany children on a trip should park in the last row on the east side of the northeast (front) parking lot (the grass side furthest from the door). No pre-school children may accompany a class on a field trip. Drivers must have current proof of insurance on file in the school office, as well as be VIRTUS trained. All chaperones must sign in at the office.

Cell phones and other electronic devices are not encouraged since the school, bus company, bus driver, and school personnel assume no responsibility for the security or safety of these items. On long trips, a teacher may give special permission to bring certain items.



## GRADING SCALE

Grades are a reflection of class work, homework, tests, quizzes, and a student's participation in the learning process. All are important, and each will either add to or take away from a child's academic progress. The scale for 1-8 grades is as follows:

A+	100%
A	94-99%
A-	93%
B+	92%
B	86-91%
B-	85%

C+	84%
C	76-83
C-	75%
D+	74%
D	71-73%
D-	70%

69% and below results in a letter grade of F.

\* Indicates that an adjusted program was given to the student to help him/her be successful.

Kindergarten will use the following scale:

4 = Exceeding Expectations

3 = Meeting Expectations

2 = Progressing to Expectations

1 = Not Meeting Expectations

For effort and conduct, the following numerical evaluation system will be used:

4 = Outstanding

3 = Satisfactory

2 = Needs improvement

1 = Unsatisfactory

## HOMEWORK

Homework is an important part of a child's education and an integral component of the learning process. It is an extension of the learning that takes place in school. It provides practice that reinforces fundamental skills, classroom learning, and can provide opportunities for independent study, research, and creative thinking. Homework develops responsibility, accountability, self-confidence, and time management skills. Some study or written homework may be assigned by the teachers each day.

Students must record all assignments in the assignment books provided by the school. Parents can help their children by arranging for a quiet, comfortable place for their student to work and by checking the assignment book and completed work on a daily basis. Parents with students in grades 1-5 are required to sign the assignment books on a regular basis. Parents' signatures may be required on an individual basis in the Middle School.



The amount of time spent on homework will vary by child. It is expected that each student will complete their own assignment, in their own handwriting. It is the responsibility of each student to submit their completed homework on time.

### Study Habits

Special skills and techniques can make learning easier and more enjoyable for students. The following are student guidelines for achieving good study habits:

1. Come to class prepared with pencil, paper, and needed materials.
2. Be an active participant in class - listen well and take part.
3. Ask questions and clarify problems.
4. Plan your day and schedule time for homework.
5. Use what is learned and apply it to new situations.
6. Strive to do the very best work possible.
7. Set high goals — just "getting by" is not a worthwhile goal.

## **HONORS/AWARDS**

### Christian Attitude Award

Awarded quarterly to one student per classroom who exemplifies the Christian values we strive to instill in our students.

### Saint Hubert & Saint Isidore Excellence in Mathematics and Computer Technology

This award is to recognize 7th Grade Middle School students who excel in the areas of Math and Computers.

### Honor Cords and Special Middle School Awards

A special awards ceremony is held each year for the eighth grade students. A committee composed of teachers and the principal choose the recipients based on the criteria of each award. Those eighth grade students who have been on 'A' Honor Roll or Principal's Honor Role every quarter throughout Middle School will be eligible to wear honor cords at graduation.

### Honor Roll

Saint Paul Catholic School believes in recognizing and rewarding academic accomplishment. Honor Roll is posted quarterly for grades 6-8. Honor Roll Qualifications are as follows:

- In order to qualify for any Honor Roll, the student must earn conduct and effort grades of 3 or 4 in all subjects.
- Principal's Honor Roll requires that all core subject grades must be A- or above.
- A Honor Roll can have no more than 2 B's or B+ with all other grades an A- or above.
- B Honor Roll requires all core subject grades must be B- or above.

Core classes:

LA  
Literature  
Religion  
Social Studies  
Math  
Science  
Cyber civics



### National Junior Honor Society

Middle School students are invited to apply to join National Junior Honor Society. These invitations are sent out in the spring of each school year and are based on academic achievement, personal conduct, and leadership qualities. Decisions of the committee are final.

## **ILLNESS AND INJURY DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

If any student is ill, injured, or excused for any reason during school hours, he/she must be signed out in the school office. Students should be picked up within a half hour (30 minutes) of notification of parent or authorized person on the emergency form. Parents are responsible to have at least one person listed on the emergency form that can be contacted when parents cannot be reached. Up-to-date emergency forms with all current phone numbers are vital and mandatory. If any telephone numbers change during the course of the school year, please notify the office so we can ensure we have up-to-date information.

Parents will always be contacted about serious injuries and all head injuries.

In cases of emergency, the school will attempt to reach the parent before taking any action; however, the immediate safety of the child will be given first consideration in any action taken.

## **LIBRARY**

Every Elementary class has a scheduled library period each week. Students in grades kindergarten and first may check out one book for a two-week period. Students in grades second through eighth may check out up to two books for a two-week period. Renewal is possible if there is no waiting list for the book. At any time, students may request materials by placing a reserve using the library online portal or putting a note in the librarian's mailbox.

Any damaged book (page rips, etc.) should be reported to the librarian for repair. Do not try to fix books at home. Fines will be assessed for lost or damaged books beyond repair. The maximum fine is the cost of replacement plus shipping and handling fees. A student's library borrowing privileges may be taken away if he/she repeatedly has overdue, lost, or damaged books.

## **LOCKERS**

Middle School students are assigned school lockers for the convenience of storing books, school materials, and coats. The students may use only the locker(s) assigned. Students may not keep anything of extreme value in the locker. Students must report locker problems to the office immediately. Items may be displayed inside lockers with magnets and must be in good taste. No tape may be used inside or on the outside of lockers. Items which advertise or promote the usage of products which would be illegal if consumed or used by minors, or are immoral are prohibited.

Locks are issued to each student. Only school-issued locks may be used. It is the student's responsibility to lock his/her locker. The replacement cost of a lock is \$15.00.

All lockers provided for student use remain the property of the school. These lockers are subject to inspection, access for maintenance, and search by school administration based on the doctrine of "reasonable suspicion". Lockers are subject to search by school staff in the interests of school safety, sanitation, discipline, and enforcement of school regulations and by law enforcement officials on presentation of a proper warrant. Searches conducted by staff when there is suspicion that laws or safe and drug-free school policies are being violated shall be based on the reasonable grounds required by this policy. When law enforcement officials conduct the search, the more stringent grounds required by law must be applied.



## LOST AND FOUND

Our children need to learn a sense of value and responsibility for their possessions. Lost clothing, jewelry, lunch boxes, and other articles are frequently left at school and never claimed. To eliminate this problem, please put a name on everything. Encourage children to check for missing items immediately. Unclaimed items are sent to the clothing center on a regular basis.

## LUNCH

### Hot Lunch Program

Saint Paul Catholic School is part of Valparaiso High Schools hot lunch catering program. The lunch menu calendar is sent home each month. Milk is available for purchase.

### Cold Lunch

Students may also bring a cold lunch from home. Milk is available for purchase. **Students may not bring lunches or drinks from carry-out restaurants.**

Due to allergies and health concerns, students may not share food with each other.

## MEDICATIONS

No medications will be given unless all requirements are met. Students are never allowed to keep any type of medication in their possession, without approval from the principal.

### Prescription Medication

1. The school is required to have on file the written permission of the student's parent/guardian to give the medication. Use the official school form available in the school office or print one off from the school website.
2. The written order of a doctor is required. The prescription label meets this requirement. Any additional doctor's instructions should be sent on a separate prescription note. Remember, for students to be allowed to take prescription medication a new doctor's prescription note is needed for all dosage changes.
3. All medication must be sent in the original labeled container. When filling a prescription, ask your pharmacist to provide one labeled container for home and one labeled container for school use. This will greatly improve the chances of receiving accurate doses at both places at the prescribed times.
4. All prescribed medication must have on its label the following information:
  - child's name
  - name of doctor prescribing the child's medication
  - frequency
  - dose
  - date

### Over-the-Counter Medication

If there is a parent/guardian authorization filed in the school office, an over-the counter medication (i.e. aspirin, Tylenol, etc.) in the original labeled container may be kept in the office for self-administration by the student under the supervision of a staff member.

Cough drops must be accompanied by a parent's authorization and kept on the teacher's desk.

All medication authorizations must be renewed each school year.

All school personnel are trained in emergency allergic reaction procedures.



## PARENT VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

One of the most vital forces in the everyday functioning of our school is the volunteer program. Parents give countless hours of their time to help with cafeteria, library, field trips, and other special projects to make our school a productive learning environment for the benefit of our children. Only with the continued interest and generosity of parents and parishioners who support our dedicated, hard-working staff, can we hope to use all of our facilities to their fullest in educating our students - your children - according to the high goals we have always maintained. Therefore, we thank you most sincerely, and ask that you continue to offer your time and talents as you have in the past. You are part of the "plus" that makes Saint Paul Catholic School.

### Child Protection

All parents who want to have any involvement with the children of our school must attend one VIRTUS training workshop offered in the Diocese of Gary and continue with the online bulletins that follow this training for one calendar year. Protection of children is a high priority and all adults (e.g. staff, coaches, field trip chaperones, Room Parents, those who help with school parties, volunteers with different activities such as Scouts, playground supervisors, etc.) must fulfill this obligation. Diocesan regulations (see appendix for complete document) will also be enforced. Regular, clear, criminal background checks are required prior to volunteering.

### Hosting of Special Events

- A First Reconciliation breakfast for students and their parents is hosted by 1st grade parents.
- A First Communion breakfast for students and their parents is hosted by 2nd grade parents.
- 7th grade students and their parents serve the 8th Grade Awards Night.

### Room Parents

At the beginning of the school year, parents may sign up to be Room Parents. They assist the teachers, as needed, with preparations for class activities, holiday parties, teachers' birthday parties, class outings, and more. You do not receive fundraising hours when you are a room parent.

## PARENTS AS PARTNERS

As partners in the education process at Saint Paul Catholic School, we ask parents:

- To support the religious and educational goals of the school by making school the number one priority during the academic school year.
- To attend Mass and teach the Catholic faith by word and example.
- To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school.
- To be supportive of the school, to be a good ambassador, to treat all staff with respect and courtesy, and to never smear or spread rumors about the school to hurt the reputation of the staff or school.
- To provide necessary materials and an environment that is conducive to uninterrupted study time.
- To set rules, times, and limits so that your child:
  - Gets to bed early on school nights;
  - Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day;
  - Is dressed according to the school dress code;
  - To ensure that the child is completing their work with integrity and on time; and
  - Has lunch money in their lunch account or a nutritional sack lunch every day.
- To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences.
- To notify the school with a phone call and written note when the student has been absent or tardy.



- To notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers.
- To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health.
- To complete and return to school any requested information promptly.
- To read school notes and newsletters to show interest in the student's total education.

## PARENTS' ROLE IN EDUCATION

We, at Saint Paul Catholic School, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life – physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of Saint Paul Catholic School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the church community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at Saint Paul Catholic School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (Pre-K to 8), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their education partner in the quest of challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships. Talking negatively about a child's teacher or a staff member at home will only create an attitude of distrust toward the teacher, the school, and the parent. **Parents who, by their actions – including offensive social media postings, do not support the philosophy and policies contained herein are, in fact inhibiting the school's ability to preserve the integrity of its mission. They will then be notified of the problem and informed that unless the situation is rectified within a specified period of time, the school reserves the right to remove the child from the school or refuse registration for the next school year.** If a family is asked to leave the school for any reason, unpaid tuition and fees will be due immediately. If all fees have been paid, the prorated amount will be returned upon the return of all undamaged school property.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times, your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits which provide a young person with both guidance and security.

It is essential that a child take responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments. Parents are encouraged to let their child experience a logical consequence for an inappropriate action or behavior. This responsibility also extends to times of absence.

Together, let us commit to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she is capable of becoming.



## PARTY INVITATIONS/RIDES

Party invitations may not be passed out at school unless everyone from the class is being invited. Carpooling or special transportation to birthday destinations must occur off of school grounds.

## PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY

Although the aim of the school is to help each student progress smoothly from one grade to the next, this is not always possible. Due to immaturity, illness, or other factors, some students may be unable to complete the required curriculum resulting in possible retention or receipt of a certificate instead of a diploma at graduation. Children who are experiencing difficulty should be retained in the primary grades, the younger the better. F's indicate that a student has not mastered the material taught in the classroom and may strongly suggest retention. If a student receives an F in two or more core subjects during the school year, this will most likely result in the recommendation of teachers to retain the student in the same grade. Grade level placement decisions are made by the principal in cooperation with teachers and working with the child's parents. Grade placement of special education students is based on the decision of the case conference committee and the student's Individual Service Plan (I.S.P.).

1. Students who are slow in adjusting or have been absent excessively may be recommended for tutoring or summer school. They may be placed in the next grade also, which means they are passed on a probationary status.
2. The parents should be notified after the end of the second quarter if the student is in danger of being retained or will be receiving a certificate instead of a diploma.
3. The final decision as to whether or not a child is retained regardless of grade average will be made by the classroom teacher(s) and the principal (and pastor if warranted). This decision will be made with the best interest of the student in mind. Parents will be notified no later than the beginning of the fourth quarter if retention is a likely possibility for their child. A notice will be mailed to the parents should the parents refuse to meet for a conference.

### Graduation Policy

All graduates wear caps and gowns for graduation. Receiving a diploma from Saint Paul Catholic School is an honor. A diploma signifies that the student has satisfactorily met the educational standards set forth by Saint Paul Catholic School. Students must pass each grade level with a C- average or above unless special circumstances exist. Any student who does not meet this requirement will receive a certificate in place of a diploma at graduation.

If financial obligations have not been met, the student will receive an empty diploma folder at the graduation ceremony.

## RECESS

Recess is an important part of the elementary curriculum. It is an opportunity for physical activity that better enables the students to participate in their studies. Even during the winter, outdoor exercise is beneficial to their health and education. Children should always come to school properly dressed for the weather. In most cases, children who are well enough to come to school should also be well enough to go outside for some fresh air and exercise. **If the wind chill factor is twenty degrees or above and it is not raining, the students go out for recess.** Please do not ask for an exception without a doctor's excuse. Grades K-3 usually have morning and afternoon recess. Grades 4-5 have lunch recess and a morning break. Grades 6-8 have a lunch recess.





## REGISTRATION

Student registration occurs in late January each year. A child should have attained the age of 5 years on or before August 1st of that year to be eligible to enter kindergarten.

Registration Priority is as follows:

- Current Saint Paul students will be allowed to register during the week prior to Catholic Schools Week (the last week in January). Classes will fill on a first come-first served basis.
- Once registration opens to new students (typically on the 1st Sunday of Catholic Schools Week) preference is as follows:
  - siblings of current families
  - graduates of pre-school
  - contributing members of Saint Paul Parish
  - all others

We cannot guarantee that children registered after this week will be accepted. A waiting list will be kept for grades that have reached maximum enrollment. Students on the waiting list cannot be assured of an offer of enrollment. Families on the waiting list will be contacted when/if an opening becomes available.

At registration, parents must present the following:

- child's official Birth Certificate
- record of Compliance with the Health Code, including Immunization Records
- if applicable, a copy of custody and/or court orders must be on file in the school office
- All Catholic children must have a copy of their Baptismal Certificate on file. If other Sacraments have been received, those certificates are needed as well.

Students are not considered registered unless all paperwork and financial obligations have been met.

### Parish & Pastoral Covenant

Every Catholic family must complete an Engaged Parishioner Tuition form and be approved by their pastor in order for a family to be eligible for the engaged tuition rate. As the parish provides a significant subsidy to keep the tuition affordable for Catholic families, it asks that families actively participate in their parish.

### Classroom Placement

The principal assigns students to appropriate grades, classes, or groups based on consideration of the needs of the students, the school, and the administration of the school. The goal is to balance classes according to boy/girl ratio, academic ability, social-emotional issues, work habits, and special learning needs. If a parent/guardian feels there is information the principal should have about his/her child, such written communication should be provided to the principal in the spring no later than May 1st. This communication should identify specific educational concerns, not a request for a specific teacher.

Parents of twins may request that their children be in the same class or separated (if there are 2 classes). This request also requires written communication no later than May 1st.

### Placement Testing

New students will be tested in math and language skills using NWEA to enable us to better meet their needs.

### Students Transferring to Saint Paul



Saint Paul Catholic School wants to make certain that we are the best fit school for a student that enrolls. Therefore, we take careful steps to ensure that students will successfully adjust and be able to be served by us. Whenever a student enrolls at Saint Paul from another school, he or she will be placed on probation. During this time, we will monitor the student and report to the parents how the student is adjusting to our school. We look at academics and behavior of the student in order to determine if we can adequately accommodate that child. At the end of the probationary period, the teacher and principal will meet to decide if a student's needs can be met at Saint Paul. The teacher will then contact the parents to discuss how the child has progressed over the course of the probationary period and whether or not the child can remain a student at Saint Paul Catholic School.

All transferring students are required to provide a copy of the latest immunization records, report card, standardized test results, and any Individualize Education Plan. Students and parents must also meet with the principal and/or teacher. If a child has had academic difficulty at a previous school, that child will be tested by the potential classroom teacher prior to enrollment to determine placement of a child.

Students who request to enter Saint Paul Catholic School during the 8th grade, must do so prior to the end of our first quarter. Students who want to transfer into our 8th grade after the first quarter will be denied, unless special circumstances have been approved by the principal or pastor. Students 7th grade and younger who want to transfer to Saint Paul after the first quarter will be considered on an individual basis.

#### Students Who Transfer to Another School

If a family leaves the school and does not pay the balance of tuition, another Catholic school in the diocese may not accept that student until the tuition is paid in full.

If a family leaves the school and does not pay the balance of tuition, the school need only send the health records on to the public school. Grades and test scores do not have to be sent to the public school until the balance is paid. Verbal confirmation of grades may be given.

#### Change of Name/Address/Phone Number

A change of address, telephone number, legal name, or emergency contacts should be reported to the school office immediately. Up-to-date records are important in handling emergency situations.

#### Health Records

A health record is kept on every student. All state/local vaccination requirements must be met, specifically the following vaccinations are required under Indiana Code 20-8.1-7-9.5:

- diphtheria
- pertussis
- tetanus
- measles
- rubella
- poliomyelitis
- mumps
- chicken pox (varicella)
- hepatitis B
- meningococcal

The only exception to immunizations is an official letter from the child's doctor stating the medical reason for the child not to be immunized. Before a child enters kindergarten, a physical including all boosters and immunizations is required.



All immunization records, birth certificates, baptismal certificates and emergency forms must be in prior to the first day of school. Students will not be admitted to school without these forms.

We require a new health card to be filled out by parents each year to update health conditions or development of allergies.

Physicals are required of new students.

The teachers review these records at the beginning of the year so that they are aware of any specific problems a student may have. Parents or guardians are urged to make all health problems known to the office before the first day of school. If a teacher notices a specific problem in a student, they advise the school office and parents/ guardians are notified. All known allergies must be reported to the office.

During the year the school makes arrangements for hearing checks for kindergarten, grades one, four, and seven; vision checks for grades kindergarten, three, five, and eight. In addition, any new students undergo vision and hearing screenings.

#### Accidental Insurance Policy

It is mandatory that every student participate in the Accident Insurance Policy sponsored by the Gary Diocese Schools. The insurance fee is included in the tuition fees.

## **REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS**

Printed report cards will be sent home following the end of each quarter in a re-usable envelope that must be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the homeroom teacher. The school will make a printed copy of the final report card for the student's permanent file.

Progress reports are available online midway through the first, second, third, and fourth quarters for students in grades K-8. An e-signature is required for Progress Reports.

If financial obligations (tuition, fees, etc.) have not been met, no student will be given a Progress Report or Report Card.

## **SAFETY COMPLIANCE**

Saint Paul Catholic School is committed to safety. An extensive safety plan is in place and reviewed regularly. The school conducts monthly and annual fire drills, tornado drills, lockdown drills, and earthquake drills. Saint Paul is in complete compliance with all local and state regulations. We have a good working relationship with the Porter County Sheriff, the Valparaiso Police and Fire Departments. All staff members have been trained in CPR. Numerous defibrillators can be found around the campus and church. High definition cameras inside and outside of the building monitor 24/7. All visitors are required to check in at the office prior to entering the classroom wings.

#### Fire and Tornado Drills

In accordance with state regulations, fire drills, tornado drills, earthquake drills, and lockdown drills will be held once monthly/as necessary, even during the winter months. Students are expected to maintain silence during the drills so that special instructions can be heard during a drill or an actual emergency. Campus Evacuation/Reunification Should an event take place that requires evacuation of the campus (such as a gas leak), students will be taken to a reunification site. Parents will be notified via our FACTS system.



## **SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The mission of the School Advisory Council is to assist the school in providing a Catholic education at a reasonable cost within the boundaries of the parish subsidy and school budget. The School Advisory Council meets monthly; all parents are invited to attend as observers.

Requests for inclusion on the agenda must be submitted to and approved by the principal and the SAC president in writing at least seven school days in advance of the meeting.

School Advisory Council members serve a three-year term. Nominations and applications are received in the Spring. After careful review of all the applications the current School Advisory Council members select the new members.

For the current list of School Advisory Council members, see Appendix – School Advisory Council Members.

## **SCOUTING**

Saint Paul Catholic School sponsors Boy Scout and Girl Scout Programs which include Cub Scouts, Tiger Cubs, Brownies, and Daisies. Each Fall a notice is sent home regarding registration and troop availability. Scouts are permitted to wear their scout uniforms instead of school uniforms on scout meeting days. Scout Masters and leaders are to give to the office a copy of permission slips for field trips so that if a parent comes to school looking for a child we will know where to send them. It is absolutely mandatory that at least two adults be present for all meetings and stay until all children have gone home. This applies to meetings held at school or away from school.

## **SERVICE PROJECTS**

The purpose of Service Projects for students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 is to provide students with the opportunity to make a difference in our Church and surrounding communities. Each grade will participate in a service project appropriate to their grade level during the school year.

## **SEXTING**

Students involved in possession or transmission of inappropriate photos on their cell phones or other electronic devices face suspension and/or expulsion. The police will be notified as appropriate.

## **SMOKING**

Saint Paul Catholic School is a smoke-free facility. No smoking in building or on school grounds.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**



Engagement in on-line social media will result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student's account includes derogatory or defamatory comments or pictures, personal attacks, rude or inflammatory language or other postings on the Internet (including, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) regarding the school, the faculty, other students, or the parish. Conduct, whether inside or outside the school, which is detrimental to the reputation of the school, can result in discipline. (See section on Discipline for further explanation.)

## **SPIRIT WEAR**

Spirit Wear days are held usually on the last school day of each month. Students are permitted to wear a Spirit Wear top with their uniform bottoms on these days. Spirit Wear Days are listed in the Panther Post and teachers' newsletters. Spirit Wear tops may be through school sale opportunities.

## **STUDENT DIRECTORY**

Within our student management system, RenWeb is a Student Directory listing students' and parents' names, addresses, home telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses. Parents may choose to exclude any personal contact information from the Student Directory.

The Student Directory should be used to acquaint parents with the names of their children(s) classmates and parents. These directories should not be used or sold for other purposes.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Saint Paul Catholic School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy) regarding access to student records. Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the U.S. Mail or faxed to the new school. Records will not be sent until receipt of request from prospective or new school.

No records will be given to parents to transport to a prospective or new school.

If financial obligations (tuition, fees, etc.) have not been met, no records will be sent to transferring schools of students.

## **TARDY POLICY**

The Saint Paul Catholic School day begins at 7:45 a.m. Students entering after this time must report to the office for a tardy slip and will be marked tardy. Students arriving late because their buses are late are not considered tardy.

When a student returns to school from a medical appointment, he/she should bring a note from the doctor and check in at the office before returning to class.

It is the responsibility of each family to work out a system so that students arrive to school on time. Students who consistently arrive late to school are being deprived of social interaction, morning prayer, announcements, and time to organize themselves for the day.

Any student arriving after 8:30 a.m. will need to bring a sack lunch.



### Consequences of Tardiness

If a student is late to school, they must get a tardy slip from the office. Tardies are recorded per each school quarter.

- 1st, 2nd, 3rd, & 4th offenses will be recorded in the office.
- 3rd tardy will result in a notice of concern to be signed by parents.
- 5th tardy will result in a lunch/recess detention.
- After excessive tardies, a parent conference with the principal and teacher may be deemed necessary.
- ***If your child has been absent or tardy for ten days or more, your child will be reported to the Porter County Juvenile Detention Services "Project Attend" office and you will receive a letter stating this fact.***

## TECHNOLOGY

Any technology that is the property of Saint Paul Catholic School will be monitored by school staff. This includes, but is not limited to: email messages, internet usage, Chromebook usage, etc. This applies to students, teachers, staff, and anyone else using technology that is property of SPCS. Because the technology belongs to SPCS, it is not private and the administration reserves the right to monitor and/or deny student access.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Arrival and Dismissal

The outside doors open to students at 7:30 a.m. Students arriving between 7:30 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. may go directly to their classrooms. The school is not responsible for the supervision or safety of any student who arrives before 7:30 a.m. without special permission from the principal or prearrangement with a teacher.

The school office has a record of how each student is normally transported home each day. If for any reason a child needs to go home by another means (ex. ride a different bus, go by car with another person, or walk somewhere) parents are required to send us a signed note stating such information. Do not send an e-mail or RenWeb message to the teacher during the day regarding dismissal plans; you must contact the school office. Please plan ahead - phone calls will be allowed only for emergency and unforeseen situations. Without a signed note, the student will be sent home according to the usual manner of transportation.

Be aware that relaying dismissal information via students is not always successful. Handwritten notes are frequently forgotten and left in backpacks. A timely RenWeb or phone call directly to the school office is the best option.

Students may walk, bike, or be transported by car or bus to and from school. Students being transported by car are to be dropped off and picked up at the back (south) entrance.

After dropping off your student, parents wishing to buy scrip, go to the office, or attend Mass are to park in the front (north) parking lot. Safety is very important. Be alert and drive slowly!

Visitors are required to park in designated parking spaces. No parking or idling along the sidewalk is permitted, as per state law.

### Afternoon Dismissal Schedule

The afternoon dismissal schedule for students is as follows:



2:34 p.m. – TJ/ BF bus students

2:35 p.m. – Wee Care students

2:37 p.m. – Walkers and bike riders; Walkers are escorted across the street by an adult.

2:38 p.m. – 1st floor carline students and scouts

2:40 p.m. – 2nd floor carline and Benjamin Franklin bus students

Drivers in the car line are asked to follow the directions of the supervising teachers. Cars may start to arrive on the playground for pickup at or after 2:15 p.m., forming the pick-up pattern as directed. At the 2:40 pm bell, the barricades will be put in place before the children are dismissed to the parking lot.

Safety is a priority. There will be no speeding in the parking lot or going around other cars either in arriving or dismissing. Your cooperation is essential to keep all children safe. Car riders not picked up after the second wave of the car line will be sent to the school office. Parents will have to come in to the front office and sign the students out.

No parking is permitted in back of the school on the playground between 7:15 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

To ensure the safety of our students during bus loading and peak traffic times, students may not be checked out between 2:20 p.m. - 2:40 p.m. If you anticipate the need to check your student out during that time period, please arrive at the school before to 2:15 p.m.

Students should leave school promptly at 2:40 p.m. The school will provide supervision of students until 3:00 p.m. No student is to remain on school premises after that time, unless participating in a school-sponsored and staffed after-school activity. The school is not responsible for the supervision and safety of any student who remains at school without prior written permission of supervising adult. Please be considerate of those supervising after-school activities and extra-curricular activities.

### Bus Riders

If residing in the Valparaiso school district, bus transportation is provided by the Valparaiso Public School system. Each student's behavior is directly connected to the safety of everyone on the bus. For the safety of all, the bus driver has complete authority and must be obeyed. Parents/guardians should periodically review the bus behavior expectations:

1. Arrive at the bus stop before the bus is due to arrive.
2. Stay off the road at all times while walking to and waiting for the bus.
3. Line up single file off the roadway to enter.
4. Wait until the bus is completely stopped and the door has been opened by the driver before moving forward to enter.
5. Do not cross a highway until the bus driver signals it is safe.
6. Go immediately to a seat and be seated. Standing or moving from seat to seat while the bus is in motion is not permitted.
7. Keep head, hands, arms, and legs inside the bus at all times.
8. Windows and doors are opened /closed only with bus driver's permission.
9. Absolutely NO objects (books, paper, etc.) may be thrown on the bus.
10. Keep aisles free of books, packages, coats, backpacks, etc.
11. Do not intentionally cause or attempt to cause damage to the school bus.
12. Refrain from loud, boisterous, or profane language.
13. Be courteous to the driver and bus riders. Teasing, wrestling, or shoving is not allowed.
14. When exiting the bus, cross the road at least ten (10) feet in front of the bus, but only after the driver signals that it is safe.
15. Students should only depart from the bus at their regular stop or at school unless they have proper authorization from home (a parent note) or from a school official.
16. Gum and candy are not allowed.



- Policies of VCS supersede all above policies.

Failure to comply with the school bus behavior regulations can result in disciplinary action. A student who becomes a discipline problem on the bus may be deprived of the privilege of riding on the bus. If a student is suspended from the bus, the student's parent(s) shall be required to furnish transportation to and from school during the entire period of suspension.

To contact the Bus Transportation (Bus Barn) Office, call 531-3120.

#### Car Riders

Students may exit the building only if supervising teachers are present. Each child is responsible for staying in designated areas, watching for his/her car, and following the direction of supervising adults. Children may not get off the sidewalk until the cars have completely stopped.

#### Cyclists

Students are permitted to ride bicycles to and from school. For safety reasons, they must walk, not ride, through the parking lot to and from the bike area. The bicycle riding privilege may be removed for unsafe riding. Children must wear helmets and observe all bicycle riding regulations. Parents are asked to please realize, despite these guidelines, that bicycles brought to school are at the parents' and students' own risk. Direct supervision of the bicycle parking area is not possible.

#### Walkers

Students who walk to school should walk on the northeast side of the parking lot and sidewalk at all times and should enter through the front door (Door #1). They should then go straight to their assigned destination. When walking home after school, students are escorted from the east door to the Harrison Blvd. crossing. They must follow the directions of the staff escort at all time. **Walkers must be within walking distance of the school.**

## TUITION POLICY

Tuition rates are subject to change from year to year. New tuition contracts are distributed in January. Please contact the school office for an updated tuition contract if needed.

Catholic Families belonging to another parish must receive written permission from their home parish to attend Saint Paul Catholic School. Families pay tuition directly to Saint Paul Catholic School or through the FACTS Management System and the home parish will pay a subsidy per student.

Four payment options are available:

Option 1: One Payment Plan

Payment in full, due 15th of August

Option 2: Two Payment Plan

One-half tuition/books due on the 15th of August and January

Option 3: Four Payment Plan

One-quarter tuition/books due on the 15th of August, September, December, and March

Option 4: Ten-Payment Plan

Payments due on or before the 15th of each month, August-May

All payments are due by the 15th of the month. If payment is not received by the 15th of the month, there will be a **\$25.00 late fee** added to that month's payment. After August 1st, the per-child book/technology fees are non-refundable, non-transferable.





ALL PARENTS MUST CREATE A FACTS ACCOUNT for tuition, lunch, afterschool care, and incidentals. Scrip tuition credits from previous school year are applied to accounts in September.

#### Financial Assistance

- Applications for free or reduced price lunches and/or books are available in the office. If at any time during the year your family income meets the federal/state guidelines, please feel free to apply for your benefits.
- Diocesan Financial Assistance information is available through the Diocese of Gary's website, [www.dcgary.org](http://www.dcgary.org). Applications are made on-line through the FACTS Management system.
- State of Indiana Choice Scholarship information is available at the Indiana Department of Education website, [www.doe.in.gov/choice](http://www.doe.in.gov/choice). You can find out if you qualify financially for this state scholarship on the website or contact the principal for more information.

#### Contractual Obligations

Every family signs a tuition/fundraising contract agreeing to pay current tuition fees, book fees, and other fees and work fundraising hours.

It is understood that you will be responsible for any balance due, collection fees, court costs, and interest due in the event any amounts are forwarded to collection. Viewing of grades on RenWeb will be blocked until accounts are made current.

Each family must agree to comply with all school policies and procedures and will sign an agreement at the start of each year. Annual criminal history checks will be completed on all parents and adults working with our children.

#### Fees

Chromebook - \$204 per student, grades 3-8

#### Returned Check Policy

There will be a \$25.00 charge for each check returned to any school account. Additionally, after two returned checks, only cash or money orders will be accepted.

## **VISITORS**

During school hours, all visitors and parents are to enter from Door #1, check in with the office personnel, and receive a visitor's badge. No visitors/parents will be allowed to interrupt instructional time in the classrooms without permission from the office/teacher. All classroom visits/observations and conferences must be scheduled in advance with the approval of the principal. If you are bringing in any items forgotten at home, they must be dropped off in the school office. Children will not be allowed to call home for forgotten items—homework, permission slips, clothing, etc. without staff permission.

## **VOLUNTEER SERVICE HOURS**

We encourage all families to look at the many wonderful opportunities to support these programs and service events to build community, support fundraising, and provide value added opportunities for our children. All families are required to support SPCS through time, talent, and treasure. In order to help new families meet their service hours and more easily enter the Panther family, a minimum of 10 hours will be assigned to assist with Oktoberfest or the Gala. These families will be able to select their additional hours



through a variety of OnVolunteer opportunities. Returning families will continue to be asked to select their service hours from the Gala, Oktoberfest, and other events. Refer to the Fundraising Handbook for more information.

## **FINAL NOTE**

This handbook is provided in an attempt to make both parents and students aware of the basic rules and policies governing Saint Paul Catholic School. The regulations cited are general guidelines and are not all inclusive. The school administration is the final arbitrator in the interpretation and enforcement of all regulations and reserves the right to make amendments and changes as deemed necessary.



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### Saint Paul Catholic School

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Diocese of Gary

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Indiana Superintendents and Principals  
FROM: Cathy Danyluk, State Attendance Officer  
DATE: February 7, 2012  
TOPIC: Attendance Guidelines

In response to P.L. 90-2011, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) has developed the following update to the Attendance Guidelines memorandum:

### Rationale:

Pursuant to I.C. 20-33-2-3.2, “attend” means to be physically present: (1) in a school; or (2) at another location where the school’s educational program in which a person is enrolled is being conducted; during regular school hours on a day in which the educational program in which the person is enrolled is being offered.”

Currently, school districts locally define “excused” and “unexcused” absences. The lack of state-level guidance on this issue has led to discrepancies in the ways that excused and unexcused absences are defined and reported. In some cases, school districts have adopted policies that define excused and unexcused absences (and attendance in general) in such a way that the school’s attendance rate is artificially inflated. In other cases, school districts have defined “absence” in such a way that their attendance rate is artificially deflated, thus negatively affecting their AYP ratings. Although school corporations are not required to count excused and unexcused absences in the same way, below are some recommended policies for excused and unexcused absences.

### Recommendations:

#### Habitual Absence:

Under I.C. 20-33-2-25, the “Superintendent or an attendance officer having jurisdiction shall report a child who is habitually absent from school in violation of this chapter to an intake officer of the juvenile court or the department of child services. The intake officer or the department of child services shall proceed in accord with I.C. 31-30-through I.C. 30-40.”

Additionally under I.C. 20-33-2-14; the “governing body of each school corporation shall have a policy outlining the conditions for excused and unexcused absences. The policy must include the grounds for excused absences (Sections 15-17.5 of this chapter of another law). Any absence that results in a person not attending at least one hundred eighty (180) days in a school year must be in accordance with the governing body’s policy, to qualify as an excused absence.”

#### Excused Absences:

Excused absences are defined as absences that the school corporation regards as legitimate reasons for being out of school, as included in the school policy. These could include:

- Illness verified by note from a parent/guardian
- Illness verified by note from a Physician
- Family Funeral
- Maternity
- Military Connected Families (e.g. absences related to deployment and return)

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#### Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence is any absence not covered under the definition of excused or exempt.

#### Exempt

Under certain circumstances, the law requires the school to authorize the absence and excuse of a student: serving as a page or honoree of the General Assembly (I.C. 20-33-2-14); serving on the precinct election board or as a helper to a political candidate or party on the day of a municipal, primary, or general election (I.C. 20-33-2-15); when subpoenaed to testify in court (I.C. 20-33-2-16); serving with the National Guard for no more than 10 days (I.C. 20-33-2-17); or serving with the Civil Air Patrol for up to 5 days (I.C. 20-33-2-17.2). In each of these circumstances, the student is excused from school and is not to be recorded as absent, and is not to be penalized in any way by the school. The governing body of a school corporation may authorize the absence and excuse of a student who attends any educationally related non-classroom activity if the activity is consistent with and promotes the educational philosophy and goals of the school corporation; facilitates the attainment of specific educational objectives; is part of the goals and objectives of an approved course or curriculum; represents a unique educational opportunity; cannot reasonably occur without interrupting the school day; and is approved in writing by the school principal. (I.C. 20-33-2-17.5) Certain school trips fall under this exception, as well as individual student absences. Students have been excused from attendance to participate in various academic bowls, band or orchestra trips, for attendance at local, state, or federal government proceedings, or to hear various public speakers or performers. To review this statute in its entirety, refer to: <http://www.in.gov.legislative/ic/code/title20/ar33/ch2.html>.



## INTERNET/NETWORK ACCESS INFORMATION

The purpose of this agreement is to outline the rules for using electronic media in Saint Paul Catholic School. Since students using computers will also be using the network which features internet access, the rules must be understood by parents, students and staff.

Via the internet, our students and teachers have access to:

1. on-line libraries and current periodicals
2. educational websites
3. e-mail with people all over the world
4. public domain software and shareware of all types
5. discussion groups on an endless list of topics

This information and research will be used by staff and students to complete assignments, research current topics, and communicate with the vast electronic community of users.

With internet access also comes the availability of material that may not be considered of educational value in the context of a school setting. Saint Paul Catholic School has taken precautions to restrict access to these materials. (e.g. All students will only be able to access the internet with adult supervision and will not have access to personal e-mail accounts.) However, it is impossible to have complete control, and an industrious user may discover controversial information. We firmly believe the value of the educational information and interaction on the internet far outweighs the possibility that users may procure unsuitable materials.

To address issues surrounding this important resource, Saint Paul Catholic School has created an "Internet/Network Access/Acceptable Use policy for all users. The first portion of the agreement is written to be age appropriate to all students. The other section of the agreement is more appropriate for Middle School students, and adults. We are asking that both the parents, students and staff review this document. Our purpose is to inform parents, students and staff of our rules concerning internet/network computer use.

All users, both students and adults, will be held responsible for their behavior while on-line. There is special internet etiquette, called netiquette, which will be taught. The use of the internet is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in cancellation of those privileges.



## **INTERNET/NETWORK ACCESS ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

This section is written to be age appropriate for all students.

1. The use of the chromebook and computer is a privilege which may be taken away if the student uses the computer, the network, or the internet improperly, or causes damage to computer hardware or software or any electronic media.
2. Saint Paul Catholic School may remove any inappropriate or objectionable material from the chromebooks or computers. We also reserve the right to block objectionable sites for all users if they have little or no educational value.
3. The chromebooks / computers are to be used only for school work as directed by the teacher or staff member.
4. Each student is responsible for good behavior while using the chromebook, computer and network. Improper use will lead to loss of computer privileges for the student.
5. The student may only log on and use the Network and/or internet under the immediate supervision of a staff member.
6. If sites are brought to the attention of the school administration by students, parents, or other individuals, the school reserves the right to address the behavior in accordance with diocesan/school policies, as well as civil laws.
7. Even if the agreement is not signed by the parent, student, or staff member improper use of the chromebook, computer, the network, or internet will be reason for loss of the privilege at school as determined by the principal.

This section is more formal and more age appropriate for Middle School students and all users.

1. The use of the SPCS computer network (the Network) is a privilege which may be revoked by Saint Paul Catholic School at any time for reasons which include, but are not limited to: the altering of system software, and the placing of unauthorized information, computer viruses or harmful programs on or through the computer system in either public or private files or messages. St. Paul Catholic School reserves the right to remove files, limit or deny access, and refer the student/user for other disciplinary actions.
2. Saint Paul Catholic School reserves all rights to any material stored in files on its chromebooks and computers which is generally accessible to others and will remove any material which Saint Paul Catholic School, at its sole discretion, believes may be unlawful, obscene, pornographic, abusive, or otherwise objectionable. Students and users will not use their Saint Paul Catholic School approved computer access to obtain, view, download, or otherwise gain access to such materials.
3. All information services and features contained in the Saint Paul Catholic School Network and/or its resources are intended for the private use of its registered users. Any use of these resources for commercial, for profit, or other unauthorized purposes (e.g. advertisements, political lobbying), in any form, without permission, is expressly forbidden.
4. The student/user is responsible for the use of his/her assigned password and access privilege. Any problems which arise from the use of a user's password or access to student folders is the responsibility of the student. Use of a password by someone other than the registered password holder is forbidden and shall be grounds for loss of access privileges.

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5. Any misuse of password access or of the Network will result in suspension or revocation of computer and/or Network privileges and/or other disciplinary action determined by Saint Paul Catholic School. Misuse shall include, but not be limited to:
  - a) intentionally seeking information on, obtaining copies of, or modifying files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users
  - b) misrepresenting other users on the Network
  - c) disrupting the operation of the Network through abuse of the hardware or software
  - d) malicious use of the Network through hate mail, harassment, profanity, pornography, vulgar statements, or discriminatory remarks
  - e) interfering with others' use of the Network
  - f) extensive use for non-curriculum-related communication
  - g) illegal installation of software not owned by the school
  - h) unauthorized down-loading, copying, or use of licensed or copyrighted software
  - i) allowing anyone to use an account other than the account holder
  - j) accessing unauthorized or questionable web sites
6. The use of Saint Paul Catholic School's Network resources is for the purpose of (in order of priority),
  - a) supporting the academic program
  - b) telecommunications for research
  - c) general information
7. Saint Paul Catholic School does not warrant that the functions of the system will meet any specific requirements the user may have, or that it will be error free or uninterrupted; nor shall it be liable for any direct or indirect, incidental, or consequential damages (including lost data, information, or time) sustained or incurred in connection with the use, operation, or inability to use the system.
8. Access to email, Social Networking sites, chat groups and other outside communication is not necessarily a part of the current educational plan and may be restricted. Only under special circumstances may these functions be accessible with the permission of the computer teacher or principal.
9. Saint Paul Catholic School will periodically make determinations on whether specific uses of our Network are consistent with this INTERNET/NETWORK ACCESS AGREEMENT and the Diocese of Gary Acceptable Use Policy. Changes in these acceptable-use agreements will be communicated to all staff, students, parents and guardians in writing. The Diocese of Gary Acceptable Use Policy is available on the school website at [www.stpaulvalpo.org/technology](http://www.stpaulvalpo.org/technology). Saint Paul Catholic School reserves the right to log and report on internet use, and to monitor electronic mail space utilization by all users.
10. Digital media not provided by Saint Paul Catholic School may not be uploaded to the machines without the specific permission of the computer teacher or Principal.
11. The user/student may not download and/or save files, shareware, software, WEB sites, search engines, information services, electronic bulletin boards, or music sites unless authorized to do so. The user/student will be liable to pay the cost or fee of any file, shareware, or software transferred without permission.
12. All users/students agree to follow standard copy right guidelines regarding the use of electronic media, written material, etc.
13. Saint Paul Catholic School reserves the right to log and monitor all computer usage through its electronic filter, and excessive file-serves space utilization by all users. Saint Paul Catholic School reserves the



right to remove a user account on the Network to prevent unauthorized activity or excessive use of school resources.

14. Students must be reminded that they need to take appropriate care when moving any chromebooks, laptops, tablets, or other portable hardware. Every effort will be made to instruct students in the responsible use of school owned hardware.
15. Wireless access to internet will be made available to students and staff for educational purposes only. Any other attempt to wirelessly access our Internet or Local Area Network without the explicit permission of the Pastor, Principal, Or Technology Staff is prohibited.
16. Students are NOT allowed to access their personal email during school hours. Students are NOT allowed to change screen savers or tamper with the computers at any time. Students who do NOT follow these rules will lose the privilege of using their chromebook. No programs will be downloaded (this includes games) without permission from Saint Paul Catholic School administration. Attempts to bypass internet restrictions will result in electronics probation, denial of electronics access as well as consequences deemed applicable by the Saint Paul School administration.
17. Whether this document is signed or not, proven malicious intent will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Saint Paul Catholic School student policy. Misuse of the Internet/Network/Computer resources which results in breaking local, state, or federal laws, may result in prosecution under applicable state and federal statutes.



## **PLAN FOR SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT IN SCHOOLS**

Saint Paul Catholic School believes a safe and healthy environment should be provided in which all children can learn, develop, and participate in instructional programs that promote high levels of academic achievement. As an Indiana accredited non-public school, state law requires that our school has a Seclusion and Restraint Plan. The purpose of the plan is to insure that all students and staff are safe in school, and that students who may have behavior crises are free from inappropriate use of seclusion or restraint.

Behavioral interventions for children must ensure all children are treated with dignity and respect. This environment should allow all children to be free from physical or mental abuse, adverse behavioral interventions that compromise health and safety, and any physical seclusion or restraint imposed solely for purpose of discipline or convenience.

Seclusion or restraint shall not be used as routine school safety measures; that is, they shall not be implemented except in situations where a child's behavior or action poses imminent danger of physical harm to self or others and not as routine strategy implemented to address instructional problems or inappropriate behavior (e.g., disrespect, noncompliance, insubordination, out of seat), as a means of coercion or retaliation, or as a convenience. Any use of either seclusion or restraint shall be supervised, short in duration, and used only for the purposes of de-escalating the behavior.



## SAFE ENVIRONMENT PLAN

In conjunction with the Sexual Misconduct Toward Minors and Others at Risk Policy of the Diocese of Gary

6-13-03

Revised 6-11-04

Revised 9-21-04

### PURPOSE

The Diocese of Gary has established the Sexual Misconduct Toward Minors and Others at Risk in July 1993. To implement this policy as revised on April 1, 2003, a Safe Environment Plan has been established in order to:

- provide a safe and secure environment for the children and youth in the faith communities within our Diocese of Gary
- assist the Diocese in evaluating a person's suitability to work with children, youth or the elderly
- satisfy the concerns of parents and staff members with a screening process
- provide a system to respond to the victims and their families, as well as the accused
- reduce the possibility of false accusations against clergy, employees, and volunteers
- reduce the risk of exposure of the parishes and the Diocese of Gary

### DEFINITIONS

#### *Background Check*

The verification of information provided on Application for Employment or Volunteer Service, including a minimum of three reference contacts.

#### *Child Abuse*

Consists of any of the following:

*Sexual Abuse* includes any act or interaction whether it involves genital or physical contact, with or without consent, even if initiated by the child, which involves sexual contact, molestation or sexual exploitation of a child by a parent or any other person who has permanent or temporary care or custody or responsibility for supervision of a child, whether physical injuries are sustained or not, to include:

- The intentional touching of the genitals or intimate parts including the female breast, the genital area, groin, inner thigh and buttocks of a child or of a perpetrator by a child for purposes of sexual arousal or gratification
- Rape, sexual intercourse (vaginal or anal), oral/genital, oral/anal contact
- The intentional touching and/or displaying of one's own genitals or intimate parts including the female breast, the genital area, groin, inner thigh and buttocks in the presence and view of a child for purposes of sexual arousal or gratification
- Permitting, causing, encouraging or assisting in the depiction of or posing for viewing by any person, either in person or by way of graphic means including digital or photographic image of the partially or fully unclothed body of a child, displaying intimate parts, in motion or not in motion, alone or with other persons, or the depiction of a child in apparent observation of sex acts by others in the child's presence
- Displaying or distributing to a child any picture, photograph, book, pamphlet, digital image, movie or magazine the cover or content of which is principally made of descriptions or depictions of sex acts or contact, or which consists of pictures of nude or partially denuded figures posed or presented in a manner which the average person applying contemporary community standards would find, taken as a whole, appealing to the prurient interest.

*Physical Abuse* includes any act which:

- Willfully causes or inflicts physical injury to a child or

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- Willfully causes mental injury or psychological injury to a child by intentionally engendering fear of physical injury to that child.
- It is the policy of the Diocese of Gary that corporal punishment of a child is prohibited in all entities under the auspices of the Diocese of Gary.
- Physical abuse does not include the appropriate physical restraint of a child who is attempting to injure another person or him/herself, or the appropriate physical direction of a child away from danger or the minimum restraint necessary to place a child in “time out” or other appropriate limitation of movement to promote the child’s regaining of safety and emotional control.

*Neglect* includes:

- Abandonment of a child by a parent, custodian or guardian
- Lack of care by not providing appropriate and necessary food, shelter, clothing and education
- Not providing care or control in respect to physical or emotional health; the refusal or inability to discharge parental or custodial obligations; and expressions of intention by parent, guardian or institution to discontinue care.

#### *Criminal Background Check*

The submission of form to provide information on existence and content of a criminal arrest record.

#### *Substantial Contact*

Contact with children in which the duration and scope in both time and exposure to children is neither trivial nor limited and may occur on a routine and/or ongoing basis.

## **EDUCATION**

#### *Purpose and Objective*

This policy applies to the programs that provide specific training in the prevention, recognition and reporting of child abuse that are developed and/or offered by the Diocese and is:

- *Required* of all Diocesan personnel and volunteers directly involved or in contact with children
- *Required* of all children and youth who participate in activities, services and programs under the auspices of the Dioceses and
- *Recommended* of parents and other adults who participate or have children who participate in activities, services and programs under the auspices of the Diocese.

The objective of these programs is to prevent, recognize and appropriately report child abuse through educational programs, such as seminars, workshops and meetings, provided by the Diocese and completed by all Diocesan personnel who have substantial contact with children, on an annual basis.

#### *Personnel*

The following Diocesan personnel shall participate in the “Protecting God’s Children” program on child abuse:

- a) All active priests, deacons and members of religious communities in the Diocese of Gary
- b) All principals, administrative staff, teachers, guidance counselors, librarians, all volunteers and staff at all levels, including aides, janitors, food service workers, school nurses, and office personnel of all Catholic elementary, middle and high schools
- c) All directors, catechists, staff, and volunteers of religious education programs and youth ministry programs
- d) All Diocesan personnel providing child care services
- e) All youth ministry coordinators, directors/coaches of children’s activities (e.g., athletics, scout troops, choir, camp counselors, etc.) and similar Diocesan personnel who provide such services.



The Bishop shall have the authority to direct additional personnel of the Diocese (other than those specified in a-e) to attend the annual education programs.

#### *Educational Curriculum*

VIRTUS will provide the training program for adults. Each parish will have two people trained as facilitators. The facilitators will provide the training sessions for the adults according to the timeline.

#### *Deadlines for Completing Training*

New staff and volunteers who will have substantial contact with children shall receive an immediate criminal background check and appropriate preventive education programs at the earliest possible date.

Pastor/parochial administrators, principals and agency directors will ensure that all personnel required to receive training do so within the requisite time period or are removed from contact with children for failure to attend appropriate training programs. Parishes, schools and agency offices will maintain lists of those who have completed the training requirement.

#### *Educational Programs for Students*

The Superintendent of Schools, the Director of Religious Education, and the Youth Director will ensure that age-appropriate abuse prevention education programs are available at both the elementary (K-8th grade) and secondary (9th-12th grade) levels. Each school, religious education program and youth program is required to submit the curriculum to the School Office.

Such programs shall be provided annually to children in all grades of every Catholic school and religious education programs as well as youth ministry programs in the Diocese.

#### *Assessment and Evaluation of Educational Efforts*

With a view toward assessing the progress of the educational efforts called for by this Policy, records shall be kept of:

- The number of training courses offered
- The number of training courses attended by:
  1. Priests, permanent deacons and religious
  2. Staff members
  3. Volunteers
  4. Parents
  5. Children and youth
- Proportion of new staff and volunteers trained by deadlines
- Participant evaluations of training content and learning opportunities
- Curriculums of the schools, religious education programs and youth groups

The Safety Committee, in consultation with the appropriate constituent groups, will review the child abuse prevention curricula every three years.



## **REQUIREMENTS**

Each Diocesan entity shall:

- Appoint a Safety Officer (clergy, staff or volunteer) to oversee the Safe Environment Program.
- Implement the Safe Environment Program following the guidelines and procedures found in the
- Diocesan Safe Environment Program Booklet.

### *Screening Procedures*

The following screening procedures are to be used with all clergy, staff, and volunteers who work with children, youth, senior citizens or the developmentally disabled. All collected information is to be treated as confidential.

- " Screening. Volunteers should have attended the parish an adequate length of time to become well known by the other adults and leaders.
- " Employment application. Those applying for a paid position must complete an employment application.
- " Reference check. Maintain a written record of each reference check.
- " Interview. Interview each new applicant.
- " Criminal Background Check. Conduct a criminal background check on clergy, staff, and volunteers who work with children, youth, senior citizens, or the developmentally disabled. Criminal background checks will be completed every **five** years on active clergy, staff, and volunteers.

If the person hired has not lived in Indiana in the past five (5) years, the parish must pay for a federal criminal background check. Contact the School Office for the information.

### *Results of Criminal Background Checks*

- When the criminal background check on a candidate is clear, the pastor will be notified that everything is fine.
- A questionable criminal background check will be reviewed by the Diocese of Gary Safe Environment Committee. The Pastor will receive the committee's decision of whether or not the individual is cleared.

Anyone with a pending conviction or who has been convicted of sexual misconduct will not be permitted to work or volunteer in a Diocesan sponsored environment.

Committee members are: Bishop's Delegate for Sexual Misconduct Cases, Coordinator of Safe Environment Program, Administrative Assistant to the Bishop, VIRTUS Coordinator, Director of Religious Education, and Director of Youth Ministry.

### *Confidentiality*

Like all personal records, information obtained through the Screening, Application, Reference, Interview, and Criminal Background Check must be kept confidential. It is recommended that all material be kept in a locked file cabinet and access to it be restricted to the school principal and the pastor. These materials should be destroyed after three years if the employees' employment is terminated or the volunteer ceases his/her volunteer duties.



## **PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR YOUTH**

7-03-02

Revised 6-13-2003

Revised 4-2013

These guidelines support the Diocese of Gary Safe Environment Plan viz., the policy regarding Sexual Misconduct Toward Minors and Others at Risk. The guidelines describe actions and/or response that are rooted in sound, appropriate, approved practices.

Youth are identified as those who have not graduated from high school nor have reached their 18th birthday.

Expectations:

### Adult Supervisors and Clergy

- Conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the teachings of the Roman Catholic church in mind and deed
- Are in compliance with the Diocese of Gary Safe Environment requirements – this includes young adults 18-21 years of age
- Are 21 years of age or older; young adults 18-21 may be allowed to serve in a supervisory role provided that they are accompanied by at least one adult 21 years of age or older who is VIRTUS trained
- Have authorized criminal background and reference checks
- Are aware of state laws regarding mandated reporting of abusive or inappropriate behaviors toward youth
- Report incidences or suspicions of abusive and/or inappropriate behaviors toward youth to immediate superiors and/or appropriate authorities
- Submit a Diocese of Gary Adult Driver Information Form as needed, to the appropriate authority; provide appropriate license and insurance information

Supervision:

### Adult Supervisors and Clergy

- Ensure that a Release Form is completed by parent/guardian when activities are held away from the parish/school; a health form is submitted before allowing youth to participate in on-going athletic events
- Provide for an adequate number of adults at all youth events; a recommended ratio of adult leaders to youth is 1:7; with the ration not to exceed 1:10
- Secure additional adults for any event involving youth in high risk or overnight settings; secure male and female chaperones when both sexes of youth are present
- Never schedule activities that conflict with curfew laws governing minors
- Closely monitor facilities, church services, and other environments when youth are present; never give youth keys to any church/school facilities
- Never administer medication of any kind to youth without written parent/guardian permission
- Never use any form of physical discipline
- Release youth only when the custodial parent, guardian, or other adult designated by parent
- Use a buddy system when events are held away from church/school property; e.g., never permit a child to leave the group or cross a road alone while in custodial care

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Behavioral:

Adult Supervisors and Clergy

- Never engage in topics, humor, vocabulary, recordings, films games, or the use of technology that could not be used comfortably in the presence of parents/guardians
- Always hold on-on-one meetings with youth in areas that are visible and accessible, if such an area is not available, the door to the meeting room is left open and another staff member is notified
- Never drive alone with a youth or meet with a youth alone in a residence, hotel, locker, rest room, or dressing facility, or any other closed or isolated area
- Never share a bed with youth; no adult should share a sleeping room with youth unless they are a direct family member
- Never take unaccompanied youth on a trip, e.g., to a cottage, without other adults present
- Never purchase or share alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, videos, or reading materials that are inappropriate with youth
- Never be in possession of or drink alcohol while supervising minors or participating in a youth event
- Take care to avoid initiating hugs; if a youth initiates physical contact, a limited response is appropriate

Technology, Social Media, and Networking:

A. Registration Technologies and Securing Private Information

Adult Supervisors and Clergy

- Ensure that no sensitive personal information – particularly financial information (credit card and/or checking account numbers) and secure identifiers (social security numbers) – is never transmitted through e-mail or web pages
- Handle all financial transactions in real time, that is, on a commerce website that can process credit card transactions online, assuring that no financial data need be communicated to the parish/organization
- Do not create forms using technology that is beyond the technical competence of the webmaster or staff person responsible for registration forms; contact a technology/web solution provider for assistance

B. Websites/Social Media

Adult Supervisors and Clergy

- Are informed of terms of use, age restrictions, and privacy options and controls for any site prior to establishing a ministry presence
- Always inform parents that a social networking site is being used as a standard part of the ministry
- Establish separate sites and pages for personal and professional/ministerial use; the official organizational logo or standard images appear on the organization's official site to identify it as such
- Be vigilant that on personal or networking sites you represent yourself as a minister of the Catholic Church in all interactions that may be viewed publicly
- Allow at least two other adults, who function in an official parish, school and/or organizational capacity, full administrative access to the account/sites, provide them with e-mail alerts of page updates and activity
- Never advertise or make personal pages and/or information accessible to youth
- Always avoid anything that might cause scandal to your ministry; never mention inappropriate use of alcohol, advocacy of inappropriate music/movies, inappropriate language, inappropriate dress of the expression of opinions that are contrary to the teaching of the Catholic Church
- Never initiate a friend request
- Never tag or identify, by name, youth in photographs; it is recommended that the no tagging option be set on the original social networking site
- Never post personal photographs or information of parish, school, or organization staff or volunteers; this includes family pictures, social events, home phone numbers and addresses, personal e-mail account, etc.



### C. E-Mail and Text/Instant Messaging

#### Adult Supervisors and Clergy

- Always inform parents/guardians of the use of e-mail or instant messaging for communication purposes with minors as a standard part of youth ministry
- Always maintain separate e-mail accounts for personal/professional communications
- Use the parish, school, or organizational e-mail account when communicating parish, school, or organizational business; never a home or personal account
- Ensure that all communications are professional and that these are being rendered on behalf of the parish, school, or organization
- Use e-mail and instant messaging only in matters that deal with one's professional relationship or in matters related to the ministry/activity
- Remember that there is no such thing as a private e-mail/instant message
- Observe the same boundaries used in oral/personal communication when communicating via e-mail/text messages
- Avoid overstepping the boundaries of adult/youth relationships; avoid communication that might be construed as having sexual overtones; never reply to any such e-mail; make and keep a copy of any such inappropriate communication and notify a supervisor if necessary
- Avoid engaging in any postings/communications that could be misconstrued or misinterpreted, remembering that e-mail, text messages, and instant messages can be logged, archived, and forwarded to other parties
- Always double-check messages to see if a reader might read something into it that is not intended or if the message might be misinterpreted or misunderstood
- Remember that communications are organizational in nature, may be viewed by the organization at any time, and may be subject to legal action
- Avoid sending a message in haste or when emotions are involved
- Establish clear guidelines/parameters with regard to times of communication between adults and youth; predetermine a time when it is too late to take a professional call, except in the case of serious urgency

### D. Blogging

#### Adult Supervisors and Clergy

- Ensure that all professional/ministerial settings, posted information, opinions, references, and resources are in compliance with the teachings of the Catholic Church and are being rendered on behalf of the parish, school, or organization
- Inform parents/guardians of the use of blogging with minors as a standard part of youth ministry
- Utilize blogs to promote upcoming events or programs and for the purpose of evangelization providing resources and information within ministry settings
- Ensure that, if youth are to engage in blogging as part of an officially sanctioned activity, the activity is monitored by at least two adults, no youth is identified by name or personal information, and inappropriate blogs are removed
- Separate personal/professional communications; do not use blogs to conduct or promote outside business and/or personal activities; never make information regarding personal blogs available to youth
- Never divulge the name or any personal information regarding those being ministered to

### E. On-Line Video, Chat Rooms, Skype, and Face Time

#### Adult Supervisors and Clergy

- Always inform parents/guardians of the use of such communication with minors as a standard part of youth ministry
- Remember that when presenting personal opinions and engaging in chats/discussions, others may assume these opinions represent the teachings/values of the Catholic Church



- Use streaming video only for education, communication, and promotional purposes
- Never use live streaming, one-on-one video, or other communication technologies that lead to, support, or encourage an exclusive minor-adult relationship
- Take extreme care to protect the privacy of youth when posting videos on-line; such videos are utilized only to showcase/advertise ministry-related events and activities

#### Photographic Images of Youth – Youth Under Age of 13

##### Adult Supervisors and Clergy

- Always obtain written permission from the parent/guardian to use any photographic images for publicity/marketing such as brochures, newsletters, or websites
- Never include the youth's name or contact information in photos that are published
  
- Photographic Images of Youth – Youth Ages Between 13-18
- Adult Supervisors and Clergy
- Always obtain written permission from the parent/guardian to use any identifiable photographic images for publicity/marketing such brochures, fliers, and websites
- Always obtain written permission when using youth in a planned project, e.g. using youth as models and the photographic images are identifiable
- Always obtain written permission from parent/guardian for any type of video that show youth doing work or in discussion; this video is considered an education record

The safest photographic images of youth over 13 used for publicity/marketing are unidentifiable images, i.e., those images taken at a distance, from the side, from the top, or of a large group activity

##### For Clergy

- Always notify parent/guardian of scheduled on-on-one pastoral care of youth
- Always schedule session at times and locations that allow for security and accountability
- Always limit the length and number of sessions; make professional referrals appropriately
- Never allow individual youth to socialize in the rectory; ensure other priests or adults are present
- Never allow youth into the sleeping areas of the rectory; only the families of priests and seminarians may be overnight guests in the rectory

#### General Considerations and Practical Suggestions

##### Adult Supervisors and Clergy

##### Contact with Youth that is Permissible

- Verbal praise
- Pats on the shoulders or back
- Hugs initiated by youth
- Holding hands with small children
- Blessings on the head
- Holding hands during prayers

##### Contact with Youth that is Never Permissible

- Verbal abuse/sexual innuendo
- Touching knees or legs
- Piggy back rides
- Kissing
- Inappropriate/lengthy embraces
- Tickling
- Holding children over age four on the lap
- Any type of massage given by an adult to a minor



- Wrestling
- Any form of unwanted affection/physical contact





## SIGNATURE FORMS

The following agreement/permission forms must be kept on file in the school office. Please return these completed and signed forms to the office as soon as possible.

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### STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

We have read and discussed the electronic Student-Parent Handbook. We have electronically received the handbook, always have access to it, and understand that it is our responsibility to read and comply with policies and procedures contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it. We understand that we will be notified of any additions/amendments/corrections to this handbook that may be necessary during the school year. I/We as parent(s) agree to support Saint Paul Catholic School by following all school policies/procedures and further agree to help our child(ren) understand and abide by these same policies/procedures.

We agree to pay Saint Paul Catholic School for all hours, meals, and additional fees as outlined in this Student-Parent Handbook. In addition, it is understood that we will be responsible for any balance due, collection fees, court costs, and interest due in the event any amounts are forwarded to collection.

Parent's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I/We, as student(s), agree to support Saint Paul Catholic School by following all school policies/procedures. Each student must sign.

_____ Student Signature	_____ Student Name (Printed)	_____ Grade	_____ Date
_____ Student Signature	_____ Student Name (Printed)	_____ Grade	_____ Date
_____ Student Signature	_____ Student Name (Printed)	_____ Grade	_____ Date
_____ Student Signature	_____ Student Name (Printed)	_____ Grade	_____ Date
_____ Student Signature	_____ Student Name (Printed)	_____ Grade	_____ Date
_____ Student Signature	_____ Student Name (Printed)	_____ Grade	_____ Date

Please note: Page 1 of 3 to be signed.

Effective 8/01/2024



## CONSENT FOR PHOTOGRAPHS OR VIDEOTAPES OF STUDENTS

I do hereby give my permission to the Saint Paul Catholic School and its employees, principal-designated personnel, or administration-approved newspaper reporters and photographers to photograph, videotape, or interview my child(ren). I understand that the photographs, videotapes or interviews will be done at the discretion of the principal for educational purposes or for school promotional purposes (a school brochure, publicity for a school activity/event, or the like).

\_\_\_\_\_ My child(ren) may have his/her (their) picture taken for ALL educational and promotional purposes.

\_\_\_\_\_ I/We do not want photos of our child(ren) appearing in any educational / promotional materials

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please note: Page 2 of 3 to be signed.

Effective 8/01/2024



## INTERNET/NETWORK ACCESS ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AGREEMENT

I/We have read and agree to this policy in consideration for the privileges of my child(ren) and/or myself using the Saint Paul Catholic School Internet/Network resources and in consideration for having access to the information contained on/or by the Internet/Network. I/We hereby release Saint Paul Catholic School, the School Advisory Council, the Internet/Network, and their operators and administration from any and all claims of any nature arising from my child(ren)'s or my self's inability to use the Saint Paul Catholic School computer resources.

Parent's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

In consideration for the privileges of using the Saint Paul Catholic School Internet/Network/Computer resources, and in consideration for having access to the information contained on or by the Internet/Network, I hereby release Saint Paul Catholic School, the School Advisory Council, and the Internet/Network and their operators and Administration from any and all claims of any nature arising from our use, or inability to use, the Saint Paul Catholic School computer resources.

_____ Student Signature	_____ Student Name (Printed)	_____ Grade	_____ Date
_____ Student Signature	_____ Student Name (Printed)	_____ Grade	_____ Date
_____ Student Signature	_____ Student Name (Printed)	_____ Grade	_____ Date
_____ Student Signature	_____ Student Name (Printed)	_____ Grade	_____ Date
_____ Student Signature	_____ Student Name (Printed)	_____ Grade	_____ Date
_____ Student Signature	_____ Student Name (Printed)	_____ Grade	_____ Date

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_