

# St. Joseph Catholic School



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Dear Parents,

Welcome to St. Joseph Catholic School! The faculty and staff of St. Joseph consider it a privilege to partner with you in the education of your children because we believe that you, parents, are the primary educators of your children. Working together, we can fulfill the Mission Statement, embody the Philosophy, and implement the Goals and Objectives of St. Joseph Catholic School. Understanding policies and procedures in the handbook is essential for the school to meet its mission.

Your choice of St. Joseph Catholic School requires your commitment to the Mission, Philosophy, and Goals and shows your concern for helping your child recognize God as the greatest good in your child's life.

To assist parents and students in building up of the community expressed in the Philosophy, we offer **POSITIVE DISCIPLINE** in the classroom. Positive Discipline is a means of providing a respectful environment where Christian values can be integrated in all aspects of academic and extra curricular life. Through the practice of Positive Discipline, mutual respect between staff and parents will be a model for mature behaviors and mature relationships for our students.

Finally, administration and staff endeavor to provide an environment where students can grow in their relationship with Jesus, grow in their desire to respond to the rights and needs of others, and to develop Christian values to aid in the moral decision-making process. We hold the following convictions:

**“that people are more important than material gain  
that justice is more important than success  
that love is more important than esteem, and  
that collaboration unites.”**

The truly successful Catholic school student is one who accepts Christian responsibility for the fulfillment of personal potential and shares these gifts with others.

Together let us pray that God, who has begun this good work in us, will carry it through to completion

God bless you!  
Sister Kathleen Murray, DC  
Principal

## MISSION STATEMENT

The cooperative mission of St. Joseph Catholic School extended community is to provide a family oriented Christian environment of academic excellence where each child has the opportunity:

- To mature in faith through spiritual guidance
- To develop intellectually, emotionally, and physically
- To prepare for service to others

## PHILOSOPHY

As a Catholic School, St. Joseph seeks to enhance in its students, staff, and parents, an experience of the love of God made real by Jesus Christ today. To achieve this, the St. Joseph School community continually strives through prayer, sacraments, and ministry, for an appreciation of the Word of God, an expression of love in living community, and service to the larger community. Mary, Mother of Jesus, and Joseph, patron of the school, are models for the St. Joseph Community to pursue these challenging objectives.

As an institution of learning, St. Joseph Catholic School addresses and challenges the intellectual, moral, physical, social, and spiritual growth of students. St. Joseph fosters in students an appreciation of their self worth, respect for others, and a sensitivity to the challenges and promises of the future.

Working together as one family, we at St. Joseph Catholic School, continually strive to actualize our motto:

**“The Spirit Comes Shining Through”**

## GOALS and OBJECTIVES

To teach the tradition of the Catholic Church

- By participating in the liturgical calendar events
- By modeling rituals of the church
- By modeling various forms of prayers
- By modeling participation in the Eucharist

To teach Gospel values as a way of life

- By emphasizing the Beatitudes and Ten Commandments
- By encouraging students to apply the message of the weekly homily
- By modeling the words and deeds of Jesus

To foster active participation in parish life and religious activities

- By providing information regarding parish activities
- By encouraging parents to volunteer as catechists
- By encouraging students to participate in service learning projects

To provide a curriculum that challenges each student to develop his/her intellectual ability

- By providing higher level thinking modules
- By emphasizing importance of cross-curricular connections
- By integrating technology in all content subjects

To promote a positive attitude in the face of change

- By providing a well-balanced classroom atmosphere
- By implementation of Positive Discipline
- By setting realistic expectations
- By teaching tolerance

To develop school spirit, civic pride, good sportsmanship and leadership qualities through co-curricular and extra-curricular activities

- By encouraging participation in Spirit Day
- By recognizing members of NJHS
- By supporting co-curricular and extra-curricular activities

## **ACCREDITATION**

St. Joseph Catholic School received accreditation renewal from the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department through a process completed December 1999. The ten-year accreditation cycle will include St. Joseph Catholic School, spring, 2010.

## **ADMISSION**

Students entering 3K, 4K, 5K must be three, four or five years old respectively, on or before September 1. Students entering first grade must be six years old on or before September 1. Transfer students into grades 1-8 are required to have a teacher referral page completed and at least average grades and satisfactory conduct. Transfer students have an interview with the principal. When a new student is assigned grade placement, a probationary period exists for nine weeks during which time a decision is made whether or not the school can meet the needs of the child. This decision is based on

- academic requirements,
- attendance requirements,
- homework requirements,
- conduct requirements.

The principal will inform the parents of the need to enroll the child elsewhere if these criteria are not met.

Parents registering their children for the first time present a baptismal certificate, birth certificate (from the Department of Vital Statistics), and an up-to-date immunization record. Registration is not complete until all documents are in the school office.

St. Joseph Catholic School maintains the right to give preference to St. Joseph Parish students, students from neighboring Catholic parishes, then non-Catholic students for admission.

Registration for new students includes a completed teacher evaluation from the sending school before registration is final.

St. Joseph Catholic School does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, national origin, or age in its employment or admissions practices.

## **ENROLLMENT BLOCK**

The school reserves the right to dismiss or block re-enrollment of a student for the following reasons:

- Repeated violations of the discipline plan
- Violation of specific policies
- Excessive unexcused absences and/or tardies
- Excessive non-compliance with homework policy
- Continued non-compliance with tuition policy
- Continued uncooperative behavior on the part of a parent

The education of a student at St. Joseph Catholic School is a partnership between parents and the school. Just as the parent has the right to withdraw or not return the following year if desired, the school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal or non-re-enrollment if the

administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

### **ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

In compliance with the EPA Asbestos Emergency Response Act (AHERA), passed in the fall of 1988, all schools, private and public, were required to have an inspection of buildings for asbestos containing materials(ACBM.) The management plan assures that students and personnel are free from any exposure to asbestos containing material. The inspection findings and management plan are on file in the administrative office. These are available for review upon request at any time during normal school hours. The regular three-year inspection was completed in May, 2009.

### **ATTENDANCE/ARRIVAL ABSENCE/TARDINESS**

The school calendar is published prior to the beginning of each year. Parents/guardians are expected to honor the calendar when planning vacations and medical appointments. Regular and punctual attendance is essential to maximize academic achievement. Excessive absences and excessive tardies can result in blocked enrollment for the following year.

It is imperative that all students are in attendance for afternoon homeroom, 3:10-3:20. Students who have an early dismissal must give early dismissal slip from the office to the homeroom teacher before leaving school.

### **STUDENTS AND PARENTS ENTER THROUGH THE W. FAY STREET DOOR OR THROUGH THE STUBBS STREET GATE.**

**10<sup>th</sup> Street door is an EMERGENCY EXIT ONLY on school days.**

**The school day extends from 7:50 a.m. until 3:20 p.m.**

**Upon arrival, students go directly to the parish hall for prayer and announcements.**

**When a student is absent, the parents or guardian call the school office, 383-3957 between 7:30 and 8:00 a.m. to explain the child's absence.** Patterns of habitual absence will be investigated for possible violation of compulsory school attendance. Excused absences are for the following reasons:

1. Medical and dental needs of students
2. Death in the immediate family
3. Emergency situations for the immediate family

When a student's absence for personal illness exceeds seven (7) cumulative days, the principal may require a statement from a physician or health clinic verifying the illness or other condition requiring the student's extended absence from school. If the student has established a questionable pattern of absences, the principal may require a physician's or clinic's statement of illness after a single days' absence as a condition of classifying the absence as one for which there are extenuating circumstances.

Absences such as vacations and trips (except those excused by the principal for unusual circumstances) babysitting, working, and non-school sponsored athletic events and programs **shall be considered unexcused.**

A student with an unexcused absence can not make up assigned work and cannot make up tests given on the day(s) of the unexcused absence.

**A PARENTAL NOTE STATING THE REASON FOR ABSENCE, EARLY DISMISSAL OR LATE ARRIVAL IS REQUIRED FOR ABSENCES TO BE CONSIDERED "EXCUSED."**

Each day of absence is mentioned in the note. **The telephone call to the office does NOT replace the note to the teacher.**

**A doctor's note is required for students who are absent because of sickness. A doctor's note is necessary the following day for students who have an early dismissal for a doctor's or dentist's appointment.**

Once at school, students may not leave the school grounds without the expressed permission of the principal. Students do not leave the campus for lunch.

**TARDIES**

**Students who arrive in the classroom after the 8:00 a.m. bell are tardy.**

**Excessive (more than 7) morning arrival tardies in a marking period places a child on probation. This may result in blocked enrollment for the following year.**

**Students arriving after 10:00 am or leaving before 1:30 pm are considered absent one half day.**

**CAFETERIA/LUNCH**

A catering service will provide lunch and milk/juice for \$2.65 per day. A menu will be provided each month. Students may bring a bag lunch and purchase milk for twenty-five cents if they are not purchasing the catered lunch. Students pay twenty-five cents for extra milk. **Fast food lunches and carbonated drinks are not permitted at lunch in the cafeteria on days when the catered lunch is available. Microwaves are not available for students to warm food.**

**In the cafeteria, students are expected to:**

1. Observe good dining room manners
2. Leave the table and surrounding area clean and orderly
4. Talk in quiet conversational voices

**Students do not leave the campus for lunch.**

**CATHOLIC FAITH**

**Religious education is at the core of the St. Joseph Catholic School curriculum.** All students receive daily instruction in Catholicism. Religion, as an academic subject is designed to have students develop a working knowledge of Catholic dogma, traditions and practices. Of equal importance is the goal to have all students develop a relationship with God, and express this relationship through Catholic experiences of prayer, worship and service. Students receive instruction in preparation for the sacrament of First Reconciliation in second grade and First Eucharist in Third Grade. Religion is both a separate academic subject to be learned and a principle to be integrated in all subjects. The Catholic faith permeates the entire program by integrating religious truths and values into the education and everyday life of students.

Faith, Family and Friends, the Catholic Elementary School Guidance Program was implemented in 1998. Growing in Love was implemented in the Fall of 2007 to complement the guidance program.

## **CLASSROOM VISITATIONS**

All visitors, including parents, report to the school office before visiting anywhere in the campus. Parents delivering items to children enter through the front door and leave the items in the office.

**PARENTS AND VISITORS OBTAIN A PASS FROM THE OFFICE BEFORE GOING TO ANY PART OF THE BUILDING FOR ANY REASON.**

**Gifts and gift baskets sent to children at school will not be accepted in the office. Send the items to the home.**

## **COMMUNICATION**

Good communication between home and school is very important at St. Joseph School. Each Wednesday a communication envelope will be sent home with the oldest child in each family. Younger siblings bring home their own set of test papers, etc. The communication envelope will contain a letter from the principal and students' papers. Please impress your child with the importance of bringing home all school correspondence. **Sign and date the communication envelope after removing and reading the contents. The envelope is returned to the homeroom teacher.** Students are charged fifty cents after one week of a missing communication envelope. **Parents sign and return test papers.**

## **COURTESY**

Students address all members of the faculty, staff, and all adults with:

Mr., Mrs., Miss, Sir, Ma'am, Sister, Father, as is appropriate. Knock on doors and wait to hear "come in" before entering any office or classroom. Use "Please, Thank you, and Excuse me" as appropriate.

## **CUMULATIVE RECORDS.**

Cumulative records of students are kept in the school office from the date of entrance until the date of withdrawal and/or upon completion of the eighth grade. The cumulative record contains the pupil's final averages, standardized test scores, and attendance. When a student withdraws, a copy of the cumulative record is sent to the receiving school upon written request from the school.

## **CURRICULUM**

The curriculum at St. Joseph School follows the guidelines established by the State of Texas, Texas Catholic Conference Education Department, and the Diocese of Brownsville. Basic to the curriculum is the study of Catholic religion. In addition, the curriculum prepares students for responsible citizenship. Language arts (English, reading, spelling, written and oral communication), mathematics, science, social studies, computer education, fine arts, and physical education instruction follow the TCCED guidelines, Diocese of Brownsville Curriculum. The curriculum exceeds the standards set by the State of Texas. Spanish language is considered part of language arts. Accelerated Reader tests are provided for first through eighth grade students.

### **Religion**

Religious instruction in the Christian faith, as lived out in the Catholic tradition, forms the basis for the total development of the student. All students are required to participate in all regular church services during school time. The Religion curriculum from the Diocese of Brownsville. Services are held weekly and on Holy Days for the entire student body and staff. Parents and family are welcome.

**Sacramental Formation**

Parents with children who are ready to begin celebration of the Sacraments should petition with their child to their parish. Sacramental formation consists of two parts: ongoing systematic catechesis. The school also works closely with St. Joseph Parish in providing appropriate workshops for parents in formation for the Sacraments.

**Mass and Prayer**

The most important aspect of a child's development is spiritual. St. Joseph School expects all families to attend weekend worship services in the church of their choice. In addition, all St. Joseph students attend Mass Fridays and on Holy Days of Obligation. Prayer is a daily part of the morning routine for all classes, in addition to classroom and other special prayer opportunities.

**Language Arts**

Reading skills form the basic literary and critical tools for gaining knowledge and understanding in all subject areas, including the spiritual and the academic experiences of life. Emphasis is placed on Language Arts as a foundation for all learning, with remediation and enrichment opportunities provided as determined to be beneficial to the child. English I credit is offered to eighth grade students.

**Mathematics**

The math program is designed to help each student learn the basic mathematical structures, language, and principles in order to develop skill in computation, to use vocabulary and symbols in reading and interpreting data, and to measure and solve problems. A full year in Algebra I for High School credit is offered in Eighth Grade to students.

**Physical Education/Health**

The Physical fitness program provides students PK4 -8<sup>th</sup> grade with the opportunity to exercise and acquire life long skills to maintain a healthy body and attitude. The program includes competitive athletics (grades 5-8) Health classes are also included in the physical education program for PK4-3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Health is integrated in grades 4-8.

**Spanish**

The purpose of the Spanish program is to familiarize students with a basic knowledge of Spanish vocabulary, grammar, and conversational skills. Spanish I credit for high school can be earned in Eighth Grade.

**Social Studies**

This program is designed to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes necessary for becoming good citizens.

**Science**

The purpose of the Science program is to promote a genuine interest in all facets of science education and to provide the skills necessary to achieve scientific literacy appropriate to grade level.

**Fine Arts**

The purpose of the Fine Arts classes is to provide students with the opportunity to experience and appreciate the fine arts and to develop basic skills in music (choir, recorders), art.

**Computer Literacy**

Computers are utilized in the classroom and lab setting as tools to enrich the curriculum in the classroom. Keyboarding skills, ethical use of technology and the internet, and general computer skills are taught, with a goal of integration of those skills into the learning process of the student.

**Co-Curricular Activities**

A number of opportunities for enrichment and reinforcement of skills and knowledge are integrated into our curriculum. These include contests, bees, tournaments, and organizations intended to allow students to excel in various areas.

## **Guidance**

Teachers are interested in the physical, academic, spiritual, and emotional well-being of children. Teachers have a moral obligation to work as partners with the parents to guide the students to be healthy, productive citizens of our community and world. The more the teacher knows about the environment of each child, the better he/she is able to guide him/her through these important years of development. For this reason parents are encouraged to consult with the teachers, the principal, and the school counselor when there are problems at home which could result in a child's experiencing some emotional or physical difficulties. St. Joseph School employs a part time counselor who conducts classroom guidance and provides for small group guidance.

## **Character and Virtue**

Character education, rooted in the teachings of Christ, is incorporated into all areas of our daily curriculum through Project Wisdom and Positive Discipline. St. Joseph School is dedicated to helping parents in their responsibility as primary educators of the children, in teaching, enforcing, advocating, and modeling the virtues we wish to instill in our children.

## **COOPERATION WITH EDINBURG INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The school will, with the cooperation of parents, request ECISD to provide testing services for students with minimal learning disabilities as regulations permit. The school will make every effort to meet the academic needs of students with minimal disabilities as well as students who are gifted. Students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities to develop character, talent and responsibility.

## **CUSTODY**

The school abides by the provision of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to academic records and other school information regarding his or her child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide the school with a court-certified copy of the court order.

## **DISCIPLINE/SUSPENSION**

An important aim of Catholic education is the Christian development of the whole person. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not interfere with the rights, privileges, and safety of others. Students are taught to develop good habits such as courtesy, respect, kindness, helpfulness, cooperation, responsibility, as well as good study habits. Corporal punishment is never permitted.

Self-discipline is the goal for each student.

## **POSITIVE DISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM**

St. Joseph School implemented **POSITIVE DISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM** which is concurrent with Gospel values and Catholic Social Teaching. Students are guided to develop skills and attitudes necessary for a healthy and successful life in society. Attitudes of kindness, cooperation, respect, tolerance through problem-solving, and honesty are fostered in an atmosphere where personal independence and social responsibility are nurtured through careful guidance. Student involvement in problem solving means that students are no longer passive recipients of the teacher's knowledge. Active participation leads them to deeper understanding and promotes inner motivation and commitment to appropriate action.

The major benefits of the program are the social, academic, and life skills the students experience which can be summed up in what is called the Significant Seven. These comprise of three empowering perceptions and four essential skills which students will have an opportunity to develop.

#### Three Empowering Perceptions

1. Perceptions of personal capabilities: “I am capable.”
2. Perceptions of significance in primary relationships: “I contribute in meaningful ways, and I am genuinely needed.”
3. Perceptions of personal power and influence in life: “I use my personal power to make choices that influence what happens to me and my community.”

#### Four Essential Skills

1. Intrapersonal Skills: The ability to understand personal emotions, to use that understanding to develop self-discipline and self-control, and to learn from experiences
2. Interpersonal skills: The ability to work with others through listening, communicating, cooperating negotiating, and empathizing
3. Systemic Skills: The ability to respond to the limits and consequences of everyday life with responsibility, adaptability, flexibility, and integrity
4. Judgment Skills: The ability to develop wisdom and evaluate situations according to appropriate (Gospel) values

In order for students to develop the Significant Seven skills, teachers and students:  
Work to create an atmosphere (non-threatening) of caring based on kindness, firmness, dignity, and mutual respect.

Learn to hold regularly scheduled classroom meetings in which students learn oral language skills, assertiveness, critical thinking skills, decision-making skills, problem solving skills, and democratic procedure.

Learn to understand why people do what they do through The Four Mistaken Goals of Behavior. Teachers and students both understand that there is positive or negative motivation behind all behavior.

Use encouragement as a powerful motivator for positive change.

Learn to use 14 classroom management tools to ensure respectful management throughout the day.

Hold conferences (parent/student/teacher) when needed.  
The conference is an encouraging process.

The key is for parents, students, and teachers to work together to help each other soar. That is what people do when they feel encouraged.

The program focuses on solutions, not punishment, and students are taught to look for WIN-WIN situations.

Students are taught in a loving, caring, Christ-centered community that is present to help

each other and not hurt each other. Competitiveness in which students choose whatever suits their self-interest is discouraged. Creative individuality must be balanced with concern for the welfare of others and a desire for common good. The basic rights of human dignity, equity, justice, and caring are the foundation of The Positive Discipline in the Classroom Program.

However, this can only be accomplished through cooperation. In fact, cooperation is the cement that holds the foundation of the Positive Discipline philosophy together.

Students, developing as responsible Catholic Christians, are expected to

- Treat everyone with respect and courtesy**
- Care for all personal and school property**
- Come to school prepared for learning**
- Act responsibly and accept consequences for their actions**
- Support a harassment-free environment**
- Conduct themselves with honesty and integrity**
- Adhere to the process of Positive Discipline**

If a problem or question arises, the parent contacts the teacher for a student/teacher/parent conference to discuss the matter as soon as possible. Rely on teacher conferences rather than on hearsay to obtain accurate information. If the parent is not satisfied, the parent can make an appointment with the principal.

St. Joseph Catholic School shares a certified councilor with Immaculate Conception School. Parents may request the use of the councilor. The school counselor will provide group sessions for students; these sessions do not replace individual counseling.

### **SUSPENSION**

Suspension is a serious matter. Students are liable for suspension for the following reasons:

1. Fighting (both parties); bullying
2. Serious disrespectful behavior toward any person (staff member, parent, student)
3. Disruptive behavior
4. Defacing school property
5. Stealing
6. Misbehavior during a disaster drill
7. Misbehavior during a field trip
8. Leaving school grounds without permission
9. Truancy
10. Inappropriate/vulgar language
11. Any activity contrary to Catholic faith and morals
12. Cheating (both students)
13. Inappropriate use of technology

**A student in suspension receives a zero for class work and tests for the day of suspension. Work missed because of suspension cannot be made up. A student with two suspensions is liable for dismissal from school.**  
**A suspended student may not participate in extracurricular activities the day of suspension**

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE**

The administration and staff of St. Joseph Catholic School are responsible for enforcing this policy: No student shall possess, use, transmit, and attempt to use, transmit, or be under the influence of (legal intoxication not required) any of the following substances in school premises during any school term or off-school at a school-sponsored function, or event:

- A. Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law including, but not limited to: marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, barbiturate, or modified drug
- B. Alcohol or any alcoholic or intoxicating beverage
- C. Any abusable glue, aerosol paint, or any other chemical substances for inhalation
- D. Any other intoxicant, mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drug
- E. Student use of **white out is prohibited at school.**

In the event that a student enrolled at SJS is determined to be in violation of this policy, the procedure is as follows:

When a student is referred to the principal by a teacher, parents, or is a self-referral and is found to be under the influence of a prohibited substance without possession thereof,

- A. Contact the proper law enforcement agency;
- B. Attempt to contact the parents or legal guardians to request their presence at school.
- C. In the case of a first time offender, at the parents' expense, require the offender to receive counseling by a licensed counselor within two weeks; verification of counseling is required.
- D. Second time offenders will be liable for suspension and/or expulsion.

Students may not bring to school or a school-related activity any weapons prohibited by law as identified below:

- A. Fireworks of any kind
- B. Clubs
- C. Razors
- D. Metallic knuckles, chains
- E. Firearms, explosive weapons, matches
- F. Knives
- G. Any other object, including school supplies, used in a way that threatens or inflicts bodily injury on another person

Lockers may be inspected by school personnel if there is just cause. Students found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action. **Duplicate key for the locker must be in the office.**

**ELASTIC CLAUSE:** Because it is impossible to foresee all problems which might arise, this clause empowers the administration to take disciplinary action for any behavior of students or parents that violates the spirit and philosophy of St. Joseph Catholic School even though not specified in the handbook.

## **SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Administration, faculty and staff at St. Joseph Catholic School commit :**

To motivate and assist all students to follow the Positive Discipline Program as a means of personal growth and an expression of Christian moral behavior and of respect for oneself and other children and adults

To apply school rules and discipline policies with fairness and discretion.

To allow adjustments in disciplinary action as deemed necessary according to circumstances and the maturity of the student.

To maintain effective, regular, and respectful communication with parents regarding student behaviors.

To continually update understanding of student behavior and its influences.

### **PARENTS AS PARTNERS**

As partners in the educational process at St. Joseph Catholic School, we ask parents to live **A Catholic School Parent's Code of Conduct**

**As my child's most important educator, I understand that I teach my child best by my own example of reverence, responsibility, and respect. I ask St. Joseph Catholic School to assist me in forming my child as a disciple of Jesus Christ. I understand that my child's teacher is a dedicated professional who makes many sacrifices to teach in a Catholic school. In order to show my cooperation, support, and thankfulness...**

- **I will ensure that we pray daily as a family and attend Mass as a family on weekends.**
- **I will have my child in school on time every day with the necessary school supplies and appropriate dress.**
- **I will monitor my child's telephone, computer, and television use, as well as movies and magazines my child views or sees.**
- **I will not tolerate vulgar, sarcastic language from my child or bullying, violent, or aggressive speech or behavior. I will set a good example in my own speech and behavior.**
- **I will show respect for the teacher and any other adult in authority in front of my child at all times, regardless what I may think of their actions or say to them in private.**
- **I will speak respectfully and with kindness and courtesy to other parents in front of students, especially when there is any disagreement.**
- **I will speak to the teacher or adult in charge before I accept my child's version of an incident. I know the good of all children comes before my child's needs or wants.**
- **I will follow the school's rules, calendars, deadlines, and expect my child to do the same even when I may disagree.**
- **I will build a bridge of acceptance and understanding, and expect my child to do the same, among the different cultures represented at St. Joseph Catholic School.**

**With the example of Jesus, Mary, and St. Joseph and the help of God, I will abide by this code of conduct while my child is enrolled at St. Joseph Catholic School.**

## **DISMISSAL**

Dismissal **for all grades is 3:20.** For the safety of students, parents walk into the school to pickup children.

**Parents wait quietly away from classrooms as content classes are in session until 3:10. Children remain in the classroom until 3:20. Parents go to the classrooms at 3:20 to get their children.**

**Parents must notify the school in writing when a student is allowed to walk home or ride home with another student or other person. This regulation is for the safety of all children and the school. Parents inform the homeroom teacher in writing when their child will go home regularly with another parent.**

**Parents must send a note to the office requesting early release for medical and dental appointments. A student may not be released early on a continued basis. Students will not be released to persons not listed on emergency cards. **Parents will be called if an authorized person (including a relative) asks to take a child before dismissal time unless a note indicating early release time is presented to the teacher.****

## **DRESS CODE/UNIFORM/PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

The school uniform helps to identify the student as a member of St. Joseph Catholic School. The uniform is a sign of a student who is contributing to the sense of community, which is important to the Catholic school. Students in PK-8th grade wear the uniform daily except when designated otherwise by the principal. On Spirit Day, each Thursday, students may wear any St. Joseph T-shirt with walking shorts or long blue pants (boys.) Parents will be notified of uniform infractions so that the parent can bring the required clothing to school for the child. Blue jeans for \$1.00 donation on Spirit Day must be intact (no holes, no frays, no tears, and not tight.)

### **GIRL'S UNIFORM                      NO SKORTS, NO CAPRI PANTS**

#### **Pre-kindergarten-third grade**

White Polo type shirt  
Navy blue walking shorts                      one inch above the knee  
Jumper                                              two inches below the knee  
Tennis shoes NO LIGHTS                      NO MULTI-COLORED SHOES,  
NO CROCS  
Plain White crew or ankle socks (PK-K wear socks that cover the ankle)  
Navy blue cardigan sweater  
Grey sweatshirt (with logo)  
Long navy blue pants                              (no sweatpants) December-February only  
St. Joseph Catholic School windbreaker or navy blue hooded sweatshirt with the logo

### **Girls- Grades 4-8                      NO SKORTS, NO CAPRI PANTS**

Princess style blouse  
Plaid skirt                                              two inches below the knee  
Walking shorts                                      one-inch above knee  
Navy blue pants in very cold weather  
Plain white ankle or crew socks only                      no sport logo  
White or black Tennis shoes                      NO MULTI COLORED SHOES, NO CROCS  
Navy Blue cardigan  
Vest for Friday Mass                              navy blue tie

Grey sweatshirt only SJ logo  
Blue gym shorts  
Grey SJ T-shirt for PE /athletic practices  
St. Joseph Catholic School windbreaker or navy blue hooded sweatshirt with the logo  
**White ONLY undershirt or camisole must be tucked in.**

**BOY'S UNIFORM**

**Pre-kindergarten-third grade**

White polo type shirt  
Navy blue walking shorts no belt for 3's, 4's, 5's  
Navy blue pants  
Dark belt 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>  
Tennis shoes NO LIGHTS  
Ankle or Crew socks when wearing walking shorts  
Navy blue cardigan sweater  
Grey sweatshirt only SJ logo  
St. Joseph Catholic School windbreaker or navy blue hooded sweatshirt with the logo

**Boys-4-8**

Blue oxford short sleeve shirt  
Navy blue tie for Mass  
Navy blue pants  
Navy blue walking shorts  
Dark belt  
Tennis shoes, NO LIGHTS  
Ankle or Crew socks when wearing walking shorts  
Navy blue cardigan  
Jackets cannot be worn in the classroom  
Grey sweatshirt only SJ logo  
St. Joseph Catholic School windbreaker or navy blue hooded sweatshirt

**ALL STUDENTS CAN WEAR NAVY BLUE WALKING SHORTS WITH THE UNIFORM BLOUSE OR SHIRT ANY DAY EXCEPT MASS DAYS.**

**On Mass day students wear the official uniform (not walking shorts). On Mass day boys and girls in grades 4-8 wear a tie. Students in PK-3<sup>rd</sup> grade do not wear a tie.**

**PE class for grades 4-8: students wear blue shorts and Grey T-shirt with the logo. Failure to wear the PE uniform will result in unsatisfactory on the progress report or report card.**

***Attire for school events or away from school should be appropriate for the occasion. Short shorts, tight fitting tops or jeans, midriff tops, low cut blouses or dresses, off the shoulder blouses or dresses are not acceptable. PARENT'S ATTIRE for school MUST be appropriate for the occasion, including arrival and dismissal.***

Plain white or black tennis shoes are permitted. "School shoes" with socks are permitted. On non-uniform days blue jeans and dress pants must be at the waist. Blue jeans on non-uniform days must be "intact" with no holes or torn areas. Blouses and t-shirts must be long enough to be tucked in. Tennis shoes with wheels are prohibited at school and at school functions.

Only clear fingernail polish is permitted. Girls with nail polish will remove the polish in the office with non-acetate polish remover. Make-up and jewelry are not permitted as they take away from the overall appearance of the school uniform. One wrist band supporting a cause may be worn. Girls may wear one pair of small earrings, not large loops, one bracelet, one chain with a medal, no gold necklaces, no chokers. Boys may wear a chain and medal, no gold necklaces, no chokers.

Hair accessories must complement the uniform. Hair bows must be navy blue or the plaid of the jumper or skirt. Hair must be groomed (boys and girls) so that eyes and eyebrows are not covered. Hair style should pull hair away from the face.

Girls' purses should be small to medium that complement the uniform. The school is not responsible for the loss of purses or the contents.

If for any reason part of the uniform cannot be worn, a note from the parent or guardian must accompany the student.

Good grooming has a bearing on classroom behavior and attitude and reflects on both the school and the home.

The school reserves the right to monitor and restrict, if necessary, any clothing styles, hair styles, general adornments which are judged to detract from the simplicity of the school uniform or impair the learning environment.

**Hair cuts for boys: hair must not cover the ears eyebrows or collar.**

Fad hair styles for boys and girls are not permitted. Bleached hair for boys or girls is not permitted. Shirts are tucked in at all times, including dismissal time.

**Boots and hiking boots are not permitted.**

**The school sweater, the school sweatshirt, the school hooded jacket, or the school windbreaker are acceptable in the classroom. Non-school outerwear is not acceptable in the classroom.**

### **EARLY RELEASE**

**Students are released before 3:20 only to parents/guardians. Any other person picking up a child before 3:20 must have a note from the parent requesting early release.**

### **EDUCATIONAL TRIPS**

Educational trips are initiated by the teacher and must be arranged with the Principal beforehand. Educational trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals. All grade levels do not always have the same number of educational trips. Educational trips are permissible for all grades when advanced planning, locations, and the experience insure a successful learning opportunity. Individual teachers in consultation with the Principal reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to academic or behavioral concerns.

Students must have a signed permission form from St. Joseph Catholic School to participate in educational trips. Phone permissions are not accepted. Ordinarily, the uniform is worn on all educational trips.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

St. Joseph Catholic School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin or sex in its employment policies.

## **EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM**

Extended day program is available from 3:35-5:45 on regular school days for \$4.50 per child. The service is for parents who, because of employment, cannot pick up children at 3:20. The schedule includes supervised study and supervised recreation. School rules apply for extended day. Students in 3K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade are engaged in various age-appropriate activities from 3:35-5:45. Students in grades 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> begin their homework or read from 3:35-4:30. At 4:30 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> will join the younger students and engage in various age-appropriate activities.

## **GENERAL POLICIES FOR EXTENDED DAY:**

**The Extended Day Program begins at 3:35 and ends at 5:45. A late fee of \$15.00 for any portion of time after 5:45 will be added to regular billing. Children who are habitually late in being picked up will be withdrawn from the program by the principal. Any student remaining on the campus without direct supervision at 3:35 will be placed in Extended Day. Students who participate in extra curricular activities (sports, jazz, karate, academic competitions, tutoring, etc) and are not picked up after the activity will go to Extended Day. Teachers do not supervise students after 3:35 at the request of parents in order to avoid extended day.**

## **BEHAVIOR:**

***The St. Joseph Catholic School Parent/Student Handbook policies apply during Extended Day. All students who attend Extended Day are expected to follow all rules and regulations that govern behavior at St. Joseph Catholic School. A student will be dismissed from the program if behavior is non-compliant.***

## **PAYMENT**

**Extend Day fees are billed weekly. Unpaid fees exceeding \$45.00 (10 days) will result in denial of extended day services.**

## **DAILY ACTIVITIES**

**Extended Day students may bring a healthy snack. Students are responsible for cleaning their area after the snack.**

**Supervised study hall: 3:50-5:15**

**Supervised play: 5:15-5:45**

## **CHECK IN**

**Students will be checked in by the supervising staff member.**

## **SIGN OUT**

**Students will be released to authorized adults only. Parents/guardians/authorized adults must sign out his/her child each day and record the time signed out. The time is according to the school clock in the Extended Day area. No child will be allowed to leave the premises unless accompanied by an authorized person. The Extended Day supervisor can ask for positive identification of the person signing out a student.**

Failure to follow the school rules may result in removal from extended day program.

## **FIRE DRILL/DISASTER DRILL**

Fire drills and disaster drills are conducted for the purpose of practicing in the event of an emergency. Students will be instructed in the manner of responding to the drill quickly and quietly. Each classroom has a disaster drill route. In the event of severe weather or an emergency, students will be directed to move to a safe area previously determined. In an emergency, parents will be notified.

## **GRADUATION**

The school is responsible for the planning of the graduation ceremony and reception for Kindergarten and 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE OF THE DIOCESE OF BROWNSVILLE**

A grievance is a complaint based on alleged violation or inequitable application of policy or a dispute over the meaning or interpretation of the terms contained in this handbook.

This procedure is intended to resolve a grievance at the lowest level in a Christian atmosphere. Persons with concerns regarding application or interpretation of a policy should first attempt to address the concern with the teacher. Only after such attempts have failed should administrators be contacted.

The following levels of submitting and resolving a grievance are:

### **Informal Action – Resolution/conflict Level**

Level One	Presentation to the Teacher
Level Two	Presentation to the Principal

### **Formal Action**

If a satisfactory resolution is not reached at the resolution/conciliation level, the complainant shall state his or her complaint in writing (on a form to be provided by the principal), setting forth the nature of the complaint, all relevant details, and the remedy sought. This form should be submitted to the pastor within ten (10) working days following the meeting with the principal.

Level Three	Presentation to the Pastor
Level Four	Presentation to the Superintendent

## **POLICY REGARDING HARRASSMENT/BULLYING**

Students are expected to behave in a manner appropriate for their age and level of maturity. Engaging in harassing behavior on school property or off school property at a school-sponsored activity is forbidden. Students will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Harass: to disturb or upset with repeated (more than one) offensive acts.

Examples of harassment: **Engaging in any type of unwanted and unwelcome verbal or written taunting, physical behavior, whether by use of foul language, verbal threats, gestures, derogatory remarks, name calling, note passing, inappropriate drawings, graffiti, jokes, stories, cartoons drawings or objects which are offensive, annoy, abuse, or demean an individual or a group, inappropriate touching, kissing, hugging, hand holding, or any other conduct deemed inappropriate at school or at school-sponsored events.**

When a teacher or the principal receive a report that a student is being harassed or abused, he or she will initiate an investigation and take prompt action to intervene. Parents of both parties will

be notified.

A parent whose child has a complaint alleging harassment by another student may request a conference with the principal or the teacher. The conference will be scheduled as soon as possible, but within five school days. The principal or designee will coordinate the investigation. Oral complaints should be submitted in writing to assist in the investigation.

**Consequences for harassment, bullying, and any disruptive behavior may include, but not be limited to:**

**Process for Positive Discipline followed by**

Verbal or written warning

Referrals (written notification to parents of infractions)

Conference including parent, student, and principal or a designee

Behavioral contract

Referral for professional counseling

Out-of-school suspension

Notification of the police Blocked enrollment

**HEALTH POLICIES/CHILD ABUSE**

**PREVENTING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE** The school teaches children to make safe choices through a parent-school partnership that was implemented in the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Brownsville in the fall of 2004.

**OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATION IS NOT ADMINISTERED AT SCHOOL.**

Parents sign a request for medication to be administered by authorized school personnel. Only medication prescribed by a licensed physician or dentist and dispensed by a registered pharmacist will be administered during school hours. Medication is administered only if parents have signed a request for medication to be administered. Medication must be in the original container with the following information:

Student's name

Physician/Dentist

Date

Name of medication

Dosage

Directions for administration

Duration of medication

Students do not carry medication. All medication is kept in a locked cabinet in the school office.

Any child with a temperature of 100 degrees or above will be sent home. School personnel will give only minor first aid. In the event of major first aid, the school will contact, in this order, student's mother, father, persons listed on the emergency card, the physician listed on the emergency card.

**Keep students home when they have a severe cold, sore throat, temperature, eye infection, unusual skin eruptions, swollen glands, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.**

Any child having such symptoms at school will be sent home. Keep your child at home if the child has an elevated temperature. **DO NOT SEND OTC MEDICINE WITH YOUR CHILD.**

Health screening of vision, hearing, and scoliosis takes place on a regular basis.

St. Joseph School follows the Texas Health Department rules of immunization. The school reserves the right to delay admission of a student until the immunization requirements are met.

The principal will cooperate with Child Protective Services in the investigation of child abuse cases in accord with the Texas Family Code.

### **HOMEWORK**

The regular assignment of homework serves as a reinforcement of skills that the students learn in class. Homework is an integral element of the teaching/learning process. Homework must be completed on time. **It is essential that a child take responsibility for grades he/she has earned. Each student is accountable for homework, long term assignments, major tests, service projects and any other assignments. The responsibility of completing homework also extends to times of absence.**

### **RESPONSIBILITIES FOR GRADES 1-3**

1. Homework is due the following day after the assignment is given unless otherwise noted. It will be checked for completion, recorded, and returned.
2. Parents will be notified in writing if homework is not brought in, and the child will allowed time during the day to complete the homework.
3. Consistently late homework will be noted on the progress report and reflected on the quarterly report card.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES FOR GRADES 4-8**

1. Each student is responsible for keeping his/her assignment book up to date.
2. **Late homework will not be accepted and will not receive credit**
3. Parents must read teacher notes concerning behavior or work and sign the appropriate notice.
4. Students who are absent will be given a day for each absence to make up work
5. Students absent three or more days may be given additional time to make up work.

**Arrangements for home work must be made with the teachers.**

**\*When advanced notice is given to a long-term assignment, no excuse will be accepted for lateness. If students know in advance that they will not be present on the due date, they must make plans to turn in the assignment in advance.**

Guidelines:

- A. Support your child's teacher in homework assignments.
- B. Provide quiet time for your child to complete homework.
- C. Do not allow after-school practices, shopping or any other extra-curricular activity replaces homework time.
- D. Refrain from the temptation to make excuses for your child's incomplete homework.

**Students will complete assignments and tests using their own answers, writing, and ideas. Any form of cheating or dishonesty will result in a zero for both parties.**

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

It is the responsibility of the student (grades 4-8) to arrange with the teacher the time and place for make up work. Make up work must be completed within the allowed time – one school day for each day the student was absent. Students who do not make up work during the allotted time, or

who have not made arrangements with the teachers, will not receive credit for the missed work

Class work and/or tests missed during an in-school or out-of-school suspension may not be made up.

### **HONOR ROLL**

At the end of each quarter a list of High Honors and Honor roll students is published.

**High Honors:** 96-100 Average of core subjects (religion, language arts, social studies, science, technology, Spanish and math) with no grade below 75.

**Honors:** 90-95 Average of core subjects as above.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

St. Joseph School follows ECISD in closing for inclement weather. Listen to the radio and local TV stations for school closing information.

### **LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS**

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds without the expressed permission of the principal. Violation of this can result in suspension. **Students do not leave the campus for lunch.**

### **LIBRARY**

St. Joseph School Library is under the direction of a certified librarian. Library policies and Accelerated Reader Program are explained to students verbally and in writing at the beginning of each school year. Encourage children to make good use of both the school library and public library. The school library is open daily from 7:30 – 7:50 and 8:30 -3:15. The library is open from 3:45-4:30 for Extended day students. Each class has minimum of one library period weekly. Students are expected to respect library books and materials. Fines are assessed for overdue or damaged books.

Etiquette policy for the use of Internet established by the Diocese of Brownsville is an attachment to the handbook.

### **LITURGIES**

Parents are encouraged to celebrate with students by participating in the weekly liturgies planned by students and teachers. Check the weekly letter for liturgy times and dates. Occasionally the liturgy schedule will change because of the pastor's schedule. Boys in grades four through eight who have received First Holy Communion assist at the liturgy as Altar Servers

### **LOST ARTICLES**

**Parents are requested to mark all clothing.** Clothing not claimed within ten days will be donated to the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

### **MONEY SENT TO SCHOOL**

Clearly mark in an envelope the purpose for any money, cash or check sent to school. Parents receive a receipt for all payments..

### **NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY**

Students in the first semester of seventh grade and eighth grade can be inducted into the NJHS after a selection process by the NJHS committee (teachers of grades 7-8) in the fall. Students are selected on the basis of character, leadership, scholarship, and citizenship. Specific information

regarding the selection process is sent to parents of seventh grade and eighth grade students in August. NJHS students whose grades fall below 90% average of core subjects as indicated in the second and fourth report cards or who incur a suspension at any time will be removed from the National Junior Honor Society.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATORY STATEMENT**

St. Joseph Catholic School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin or sex in the administration of educational policies, admission policies, and other school administered programs.

### **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Teachers must devote class time to instruction and supervision of students. Parents can schedule a conference after school dismissal time, or during the teacher's conference time.

Teachers will not receive phone calls from parents during class time. If a student is having difficulties in the classroom, or if parents have a concern regarding their child, parents can have a phone conversation or set an appointment with the teacher to discuss the difficulty or concern. Conference appointments are made through the office.

The first quarter report card is discussed with parents during conferences scheduled at the end of the first quarter. Conferences, including the first nine week conference, should be conducted in a confidential manner and in an appropriate setting (not in the hallway, at dismissal, etc.)

### **PARTIES**

Students have two classroom parties: Christmas and Valentine's Day. Room parents work closely with the homeroom teacher in planning these events. **Students attend their own classroom party, not the classroom party of siblings.**

**Birthdays may be celebrated in the cafeteria at lunchtime with a simple treat.**

**When planning birthday treats, consider a gift to the child's classroom or to the library.**

**Gum is prohibited at school and at all school functions at school. When sending treats, please remove the gum.**

**Gifts or gift baskets sent to students at school for any occasion will not be accepted; send the baskets to the home. Office personnel will not sign for gifts baskets for students.**

**Invitations to birthday parties should be sent via the U.S. mail unless an invitation is given to every student in the class. Invitations to all boys or to all girls are acceptable.**

Students may not bring refreshments or collect money for any celebration unless approved by the principal in advance of the celebration.

### **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Students' personal belongings, including books and clothing, must be clearly marked so that the items can be readily returned when lost. Textbooks are covered at all times. The replacement cost of a textbook includes shipping and handling. Magazines, CD's, diskettes, toys, any electronic game and/or discs are prohibited at school. Those items will be taken from the student and returned to parents. Software FROM HOME IS PROHIBITED because of potential viruses.

**Cell phones are not permitted to be carried during the day. Cell phones for emergency matters after school are to be turned in to the office upon arrival. If a student brings a cell phone to school and does not turn it into the office, the confiscated cell phone will be returned to the parent. \$25.00 fine will be charged to the parent. iPods and other electronic equipment are not permitted at school unless a written note from a teacher indicates specific date. Electronic equipment will be returned to the parent. \$25.00 fine applies.**

### **PLAYGROUND**

To insure the safety of students at all times at the play areas, students are expected to:

- A. Play fairly and take turns.
- B. Keep rocks and other objects on the ground
- C. Follow directions given by any staff member supervising the play areas.

### **PROMOTION POLICY**

Social promotions are not granted in the Diocese of Brownsville. Students are promoted to the next grade level based on their academic achievement. Following are guidelines for promotion:

- 5K A students must have at least a "G" (good, satisfactory) final average in reading and mathematics in order to advance to first grade.
- 1-8 A students must have at least a 70% in religion, language arts mathematics, science, social studies in order to be promoted to the next grade.

At times teachers may encourage parents to allow a child to remain in a grade even though the child may not have failed. The suggestion is made to reduce the student's frustration and to help restore self-confidence. The child should not be made to feel that he or she has failed. Parents will be informed before the end of the third quarter of the possibility of retention and/or the need of summer school. **A child failing in two or more core subjects will not be promoted to the next grade.**

### **PROMOTION OF EIGHTH GRADE**

Diplomas and honor awards are presented to the eighth grade students during a ceremony following a liturgical celebration. A celebration planned by the school celebration for relatives of the eighth grade students follows the liturgical celebration.

The highest ranking student (Valedictorian) and second highest ranking student (Salutatorian) are determined by cumulative averages of core subjects from sixth, seventh, and eighth grade final grades as recorded in the fourth quarter report card.

The eighth grade student who receives the highest score in the ACRE test in the spring, (Assessment of Catechesis and Religious Education) test will receive a special award at graduation.

All fees, including library, cafeteria, required fundraising and extended school, must be paid in full one week in advance of graduation in order to participate and receive a diploma.

### **PTSO**

The Parent Teacher Student Organization (all parents/guardians of students enrolled at St. Joseph Catholic School) meets three times a year. The purposes of the PTSO are

- Build community among parents, staff, students
- Support the total program of the school
- Carry out the required fund-raisers mandated by the School Council

The PTSO officers are President, Vice-President (in charge of all publicity), Secretary, and Head Room Parent.

In early spring, parents are asked to put their names in for vote for one-year office. Parents are interviewed as part of the candidate selection process before the ballot is distributed to parents. The PTSO officers meet to plan the monthly meeting of the room parents.

### **ROOM PARENTS**

Each class has two room parents chosen by the teacher. Room parents are responsible for coordinating activities with the teacher. Room parents organize parents in each homeroom to assist at the PTSO functions and classroom activities and educational trips. **Room parents confer with the homeroom teacher before planning any event or treat for the class.**

### **REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS/GRADING SCALE**

Report cards are issued at the end of each quarter covering approximately nine weeks of school. At the end of the fifth week of each quarter, students in grades PK3-8<sup>th</sup> receive a progress report indicating satisfactory or unsatisfactory status in each subject and behavior.

### **GRADING SCALE**

Pre-kinder and Kindergarten: See report card

First through Eighth Grades

94-100	Outstanding Progress
86-93	Good Progress
77-85	Acceptable Progress
70-76	Limited Progress
69	Unsatisfactory Progress

Non-graded subjects and conduct: Pk- K

O	Outstanding
S	Satisfactory
U	Unsatisfactory
—	Indicates Needs Attention

For grades five through eight grade averages, the following formula is used:

50%	tests
45%	class work, quizzes
05%	homework

### **SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION AND HOLY EUCHARIST**

St. Joseph Catholic School follows the regulations for sacramental preparation set by the Diocese of Brownsville. Second grade students are prepared for the reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Third grade students receive preparation for the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. Parents attend classes each semester at St. Joseph Church to prepare with their children for the reception of the sacraments.

## **SCHOOL COUNCIL**

School Council members are elected by the school parents and approved by the Pastor of St. Joseph Parish. The School council has the following four broad goals

- To educate students in a school environment which proclaims the Good News revealed by Jesus Christ and as taught by the Catholic Church, and which encourages them to be responsible and active citizens, committed to their faith and recognizing their responsibility to reach out in service to others.
- To create in the school an active Catholic faith community permeated with Gospel values, where teacher and staff in partnership with families guide the way for students to receive quality education without regard to gender, economic, ethnic, or racial background.
- To help the school provide educational programs and services which are academically sound and which challenge students to grow spiritually, academically, and socially.
- To promote in the students a zeal for the achievement of God's justice, peace, charity, and mercy, developing in them an awareness of their place as members of a global society and stewards of the earth's environment and resources
- 

St. Joseph School Council is an advisory body that supports the overall policies for the operation of the school in accord with the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and the Diocese of Brownsville. Monthly school council meetings are open meetings. The council works in conjunction with the Pastor, Principal, and the Diocesan School Council.

The council consists of the Pastor, principal, PTSO President, and a maximum of 10 elected/appointed members. Individuals interested in proposing an agenda item must submit the item in writing to the Council Chairperson or Principal five (5) business days before the next regular council meeting. Groups will appoint a spokesperson to make a presentation. Presentations shall be limited to 10 minutes. The School Council will respond at or before the next meeting.

The School Council meets each month, August-June. Meeting times are posted in the monthly calendar.

## **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Brownsville have 180 instructional days. A yearly calendar with early dismissal dates and holidays is given to parents at orientation. The calendar is up-dated each month.

## **SOLICITATION**

**Parents may not solicit the sale of items to parents or students without the written permission of the principal.**

## **SPORTS PROGRAM**

St. Joseph Catholic School participates in an after school sports program for boys and girls in grades five through eight. Students participating in after school sports must have on file in the office at the beginning of the school year:

1. Written proof of insurance
2. Written permission from parents
3. A physical examination

Students must have a minimum average of 75% in core subjects and have satisfactory conduct to participate in after-school sports. **Ineligibility occurs when a student receives an average of core subjects below 75%, any grade below 70, or unsatisfactory conduct on the progress report or the report card. The student remains ineligible until the next grading period.**

Students pay \$35.00 per sport and are responsible for the athletic uniform issued. Fee must be paid in the office before attending practices or games.

Children enrolled in the after-school sports program participate equally for the good of each child.

Schedules provided in August for practices and games are subject to change. Parents will be notified of time changes for games and practices.

Parents are expected to show appropriate conduct at games. Volunteer coaches fulfill the requirements of Volunteers in the Diocese of Brownsville before assisting in soccer, basketball, volleyball, soccer or track. An Athletic Awards Assembly is held in late April to give recognition to those who participated in team sports.

### **TELEPHONE CALLS AT SCHOOL      NO CELL PHONES AT SCHOOL**

From parents:            Only urgent messages will be relayed to students during class.

From students:            **Use of the school telephone is limited to emergencies, not for brining forgotten items. Students plan social arrangements previously and not at dismissal time.**

**Excessive use of the telephone in the evening is discouraged. Parents are asked to limit their children's use of the telephone. Teachers are available until 3:35 for students to inquire about homework. Ordinarily, a teacher's telephone number is not given out. Out of courtesy, refrain from calling teachers at home unless absolutely necessary and never after 8:00 PM.**

### **TEXTBOOKS**

All student textbooks, workbooks, and paperbacks must be cared for at all times. Students who lose, deface, or misplace a textbook, workbook, or paperback are required to replace it at their expense. The replacement cost of a textbook is \$65.00, a workbook is \$20.00, and a paperback is \$8.00. Text books must be covered at all times.

### **TUITION/FEES/REGISTRATION/FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The School Council sets tuition and fees during the first semester for the following school year. Parents sign a tuition contract for the school year and indicate the plan of tuition payment (10 months or 11 months) and one fundraising obligation. The tuition contract states that parents will abide by school rules and regulations. All fees paid at registration are **non-refundable**.

Tuition is due the 1<sup>st</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> of the month or through the bank draft on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. A late fee of \$10.00 is assessed after the 8<sup>th</sup> of the month. \$25.00 is assessed after the 25<sup>th</sup> of the months, August-May.

Academic records are not released if any fees required fundraising, library fees, lunch, extended school or tuition remain unpaid at the end of the school year or at the time of withdrawal of the

student. Post-dated checks are not accepted.

Re-registration for the following school year begins in February of the current school year. Parents must have their tuition current in order to re-register their children.

If tuition and fund-raising payments are not up to date and payment arrangements are not made, it is the right of the school to ask the parents to keep the child at home until financial arrangements are made.

At the end of the school year, names of parents who have outstanding balances and have not made financial arrangements will be sent to a collection agency.

### **RETURNED CHECK**

A \$25.00 fee is charged on each returned check, or NSF bank draft, regardless of the reason. NSF checks are not re-deposited by the school.

### **VISITORS**

St. Joseph School is a closed campus. All visitors, including parents, former students, and friends sign in the office and receive a **VISITOR'S PASS**. Items for students are delivered to the office, not the classroom. Please state this policy to those who may bring items to your children.

**Instructional time is not interrupted by visits.** Parents must obtain permission from the administration before making a classroom observation and/or visit. This regulation is for the protection of every child in attendance at St. Joseph School. **Positive identification is required before a person other than the parent picks up a child from school.**

### **VOLUNTEERS**

St. Joseph Catholic School always welcomes volunteer assistance from parents

Library

Office

Classroom

After school sports program

Parents are welcome to share their talents with all students during scheduled career days.

Contact the principal for days and times that are available. Parents having regular contact with minor children (home room parents, boy scout leaders, girl scout leaders, etc.) must have on file in the office a volunteer form and certificate from "Protecting God's Children" seminar provided by parishes in the Diocese of Brownsville.

### **WITHDRAWAL FROM ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

Notice of withdrawal from St. Joseph Catholic School should be made by the parent in writing to the principal in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the school to prepare necessary information and settle accounts. No student records may be forwarded until the school office accounts have been cleared.

### **WEBSITE**

[www.stjoseph-edinburg.org](http://www.stjoseph-edinburg.org)

**Yearly calendar and other information are posted for convenience.**